Editor's note: The following is taken from Pope John Paul II's message for World Day of Peace 2002, to be celebrated Jan. 1.

The World Day of Peace this year is being celebrated in the shadow of the dramatic events of last Sept. 11. On that day, a terrible crime was committed. In a few brief hours thousands of innocent people ... were slaughtered. Since then, people throughout the world have felt a profound personal vulnerability and a new fear for the future. Addressing this state of mind, the Church testifies to her hope, based on the conviction that evil does not have the final word in human affairs.

The history of salvation, narrated in sacred Scripture, sheds clear light on the entire history of the world and shows us that human events are always accompanied by the merciful providence of God, who knows how to touch even the most hardened of hearts and bring good fruits even from what seems utterly barren soil.

This is the hope which sustains the Church at the beginning of 2002: that, by the grace of God, a world in which the power of evil seems once again to have taken the upper hand will in fact be transformed into a world in which the noblest aspirations of the human heart will triumph, a world in which true peace will prevail.

How do we restore the moral and social order subjected to such horrific violence? My reasoned conviction, confirmed in turn by biblical revelation, is that the shattered order cannot be fully restored except by a response that combines justice with forgiveness. The pillars of true peace are justice and that form of love which is forgiveness.

No peace without justice, no justice without forgiveness: This is what I wish to say to those responsible for the future of the human community, entreating them to be guided in their weighty and difficult decisions by the light of man's true good, always with a view to the common good.

On this World Day of Peace, may a more intense prayer rise from the hearts of all believers for the victims of terrorism, for their families so tragically stricken, for all the peoples who continue to be hurt and convulsed by terrorism and war. May the light of our prayer extend even to those who gravely offend God and man by these pitiless acts, that they may look into their hearts, see the evil of what they do, abandon all violent intentions and seek forgiveness. In these troubled times, may the whole human family find true and lasting peace, born of the marriage of justice and mercy!
New era in American history begins with Sept. 11 attacks


The Sept. 11 events had profound religious and moral dimensions, as millions of Americans thronged to worship services and asked new questions about the existence and meaning of evil. Heart, too. When some 300 New York police, fire and emergency medical personnel died trying to save others, millions were reminded of what it really means to be a hero. Among the dead was Franciscan Father Mychal F. Judge, a fire department chaplain who died as he administered last rites to another victim.

In scores of New York and New Jersey parishes, funeral after funeral was celebrated with no body present, as the collapse of the World Trade Center towers left no identifiable remains for most of those killed.

The attacks also brought an unprecedented outpouring of charity as millions of Americans dipped deeply into their pockets to aid victims’ families. Catholic Charities USA collected $16 million to help families through local Catholic Charities in the dioceses where victims had lived or worked.

Combined contributions through various charities rose well over $1 billion.

Shortly after the jetliner attacks, the apparently opportunistic anthrax attacks carried out through the postal system brought widespread fears of bioterrorism. When someone sent anthrax threats to many of the nation’s abortion clinics, church and pro-life leaders sharply condemned those actions. In December, police captured the chief suspect in those threats, Clayton Lee Waagner, an escaped prisoner, thief and self-styled anti-abortion “warrior.”

The U.S.-led war on terrorism following the attacks also provoked moral reflection as theologians and ethicists discussed the ethical framework for such a war—not against a nation or region, but against discrete individuals or groups around the world identifiable only by their cause and their secretive associations with others in the cause.

The crackdown on terrorism on the home front raised another widely debated dilemma—what the U.S. bishops’ Committee on Ecumenical and Interreligious Affairs and the National Council of Synagogues called the “Faustian bargain” of losing civil liberties to fight terror. In a joint reflection, the two organizations said, “A general expansion of law enforcement powers beyond those necessary to fight terrorism cannot be justified if such an expansion comes at...”

See YEAR, page 23

Sacred Heart Parish in Jeffersonville dedicates new church

JEFFERSONVILLE—Just in time for Christmas, Sacred Heart of Jesus parishioners celebrated the dedication of their new church with a Chri$tmas program. Deacon Daniel M. Buechlein and 18 diocesan and order priests during a Dec. 16 eucharistic liturgy that marked the realization of a 48-year dream.

When Sacred Heart Parish was established in 1953 at 1486 E. Eighth St. in Jeffersonville, parishioners began worshipping in a temporary space that was intended to serve as a gymnasium for the school in 10 years.

Nearly five decades later, 65 charter members are still among the 664 parish families that are finally celebrating the completion of the permanent church.

“All are truly welcome here,” Father Raymond Schafer, pastor, told the standing-room-only gathering at the start of the Mass that also celebrated the diversity of the multicultural New Albany Deanery parish. “May we all be gathered in faith and in prayer.”

Father Schafer, the pastor since 1988, said the church “features a ‘simplesness and natural beauty’ that encompasses the inclusiveness of community and consciousness of accessibility for persons with disabilities.”

Parishioner Sue Ann Kight of Jeffersonville said the new worship space allows her complete access to the facilities in her wheelchair.

“I am just overjoyed,” she said. “Not only will it be beautiful, but I will be able to go everywhere on my own. One of the great things is to have a bathroom on the first floor. That is a blessing after so many years. My prayer is that we move into our new church with the same love and joy that we have had for 50 years in our parish family.”

Parishioner Jim King, a member since 1955, said the new worship space “is a step into the future” and “a dream come true.”

His son, Benedictine Father Jeremy King, consecrated the liturgy and was introduced as a “son of the parish.”

Benedictine Father Donald Walpole, who created most of the artwork for the temporary church in the 1950s, also


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Crosiers of the birth of Christ, which is depicted in contemporary artwork from the Basilica of Pius X in Lourdes, France. †

Below: Archbishop Daniel M. Buechlein and 18 diocesan and order priests celebrated the dedication of the new Sacred Heart of Jesus Church in Jeffersonville. Father Raymond Schafer, pastor, is at the far left.

Above: Archbishop Daniel M. Buechlein and 18 diocesan and order priests concelebrated the eucharistic liturgy for the Dec. 16 dedication of the new Sacred Heart of Jesus Church in Jeffersonville. Father Raymond Schafer, pastor, is at the far left.

consecrated the Mass. His brother, the late Father Robert Walpole, was the founding pastor.

All but one of the former pastors still living, as well as priests from other New Albany Diocese parishes, also concelebrated the liturgy.

A Chri$tmas program with a Chri$tmas program during a Dec. 16 eucharistic liturgy that marked the realization of a 48-year dream.

The Stations of the Cross in the new Sacred Heart of Jesus Church are interactive prayer experiences.
By Jennifer Del Vechio

The last words of Thomas Burnett Jr. were to his wife as he flew on board a hijacked plane heading for destruction: “We’re going to do something ... Deena if they are going to run this plane into the ground, we’re going to do something, just pray, Deena, pray,” he said, in one of four cell phone calls to his wife in San Ramona, Calif.

The words are etched in the memory of Americans as Burnett, 38, and others decided to fight back against hijackers on United Airlines Flight 93 on Sept. 11. The plane crashed in a rural Pennsylvania field, thwarting the plans of hijackers to use the plane as a missile as they did at the World Trade Center towers in New York and the Pentagon in Washington, D.C.

“You hear he wanted to do something,” said Thomas Burnett Sr. on Dec. 5 during the Civitas Dei Christmas dinner in Indianapolis, where his son’s memory was honored. “I’d like you to know something about his character.”

Civitas Dei is an Indianapolis-based association of Catholic businessmen and women. The elder Burnett told the story of a little boy who grew into a man “who exuded goodness. “He was a very good man,” his father said. “He was the best of the best, absolutely the best of the best.”

From his earliest years, Burnett Jr. was an outdoorsman, accompanying his father and close family friend, Mgr. Joseph Stepek, on hunting and fishing trips. One of his earliest photos shows Burnett as a 4-year-old holding a 6-pound large-mouth bass that he caught on a 50-cent rod and reel with a copper hook.

“In honor of his memory, I ask you to be good to your families,” Burnett Sr. said. “Work hard and be good American citizens.”

Burnett Jr. was born on May 29, 1963, at St. Mary’s Hospital in Bloomington, Minn. He was a premature baby and his feet were no bigger than a thumb.

A priest at the hospital gave the newborn a M other S eton medal. It was the beginning of a life filled with faith.

Burnett, who attended Mass daily, was known to call his parents and ask them to pray, along with enlisting the prayers of the Poor Clare sisters.

“I remember one time we were in Texas,” said Beverley, his mother. “We got up at the crack of dawn to find a church and go to Mass because Tommy said it was important that we pray.”

She spoke of a child who grew into a man that listened and gave good advice. He was a devoted family man to his wife and three daughters, and a man who loved to read, pouring through biographies on Thomas Jefferson, Lewis and Clark, and Winston Churchill, his favorite historical figure.

The Burnetts traveled to Indianapolis from M innesota to accept the inaugural Thomas E. Burnett Jr. Heroic Leadership Award. The award, to be given annually to a Catholic businessman or woman, recognizes an individual who best exemplifies the virtues of the Catholic faith, along with courageous action and leadership in the marketplace.

Members of Civitas Dei said that Burnett’s role model is a strong reminder of the importance of living one’s faith in the marketplace.

The Burnetts said traveling to meet President George W. Bush to the Burnetts especially for the occasion.

The president wrote that “Americans draw strength from the courageous actions of Burnett and the group to join him in prayers for God to watch over the nation.”

The Burnetts said traveling to meet strangers and accepting awards for their son has placed them in a new role.

“We now are reaching out to lots of people and certainly we will share our faith,” Beverley said.

“As I think and pray about this, I keep seeing it’s not about me,” Beverley said. “I think I hear myself say, ‘What about me? I’m going to miss my son.’

“This is about what happened to Tommy, it’s not about me,” she said. “It’s about God. I believe that and what our mission is to be I don’t know yet, but I’m sure we have one.”

They also are struck by the wisdom in some of their son’s last words that were spoken at one of his last professional meetings with employees.

“What we accomplish in life,” Thomas Burnett Jr. told his employees, “our pursuits, our passions, echo in posterity, through our children, our neighbors and ultimately in our own souls.”

Indianapolis-based Catholic business group honors Sept. 11 hero

St. Vincent de Paul Society

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WTTV/WB4

Tuesday, December 25

6:30 a.m. only

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We invite you to participate in the financial underwriting of this program.

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St. Vincent’s Hospitals and Health Services
N o matter what else is going on in the world—or in our daily lives—Advent and Christmas awaken in our hearts the desire for peace.

The imagery of Advent is about longing and hope-filled expectation. Christmas brings the fulfillment of all our hopes, but it also inevitably reminds us that the innocent will suffer and the good die young before our Christmas cheer can mature into Easter joy. We long for everlasting peace during Advent and Christmas, but the peace we actually experience, here and now, is both fragmentary and fleeting.

Thank God for Advent and Christmas. In the midst of war in faraway places and terror-inspired fears here at home, we remember God’s promise to send light into our darkness and hope into our despair. We remember—and we celebrate—the prophecies of the Old Testament and their wonderful fulfillment in the New Testament.

The peace of Advent and Christmas is not an elusive dream of Camelot or Utopia. It is an experience of certain trust between a people of faith and their provident God. The realities of Advent and Christmas peace are perfectly symmetrical. It is sustained by God throughout all their experiences of the way things are in the world—or in our daily life. It is the peace of Christ as he stands before his accusers during Holy Week—unable to do away with death, but willing to sacrifice everything in order to redeem it.

The peace of Advent and Christmas is a premonition of the kingdom that is both here and still to come—a world far better than this, where “peace, joy and love” will no longer be simply “season’s greetings” but permanent expressions of the way things are in the new and everlasting Jerusalem, our heavenly home.

Mariana. Come, Lord Jesus.

Grant us your peace. Now and forever.

Amen.

— Daniel Conway

(Daniel Conway is a member of the editorial committee of the board of directors of Criterion Press Inc.)

A baby boy lying in a manger is called the Light of the world and the Word made flesh. How strange and how abstract—to call a person a light and a word!

Yet, if we stop to think of circumstances some 2,000 years ago, it doesn’t seem so strange. Then as now, a light in the darkness meant an awful lot. We panic when electricity “goes out.” That was the normal condition then. Fire went out quicker and more often.

Before newspapers and books, centuries before audio and video cassettes, before computers and the Internet, the truth about things, the news, and just general information was learned through the face-to-face, spoken word.

Messengers and storytellers and rabbis (teachers) were a lifeline. The boy named Jesus would come from God as a light in the darkness and a teacher and storyteller and messenger. He became light. He became God’s Word of love.

Ever since Adam and Eve said, “No, we will not obey (because we want to be like God),” humanity has been plagued by another kind of darkness and ignorance. Sin and tragic human error mark our lives.

Think of the darkness and ignorance that spawned jealousy and murder, stealing and war, a brother in the blinding darkness of jealousy, hates his own brother and commits the first murder. In these last months of 2001, the free world has been at war with terrorism. It is not at all unlikely that, in our cities and towns this Christmas, brothers will kill brothers for drugs and the money to purchase them.

It wasn’t long before descendants of our first parents became unfaithful spouses because of self-centeredness. Today, victims of broken love discover the worst kind of darkness. Man and woman, intended to be complementary partners for life, become estranged, separated and lonely. Distrust adds the bitter spice to the fright of darkness.

Only God could bring light and knowledge to our human family hopelessly lost in darkness and ignorance. His own Son became one of us as the saving light and trustworthy word of truth. Jesus reveals God, who is faithful love itself.

Christmas is a feast of love. In the manger in a dark stable with dumb animals, Christ began to shine as the Light of the world and the Word of truth. It began with a little boy born of a loving mother and watched over by a courageous father.

This Christmas is shadowed by the following smoke and dust of New York and Washington and Pennsylvania, and then the fiery images of bombs in Afghanistan. How fragile life is!

Some people say uncontrollable fate led our ancestors to invent sorcerers and deities. Those of us who believe in one God have another perspective, and it begins with Christmas. We celebrate the mystery that offers the only path of human security. God is in charge of all destiny; we don’t have to be. His is the master plan to make everything finally work out for the good.

The string attached to the great Christmas gift of “God coming to live among us as light and word of love” is that we believe in and accept his love and that we accept in faith that this life (as we know it) is not the whole story.

It all goes together and starts with Christmas. Jesus did something to human destiny. When we celebrate his birth, we celebrate the remarkable fact that God came to be one of us to save us and to show us how to live and to love, and yes, to die in this passing world. The greatest Christmas gift is God himself.

The gift is free, and it is for all of us, holy and unholy alike. A prayerful celebration of Christmas is our thanks to you.

Those of us who know the meaning of the stable and the simple birth of the Savior have a special obligation to our troubled world. The torch has been handed on to us. We are called to be “Disciples in Mission,” evangelizers. We are called to bring the Light of Christ and the Word to our world. Christ once said that the world would know we were his if we have love, one for another. "Love your neighbor as yourself," he urged. "Turn the other cheek." "Forgive your enemy 70 times seven." “Feed the hungry, clothe the naked.”

Our colored lights and Nativity sets remind us of the promise of Christmas and our part in it. They also remind us to thank God for his Christmas gift!

I add a heartfelt “thank you” to all of you who help carry the Christmas light of hope in central and southern Indiana. God bless each and every one of you! My Midight Mass is for all of you. 
Buscando la Cara del Señor lleno de animales tontos, Cristo brilló. Hijo se hizo uno de nosotros como la oscuridad y la ignorancia. Su propio diseño como parejas complemen-
tadas como parejas complementarias de oscuridad. El hombre y la mujer, en cónyuges infieles debido al egocentrismo, en nuestras ciudades y pueblos, mano y comete el primer asesinato. Oscuridad e ignorancia que produce que en nuestras vidas, Piensen en la humanidad ha sido plagada con otro. Dios llegó a ser uno de nosotros para salvarnos y enseñarnos como vivir y estar con Dios. Al celebrar su nacimiento cele-
bramos el extraordinario hecho que Dios llegó a ser uno de nosotros para salvarnos y enseñarnos como vivir y morir en este mundo transcendentemente. El mejor regalo navideño de “la venida de Dios” como aceptamos por fe que esta vida en su amor y aceptamos el mismo es que creemos tanto en su amor y aceptamos el mismo como aceptamos por fe que esta vida (tal como la conocemos) no es toda la historia.

Todo se complementan y comienza con la Navidad. Jesús afectó al destino humano. En el siglo I, el profeta celebramos lo que el mundo comprende con una persona que de la venida de Dios a vivir entre nosotros como la luz y la palabra de amor “es que creemos tanto en su amor y aceptamos el mismo como aceptamos por fe que esta vida (tal como la conocemos) no es toda la historia” como un nuevo comienzo y una nueva etapa en el universo. Su palabra es luz en el oscuro, luz de la esperanza, luz de la fe.

La Navidad es una fiesta de amor. Aun antes de la cinta de audio y de las cintas de video, antes de las computadoras y el Internet, la verdad sobre las cosas, las noticias, la información general era repetida cara a cara, hablando. Los mensajes de colegiales y rastreros (maestros) eran el auxilio. Un niño llamado Jesús vendría de Dios como una luz para iluminar pero necesitaba al maestro, el contador de cuentas y el mensajero. El se convirtió en la luz. El se convirtió en el Árbol de Amor de Dios.

Desde que Día y Eva dijeron: “no, nosotros no desearemos porque queremos ser como Dios.”, la humanidad ha sido plagada con otro tipo de oscuridad e ignorancia. El pecado y el trágico error humano marcó nuestras vidas. Pertenecen en la oscuridad el temor y la oscurecimiento, el celo y el asesinato, robos y guerras. Cínico un hombre ceñido por la oscuridad de los otros, y la mente del hombre y comete el primer asesinato. En estos últimos meses del 2001, el mundo libre ha estado en guerra con el terrorismo. No parece probable que en nuestras ciudades y pueblos, hombres matan a hombres por miedo y el dinero para comprarlas está Navidad. Puesto que los descendenten de nues-
tros primeros padres se convirtieron en cónyuges infieles debido al egoce-
trismo. Hoy en día la víctima del amor falso latina que deje de ver que el amor no existe cuando sus padres les dijeron: “la luz salvadora y la palabra confiable de la verdad Jesús revela a Dios quienes es el amor frío el cual se produce en la Navidad. Nuestra Natividad es una fiesta de amor. En el pecho del fondo oscuro lleno de animales tontos, Cristo brilló como la luz del mundo y la Palabra de la verdad. Todo comenzó con un pequeño niño que nació de una madre cariñosa y de un padre valiente que lo vigilaba. Esta Navidad se celebra en la sombra del humo y polvo que suben de Nueva York, Washington y Pennsylvania y luego las imágenes ardientes de las bombas en Afganistán. ¿Qué delicata es la vida! Aquellos que crean en un Dios tienen otra perspectiva, y ésta comienza con la Navidad. Celebraban el misterio que ofrece el único undio religioso. Dios manda el destino por completo; no nos corresponde. Su plan nos es que a fin de cuentas todo se resuelve. El cordero que está al grado rey cordero de “la venida de Dios a vivir entre nosotros como la luz y la palabra de amor” es que creemos tanto en su amor y aceptamos el mismo como aceptamos por fe que esta vida (tal como la conocemos) no es toda la historia.

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What is the New Testament?" will be offered by Saint Meinrad School of Theology’s Ecclesial Lay Ministry Program from 6:30 p.m. to 9:30 p.m. each Monday for 10 weeks, starting on Feb. 4. The course will meet in the library at St. Louis School, 17 St. Louis Pl., in Batesville.

U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops’ Office for Film and Broadcasting movie ratings

The Majestic (Warner Bros.)
Rated A-II (Adults and Adolescents) because of a car crash and fleeting profanity with a few cuss words.
Rated PG (Parental Guidance Suggested) by the Motion Picture Association of America (MPA). A

Not Another Teen Movie (Columbia)
Rated O (Morally Offensive) because of brutal violence played for laughs, recurring nudity, perverse sexual situations, brief recreational drug use, occasional rough language and much stylish profanity.
Rated R (Restricted) by the MPA. A

The Royal Tenenbaums (Touchstone)
Rated A-III (Adults) because of an attempted suicide, implied promiscuity and substance abuse, brief nudity, some rough language and minimal profanity.
Rated R (Restricted) by the MPA. A

Vanilla Sky (Paramount)
Rated A-III (Adults) because of a few sexual encounters and vulgar references, brief violence including suicide, and recurring rough language with some profanity.
Rated R (Restricted) by the MPA. A

Archbishop Buechlein thanks Sacred Heart of Jesus parishioners for their hard work and dedication, which made their new church a reality.

West Deanery Recognition Awards Dinner 2002
Cardinal Ritter High School
January Thirtys-first at 6:30 p.m.
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For more information or to reserve your table or seat please contact the Office of Development at Cardinal Ritter High School at 317-927-7825.
Manger connects to the crucifix and Resurrection

By Fr. Eugene Lavrildien, S.S.S.

We all have our favorite Christmas stories. Mine is a story told by Maryknoll Sister Mary Coleman, who spent most of World War II in a prison at Los Banos in the Philippines.

“The Japanese guards were kind to us,” she said. “When they had enough to eat, we also had enough. We were able to put aside a place for prayer in the camp, and a Filipino carved a fine wooden crucifix for our prayer room, and we set it up on the wall. When Christmas came, someone carved a manger set, which we put out early, but without the figure of the infant Jesus. We waited for Christmas Eve.

“One of the Japanese guards who never had seen a Christmas manger watched us when we were praying silently before the manger,” Sister Mary said. “But as we were leaving, he pointed to Jesus in the manger and then to Jesus on the cross and asked, ‘The same one?’”

“She nodded. ‘Yes, he is the same one,’” she recalled. “Looking again from the manger to the crucifix, he said, ‘I am so sorry.’”


Often, particularly at Christmas, we read or listen to the Gospel infancy narratives of Jesus’ birth romantically through our childhood experience. Luke and Matthew wrote them, however, for adult Christians in their communities. The Gospel infancy narratives are simple but deep, like a bottomless well.

Our childhood experience. Luke and Matthew wrote them, however, for adult Christians in their communities. The Gospel infancy narratives are simple but deep, like a bottomless well.

When we celebrate the birthday of historical persons, we do not celebrate only their birth. We also celebrate their life, their relationships and their achievements.

At Christmas, when we celebrate Jesus’ birthday, we do not celebrate only his birth. We also celebrate his entire life, including his mission, his ministry, and his death and resurrection.

Traditionally, the early Christian creeds connected the birth of Jesus to his passion and resurrection. “[Christ Jesus was] descended from David according to the flesh, but established as Son of God in power according to the spirit of holiness through resurrection from the dead, Jesus Christ our Lord” (Rom 1:3-4).

For many years, Luke and Matthew meditated again and again on this creed or similar creeds. The Gospel infancy narratives actually are the Gospels in miniature, introducing the principal themes of their Gospels, including the mission of Jesus and his passion and resurrection.

Look at Luke’s story of Jesus’ birth: She “laid him in a manger, because there was no room for them in the inn” (Lk 2:7).

Mary placed Jesus in a manger, a feeding trough for the animals. In this context, Mary offered Jesus, her son, the firstborn of God, as nourishment for the flock (Lk 2:8). Because there was no place for the Son of David (Lk 1:32; 2:4) in the hospitality of the city of David (Lk 2:4, 6).

The flock, in Luke’s Gospel, is a symbol of the community of his disciples and also the Christian community (Lk 12:32; Acts 20:28-29).

The “inn” (in Greek: katalympa), literally the place of hospitality, refers to the “guest room” (in Greek: katalyma) in which Jesus will eat the Passover as the Last Supper with his disciples (Lk 2:11).

Jesus was denied hospitality—or rejected—by the city of David at the time of his birth. In response, Mary, as a symbol of the Church, offered Jesus as nourishment for our flock, that is, our Christian community.

Jesus also was rejected by the city of David at the time of his death. In response, Jesus gave the ultimate hospitality, offering himself as nourishment for the world.

Thus, in Luke’s Gospel, the story of Jesus’ birth refers to the story of his passion and resurrection.

It is similar in Matthew. Look at Matthew’s story of the magi. “Then they opened their treasures and offered him gifts of gold, frankincense and myrrh” (Mt 2:11). Their gifts evoked Isaiah’s prophecy: “All the nations will come and give their gifts” (Is 60:6). In this prophecy, there are only two gifts: gold and frankincense. Matthew added a third gift, myrrh, used in the ancient world as an ointment for the dead.

In Matthew’s Gospel, the gift of myrrh evokes Jesus’ passion. When the magi with their three gifts prostrate themselves before the newborn king, Matthew is saying that Emmanuel will reign in the kingdom of heaven as a messianic king through his passion.

Without his passion and his resurrection, the story of Jesus would not be a Gospel story or good news for us. That is why every Gospel creed, hymn and story of Jesus’ birth refers to his passion and his resurrection.

(Blessed Sacrament Father Eugene Lavrildien is a Scripture scholar and senior editor of Emmanuel magazine.)

**Memories enrich holidays**

Share a favorite memory of Christmas in your own life.

“I have eight grandchildren, all under age 9. A few years ago, all of us were together, and every year my favorite memory of Christmas is being together as a family.” (Eileen A. Edson, Afton, N.Y.)

“My favorite memory is decorating for the holidays with my father, who died when I was 12.” (Maureen Godwin, Wilmington, Del.)

“When Christmas Eve, the doors of the parlor were closed while our parents and Santa Claus set up and decorated. Then we children lined up in order of age and marched into the parlor lighted only by the lights on the tree and the one in the Nativity set. There we stood and sang (‘Silent Night’ in German), after which we opened our presents. As we grew older and had music lessons, we performed a concert for our parents. I am 88 now, and can never forget those holy Christmases.” (Anna W. Pavlik, Ocean Springs, Miss.)

**Lend Us Your Voice**

A question for possible publication: What is wrong, as you see it, with a spirit of vengeance?

Luke’s infancy narrative is Christological

Shirley Vogler Meister

From the Editor Emeritus/John F Fink

Matthew’s, is Christological. He uses Old Testament references and legends to tell us just who Jesus is. Matthew does it with a literary balancing of details.

There are, for example, two parallel announcements, one to Mary announcing the birth of John the Baptist and the other to Mary announcing the birth of Jesus. These announcements are co-mingled in the meeting of the two mothers. There are parallel accounts of the birth and circumcision of John, including a canticle by Zechariah (the Benedictus), and the birth, circumcision and presentation of Jesus in the Temple, including a canticle by Simeon.

Simeon and Elizabeth are described as too elderly to have a child, just as were Abraham and Sarah.

The initial physical presentation of Samuel in the Temple before the aged Eli is paralleled in two places in Luke’s Gospel. The first is Mary’s visit to Elizabeth, very similar to the canticle of Samuel’s mother Hannah (1 Sm 2:1-10) and the second is Samuel’s presentation in the Temple before the aged Simeon.

Other Old Testament allusions are interesting. For example, John’s appearance to Zechariah. He tells him that John will drink neither wine nor strong drink, like Samson and Samuel. And Gabriel says that John will have the power of Elijah. (Gabriel, by the way, previously appeared in the Book of Daniel to announce the coming of an anunciator one (Dn 9:21-27).

There is a verse in the story of the Annunciation that might have been the first allusion to the Trinity: “And the angel said to [Mary] in reply: “The Holy Spirit will come upon you and the power of the Most High will overshadow you. Therefore the child to be born will be called holy, the Son of God” (Lk 1:35).

This was perhaps clear to Luke’s first readers but I cannot help wondering if it was clear to Mary, a good Jewish girl. Matthew’s Gospel had its magi, but Luke has the shepherds. This is in keeping with Luke’s emphasis, throughout his Gospel, on the lowly as the recipients of God’s good news.

The shepherds are the first to receive the good news, and that news is the most important message of the infancy narrative: “You will find a baby wrapped in swaddling clothes and lying in a manger” (Lk 2:11).

Only Luke among the synoptic Gospel writers uses the word “savior.” Luke sees Jesus as the one who redeems humanity from its alienation from God. He is the long-awaited Messiah and Lord—the title applied to God, as in the Old Testament. Luke elaborates on this message in the rest of his Gospel. Have a holy and blessed Christmas.

Catholics could also pay more attention to the lonely, the elderly, all the folks who probably have the least to celebrate on any day of the year.

When we say prayers over the Advent wreath at dinnette, and encourage our kids to remember what’s really important about what is, after all, a Christian holiday, we try to spend the pre-Christmas season in a way that earns the reward of the day itself.

“… at the name of Jesus every knee shall bow, and every tongue confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father.” (Phil 2:10-11), wrote: “… at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, in heaven and on earth and under the earth, and every tongue confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father.”

So, Jonathon, in his innocence, was right. All of creation (including human beings) is to bow down in humble, literallly, or figuratively, to acknowledge the Lord’s power and love. (God understands we can’t physically do so.)

This year, I received a greeting card of encouragement that I’ve sent to others. It was a blessing to me, and it made me chuckle. I share the idea and text with perchance with wrapping gifts, mailing greetings and packages, baking cookies and going to parties. Most of us aren’t spending a lot of time on the theological implications of the coming feast.

On the other hand, many of us participate in our parish recharl service, the giving tree, the food collection. We pay special attention to the lonely, the elderly, all the folks who probably have the least to celebrate on any day of the year.

When my niece’s son, Jonathon, was about four, he came across a greeting card of the Bluegrass Band. The card’s front shows a bumble bee surely “Every tongue confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father.”

Indeed, their songs are “Every tongue confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father.”

In short, it is useless to make a clear distinction between the sacred and the secular, believing instead that the two are inevitably intertwined.

Third, they question the assumption that secularization is a one-time event. Neither the Old Testament era, medieval Europe, colonial America nor when society was wrapped in a sapraffe of scientific rationalism increas- ingly is confined to personal and family life that it is no longer useful.

Fourth, they argue, that even though science and technology are using more religious than they are today.

Fifth, they point to evidence that seems to conflict with secularization the- ory. They note that Church membership, religious belief, and religious practice are more common today than they were in medieval Europe and colonial America (for example, two-thirds of Americans now belong to a Church, compared to only 15 percent of American colonists).

While membership in mainline Protestant Churches is declining, membership in Catholic and evangelical Churches is increasing. More than 90 percent of Americans still believe in God. Scientists are among the most reli- gious, not the least religious, members of university faculties. Instead of being strictly private, religion affects the nation’s economy and leads some people to view their work as a calling. It also increases the nation’s abortion and economic justice on the political agenda and affects the many people vote in presidential elections.

As this debate over secularization the- ory proceeds, Catholic clergy and lay leaders might want to determine in which parishioners could explore the arguments on both sides, examine the evidence bearing on this question, and consider the motives of those who support and consider secularization theory.

(Shirley Vogler Meister, a member of Christ the King Parish in Indianapolis, is a regular columnist for The Criterion.)
The Sunday Readings

Sunday, Dec. 23, 2001

- **Isaiah 7:10-14**
- **Romans 8:20-25**
- **Matthew 11:24-29**

The Book of Isaiah is the source of this Advent weekend’s first reading.

Isaiah was not alone in seeing as the root of the country’s problems a decline in religious fervor. Yet he was among a distinct minority. He saw policies that toyed with the law of God as the prelude to disaster. Of course, history would prove him right.

However, in the time in which this Scripture was written, hope dawned on the horizon. The king’s young wife, or perhaps his concubine, would conceive and bear a son. In time, this son would ascend the throne. His reign would bring an era of peace and security.

Kings of Judah, and their counterparts to the north in what had survived as the kings of Israel, presided over what the prophets such as Isaiah saw as an abomination to God. They saw a nation to be one. Human greed and intrigue had broken the kingdom apart.

Still, the king of Judah occupied a special place. Obviously, as a ruler, he could direct the kingdom toward God. He also spoke on behalf of the people.

Aha appears as if he was belligerent and unsure of himself. Sinfulness robs the soul of confidence and strength. If clouds and unsure of himself. Sinfulness robs the soul of confidence and strength. It clouds.

We need the Lord. Aha was unable to lead as he should have led. He needed divine help. Even the faithful Joseph could not deduce everything. He needed the explanation offered by the angel.

However, the last word is not that humans are adrift in a sea of limitations, but rather that God lovingly provides for them amid their limitations.

To the kingdom of Judah long ago, God sent new hope in the person of a crown prince soon to be born. To the world of death and despair asian Joseph and Mary, God sent Jesus.

The epistle reminds us that these events simply did not come and then go without consequence.

God cares for us. God saves us. Jesus lives. His word reaches us through the Church, which today rests on the foundation laid by the apostles. We, too, are heirs of the kingdom and are destined for everlasting life.

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**My Journey to God**

One Beloved Babe of Bethlehem

Once more
A is the long ago,
The Babe of Bethlehem
Takes center stage
A rad radiates
That sweet simplicity
That warms our earthling hearts.
So... is the beginning,
How steeped in that holiness
From long ago.
One more a little child
Shall lead us safely home.

By Margaret McMillan

(Margaret M. McMillan is a member of St. Luke Parish in Indianapolis.)

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**Daily Readings**

**Monday, Dec. 24**
2 Samuel 7:1-5, 8b-12, 14a, 16
Psalm 89:25-27, 29
Luke 1:67-79

**Tuesday, Dec. 25**
The Nativity of the Lord (Christmas)
Midnight
Isaiah 9:1-6
Psalm 96:1-3, 11-13
Romans 1:1-7, 7b-11
Titus 2:11-14

**Wednesday, Dec. 26**
Stephen, first martyr
Acts of the Apostles 6:8-10, 7:59
Psalm 31:3cd-4, 6, 8ab, 16cb-17
Matthew 10:17-22

**Thursday, Dec. 27**
John, apostle and evangelist
1 John 1:1-4
Psalm 97:1-2, 5-6, 11-12
John 20:2-8

**Friday, Dec. 28**
The Holy Innocents, martyrs
1 John 1:5-22
Psalm 124:2-5, 7b-8
Matthew 2:13-18

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**Question Corner/Fr. John Dietzen**

Sufferers of celiac disease can’t receive the Eucharist

Q In some ways, I feel sad that so much attention is given to the form of Communion bread, which you discussed recently. A celiac sufferer who can eat nothing made of wheat, I would be grateful just for Communion. It is good to read in your column about the greater awareness of celiac disease. After years of living in a world of trials and deaths, we are finally diagnosed.

A Do you have any more suggestions?

For those readers who are not familiar with the sickness, celiac, or celiac sprue, disease is a malabsorption condition in which the small intestine cannot absorb food nutrients in the presence of gluten.

People with this illness cannot tolerate wheat, rye, barley or oats, but they are not affected by other flours like potato, corn or rice. Sometimes even a small amount of wheat may excite the allergic reaction, causing severe illness, even death.

Complete elimination of these grains from the diet, however, usually allows those with this syndrome to live normal, healthy and full lives.

A liberation of certain other afflictions, autism for one, now is believed to be related to the exclusion or control of gluten in the diet.

As one who is blessedly spared this ailment, I had no idea how many people suffer from it—will over 100,000. The many Catholics among them share the same dilemma and disappointment you have in concerning the Eucharist. For them, it is a major concern since Communion bread must be made of wheat flour for a valid eucharistic celebration.

I have several times suggested the most obvious alternative, receive Communion only under the form of wine. Mary with the celiac problem take advantage of that possibility.

Unlike the priest your friend encountered, most parish priests cooperate with this need in every possible way, sometimes providing small cups exclusively for the use of the celiac patient. Even the minute contact with the wheat in the chalice before Communion can make the wine dangerous for people with this illness.

Wine is no universal solution, however. As you apparently have discovered, for some with the allergy wine fermented with particular yeasts or in particular regions is safe.

In Cincinnati, Father Joseph Ratzinger, head of the Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith, again reaffirmed to the American bishops that bread from which all gluten is removed is not valid for the Eucharist.

Manufacturers of Communion hosts in the United States and Europe whom I have consulted have tried unsuccessfully to formulate a wheat bread with no gluten.

I am grateful to you and the many other readers who related their experiences, diet suggestions, frustrations and hopes. One thing all agree on: They feel there should be some way they, or their children, could receive Communion without endangering their health or their lives.

I wish I could provide a solution for you and your son, but I cannot. Perhaps in the future there will be an answer. Some have been able to work out a manageable lifestyle for everyone involved.

For others, it is a heavy burden with seemingly no present answer.

Fortunately, good resources are available for celiac patients and their families, particularly through The Celiac Sprue Association (Ohio, NE 68131-0700). Their Web site, www.csaceliacs.or, is loaded with helpful background and practical information.

[Free brochure in English or Spanish, answering questions Catholics ask about practical aspects and sponsors is available by sending a stamped and self-addressed envelope to Father John Dietzen, Box 325, Peoria, IL 61615.]
As the year 2001 draws to a close, The Criterion sales team would like to wish our advertisers and our readers a Blessed Holiday Season.

May Peace, Joy and Hope prevail in the New Year.

*A Happy Holidays!

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**MARRIAGE SUPPLEMENT**

Be a part of our Marriage Supplement

February 1, 2002, issue of The Criterion

If you are planning your wedding between January 30 and July 1, 2002, 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 photographs. The picture must be wallet-size and will be used as space permits. We cannot guarantee the reproduction quality of the photos. Please put name(s) on the back of the photo. Photos will be returned if a stamped, self-addressed envelope is enclosed.

**Deadline**

All announcements and photos must be received by Friday, January 11, 2002, 10 a.m. (No announcements or photos will be accepted after this date).

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**Daily Readings, continued from page 10**

**Saturday, Dec. 29**

Thomas Becket, bishop and martyr
1 John 2:3-11
Psalm 96:1-3, 5b-6
Luke 2:22-35

**Sunday, Dec. 30**

The Holy Family
Syrach 3:2-6, 12-14
Psalm 128:1-5
Colossians 3:12-21
or Colossians 3:12-17
Matthew 2:13-15, 19-23

**Monday, Dec. 31**

Sylvester I
1 John 2:18-21
Psalm 96:1-2, 11-13
John 1:1-18

**Tuesday, Jan. 1**

The Blessed Virgin Mary, Mother of God
Numbers 6:22-27
Psalm 67:2-3, 5-6, 8
Galatians 4:4-7
Luke 2:16-21

**Wednesday, Jan. 2**

Basil the Great, bishop and doctor of the Church
Gregory Nazianzen, bishop and doctor of the Church
1 John 2:22-28
Psalm 98:1-4
John 1:19-28

**Thursday, Jan. 3**

1 John 2:29-3:6
Psalm 98:1-3, 6
John 1:29-34

**Friday, Jan. 4**

Elizabeth Ann Seton, religious
1 John 3:7-10
Psalm 98:1-7, 9
John 1:35-42

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**LETTERS**

was dismayed by the backlash of letters published in The Criterion in such strong disagreement with your editorials. I challenge those who wrote to think beyond the bounds of their own geography and consider humanity as our Creator views it. I hope no one of us less or more than any other, and that includes those who might do harm. It is not the measure of his pure love to weigh actions.

I seek instead a seemingly bold prayer: “Father, forgive them, for they know not what they do”—the words that Jesus himself uttered while hanging in agony on the cross. A prayer that we, too, must grasp to utter as well in order to reach the peace that we so desperately need now.

For we will not find any true solace in retaliatory actions, although our country must protect its people as best as it can. I have another prayer, one that is equally bold: that those who seek to do harm to others may have a change of heart and instead seek peace and the building of a better world for all humanity. To offer the other cheek is truly the only way to disarm our aggressors, as they would finally discover the futility of their deeds.

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**Christmas in Afghanistan**

Staff Sgt. Dan Hottle of Kansas City, Mo., brings a bit of holiday spirit to a warehouse taken over by U.S. Marines at Camp Rhino in Afghanistan Dec. 13. He discovered the Christmas tree in a shipment of ready-to-eat meals for the troops.

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**From left to right:** Dan Frederick, Account Executive; Loretta Williams and Barb Brinkman, Senior Account Executives and Ron Massey, Criterion Business Manager
A CNS photo of a nativity scene which is depicted in detail from the painting "The Adoration of the Magi" by Sienese artist Benvenuto di Giovanni. The 15th-century work is a holding of the National Gallery of Art in Washington.

Peace on Earth
The Christmas crèche is a teaching tool

It represents Luke's Nativity story, with some of Matthew's

By John F. Fink

We are all familiar with the traditional Christmas crèche. The word itself is French, meaning manger or crib, and it is used specifically for the manger in which Jesus was born in Bethlehem.

Tradition holds that the actual crèche has been preserved as a relic in the Basilica of St. Mary Major in Rome, but it's difficult to see how its authenticity could be proved.

However, the word also refers to any representation of Christ's birth, and crèches suddenly, if not exactly miraculously, appear each Christmas Eve in Catholic churches throughout the world. After Mass on Christmas, parents (and grandparents) point out Baby Jesus and the other statues to the children.

St. Francis of Assisi is sometimes credited with building the first crèche (although I assume he would have called it a mangerbox). He did in the same way those parents (or grandparents) were doing—as a teaching tool to explain the birth of Christ.

Of course, it's doubtful that crèches can teach the whole doctrine of the Incarnation. It doesn't try to, any more than the second chapter of Luke's Gospel does. But the crèche does represent Luke's story, usually with some of Matthew's thrown in.

One of the main businesses of Christian Palestinians in Bethlehem is the carving and sale of crèches—and the current strife in the Holy Land has meant destitution for many in that business. Strangely, even though the Palestinian artisans know better than anyone that Jesus was born in a cave, most of their crèches show a stable—the Western idea of where a manger should be located.

Crèches can be simple or elaborate. The simplest require only statues of the Baby Jesus, his mother Mary and St. Joseph, Jesus, of course, in the manger—a feedbox for animals—because that is where Luke says his mother put him after his birth. Luke says that she wrapped Jesus in swaddling clothes, perhaps an allusion to the birth of King Solomon who, though a great king, was wrapped in swaddling clothes like any other infant (Wis 7:4-5).

Mary is usually hovering over her newborn son while Joseph stands protectively off to the side. This seems appropriate since Jesus and Mary should be the focus, Jesus because he is the newborn baby, and Mary because she has become the mother of God. Putting Joseph off to the side is a symbol of the Virgin Birth. Joseph is the protective foster father, but his role is not the same as Mary's. Other participants in the crèche are usually shepherds, perhaps with their sheep. According to Luke, the shepherds were the first to hear about the birth of the Savior, Messiah and Lord. They hurried to Bethlehem "where they found Mary and Joseph, and the infant lying in the manger."

The shepherds, of course, heard the message from an angel, so a proper crèche should also have an angel—perhaps high above the scene. It could be holding a scroll proclaiming "Gloria in Excelsis Deo" (Glory to God in the highest) or "the song sung by the choir of angels doing— as a teaching tool to explain the Incarnation. It doesn't try to, any more than the second chapter of Luke's Gospel does. But the crèche does represent Luke's story, usually with some of Matthew's thrown in.

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See NATIVITY, page 13

![Image](G CNS photo courtesy Knights of Columbus Museum)
Family Christmas photograph is a priceless gift

By Stan Konieczny
Catholic News Service

Jesus' birth in a stable captured the imagination of artists. Great masters have interpreted the scene with oils and canvas, and artisans around the world have fashioned figures of clay, wood, plaster and porcelain in an attempt to transport their contemporaries back to the Bethlehem scene.

We all treasure a favorite depiction of Jesus' birth in a stable captured the Incarnation. In my house, the manger scenes are the most treasured Christmas mementos.

Sometimes, but not often, a crèche is a family hand-me-down, another is a souvenir from a foreign adventure. Yet the most recent addition to these portrayals of the Incarnation conveys a powerful message of God sharing our frailties.

Bethlehem scene.

Wood, plaster and porcelain in an attempt to allow little ones to pose as Mary and Joseph standing over their newborn infant.

From the world have fashioned figures of clay, that the twins' 5-month-old baby brother, Aaron, was due for a diaper change.

The Incarnation is real!

In a matter of minutes, Aaron—damp diaper and all—was lying uncomfortably on the manger's hay under a course blanket. He let everyone know that he was not happy, but his tearful protests only added to the scene's charm.

After dinner, everyone listened as Father John Follingstad, director for the Adorers of the Blood of Christ in Ruma, Ill., is a student at Mundelein Seminary in Mundelein, Ill., explained. He had to rely on the love of others to get through dark nights, drafty accommodations, less baby to share our frailties and needs.

The Incarnation is real!

He let everyone know that he was not happy, but his tearful protests only added to the scene's charm.

The Incarnation is real!

But it prompts a powerful reflection for those of us who know its secret—the stark reality that this little baby was in need of a diaper change, driving home the Christmas message that Almighty God came as a helpless baby to share our frailties and needs.

Benedictine Sisters of St. Peter in White Cloud, Mich. (at the left) and St. Mary of the Visitation in Mundelein, Ill., are students at Mundelein Seminary in Mundelein, Ill., explained. He had to rely on the love of others to get through dark nights, drafty accommodations, less baby to share our frailties and needs.

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The Incarnation is real!
Students reflect on post-Sept. 11 Christmas

By Theresa Sanders
Catholic News Service

This Christmas is different. Sure, the stores are stocked with ribbons, wrapping paper and gifts, just as always. Festive carols serenade us in the coffee shop and the dentist’s office, in the malls and on elevators. Yet things are different. Everything is different since Sept. 11.

I teach in Washington, and many of my students are from New York City. These two cities were, of course, the ones hardest-hit by the terrorist attacks. So I asked the young people in my classes how these events changed their priorities for Christmas this year.

In response, some students spoke of a newfound longing to be with the people they love.

“Usually, by now I would have made up my list of Christmas presents to buy,” one student said. “This year, I am looking forward to staying home, being with my family and enjoying the coziness of the hearth.”

“Personally, I plan to call or visit my family,” another student explained. “I will spend more time with my family and enjoy the cozy atmosphere of the hearth.”

However, other students felt that the familiar traditions and the familiar traditions are now things they need to feel that spirit of giving that grabs hold of us during the holidays,” one student said. “I will not be able to travel to see my family because of all the problems with the planes. Moreover, my parents told me not to send them anything because of the difficulties with the postal system. A lone in the United States during the holiday, I hope Santa Claus will come to see me!”

Other students offered more philosophical reflections.

“This year, more than ever, everyone needs to feel that spirit of giving that grabs hold of us during the holidays,” another student said.

“My favorite Christmas song, sung by Frank Sinatra, says, ‘It’s that time of year when the world falls in love.’ I think we all need to fall in love with life and with one another,” another student said.

“Yes, Christmas is different this year. It will be darker and, in the cold night that is the first Christmas star shone. ‘Wasn’t that the point of Christmas—to offer a weary world some glimmer of hope?’ It’s the time of year when the world falls in love. Let’s fall in love—with life and with one another.”

(Theresa Sanders is an assistant professor of theology at Georgetown University in Washington, D.C.)
Readers share favorite holiday memories

Grandmother thanks God for Christmas blessings
By Bernadine Purcell

Being old isn’t all bad. I can still look forward to Christmas. I have a large box with my name on it filled with memories of my Christmases Past.

The season of Advent prepares me for the spiritual joy of Christmas. The colorful lighted rooftops and doorways of houses in my neighborhood are a reminder to me that the small artificial tree with strings of colorful lights and ornaments is waiting to be brought down from the upstairs closet and placed on that special table in our living room. Santa Claus has been appearing in the stores at the mall, ready for the children to sit on his lap and tell him what they want for Christmas.

I often wished that I had asked my mother and father how they spent the Christmas holidays when they were young. Did they really have candles on their Christmas tree? This was the time when homes were lighted with gaslights and kerosene lamps. What kinds of toys were placed under their Christmas tree? Did they chop down their own tree? Did the boys ask for wagons? Dolls were probably on the girls’ lists. I am sure many family customs were handed down to us by their parents.

We always had a houseful of aunts and uncles and cousins during the Christmas season. I always enjoyed being with my cousins. There was only one problem. When suppertime came, Mom, Dad and our aunts and uncles sat at the first table. My mother was a very good cook. They not only enjoyed their food, but also enjoyed reminiscing and joking. We could hear their laughter as we played around the Christmas tree.

When they were finally finished, the table was cleared and set a second time for the older cousins to eat. They didn’t linger as long, but they did take time to decide which picture-show they wanted to see. Finally, we younger children were called to eat at the third setting. We were glad to leave our toys because we were starving. We only got to play a short time after supper because the day was slipping away. Parents were anxious to get home. The next day was a regular working day.

We children would have a free day from school. We were ready to rest after a full day of excitement.

This Christmas will also have sad moments for me. It will be my second year without my husband after 59 years of marriage. I know he will be looking down on us, checking to see if we put the Christmas tree, that he so artfully decorated so many years ago, in the right place.

Our family is scattered, living in other states. Who will be able to make the trip home? Those who do will gather together to reach the missing relatives by telephone. Great-grandchildren will give us that special excitement that only the innocent can bring to Christmas.

The Nativity set will take its place under the Christmas tree. When I look at Jesus, Mary and Joseph, I will be reminded again of the true meaning of “Family.” I thank God for Christmas.

(Bernadine Purcell is a member of St. Anthony of Padua Parish in Clarksville.) ▼

Family Mass has become special holiday tradition
By Carrie Smith Kemp

Our family’s favorite memory of Christmas is still an ongoing affair.

The most important aspect of our plans surrounds the choosing of the best time during the week just before Christmas when each of us siblings can gather for our annual home Christmas Mass, which is so graciously presided over by one of the many priests who is and has been a favorite of our family.

The idea was conceived a few years ago when either Mom or Dad was unable to travel to church for a special Mass, and the offer was made for a Mass to be celebrated at home. It became an annual affair at Christmas to have a home Mass in my brother’s home when everyone (only one brother lives away now) is available.

The beautiful aspect of this holiday tradition is the full participation of all the families, children, grandchildren and the in-laws, who gather together to offer thanks for all the blessings from God during the past year. Hopefully, we will be able to continue this tradition for many years.

(Carrie Smith Kemp is a member of St. Monica Parish in Indianapolis.) ▼

Christmas Blessings

May the Lord’s birth bring the stillness of peace to you and yours this Christmas Season.

Monte Cassino Shrine
St. Meinrad, Indiana

Jesus was born in Bethlehem...
Man laments that he has ‘too much’ at Christmas

By Eleanor Fletcher

One of the pleasures of being postmaster in a small community is the luxury of taking the time to listen to your customers. You never know who is going to walk through the door with a tale or message. One such messenger appeared at my window on Christmas Eve in 1997, and I have not forgotten him or his words.

Christmas Eve is usually a quiet day at the post office in contrast to the hustle and hurry of the previous days. Packages are in the mail, cards are either sent by now or postponed, and most folks are busy making final preparations for their festivities.

I was enjoying the quiet, catching up on some paperwork at my desk. It was the middle of the afternoon when my messenger entered the post office. He was from a neighboring route and not one of my regular customers. I did not recall seeing him before, nor have I seen him since. He was middle-aged, of medium height and stocky, with a pleasant, florid countenance. He could have been St. Nicholas himself in civilian garb.

“I’d like a book of stamps please,” he requested in a gravelly voice.

“Well, yes,” he replied thoughtfully, then continued, “but it’s too much, really. I have too much.

“I work at a power plant on the other side of the river with a maintenance crew of 12 men,” he explained. “A bout half of them don’t have enough. Of course, some people bring on their own problems. One man has been married a couple of times and had children by his wives, and then lived with another woman and had children with her. He doesn’t have a choice about working on Christmas Day. Of his weekly paycheck, he only gets to keep one day’s wages for himself. The rest goes for child support. He brought that situation on himself but that is not my problem. I am in my 80s.

“I have to do my work outside,” he said. “One man did not have any warm clothes to wear, so I gave him an old pair of coveralls. He patched the holes and those coveralls are just like gold to him.

“Yes, I’m ready for Christmas, but it’s too much,” he said as he picked up his stamps, put them in his wallet and turned to leave. Continuing to speak, he pushed the door open, shaking his head slowly and sadly. “I have too much. I have too much.”

(Eleanor Fletcher is a member of St. Lawrence Parish in Lawrenceburg, and is the postmaster of Cross Plains, Ind.)

Last Christmas at home and first in convent were special

By Sr. M. Alma Braun, S.J. W.

Christmas memories began in my early childhood in our “Home Sweet Home.” These beautiful memories culminated in my last Christmas in our home.

All Christmas Days had their beautiful memories, but this last Christmas at home was a bit different for me. I asked Mom, Dad, my six sisters and my one and only brother to gather around the Christmas crib (made by Dad) and the Christmas tree. I wanted to tell them that next Christmas I would celebrate my first Christmas in the convent home far away. The feast of the Immaculate Conception on Dec. 8 was an entrance day for girls who desired to enter the Sisters of St. Joseph the Worker.

After my intention was made known to my family, everyone was silent. Only the soft playing of “Silent Night” was heard. Then I asked, “Why so far away? Why not go where your Sister Aunts are located?”

Then Dad spoke in a rather firm voice, “Let her go. See what happens.”

I asked my brother next in a rather doubtful and joking manner, “She will never make it,” he said. “She will change her thinking.”

The younger members of the family did not quite understand. A baby loan was only 4 years old, and I loved her dearly. There were many questions.

With God’s all-powerful grace, my intention became a reality. The following year, on Dec. 8, I did enter the convent. So Christmas Day in 1939 was indeed my first Christmas in my new convent home.

Today I have fond, lasting and grace-filled memories of my first Christmas in the convent and my last Christmas at home. I can recall those memories with gratitude in my heart in these sunset years of my life, for I am in my 80s.

First, last and in-between Christmas Days can all be a Mary’s Christmas and a Merry and Joyous Christmas.

[St. Joseph the Worker Sister M. Alma Braun resides at the convent in Walton, Ky.]†

Santa’s taxi ride with mom was the talk of the parish

By Catherine M. Keating

I grew up in a small town. On Christmas Eve, two little friends came to stay all night with me. It was really great when we awakened to a wonderful Christmas morning and opened all of our gifts.

The girls came to stay. We all received wonderful gifts. It was Santa’s last stop, and he’d sent his sleigh and reindeers back to the North Pole. A taxi was called for him when he left our house. My mother left at the same time for the 5:30 a.m. Mass. I walked to the 10 a.m. Mass and went to the school to march into church, as did other children whose parents were not with them.

How wonderful! How absolutely earth-shattering! The sister said—in front of all of the other children—that before that the 5:30 a.m. Mass was in the morning. She had seen Santa help my mother out of the cab! Wow! That proved to my whole world—positively forever, then and there—that Santa had been to my house!

I’m in my ’90s now, and it feels like this Christmas memory happened yesterday!

(Catherine M. Keating is a member of St. Anthony Parish in Indianapolis.)†

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I come from a rather large family by today's standards—seven boys and two girls, nine children in all. Christmas was a holiday we all always looked forward to with much anticipation.

Mom was never without a Christmas gift from each of us as we spent many hours at school or at home making a special gift just for her.

One year, in the late 1950s, Dad decided we could give Mom a store-bought gift. He gave each of us a dollar bill, piled us all in the car, and into town we went, which was a treat in itself since we rarely got to go into town, with the exception of 6 a.m. Mass on Sunday morning and, of course, school.

We were let out at the local Dollar General Store. With our precious money in hand and so many items to choose from, all each for one dollar, only heaven could be better than this.

We decided that Mom did enough work in the house and on the farm that something to work with was out of the question. It had to be something just for her. We split up to find that perfect gift. Imagine our surprise when half of us ended up at the perfume counter and the rest of us congregated at the jewelry department.

We all were looking at the same two items—“Evening in Paris” perfume in a cobalt blue bottle and a cross neck-lace that was surrounded with rhinestones, but to our inexperienced eyes were beautiful diamonds.

After much discussion on who would buy what, several of us decided to put our money together to purchase a bigger bottle of perfume and a necklace with even more of those “diamonds.” Still others held out for the single gift of a smaller cross necklace or a smaller bottle of perfume.

I guess we decided that Mom could never have too much perfume and she could always wear a different necklace to Mass each Sunday.

After all these years, I can still see the look of surprise and delight on Mom’s face that Christmas Eve when she said, “My, won’t I smell good and look so pretty at Mass on Christmas Day!”

(Nancy Nobbe Cuskaden is a member of St. Mary Parish in Greensburg.)

By Nancy Nobbe Cuskaden

Midnight Mass meant a long walk to church

Our grandmother had to be about my age then, in her 60s. Her name was Mary, and she left Ireland when she was 21.

Every Christmas, my younger sister and I would walk with our grandmother to Midnight Mass. This was on the Blue Island and Chicago border near 119th Street and Vincennes.

There was always snow on the ground, cold night air and a light snow falling. Grandmother would dress in an old fur coat and galoshes over her shoes and, of course, a hat. All of us would be dressed to stay warm and dry.

We would set off walking through the fields. The fields would even have snow paths to follow. It was a good long walk along the Rock Island train tracks.

We then walked about five blocks in the fields to Sacred Heart Mission Church. It was a small brick building, with the sanctuary on the second floor. It held, at the most, 250 people.

All came for Midnight Mass early to hear the poor choir singing to a house organ. It seemed cold in the small church, and we snuggled to keep warm. Father McNally and later Father Bouchart carried the statue of the infant Jesus to place in the small crib.

After Midnight Mass, we would trek back along the same path to our grandmother’s house. There we would sit by her Christmas tree, eating potato bread and gazing at the infant Jesus to place in the small crib.

Our grandmother never made it up those steps! Our grandmother never made it up those steps so fast before.

The church has been closed for years now.

(Roderick A. MacDonald is a member of St. Joan of Arc Parish in Indianapolis.)

By Roderick A. MacDonald
**Christmas in Papua New Guinea was a time to cherish**

By Nora Cummings

Thirty years ago, a tiny seed was planted and nurtured in the heart and soul of a young boy in a mountain mission of Papua New Guinea. That young boy is now Capuchin Father Matthias Olabe. In 1999, I had the privilege of spending Christmas with him. He invited me to go with him to celebrate the Christmas liturgies in remote areas on Lake Kutubu in Papua New Guinea.

Very early in the morning, Father Matthias, a high school student, a lay missionary and I climbed into a four-wheel drive vehicle. It was to be a long eight-hour trip over a rough and almost impassable road.

On the way, the vehicle broke down several times because the battery became dislodged. At one time, I gave up my shoelaces to help tie it to the engine, but that repair didn't hold for long. We were lucky to find an old inner tube, and strips were cut to keep the battery in place for the rest of the trip.

Finally, as the sun was setting, we reached the lake and the mission station. There was a little log cabin on top of a ridge. The only way up was a steep, muddy path, which was impossible for me to climb without laces in my boots. But with the help of the others, I managed to get to the top. The view was spectacular with the setting sun reflecting on the lake below and the surrounding mountains casting varied colors and shadows.

Our Christmas dinner that night was cooked on a kerosene burner. We had rice with chunks of Spam. A candle was lit in the top. The view was spectacular with the setting sun reflecting on the lake below and the surrounding mountains casting varied colors and shadows.

Our Christmas dinner that night was cooked on a kerosene burner. We had rice with chunks of Spam. A candle was lit in the top. The view was spectacular with the setting sun reflecting on the lake below and the surrounding mountains casting varied colors and shadows.

By Nora Cummings (a member of SS. Peter and Paul Cathedral Parish in Indianapolis.)

**A child is born**

In these paintings of the Madonna and Child done for Vatican Radio Christmas cards, artist Irio Ottavio Fantini depicts the newborn Jesus (far left) as already bearing the suffering of the world within him and (left) as alert and seeing everything, even all that will happen in the future. Mary is shown symbolically abandoning herself to the will of God.

**Choir rehearsal sounds like chorus of angels**

By Anna-Margaret O'Sullivan

Back in the 1920s and 1930s, my childhood home—with its high ceilings and long halls—was cold in the winter. Ice froze in a glass of water if left on a bedside table. Polar bears would have felt at home in our unheated bedrooms.

By Christmastime, we usually had a glinting white carpet of snow, beautiful to look at but hard to walk in. If a bitter wind came with it, people were glad to gain the shelter of home after going to and from work, doing outside chores around the house, laying in groceries, and checking on neighbors and relatives.

Evening was a quiet time of warmth and peace. The savage thrust of the wind had been put aside. The fire on the hearth had burned down to glowing embers. Though it was time for bed, the family lingered by the fire, dreading the plunge into the frigid hall and up the Arctic stairs—

Attending these Masses with Capuchin Father Matthias Olabe as the presider are memories that I will hold dear in my heart for many Christmases to come.

(Nora Cummings is a member of SS. Peter and Paul Cathedral Parish in Indianapolis.)

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Grandmother’s love and advice were priceless gifts
By Larry Mason

My grandmother’s house was nestled in a Kentucky valley at the base of rolling hills. As a child, I spent many long hours wandering over these hills surrounding the old homestead, hand in hand with a woman who had blessed greatly with grace and simple wisdom. She taught me about the animals, trees, herbs and medicinal roots that grew in the wilds of the forest. We often sat beside a small spring that gushed from the rocks on the hill behind the house. A great fallen oak was the seat for many a long conversation about God, life and the simple things that make life worth living. My grandmother was a simple woman. She tended two large gardens that were tilled in the spring by the farmer who lived down the road. At the harvest, he was rewarded with produce that was alarmingly large. I remember sitting on a pumpkin that weighed well over 100 pounds. She also tended two swine a year for the meat that was partially used as barter at the little general store down the road for cooking essentials such as flour, sugar and salt. My grandmother was gifted with an amazing ability to plant anything organic and make it grow. In the summer, her house was surrounded with the most amazing floral array. The air was always heady with the scents of thousands of flowers that bloomed through the entire season. We often sat on the old porch swing after sunset, listening to the hymns being sung in the little country church a little way down the valley.

One spring morning, when I was in my early teens, my grandmother walked up the hill behind her house with a shovel and returned before breakfast with a perfectly good tree. It was a tremendous impact on our community during the time when my family said our farewells as she stood at the door. She had planned.

A few days before Christmas, Daddy would comment to St. Anthony for not believing that he was in our midst. Upon arriving at St. Francis Hospital in Beech Grove, Sister Philonilla was like a whirlwind. This dedicated and tireless sister was never idle. She formed the Twilight Guild to do God’s work. A mong other activities, the guild members helped the Marion County Sheriff’s Department with their Christmas tour to institutions for children with special needs. Sister Philonilla told me of one Christmas when she and the guild members worked diligently to wrap gifts for the children. She had arranged for a candy company to provide treats for the children, but the candy still had not been delivered as the guild members and sheriff’s department volunteers were departing by bus to visit the children. Previously, in my many prayers, Sister Philonilla prayed to St. Anthony to request that all would go well on this special day. She thought St. Anthony had let her down in the children’s department volunteering to leave the hospital, a delivery truck arrived with the candy. Sister Philonilla said she wept bitterly for St. Anthony for not believing that he would come through for her during this time of need. The children nearly stampeded the volunteers to receive their candy. Seeing the joy and happiness in the faces of the children, Sister Philonilla said she was in seventh heaven and would “rather be with these poor youngsters doing out treats than be with the queen in her parlor.” Sister Philonilla was an inspiration to me and to many others. She was a dedicated, faithful, wonderful person on the payroll of God.

Franciscan sister inspired others to do God’s work
By Mary C. Vinci

The late Franciscan Sister M. Philonilla Weintraut made a tremendous impact on our community during the time she was in our midst. Upon arriving at St. Francis Hospital in Beech Grove, Sister Philonilla was like a whirlwind. This dedicated and tireless sister was never idle. She formed the Twilight Guild to do God’s work. Among other activities, the guild members helped the Marion County Sheriff’s Department with their Christmas tour to institutions for children with special needs. Sister Philonilla told me of one Christmas when she and the guild members worked diligently to wrap gifts for the children. She had arranged for a candy company to provide treats for the children, but the candy still had not been delivered as the guild members and sheriff’s department volunteers were departing by bus to visit the children.

One September morning, when I was in my early teens, my grandmother walked up the hill behind her house with a shovel and returned before breakfast with a perfectly good tree. It was a tremendous impact on our community during the time when my family said our farewells as she stood at the door. She had planned.

Attic door helped Santa surprise children with gifts
By Rosemary Robinson

There was a big, old, wooden door stored in our attic. A few days before Christmas, Daddy would comment to St. Anthony for not believing that he was in our midst. Upon arriving at St. Francis Hospital in Beech Grove, Sister Philonilla was like a whirlwind. This dedicated and tireless sister was never idle. She formed the Twilight Guild to do God’s work. Among other activities, the guild members helped the Marion County Sheriff’s Department with their Christmas tour to institutions for children with special needs. Sister Philonilla told me of one Christmas when she and the guild members worked diligently to wrap gifts for the children. She had arranged for a candy company to provide treats for the children, but the candy still had not been delivered as the guild members and sheriff’s department volunteers were departing by bus to visit the children. Previously, in my many prayers, Sister Philonilla prayed to St. Anthony to request that all would go well on this special day. She thought St. Anthony had let her down in the children’s department volunteering to leave the hospital, a delivery truck arrived with the candy. Sister Philonilla said she wept bitterly for St. Anthony for not believing that he would come through for her during this time of need. The children nearly stampeded the volunteers to receive their candy. Seeing the joy and happiness in the faces of the children, Sister Philonilla said she was in seventh heaven and would “rather be with these poor youngsters doing out treats than be with the queen in her parlor.” Sister Philonilla was an inspiration to me and to many others. She was a dedicated, faithful, wonderful person on the payroll of God.

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I walked out of my own birthday party.

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expense of core civil liberties principles of privacy, due process and freedom of associ- ation. At their fall meeting, the U.S. Catholic bishops said the defense of the people against terrorism like that inflicted Sept. 11 was "causing the U.S. president to say "Every military response must be in concert with sound moral principles, notably such norms as non-military, non-aggressive pro- portionality, right intention and probability of success." In a message for the World Day of Peace, released in mid-December, Pope John Paul II said countries have a right to defend themselves, but added that "true peace cannot be achieved without justice and that form of love which is forgiveness." The U.S. bishops urged Catholics to fast one day a week for justice and peace and called for progressive and constructive U.S. engagement, particularly with the Arab and Muslim worlds "to build a lasting peace based on justice." Religious leaders in the United States and many other parts of the world made new efforts in 2001 to interfaith prayer and understanding to assure that people of other faiths would not confuse the fundamentalist Islamic ide- ology of the Taliban regime in northern states where strict Islamic law is imposed, with the Muslim government of Sudan condemned ecumenical welcome as guest of the Armenian Apostolic Church, staying at the Vatican viewed the debt crisis of indebted poor countries concentrated in sub-Saharan Africa, the AIDS crisis there and the two issued a common declaration on Catholic-Jewish relations. In November, the U.S. bishops issued a 25 million Africans were infected with HIV/AIDS—70 percent of the world total—promoting the Group of Eight leading industrialized nations to launch a $1.2 bil- lion medical assistance program for the continent. With most of the world's heavily indebted poor countries concentrated in sub-Saharan Africa, the U.S. bishops were threatened to undermine recent efforts by world financial institutions and creditor nations to relieve those debt burdens and restore the region to a path of development. In November, the U.S. bishops issued "A Call to Catholic Responsibility in the Global Efforts by U.S. Catholics to "promote a just and equitable development in Africa." The current protest against U.S. efforts between the U.S. Church and the Church in Africa, which is one of the most important providers in the region to religious, educational and other social services on the continent. The Vatican viewed the debt crisis of poor countries as one of the most pressing issues related to economic globalization involving major social and ethical as well as eco- nomic dimensions. The Pontifical Academy of Social Sciences devoted a meeting to the challenges globalization poses for Catholic social teaching. Pope John Paul II decreed the globalization of violence and injustice and called for a global renewal of moral commitments. His chief doctrinal official, Cardinal Joseph Ratzinger, said economic globalization has replaced the Cold War as "the world's new ideological battleground. Religious persecution was a problem in northern states where strict Islamic law is imposed, and in Syria, where he became the first pope to visit a Moslem country. He said Islam should forever put aside conflict and ask forgiveness for past offenses. A Latin American cardinal reported that "almost no one. Advocates of wider latitude for research argued that the human embryos to be destroyed for such stem-cell research represented an "almost no one. Advocates of wider latitude for research argued that the human embryos to be destroyed for such stem-cell research represented an "almost no one. 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The Society for the Propagation of the Faith

Christmas Appeal

Sister Geetha, A Sister of St. Anne in India, brings the good News of God's love to villagers: with her prayers, her words, her medical knowledge and, today, with her stethoscope. Throughout the mission diocese of the world, Sisters are a vital part of the “presence of Christ,” a vital part of the presence of the Church. Our Christmas gift through the Propagation of the Faith helps them and makes us a part of that presence as well.

The Society for the Propagation of the Faith
1400 N. Meridian St.
Indianapolis, IN 46202
Death Row inmate creates Christmas cards

By Mary Ann Wyand

Federal Death Row inmate David Paul Hammer was abused as a child.

This year, the convicted murderer created two Christmas cards to raise funds to benefit Gibault Inc. of Terre Haute and other ministries that help abused children.

He painted the cards last July in his cell in the U.S. Penitentiary at Terre Haute.

"His art is an outlet to express himself," said Providence Sister Rita Clare, a member of Saint Mary-of-the-Woods.'s Hammock Youth Outreach.

Hammer's Death Row cell was hot, she recalled, but he still managed to create the whimsical winter landscape and unique Nativity scene to go on the holiday cards with verses written by Mercy Sister Camille D'Arienzo of Glendale, N.Y.

Sister Rita Clare and Sister Camille are Hammer's spiritual advisers.

"David knows about child abuse," Sister Camille said. "A victim himself, he became a drugged-out teen, then a violent criminal. By the time he was 19, he was behind bars for life. Now 43 and condemned to death for killing a cellmate five years ago, David wishes he could go back in time to prevent that murder."

Hammer was scheduled to be executed by lethal injection on Nov. 15, 2000, at the penitentiary, but appealed the sentence and was granted a temporary reprieve by U.S. District Judge Malcolm Muir.

A chapel Daniel M. Buechlein confirmed Hammer as a member of the Catholic Church during a eucharistic liturgy on Nov. 27, 2000, at the prison.

This year, Sister Camille said, "this Death Row Santa is doing his best to bring some brightness to the dark lives of wounded children."

The Nativity scene shows a silhouette of the Holy Family, which is barely decipherable to remind people of the need to search for Christ at Christmas.

"I want the infant in the manger," Hammer told Sister Rita Clare, "for Christ is never out of Christmas."

(The Nativity and snowman cards come in sets of 25 and sell for $17.50, which includes postage and handling. To order cards, send a check addressed to the Sisters of Mercy to Mercy Sister Camille D'Arienzo, Christ Life Circle, 72-25 66th St., Glendale, N.Y. 11385.)

This cheerful snowman decorates a Christmas card that federal Death Row inmate David Paul Hammer hopes will raise money for Gibault Inc. of Terre Haute and other ministries that help abused children.

St. Joan of Arc community center serves parish, school, neighborhood

By Mary Ann Wyand

"Miracles do happen," Father Patrick Doyle, pastor of St. Joan of Arc Parish, told parishioners and guests during the Dec. 2 dedication of the parish's new community center.

The new facilities enable the parish to better serve St. Joan of Arc School students, expand parish social activities and provide additional Neighborhood Youth Outreach (NYO) programming for area children.

Carolyn Holder, NYO director, said the academic and athletic program serves about 200 center-city children annually in the after-school and summer programs.

"St. Joan of Arc parishioners started NYO in 1988," Holder said. "This Parish Community Center shows how strong of a commitment they have to the school and the neighborhood."

The new facility replaces the old parish social hall, which Father Doyle said was "worn out and beyond not safe," and allows St. Joan of Arc School to relocate the office and cafeteria to provide more classrooms in the school building.

St. Joan of Arc community center serves parish, school, neighborhood

By Mary Ann Wyand

"Miracles do happen," Father Patrick Doyle, pastor of St. Joan of Arc Parish, told parishioners and guests during the Dec. 2 dedication of the new Parish Community Center on East 42nd Street in Indianapolis.

"They happen when people believe in a loving and caring God," he said, "when people of faith are willing to trust ... wait ing patiently and praying consistently, when people are faithful and committed to furthering God's kingdom through serving the needs of others through ministry."

This "Miracle on 42nd Street" began six years ago, he said, when St. Joan of Arc parishioners created a new parish mission statement that defined present and future goals for the faith community founded in 1921 at 4217 Central Ave.

"Embracing Our Bright Future" was the theme for the parish capital campaign that resulted in a new gymnasium, cafeteria, offices and meeting rooms connected to St. Joan of Arc School.

Archbishop Daniel M. Buechlein blessed the facility and thanked the parishioners for their commitment to parish ministries.

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Placemat Test Date

Saturday, January 12, 2002

8:15 a.m. - 11:45 a.m.

For further information, please contact Duane Emery, Director of Admissions, at (317) 542-1481, ext. 360.

Cathedral High School

www.cathedral-irish.org

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Michael J. Schmidt

Cathedral High School

Class of 1996

University of Notre Dame

B.A., 2000

Operations Analyst

Boston Beer Company

In the winter of 1992, I made the decision to attend Cathedral High School. Months earlier, I had surprised my parents with my interest in exploring options other than attending public high school. Even though my two older brothers had graduated from the high school serving our community and all of my friends were planning to attend there, I knew I needed something different. Cathedral represented a different environment, and it was exactly what I wanted in a high school experience.

Cathedral High School exposed me to a whole new world that intellectually I knew existed, but as of yet had not experienced. Attending a school which pulled her student body from the entire Indianapolis community offered me diversity. A class size nearly half of my eighth grade class allowed for the best learning environment and individual attention from my teachers. Teachers such as Dick Nuntali challenged me and demanded that I master the fundamentals of English grammar. My religion classes exposed me to serious and relevant discussions about values. Throughout my four years, I was offered a broad curriculum that afforded me a number of college choices upon graduation. My academic preparation and the superior reputation of Cathedral and its graduates who preceded me enabled me to fulfill a lifelong dream of attending the University of Notre Dame as a member of the Class of 2000.

Not only did Cathedral offer the best academic situation for me, but it also provided a wide range of athletic opportunities. Participating in varsity baseball, football, and soccer allowed me to compete against athletes and programs statewide. The values of sportsmanship and competitive spirit developed under the leadership and guidance of both my family and coaches continue to impact my life today. Focusing on doing things the right way has led many Cathedral teams to heralded successes. Perhaps more importantly, Cathedral values and attitudes have led many athletes to make the right decisions in their personal and professional lives. I will always be grateful for the leadership, guidance, and personal interest shown by my Cathedral coaches.

It’s been over five years since I graduated from Cathedral. Since then, I have graduated from the University of Notre Dame and moved to Boston, Massachusetts, to start my business career. Here in Boston, I am an Operations Analyst for The Boston Beer Company, more commonly known as the brewer of Samuel Adams Beer. My successful transition to college and then the business world all started with the solid foundation that was my education at Cathedral High School. The decision to attend Cathedral was my first as a young adult — and one that I will always count as among my best.
Rest in peace

Please submit in writing to our office by 10 a.m. Mon. the week of publication; be sure to state date of death. Obituaries of archdiocesan priests and religious sisters serving our archdiocese are listed elsewhere in The Criterion. Order priests and brothers are included here, unless they are natives of the archdiocese or have other connections to it.


Lemons and Glenn Sketo.

Let the peace of Christ be with you. Amen

ANNOUNCING THE NEXT Senior Financial Info Seminar Important Updated Financial Information

WHEN: FRIDAY, January 11, 2002
Starts promptly at 10:00 a.m. – 11:45 a.m.
Continental Breakfast Served From 9:30 – 10:00 a.m.
WHERE: OMNI NORTH HOTEL
8118 N. Shadeland Avenue Indianapolis, IN
(Next To Community North Hospital)

Speaker: Jim Sorg, Certified Senior Advisor, Sorg Financial Services
44 Years Experience Helping Individuals With Their Insurance & Investment Questions

Jim Sorg will explain in easily understood words:

• SIX WAYS RETIREEs MAX Up THEIR FINANCES, AND HOW TO AVOID THEM
• HOW TO PREVENT LOSING YOUR MONEY TO A NURSING HOME
  – Lessen risk to you and your family with this overview of strategies to protect your money.
• ANNUITIES
  – What are Annuities?
  – Risks in avoiding buying Annuities

For more information, call Jim Sorg at 317-927-6900.

Sitting And Serving The Community For Over 44 Years
"So many of the parents come through and say if we didn't do this the kids wouldn't have Christmas," Armstrong said. "This is their only Christmas."

She said that this year's work was hard along with the volunteers to make the Christmas Store a reality each year. By that point, the day was only half over. Sixty-two families had come through the house that serves as a store, and 38 more were scheduled that day.

This year, the store served 967 families—3,283 individuals—in the two weeks that it was open before Christmas. A restroom sends out 1,000 applications to various churches and charity organizations in the Terre Haute area to find people in need each Christmas. Clients bring their paperwork to the store and are taken through and helped by a volunteer.

It is usually the parent of a family that comes in. They may take one gift for each member of the family under 18.

"We used to call them toys," Armstrong said. "But when you give a 17-year-old a gift it's not usually a toy. They may also take one household gift and one stocking for anyone over age 1. The stockings, designed for men, women and children, contain items appropriate to each.

Each member of the family also receives two articles of clothing, such as shirts and pants, as well as two pairs of socks and two pieces of underwear.

As much as the Christmas Store represents a bright spot in the lives of needy families, it also has a special place in the hearts of the volunteers that make it work. Armstrong, the store's employee, said that the store has about 50 volunteers.

"I have volunteers I never see," she said. "I have one lady who's in a wheelchair. She sews bags. We get material delivered to her. One volunteer delivers the material, she sews it, then the volunteer picks it up and brings it back to me." John Elling, the director of Catholic Charities of Terre Haute, said that many volunteers look forward to their work at the Christmas Store.

"It's a favorite project as far as my own concerns are," Elling said. "It addresses the whole family with gifts, not just children, or one element. And that's really what Christmas is all about." Several clients in the waiting room expressed thanks for the kindness and giving that flows from the Christmas Store.

"It wouldn't have Christmas," Armstrong said. "This is their only Christmas."
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