Christ is born for us; 
Come let us adore him!
Monks of Saint Meinrad to elect new archabbot on New Year’s Eve

By Sean Gallagher

On Dec. 31, the Benedictine monks of Saint Meinrad Archabbey will elect a new archabbot, only the ninth monk to hold the office in the 150-year history of the monastery.

Benedictine Archabbt Lambert Reilly, elected by the community nearly 10 years ago, announced his resignation on April 10. The resignation took effect on Dec. 15.

Abbots of the Benedictine monasteries in the Swiss-American Congregation, of which Saint Meinrad Archabbey is a member, do not have set terms but may serve in that office until death or choose to resign.

Pope Pius XII gave the title of archabbot to Saint Meinrad in 1899 to honor its role in the establishment of the Swiss-American Congregation. There are only eight other monasteries in the world with that title.

Only those monks who have professed solemn vows may participate in the election. This group of monks is known as the monastic chapter.

In the months leading up to the Dec. 31 election, the monks participated in a discernment process in which they determined the directions for the community for the future and what qualities and skills in a leader would help them accomplish those goals.

Finally, in the days immediately before the election, the monastic chapter will hold a scrinium, in which it will determine the qualities that specific monks might bring to the office of archabbot. Any monk whose name is raised in the scrinium is not present when his qualities are discussed. Likewise, a monk may choose to refuse to be considered in the scrinium.

On the day of the election, a votive Mass of the Holy Spirit will be celebrated. Benedictine Abbot Peter Eberle, president of the Swiss-American Congregation, then presides over the election, which takes place in the monastery’s chapter room.

The monastic chapter may cast no more than nine ballots. To be elected on any of the first three ballots, a monk must receive a two-thirds majority. From the fourth ballot on, a monk may be elected with a simple majority.

Once a monk has received enough votes to be elected, the abbot president asks him if he accepts the election. If he does, he is immediately confirmed and installed as archabbot by taking an oath of office and being invested with a pectoral cross, a sign of the office.

He will receive the other signs of his office—a ring, miter and crozier—on the day of his abbatial blessing, currently scheduled for Jan. 21, 2005, the feast of St. Meinrad.

Immediately after the new archabbot is confirmed and installed, the monks process into the Archabbey Church of Our Lady of Einsiedeln, sing praise to God and individually pledge obedience to their new leader.

Benedictine Father Tobias Colgan, who served as primate leader of Saint Meinrad Archabbey and, following his resignation, has served as prior-administrator of the monastery, explained why he believes the upcoming election is important for the archdiocese.

“The archdiocese has a direct impact upon the way in which many of the monks serve in the parishes and agencies of the archdiocese and upon the formation of its future priests in Saint Meinrad School of Theology,” he said.

Yet Father Tobias also stated that his influence upon the internal life of the monastic community can be important for the archdiocese as well.

“The more authentically we keep the monastic practices,” he said, “the more authentically we will be able to do it.”

Rev. Dr. Walker-Smith explained why she believes Father Beitans will serve well the Church Federation’s ecumenical ministry.

“Father Beitans has been active on the local Church to local Church. Things are happening that we can … realizing all along that the Holy Spirit is the one who will guide and does guide the process. We want to be good participants with the Holy Spirit.”

Archdiocesan named first Catholic president of Church Federation

By Sean Gallagher

Father John Betians, pastor of St. Lawrence Parish in Indianapolis, will hold a

Archdiocesan named first Catholic president of Church Federation

Father John Betians, pastor of St. Lawrence Parish in Indianapolis, will hold a

Archdiocesan named first Catholic president of Church Federation

Father John Betians, pastor of St. Lawrence Parish in Indianapolis, will hold a

Archdiocesan named first Catholic president of Church Federation

Father John Betians, pastor of St. Lawrence Parish in Indianapolis, will hold a
Former Iraq administrator Paul Bremer said faith replaced courage

By Mary Ann Wyand

A day after receiving the Presidential Medal of Freedom from President George W. Bush on Dec. 14 at the White House, L. Paul Bremer III, former administrator in Iraq, was honored with the Thomas E. Burnett Jr. Heroic Leadership Award by Civitas Dei in Indianapolis for courageous leadership and service to the United States.

The Civitas Dei award is named in honor of Burnett for his heroic actions on Sept. 11, 2001, when he and other passengers fought terrorists on board hijacked United Airlines Flight 93 and forced the plane to crash in rural Pennsylvania instead of into the White House, the terrorists intended destination.

On Dec. 15, Bremer and his wife, Francie, attended a Mass celebrated by Archbishop Daniel M. Buechlein at St. Luke Church and the awards dinner.

The Bremers are members of the Church of the Little Flower in Bethesda, Md., and serve as Communion ministers there. They joined the Church in 1994.

Bremer served as the presidential envoy to Iraq and administrator of the coalition provisional authority there from May 6, 2003, to June 28, 2004.

“I’m really honored and very humbled to receive this award,” Bremer told members of Civitas Dei, a Catholic business association, and the Legatus Society of Indianapolis and other guests.

The plaque features a Scripture passage, Jeremiah 29:11, which reads: “For I know the plans I have in mind for you, says the Lord, plans to prosper you, not to harm you, plans to give you a future full of hope. You will live in prosperity. You will live in the quiet enjoyment of family, of friends and of a decent income honestly earned. You will live in an Iraq governed by and for the people of Iraq. In Iraq today, Bremer said, “we are witnessing, I think, a true struggle … between good and evil. It is part of a much larger struggle between good and evil brought home to most Americans by the attacks on 9-11. It reminds us, if we needed the reminding, that there really are evil men out there who want to kill us, and kill us by the thousands.

Bremer said “it is important, I think, to be very clear about the nature of this threat, the threat for which Tom Burnett gave his life. These are people who hate the West, for what we are, and they hate everything about us, not just the superficial aspects of our lives, the films and the books and the magazines, but the very foundations of Western society, the separation of Church and state, universal suffrage, women’s education, democratic freedoms, political parties, a free press.”

In the war against terrorism, he said, “there are no compromises with these people. There’s no deal to be made with them. They simply have to be confronted and defeated” because they represent a significant threat to American security.

“We are going to be called upon to be tough-minded and to defeat these evil men,” Bremer said. “This, by the way, is not a new role for the Catholic Church. For centuries, Catholicism, I believe, has played an important role in this titanic struggle for freedom and democracy.”

The Our Lady of Fatima Retreat House

By Mary Ann Wyand

A day after receiving the Presidential Medal of Freedom from President George W. Bush on Dec. 14 at the White House, L. Paul Bremer III, former administrator in Iraq, was honored with the Thomas E. Burnett Jr. Heroic Leadership Award by Civitas Dei in Indianapolis for courageous leadership and service to the United States.

The Cri...
O little town of Bethlehem, how still we see thee lie. Unfortunately, as we again celebrate the birth of Jesus in that little town, it has not lain still for years now. What its future will be, and how events of the next few months will affect Christians in the Holy Land, is problematic since the death of Yasser Arafat this past Nov. 11 and with Palestinian elections scheduled for Jan. 9.

Christians in the Holy Land, almost all of them Palestinians, have not fared well during the past few decades. Pope Paul VI tried to do something to keep the Palestinians from emigrating after his visit in 1964, including the founding of Bethlehem University, but those efforts seem to have failed. The Christian population of the Holy Land has declined from about 15 percent a generation ago to less than 2 percent today, Bethlehem, which once was 80 percent Christian, is now less than 10 percent Christian.

Bethlehem University appears to be an exception. Its campus is growing as never before, with 2,240 Palestinian students. However, its graduates strive to get fellowships outside of Palestine. Instead of keeping Christians in the Holy Land, the university is preparing them for life outside. Besides, since the Christians have left the Holy Land in droves, most of the students are Muslims.

Those Christians who remain there fear what might happen next, now that Arafat has died. Israel is able to keep extremist groups under some control and he was friendly to Christians. His wife had been a Greek Orthodox before she converted to Islam when they were married. They both attended Christmas Mass at Bethlehem’s Church of the Nativity until he became a virtual prisoner in his compound in Ramallah and did not visit the Church in her fight against this pestilence. The Church opposes evil in the free world and stands as a beacon of hope for the lost in prison.

I have been a prisoner in 25 years and used to be a “fallen- away” Catholic. But after surviving several violent attacks and witnessing in many forms behind the walls of the Indianna Reformatory, where I once lived for a few years, I reached a realization for my change of heart, and I became a regenerated Catholic and returned to the Lord of all lords. Therefore, while reading “The Problem of Evil” series, it struck me that Satan works overtime particularly during the Christmas season.

Letters to the Editor

Let’s put Christ back in Christmas

As I drive through town, I see many houses beautifully decorated for Christmas. But there is something that bothers me. I see Santas, snowmen, reindeer, sleighs, candles, decorated trees, artificial trees and lights all over the place. But what bothers me is this: I seldom see any decorations depicting the real Christmas of Yeshua. Seldom do I see a manger scene with the Holy Family, the shepherds, wise men, etc. To me, this is a major department store and am greeted with a “Happy Holiday.” I am told that these givers have chosen not to say “Merry Christmas” for fear of offending some non-Christian.

Don’t you think it’s time for all of us to put Christ back into Christmas? What is the reason for the celebration without him?

On June 29, 1788, George Washington said: “No country upon earth had it more in its power to attain these blessings than the United States.” Wondrously strange then, and much to be regretted indeed it would be, were we to neglect the means, and to depart from the road which Providence has pointed us.

On July 3, 1776, John Adams said, “And the new government we are assuming, in every part, will require a purer current from our vices, and an augmentation of our virtues or there will be no blessings . . . But I must submit all my hopes and resources to the Supreme Being in whom in unfaithful as the faith may be, I firmly believe.”

In 1799, Jedediah Morse said, “To the kindly influence of Christianity we owe that degree of civil freedom, and political and social happiness which mankind now enjoys. In proportion as the genuine freedom, and political and social happiness which mankind now enjoys. In proportion as the genuine effects of Christianity are diminished in any nation, either through unbelief, or the corruption of its doctrines, or the neglect of its institutions; in the same proportion will the people of that nation recede from the blessings of genuine freedom, and approximate the miseries of complete despotism. “

“All efforts to destroy the foundations of our holy religion ultimately tend to the subversion also of our political freedom, and happiness.”

John Quincy Adams said, “The highest glory of the American Revolution was that it connected an indissoluble bond, the principals of civil government with the Christian Kirk.”

Doesn’t it seem prudent for us to follow the advice of our founding fathers? Let’s put Christ back into our Christmas.

Winfred E. “Bud” Moody, Indianapolis

A Christmas greeting from prison

I wish Jesus Christ a Happy Birthday and a very Merry Christmas, especially to our priests and prison ministry volunteers who unselfishly give of themselves to benefit our heavenly Father’s kingdom. If not for these wonderful people, evil in society would have been greater than the level it is now.

I applaud The Criterion for publishing “The Problem of Evil” by Brandon A. Evans. Mr. Evans’ articles reveal Satan working continuous evil in society to prevent humans from receiving redemption after physical life. The articles not only addressed the origin of evil, but also increased awareness of the importance of our holy Catholic Church in her fight against this pestilence.

As this is being written, the death of Yasser Arafat this past Nov. 11 and with Palestinian elections scheduled for Jan. 9, 2005, is a “road map” to peace back on track. The Palestinian government is installed, then we should keep our hands off. Because we are waging war against the Muslims. In Iraq, for example, bombings of Christian churches have become more and more common—something unheard of prior to the U.S. occupation of that country.

As is being written, the Palestinian political leaders are Mahmoud Abbas, the new president of the Palestinian Liberation Organization, and Prime Minister Ahmed Qureia. They are considered moderates who might be able to negotiate successfully with Israeli Prime Minister Ariel Sharon. They have the backing of Egypt’s President Hosni Mubarak and other Arab leaders. They, therefore, think the worst of what is considered the old guard of the Palestine Liberation Organization—Abbas is 69 and Qureia is 65. Many Palestinians are looking toward a new generation of leaders and, unfortunately, the three) have held on so long under the oppression conditions created by the Israeli-Palestinian conflict that they tend to be more militant. Especially in Gaza, they are allied more with Hamas and Islamic Jihad than with the PLO.

What now should be the role of the United States? For the time being, we should keep our hands off. Because we are seen by the Arabs as partners with Israel, we should not appear to be supporting any faction of Palestinians. Once their election is over and a new government is installed, then we should do all we can to get the so-called “road map” to peace back on track. The United States and Israel refused to meet or negotiate with Arafat but, now that he is gone, there is no longer an excuse to refuse negotiations, and the “road map” remains the best hope for a just peace for both the Israelis and the Palestinians.

It’s encouraging that Israel’s Sharon appears to be conciliatory and has promised to help facilitate the Palestinians’ election. It wouldn’t be surprising, though, if some radical Muslim fundamentalists would try to sabotage it.

As we celebrate Christmas, let us pray for real peace in the land where Jesus was born.

— John F. Fink

Letters Policy

Letters to the Editor are welcome and should be directed to criterion@archindy.org. They may be edited for space limitations, courtesy, tone and content.

Letters must be signed, but, for obvious reasons, names may be withheld. Send letters to “Letters to the Editor,” The Criterion, P.O. Box 1717, Indianapolis, IN 46206-1717.

Readers with access to e-mail may send letters to criterion@archindy.org.
Los villancicos navideños nos enseñan importantes lecciones de fe

ARCHBISHOP/ARZOBISPO DANIEL M. BUECHLEIN, O.S.B.

SEEKING THE FACE OF THE LORD

Buscando la Cara del Señor

Christmas carols can teach us important lessons about faith

ARCHBISHOP Buechlein’s intention for vocations for December

Los villancicos navideños nos enseñan importantes lecciones de fe

ARCHBISHOP/ARZOBISPO DANIEL M. BUECHLEIN, O.S.B.

SEEKING THE FACE OF THE LORD

Buscando la Cara del Señor

Christmas carols can teach us important lessons about faith

ARCHBISHOP Buechlein’s intention for vocations for December

Los villancicos navideños nos enseñan importantes lecciones de fe

ARCHBISHOP/ARZOBISPO DANIEL M. BUECHLEIN, O.S.B.

SEEKING THE FACE OF THE LORD

Buscando la Cara del Señor

Christmas carols can teach us important lessons about faith

ARCHBISHOP Buechlein’s intention for vocations for December

Los villancicos navideños nos enseñan importantes lecciones de fe

ARCHBISHOP/ARZOBISPO DANIEL M. BUECHLEIN, O.S.B.

SEEKING THE FACE OF THE LORD

Buscando la Cara del Señor

Christmas carols can teach us important lessons about faith

ARCHBISHOP Buechlein’s intention for vocations for December

Los villancicos navideños nos enseñan importantes lecciones de fe

ARCHBISHOP/ARZOBISPO DANIEL M. BUECHLEIN, O.S.B.

SEEKING THE FACE OF THE LORD

Buscando la Cara del Señor

Christmas carols can teach us important lessons about faith

ARCHBISHOP Buechlein’s intention for vocations for December

Los villancicos navideños nos enseñan importantes lecciones de fe

ARCHBISHOP/ARZOBISPO DANIEL M. BUECHLEIN, O.S.B.

SEEKING THE FACE OF THE LORD

Buscando la Cara del Señor

Christmas carols can teach us important lessons about faith

ARCHBISHOP Buechlein’s intention for vocations for December

Los villancicos navideños nos enseñan importantes lecciones de fe

ARCHBISHOP/ARZOBISPO DANIEL M. BUECHLEIN, O.S.B.

SEEKING THE FACE OF THE LORD

Buscando la Cara del Señor

Christmas carols can teach us important lessons about faith

ARCHBISHOP Buechlein’s intention for vocations for December

Los villancicos navideños nos enseñan importantes lecciones de fe

ARCHBISHOP/ARZOBISPO DANIEL M. BUECHLEIN, O.S.B.

SEEKING THE FACE OF THE LORD

Buscando la Cara del Señor

Christmas carols can teach us important lessons about faith

ARCHBISHOP Buechlein’s intention for vocations for December

Los villancicos navideños nos enseñan importantes lecciones de fe

ARCHBISHOP/ARZOBISPO DANIEL M. BUECHLEIN, O.S.B.

SEEKING THE FACE OF THE LORD

Buscando la Cara del Señor

Christmas carols can teach us important lessons about faith

ARCHBISHOP Buechlein’s intention for vocations for December

Los villancicos navideños nos enseñan importantes lecciones de fe

ARCHBISHOP/ARZOBISPO DANIEL M. BUECHLEIN, O.S.B.

SEEKING THE FACE OF THE LORD

Buscando la Cara del Señor

Christmas carols can teach us important lessons about faith

ARCHBISHOP Buechlein’s intention for vocations for December

Los villancicos navideños nos enseñan importantes lecciones de fe

ARCHBISHOP/ARZOBISPO DANIEL M. BUECHLEIN, O.S.B.

SEEKING THE FACE OF THE LORD

Buscando la Cara del Señor

Christmas carols can teach us important lessons about faith

ARCHBISHOP Buechlein’s intention for vocations for December

Los villancicos navideños nos enseñan importantes lecciones de fe

ARCHBISHOP/ARZOBISPO DANIEL M. BUECHLEIN, O.S.B.

SEEKING THE FACE OF THE LORD

Buscando la Cara del Señor

Christmas carols can teach us important lessons about faith

ARCHBISHOP Buechlein’s intention for vocations for December

Los villancicos navideños nos enseñan importantes lecciones de fe

ARCHBISHOP/ARZOBISPO DANIEL M. BUECHLEIN, O.S.B.

SEEKING THE FACE OF THE LORD

Buscando la Cara del Señor

Christmas carols can teach us important lessons about faith

ARCHBISHOP Buechlein’s intention for vocations for December

Los villancicos navideños nos enseñan importantes lecciones de fe

ARCHBISHOP/ARZOBISPO DANIEL M. BUECHLEIN, O.S.B.

SEEKING THE FACE OF THE LORD

Buscando la Cara del Señor

Christmas carols can teach us important lessons about faith

ARCHBISHOP Buechlein’s intention for vocations for December

Los villancicos navideños nos enseñan importantes lecciones de fe

ARCHBISHOP/ARZOBISPO DANIEL M. BUECHLEIN, O.S.B.

SEEKING THE FACE OF THE LORD

Buscando la Cara del Señor

Christmas carols can teach us important lessons about faith

ARCHBISHOP Buechlein’s intention for vocations for December

Los villancicos navideños nos enseñan importantes lecciones de fe

ARCHBISHOP/ARZOBISPO DANIEL M. BUECHLEIN, O.S.B.

SEEKING THE FACE OF THE LORD

Buscando la Cara del Señor

Christmas carols can teach us important lessons about faith

ARCHBISHOP Buechlein’s intention for vocations for December

Los villancicos navideños nos enseñan importantes lecciones de fe

ARCHBISHOP/ARZOBISPO DANIEL M. BUECHLEIN, O.S.B.
Check It Out . . .

An open house will be held for Missionary of Charity Sister Mary Christina Kaunz to celebrate her silver jubilee from 1 p.m. to 4 p.m. on Jan. 1 at Holy Cross Central School, 125 N. Oriental St., in Indianapolis. Former Holy Cross parishioner Tanya Kaunz of Indianapolis joined the Missionaries of Charity in January 1977 and professed her first vows in 1979. For more information, call the parish at 317-637-2620.

The People of Peace Secular Franciscan Order Fraternity is hosting an Epiphany Party and Baby Shower from noon to 2 p.m. on Jan. 2 at the Ruth Lilly Student Center at Marian College, 3200 Cold Spring Road, in Indianapolis. The event benefits Holy Family Shelter in Indianapolis, and those who attend are asked to bring a generous gift of diapers, size 4 or 5, or other baby items. All are welcome. For more information, call 317-955-6775.

A special program for men and women in the “mourning state of divorce” will take place from 6:30 p.m. to 8:30 p.m. on eight Thursdays from Jan. 6 through Feb. 24 at the Terre Haute Deeney Pastoral Center, 2931 Ohio Blvd., in Terre Haute. The cost is $20 per person and includes a book. Pre-registration by Jan. 4 is requested. For more information or to register, call 812-232-8400 or e-mail niec@blomerc.org.

“From Dream to Action,” a Martin Luther King Jr. birthday celebration, will take place at 4 p.m. on Jan. 16 at SS. Peter and Paul Cathedral, 1347 N. Meridian St., in Indianapolis. The prayer service will feature the liturgical dancers of St. Rita Parish, the archdiocesan Gospel choir and personal testimonies about how the principles of Martin Luther King impacted their life. The event is sponsored by the archdiocesan Multicultural Commission. For more information, call the Cathedral parish at 317-634-4519.

St. Rita Parish, 1733 Dr. Andrew J. Brown Ave., in Indianapolis, is hosting several Kwanzaa events. A Jazz Fest will be featured after the 10 a.m. Mass on Dec. 26. The cost is $10. Programs will take place at 7 p.m. on Dec. 27-30. A night watch service will be held from 10 p.m. to midnight on Dec. 31, with breakfast served afterward. A Mass will be celebrated at 10 a.m. on Jan. 1. For more information, call the parish at 317-632-9349.

St. Matthew Parish, 4100 E. 56th St., in Indianapolis, will conduct a series called “Catholics Returning Home” from 7 p.m. on six consecutive Tuesdays beginning on Jan. 11. The sessions are for non-practicing Catholics who are seeking answers to questions about returning to the Church. For more information, call Melinda Fihe at 317-257-7435.

A Mass of Thanksgiving for the past year and prayers for the coming year, sponsored by the Catholic renewal groups of central Indiana, will be celebrated at 11:30 p.m. on New Year’s Eve at SS. Peter and Paul Cathedral, 1347 N. Meridian St., in Indianapolis. Songs of worship will begin at 11 p.m. on Dec. 31. Father Rick Ginther, pastor of Cathedral Parish, will celebrate the Mass. Fellowship and refreshments will be available after Mass. For more information, call 317-797-2460.

The Couple to Couple League will host a Wine and Cheese Social for those interested in Natural Family Planning (NFP) from 6:30 p.m. to 9 p.m. on Jan. 14 at St. Elizabeth Ann Seton Parish, 10655 Haverstick Road, in Carmel, Ind., in the Diocese of Lafayette. Topics that will be discussed are Pope John Paul II’s Theology of the Body and the health advantages of NFP. The cost of the event is a suggested donation of $10 per couple. An R.S.V.P. is required by Jan. 8. For more information or to R.S.V.P., call Joe and Diane Conover at 317-848-4486 or diane.conover@sbglobal.net.

St. Matthew Parish, 4100 E. 56th St., in Indianapolis, will host a 60th anniversary of ordination of Father Marcial Maciel, the founder of the order. He was among 59 men ordained this year for the Legionaries of Christ on Nov. 25 at the Santa Maria Maggiore Basilica in Rome by Archbishop Franc Rodé, prefect of the Congregation for Institutes of Consecrated Life and Societies of Apostolic Life. Father Jason has completed 10 years of formation with the Legion, and is in his third year of theological studies. In June, he will receive his first priestly assignment.

Father Jason was born in Kentucky 35 years ago and moved to Indiana when he was 5 years old. He attended St. Novas School and graduated from East Central High School in Brookville.

He was among 59 men ordained this year for the Legionaries of Christ. The ordinations coincided with the 60th anniversary of ordination of Father Marcial Maciel, the founder of the order.

Father Jason celebrated his first Mass in the Catacombs of Priscilla in Rome with his family and friends.

Father Jason has two sisters and a brother. He is the son of Catherine Clark, who is a member of St. Nicholas Parish. His father, Charles Clark, passed away in 1986.
Honored schools, more seminarians, improving budget in 2004

By Brandon A. Evans

During 2004, the archdiocese nearly doubled its number of seminarians and had six Catholic schools with boundaries honored nationally for excellence.

Those were only two of the big news stories that appeared under the archdiocese—were honored as No Child Left Behind Blue Ribbon Schools of Excellence by the U.S. Department of Education.

Annette “Mickey” Lentz, executive director of Catholic Education for the archdiocese—were honored as No Child Left Behind Blue Ribbon Schools of Excellence by the U.S. Department of Education.

• Saint Meinrad Archabbey celebates its sesquicentennial.

The monks at Saint Meinrad Archabbey have spent the past year celebrating the 150th anniversary of their founding with a variety of events.

The archabbey was founded by monks from the Benedictine Abbey of Echternach, Luxembourg, and the Swiss, Switzerland, and this year’s events included a re-creation of the first procession of monks to the abbey and the transliteration of some of the remains of the first abbey.

• Men begin their studies to become permanent deacons for the archdiocese.

Twenty-five men, with the support of their wives, began formal studies to become part of the first class of permanent deacons that will be ordained for the archdiocese in 2008.

The men, called “aspirants” in the first stage of their formation, attended a retreat together that launched the formation program and are now attending classes at Saint Meinrad School of Theology.

• Archbishop opens new House of Formation for college seminarians.

Archbishop Daniel M. Buechlein officially established and blessed the Bishop Buechlein House of Formation at Marian College in Indianapolis—a place for young men who are affiliated with the archdiocese to spend their summer vacations in prayer and learning.

The house is named after the first bishop of the Diocese of Vincennes, which became the Archdiocese of Indianapolis.

While Saint Meinrad School of Theology will be the primary place for formation for seminarians in graduate studies, Marian College will now be the primary site for the formation service for college seminarians.

• Archabbat of Saint Meinrad resigns.

Benedictine Archabbat Lambert Reily, only the eighth abbot of Saint Meinrad Archabbacy, announced his resignation from the post after nearly 10 years, effective Dec. 15.

On Dec. 31, the monks of the Archabbacy will elect their new leader.

During his tenure, Archabbat Lambert has overseen the completion of the renovation of the archabbacy church, the continued growth and development of programs in the Saint Meinrad School of Theology and the establishment of a new enterprise for the community, Abbey Casks.

St. Elizabeth’s survives tornado devastation and expands services.

St. Elizabeth’s Pregnancy and Adoption Services in Indianapolis sustained minimal damage from a tornado over Memorial Day weekend, but has been able to rebuild. Catholic dioceses and parishes across the state have worked out through a feasibility study.

Archdiocese found to be in compliance with Charter for the Protection of Children and Young People.

The Archdiocese of Indianapolis was found to be in full compliance with the national charter for the Protection of Children and Young People that was adopted by the U.S. bishops in June 2002. Suzanne L. Yakimchick, assistance coordinator and chancellor for the archdiocese, said the archdiocese has had policies in place to protect young people. To be found in compliance with the new charter, she said, the archdiocese has policies and procedures to incorporate the new language and requirements.

Balanced budget for archdiocese projected for first time in seven years.

Jeffrey Stumpf, chief financial officer for the archdiocese, said the Catholic Community Foundation annual meeting that the archdiocesan operating budget for the fiscal year ending June 30, 2005, is projected to break even for the first time in more than seven years.

2004: Clergy sex abuse fallout and debate on Catholics in politics

WASHINGTON (CNS)—For the third straight year, falling in line with the overall decline in a Catholic clergy sex abuse of minors was one of the biggest ongoing religious news stories in the United States, closely followed by the conflict with fundamental Church teachings on civil law governing those matters led to the abrupt departure of a controversial bishop.

The U.S. clergy sexual abuse crisis has been especially evident in conflicts with the many ramifications of the abuse crisis. The report was released within hours after Bishop John Duane of Richmond, Virginia, announced his early retirement for health reasons.

In January, the bishops’ Office of Child and Youth Protection and National Review Board published the results of the first sex abuse audits in 191 dioceses across the county. The report, which covered a year in 2003, found that 1,500 people died in refugee camps.

In Africa, the crisis of the HIV/AIDS pandemic continued to take its toll not only in human lives but in the economics and social structures of entire nations. Pope John Paul praised those who have lowered the price of antiretroviral drugs for people in such nations and called on the world’s wealthier nations to extend aid to countries devastated by the disease.

In February, within hours after Bishop Thomas L. Dupre of Springfield, Mass., announced his early retirement for health reasons, The Republican, the local daily newspaper, reported on its investigation into allegations that as a priest in the 1970s he was involved in sexual misconduct.

A grand jury subsequently handed down child rape indictments against Bishop Dupre, who held a position in history to be criminally indited for sexual abuse of a minor, but the district attorney declined to prosecute, citing the statute of limitations.

At the end of February, two major independent investigations carried out by the bishops to help them and others understand the abuse crisis, were released simultaneously to a throng of journalists at the National Press Club in Washington.

The “A Report on the Crisis in the Catholic Church in the United States” was prepared by the all-law National Review Board that the bishops formed in 2002 to help them address the abuse crisis. The report was highly critical of a clerical culture that did not recognize the seriousness of child sex abuse and of the hierarchy of the church as it handled the past and present abuse allegations and the

The Criterion Friday, December 24, 2004

See YEAR, page 8
The outgoing USCCB president was then-Bishop William J. Lori of St. Mary's, Md., who as archbishop of Baltimore announced in February that he would retire. Lori said that the bishops “have suggested that as a public official I must cast votes or take public positions—on issues of women’s right to choose and stem-cell research—that carry the tenets of the Catholic Church.” He said his response is, “I love my Church; I respect the bishops; but I respectfully disagree.”

The Bush re-election campaign had its first major controversy on Oct. 13, when it was revealed that the Bush campaign’s Web site had a button that read, “I am an American Foreign Policy nihilist.”

The U.S. bishops backed a federal constitutional amendment to ban same-sex marriage. In December, the bishops approved the USCCB becoming a founding member of the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO), which could not be done in 2004 in the absence of new audits. The board’s objections forced the bishops to review the issue at their June national assembly near Denver, and they agreed to undergo new audits in every diocese before the end of the year.

The Church and politics
The question of Communion for Catholic politicians whose policy positions conflict with basic Church teaching began to turn into a national debate in June when Archbishop Raymond L. Burke of St. Louis told reporters he would give Kerry a blessing, not the Eucharist. Burke, who had approached him for Communion while campaigning in his archdiocese.

In the months that followed, a number of other bishops weighed in, some suggesting Communion should be denied to dissenting Catholic politicians, while others claimed they would still give them Communion. The U.S. bishops have taken the unprecedented step of a Church of有名牧师在塞拉瑞亚圣母大教堂举行弥撒时，声称“我爱我的教堂，我尊重牧师们。”他说，他的回应是，“我爱我的教堂，我尊重牧师们；但我尊重我的教堂。”

The Bush campaign had its first major controversy on Oct. 13, when it was revealed that the Bush campaign’s Web site had a button that read, “I am an American Foreign Policy nihilist.”

The U.S. bishops backed a federal constitutional amendment to ban same-sex marriage. In December, the bishops approved the USCCB becoming a founding member of the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO), which could not be done in 2004 in the absence of new audits. The board’s objections forced the bishops to review the issue at their June national assembly near Denver, and they agreed to undergo new audits in every diocese before the end of the year.

The Church and politics
The question of Communion for Catholic politicians whose policy positions conflict with basic Church teaching began to turn into a national debate in June when Archbishop Raymond L. Burke of St. Louis told reporters he would give Kerry a blessing, not the Eucharist. Burke, who had approached him for Communion while campaigning in his archdiocese.

In the months that followed, a number of other bishops weighed in, some suggesting Communion should be denied to dissenting Catholic politicians, while others claimed they would still give them Communion. The U.S. bishops have taken the unprecedented step of a Church of有名牧师在塞拉瑞亚圣母大教堂举行弥撒时，声称“我爱我的教堂，我尊重牧师们。”他说，他的回应是，“我爱我的教堂，我尊重牧师们；但我尊重我的教堂。”

The Bush campaign had its first major controversy on Oct. 13, when it was revealed that the Bush campaign’s Web site had a button that read, “I am an American Foreign Policy nihilist.”

The U.S. bishops backed a federal constitutional amendment to ban same-sex marriage. In December, the bishops approved the USCCB becoming a founding member of the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO), which could not be done in 2004 in the absence of new audits. The board’s objections forced the bishops to review the issue at their June national assembly near Denver, and they agreed to undergo new audits in every diocese before the end of the year.

The Church and politics
The question of Communion for Catholic politicians whose policy positions conflict with basic Church teaching began to turn into a national debate in June when Archbishop Raymond L. Burke of St. Louis told reporters he would give Kerry a blessing, not the Eucharist. Burke, who had approached him for Communion while campaigning in his archdiocese.

In the months that followed, a number of other bishops weighed in, some suggesting Communion should be denied to dissenting Catholic politicians, while others claimed they would still give them Communion. The U.S. bishops have taken the unprecedented step of a Church of有名牧师在塞拉瑞亚圣母大教堂举行弥撒时，声称“我爱我的教堂，我尊重牧师们。”他说，他的回应是，“我爱我的教堂，我尊重牧师们；但我尊重我的教堂。”

The Bush campaign had its first major controversy on Oct. 13, when it was revealed that the Bush campaign’s Web site had a button that read, “I am an American Foreign Policy nihilist.”

The U.S. bishops backed a federal constitutional amendment to ban same-sex marriage. In December, the bishops approved the USCCB becoming a founding member of the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO), which could not be done in 2004 in the absence of new audits. The board’s objections forced the bishops to review the issue at their June national assembly near Denver, and they agreed to undergo new audits in every diocese before the end of the year.

The Church and politics
The question of Communion for Catholic politicians whose policy positions conflict with basic Church teaching began to turn into a national debate in June when Archbishop Raymond L. Burke of St. Louis told reporters he would give Kerry a blessing, not the Eucharist. Burke, who had approached him for Communion while campaigning in his archdiocese.

In the months that followed, a number of other bishops weighed in, some suggesting Communion should be denied to dissenting Catholic politicians, while others claimed they would still give them Communion. The U.S. bishops have taken the unprecedented step of a Church of
Hark! The Herald Angels Sing

Hark! the herald angels sing,
"Glory to the newborn King:"
Peace on earth, and mercy mild,
God and sinners reconciled!

Joyful, all ye nations rise,
Join the triumph of the skies;
With th’angelic host proclaim,
"Christ is born in Bethlehem!"

CNS photo courtesy Conception Abbey
The birth of Jesus, as told in the Gospels

By John F. Fink

For this Christmas, let us meditate on the birth of Jesus as told in the Gospels. We are familiar with the story, of course, but perhaps a closer look at the Scriptures will give us a few new insights.

Let us begin with Mary and Joseph. Mary’s Hebrew name was Myriam. It’s surprising that the only other woman with that name in the entire Old Testament was Moses’ sister, yet the name was popular when she was born. We know of Mary of Magdala, Mary of Bethany, Mary of Cleophas, but also two of King Herod’s 10 wives and three other members of his family.

When we pick up the story, Mary is betrothed to Joseph, a man who had noble blood because he was a descendent of King David. Unfortunately, by this time, 1,000 years after the time of David, his house had fallen into obscurity. Joseph was a laborer, sometimes referred to as a carpenter, but the Greek word used is tekton—a master builder who worked with timber and iron, but mainly stone. To say that Mary and Joseph were betrothed means that they were husband and wife—they were married. It was not just an engagement. Marriage for the Jews at that time consisted of two parts. The first part was the consent of both parties in the presence of at least two competent witnesses—the actual wedding. But they continued to live apart while a celebration was being planned for the formal entry of the bride into the groom’s home.

After the betrothal but before Mary moved into Joseph’s home, remarkable things began to happen. The angel Gabriel appeared to Mary. The name Gabriel means “God is my strength,” and he had appeared in Scripture before. He appeared to Daniel to announce 70 weeks of years to Daniel (Dan 9:24-27). He also appeared to Zechariah to announce the birth of John the Baptist.

How did Gabriel appear? He probably had a body because Luke says that Zechariah had seen him. After his greeting to Mary, he tells her not to fear, and we can probably infer that Mary was startled by his sudden appearance. Gabriel told Mary that she would conceive a son who “will be great and will be called Son of the Most High” (Lk 1:32-33). The term Most High for God had been used by all Jews, but that was a description of the long-awaited Messiah. But Mary was still puzzled because she had taken a vow of virginity that Joseph, apparently, was willing to accept—probably because he was an older man who looked upon his role as supporter and protector.

“How can this be,” she asked, “since I have no relations with a man?” (Lk 1:34). We have to wonder what Mary thought about Gabriel’s answer: “The Holy Spirit will come upon you” (Lk 1:35). As a good Jewish girl, she surely didn’t know that there are three persons in the one God. Probably she thought the angel meant simply that the power of God would make this possible, especially since Gabriel continued, “And the power of the Most High will overshadow you.” Whatever she thought, it was enough for her to quickly give her consent: “I am the handmaid of the Lord. May it be done to me according to your word” (Lk 1:38).

And with those words, the Second Person of the Blessed Trinity entered her womb—and, indeed, into our human race. Or, as St. John put it, “The Word was made flesh” (Jn 1:14).

Another thing that Gabriel told Mary was that she was hiskinswoman, Elizabeth, was six months pregnant. We can marvel at the complete confidence that Mary had in Gabriel’s words because she at once made arrangements to join a caravan for the 90-mile trip from Nazareth to Elizabeth’s home in Ain Karin, near Jerusalem. Did she tell Joseph that she was making the trip? If so, how did she explain how she knew about Elizabeth’s pregnancy? All we can do is speculate.

Mary was gone for three months, presumably through the birth of the John the Baptist. By the time she returned to Nazareth, she was at least three months pregnant. We presume that this is when Joseph learned about the pregnancy. Matthew’s Gospel then picks up the story. Matthew makes it clear that Joseph was “her husband” but also that Mary was found to be with child “before they lived together” (Mt 1:18). It was, therefore, during that period between the actual marriage and the time that Mary moved into Joseph’s home. In the small village of Nazareth, some of the women would have noticed Mary’s condition, and she was undoubtedly the subject of gossip. It was not sinful for a husband to have sexual relations during this period, but it was highly unusual. The townspeople doubtless thought that that was what had happened. Joseph, though, knew better, and we can imagine the shock he experienced. He obviously believed that Mary was carrying someone else’s child—which meant that she had committed adultery. He didn’t want to expose Mary to shame though (or subject her to death by stoning if Jehovah disapproved of adultery), he decided the best course was for him to divorce her quietly.

It would have been difficult to do in a small village. Nevertheless, that was his intention until he had a dream in which an angel (Gabriel again?) told him, “Do not be afraid to take Mary your wife into your home. For it is through the Holy Spirit that this child has been conceived in her” (Mt 1:20). The angel also told him to call Mary’s son Jesus “because he will save his people from their sins” (Mt 1:21). Joseph, like Mary, had intense faith so he did what the angel said “and took his wife into his home” (Mt 1:24), thus again confirming that Mary was already his wife but hadn’t yet moved into his home.

We now return to Luke’s Gospel for the details surrounding Jesus’ birth. Luke tries to put the birth in historical context, during Emperor Caesar Augustus’ reign. Augustus began life as Octavius. Together with Mark Antony, he avenged his great-uncle Julius Caesar’s death by destroying Brutus. Then he conquered Antony and Cleopatra at the sea battle of Actium to become sole ruler of the Roman world. He was emperor for 25 years at the time he ordered a census that took Joseph and Mary back to Bethlehem.

Bethlehem is where Jacob’s wife, Rachel, died and was buried, and where Ruth went to live with her mother-in-law, Naomi. Ruth’s great-grandson, David, was born there. So it had an illustrious history. But it was highly unusual for Joseph and Mary to have the complete confidence that Mary had in Gabriel’s words because she at once made arrangements to join a caravan for the 90-mile trip from Nazareth to Elizabeth’s home. In Ain Karin, near Jerusalem. Did she tell Joseph that she was making the trip? If so, how did she explain how she knew about Elizabeth’s pregnancy? All we can do is speculate.

Joseph and Mary went to Bethlehem and were unable to find a room in the inn. Besides, they needed privacy for Jesus’ birth. They found it in a cave. In the back of the cave was a stable for animals, including, presumably, the donkey on which Mary rode during the trip. Perhaps there was also an ox already in the stable. It was there that Mary gave birth, “wrapped him in swaddling clothes and laid him in a manger” (Lk 2:7).

He could hardly have been born in more lowly conditions. And who were his first visitors? Shepherds, who were members of the lowest class of Palestinian society, visited them because they, and only they for the time being, were invited to do so. Later, there would be learned men from the East, but for now it was only lowly shepherds.

An angel invited the shepherds, proclaiming to them the good news that “a savior has been born for you who is Messiah and Lord” (Lk 2:11):

• Savior—the one who would rescue humanity from sin and alienation from God.
• Messiah—the long-awaited “ancestors’ one.”
• Lord—the term usually applied to Yahweh.

After the shepherds left, “Mary kept all these things, reflecting on them in her heart” (Lk 2:19). It’s the first of four occasions that Luke speaks about Mary pondering the meaning of the events of which she was a part.

We must do the same as we reflect on the great mystery of the Incarnation—that God assumed our human nature and was born of the Virgin Mary.

(John F. Fink is editor emeritus of The Criterion.)

This Nativity scene from the late 15th century is in the Vatican Museums art collection.

John F. Fink is editor emeritus of The Criterion.
Incarnation means vulnerability, intimacy and community

By William Thompson-Uberuaga
Catholic News Service

Branded on my memory is the almost endless afternoon when our younger daughter did not return home from school in her usual way. An hour passed, I grew more despondent and phoned my wife, asking her to come home from work.

I phoned everyone I could think of, hoping someone might know something. It was getting dark, and I thought of having to call the police. My wife returned home and tried her best to calm me, but I knew she was feeling the pain, too. It was only a few hours, but they were so long. And it hurt so much. That’s what I remember the most: the hurt, the pain.

Then the phone rang. Our next-door neighbor calmly said, “Would you like us to send your daughter home now?”

Apparently our daughter had gotten home a bit before I did and promptly did what I always told her to do: Go over to the next-door neighbors."

That memory makes me think how vulnerable we humans are. Parents are vulnerable to their children. Spouses are vulnerable to one another’s experiences. Friends are likewise vulnerable—and on it goes in a rippling way.

I suspect the experience I’ve just recounted has been shared by many parents. It would be almost impossible for us, I suspect, given the pain we felt, to imagine the pain of those whose children and loved ones never return home. Incarnation, as many have noted, means vulnerability.

Without vulnerability, it is hard to imagine how we could live a really human, in-the-flesh, life. If we allowed our fear of being hurt to cramp us, life would rather dearly. However, vulnerability on its own would be deadening. Vulnerability is meant to be the other side of intimacy. Because we are close to others, we can be hurt by them—either by what happens to them or what they do to us.

But intimacy, when it works, is so good, and the vulnerability we experience seems so worth it:

• Intimacy can keep vulnerability from turning into sheer victimhood for all concerned.
• Vulnerability can keep intimacy real and expansive.

Incarnation, it seems, means intimacy. The Christmas feast of the Incarnation is an appropriate time to think of a divine form of vulnerability and intimacy. God’s becoming flesh somehow has to involve a profound expression of God’s embrace of these two.

Like the mystery of the union of divinity and humanity in Jesus Christ, we will never be able to comprehend fully how God becomes vulnerable and intimate in Jesus. But that God does so, without ceasing to be God, seems a rather clear implication of the Incarnation.

When considering this mystery, I always like to fall back on Pope Leo the Great’s advice: In the Incarnation, God is not diminished, but humanity is enhanced.

My wife, myself and our two daughters were very much a family and community that evening after our younger daughter’s “return.” The vulnerable intimacy created a community. Inasmuch as we all kept our hopes and strength up throughout it all, we cannot help but believe the mysterious presence of the incarnate God was there. Incarnation means community and family too, it seems. The Word becomes flesh and in doing so makes it possible for us to become a community and family with one another, in and through Christ.

Vulnerability, intimacy and community: We are invited to meditate on this threesome as something of a window into the mystery of Christmas.

(William Thompson-Uberuaga, Ph.D., is a theology professor at Duquesne University in Pittsburgh, Pa.)
Several hundred Filipino Catholics celebrate Advent Mass and novena

By Mary Ann Wyand

Several hundred Filipino Catholics were thrilled to celebrate Simbang Gabi—a traditional Advent novena of Masses in the Philippines—for the first time in the archdiocese during a 4 a.m. Mass on Dec. 18 at St. Michael the Archangel Church in Indianapolis.

“Simbang” means “Mass” and “gabi” means “night” or “evening” in the Tagalog language used by many Filipinos.

A few other members of area parishes joined the Filipino Catholics for the before-dawn Advent liturgy, also known as Misa de Gallo, which was started in the 1660s by missionary friars in the Philippines as a nine-day novena to usher in the birth of Jesus. The early morning Mass enables Filipino farmers to worship before beginning their work in the fields.

In the Philippines, the nine-day novena is offered at the hour when roosters crow to announce the coming of a new day as a way to thank God for his gift of Jesus and to ask for a bountiful harvest.

Father Kenneth Taylor, pastor of St. Michael Parish and director of the archdiocesan Commission for Multicultural Ministry, was the celebrant for the liturgy, which focused on prayers for justice, righteousness and peace in the world.

“We are here celebrating Simbang Gabi because we are eagerly anticipating the birth of Jesus and the coming of Christ into our lives,” Father Taylor said. “It is that anticipation, that eagerness, that brings us together this morning.

“The Messiah is coming to bring justice to the world, he said. “We know, whether it be in the Philippines or in the United States, we are in need of the justice and peace that God can bring. We know that people are fighting with one another, people are mistreating one another, and we yearn for that justice and righteousness and peace that the prophets have promised us.”

On every continent, he said, “whether it be in Africa or South America or North America or Asia or Europe, we have people who are far away from God’s vision of justice, God’s vision of peace and righteousness and peace in the world, he said. “We know, whether it be in the Philippines or in the United States, we are in need of the justice and peace that God can bring.

Father Kenneth Taylor, pastor of St. Michael Parish and director of the archdiocesan Commission for Multicultural Ministry, was the celebrant for the liturgy, which focused on prayers for justice, righteousness and peace in the world. The early morning Mass enables Filipino farmers to worship before beginning their work in the fields.

In the Philippines, the nine-day novena is offered at the hour when roosters crow to announce the coming of a new day as a way to thank God for his gift of Jesus and to ask for a bountiful harvest.

Father Kenneth Taylor, pastor of St. Michael Parish and director of the archdiocesan Commission for Multicultural Ministry, was the celebrant for the liturgy, which focused on prayers for justice, righteousness and peace in the world. The early morning Mass enables Filipino farmers to worship before beginning their work in the fields.

In the Philippines, the nine-day novena is offered at the hour when roosters crow to announce the coming of a new day as a way to thank God for his gift of Jesus and to ask for a bountiful harvest.

Father Kenneth Taylor, pastor of St. Michael Parish and director of the archdiocesan Commission for Multicultural Ministry, was the celebrant for the liturgy, which focused on prayers for justice, righteousness and peace in the world. The early morning Mass enables Filipino farmers to worship before beginning their work in the fields.

In the Philippines, the nine-day novena is offered at the hour when roosters crow to announce the coming of a new day as a way to thank God for his gift of Jesus and to ask for a bountiful harvest.

Father Kenneth Taylor, pastor of St. Michael Parish and director of the archdiocesan Commission for Multicultural Ministry, was the celebrant for the liturgy, which focused on prayers for justice, righteousness and peace in the world. The early morning Mass enables Filipino farmers to worship before beginning their work in the fields.
Readers share favorite Christmas memories

Grandpa saved Christmas by ‘fixing’ the leaky roof

By Brien Krieger
Special to The Criterion

It was colder than I remembered. Indoor temperatures were balmy compared to outdoors. The snow from Thanksgiving lay at the bottom of the 11-inch snow-pack. Eleven inches of glacier kept me wondering about the North Pole. The whitish old snow was crusty on top with a mirror finish and only an occasional crack creating tiny crevasses.

This December was going to be the best yet. My 10th birthday was in June and now I was old enough to know that when Santa checked his list that my name would be there in bold type, clearly printed and on the “nice side” of his ledger. This year was different. My brother was only good when Mom reminded him. I was good all year.

The wood stove was mostly for decoration and the white pine sure looked classy in the corner of the living room. Its green scent filled the room, creating a holiday aroma of fresh pine mingling with the smell of butter cookies baking in the oven.

The stone fireplace was still used for heating the living room. The holiday warmth had been building over the last two weeks. I was looking forward to eating the rum balls and Mexican wedding cake cookies as well as playing with our cousins and unwrapping presents.

Grandpa drove over from the west side. A few packages were then in the back seat of his front seat. They were wet with melted glove snow and German shepherd slobber when he handed them to me to set under the tree.

“Boy, it’s a rare Christmas Eve day,” he said, shaking off the drops. The sun finally broke through the clouds, and rays were melting the shoved walk and drive.

Grandpa joined Dad out back. Together they scraped, picked and hoed the snow ice from the water trough, spigots and wells. The icicles dropped their hot sparks, making indentions in the snow bank, and cold water ran down the gutters and tile.

I got my boots on and joined in the chores. My younger brothers and one sister waited inside, content to stare at the mystery of the Nativity scene and the foil icicles draped down the Christmas tree.

After I finished my chores, the children’s cries poked at my eardrums as I entered the house and quickly closed the door with only a little winter cold let inside. My outside room. The holiday warmth had been building over the last 10th birthday was in June and now I was old enough to

Grandpa climbed up at the troubled corner of the house. Grandpa climbed up the ladder with the poker in his hand and slowly stuffed it down the vertical ice jam. After two more poker hearings plus two poker pushes, the water stopped dripping indoors. The ice dam melted, the water flowed down the gutter through the downspout and the silver lining of Christmas appeared again.

The other children and I clapped our hands and sang “Jingle Bells.” Papa joined in with “Here Comes Santa Claus,” and we closed our chorus with “Away in the Manger.”

The puddle got mopped up and the wrapping dried.

Sleep came easily that night to all in our home.

(Brien Krieger is a member of St. Susanna Parish in Plainfield.)

Angelita let her light shine by caring for her sick mother

By Carmen A. Henson
Special to The Criterion

Youth, with its brimming energy, can accomplish a lot of things. So it was that, during my years in high school, it was possible for me to be involved in a variety of activities. At the top of my list was the catechetical instruction that entailed going out to selected public elementary schools to spread the Word of the Lord to little children who have not heard of it and to inspire others who have been baptized to increase their faith.

The school motto at my alma mater, St. Bridget College in the Philippines, is “Lucac Luz Vestra” or “Let Your Light Shine.” So, armed with the good will to share my faith with others and with the enthusiasm of youth, I signed up to take an hour during the day to perform this mission.

The eagerness of those young children to know about God and the goodness that he has made him look forward to each day’s Session. Added to this was the welcoming attitude with which I was received as the messenger of the Good News.

These children came from different backgrounds and some came from poor families. One child especially caught my attention. Her name was Angelita, and she was always grateful, but I noticed that she never ate them. Curious to know if she did not appreciate. She was always grateful, but I noticed that she never ate them. Finally, since it was getting close to Christmas, I brought her a little basket of fruits and nuts. She did not eat them either. Curious to know if she did not

like the treats, I asked her why she did not eat them. She told me that she saved them to take home to her mother, who was sick. She said her mother had tuberculosis and had been bedridden for a long time.

Her father died of heart disease when she was 5 years old, and her mother had been taking odd jobs to support the two of them. After her mother became sick and could not work, a married aunt began helping them out financially as much as she could, which barely made ends meet since she herself had a big family.

Ever since her mother became bedridden, Angelita took over the household chores, rushing home after school to prepare supper and take care of her mother before doing her homework.

I felt so humbled but, at the same time, so blessed! Here I was thinking I was so great teaching this little girl about the Lord and yet she has shown herself to be a hero and so unselﬁsh, taking on a giant task at so young an age and not even thinking about it.

But by the same token, I thanked God that I had the privilege of seeing a manifestation of his goodness through the example of little Angelita.

The following day, I referred—through a friend who was a social worker—the case of little Angelita and her mother to the welfare ofﬁce. They were later included in the register of indigent families who regularly received aid from the government in the form of basic foodstuffs and clothing.

I went on with my life, progressing through college and, later on, the business world. But I still remember little Angelita who, in my eyes, was really the little angel she name meant.

(Carmen A. Henson is a member of St. Lawrence Parish in Indianapolis.)

DON’T PAY AGENCY PRICES
Will care for elderly or convalescent patient by day, week or duration of recuperation.

CALL
Judy A. Gray
317-255-3528

References Available

O ur Commitm ent to Qual ity C hristian C are C ontinues...

Since 1910 The Altenheim Community has been caring for the physical, social, emotional and spiritual needs of older adults. The continuum of care includes Independent Living, Assisted Living, Intermediate and Skilled Nursing Care. A supportive professional staff, including a full-time Chaplain, work together as a team to assure that residents achieve their maximum level of independence. Contact the Admissions Coordinator at 788-4261 for information.

The Altenheim Community
317-788-4261
website: altenheimcommunity.org
3525 East Hanna Avenue, Indianapolis, IN 46237

Vatican tree
The Vatican Christmas tree is lit by moonlight in St. Peter’s Square on Dec. 15. The tree was donated from a mountainous area in northern Italy where Pope John Paul II skied 20 years ago.

Pope John Paul II
ern Italy where
ous area in north-
Vatican

References
The Christmas Supplement
Friday, December 24, 2004

Prelude to Christmas was always exciting time for children in the 1920s

By Anna Margaret O'Sullivan
Special to The Criterion

It may be that time intensifies memories, or perhaps it merely preserves them. About that I can't be sure, but I vividly remember the interval between Thanksgiving and Christmas, back in the 1920s, as taut, exciting and crackling with suspense.

Everyone had secrets. Gifts were being readied, and no one was allowed to spy. An unfinished gift was hastily whisked under an apron or cushion if the wrong person blundered into the room at the wrong time. The intruder assumed a blank expression, of course, and pretended to have observed nothing unusual.

We children—the three of us—believed implicitly in the surveillance of Santa Claus' birds. We knew they were out there watching us with eagle eyes, listening and ready to fly to the North Pole to report any child's misbehavior to Santa.

If I spoke sharply to my little brother and grabbed back a toy of mine that he had appropriated, I always looked apprehensively out the window to see if any birds were within earshot. To make up for my selfishness, I patted my brother's curly head and gave the toy back to him.

It was not part of the myth that good deeds, if any, were reported on our behalf, only the naughty ones, but making amends was worth a try. We really didn't quarrel much because it was more fun to have a good time playing together, but I'm sure my mother and grandmother noticed our suddenly saintly behavior in the weeks before Christmas.

The house was full of delicious smells, and samples of sage and vinegar taffy appeared on the dining room table. In one of our blissful holiday customs, Mother established herself in front of the fireplace with a bag of nuts—pecans, hazelnuts, black or English walnuts, hickory nuts, etc.—a hammer and a flat iron upside down in her lap. Everybody in turn received a cracked nut, but we had to winkle out the kernels by himself or herself with our teeth.

That matchless interlude between Thanksgiving and Christmas is one of the memories I relive every year of the top of each stocking.

By Margaret Polak
Special to The Criterion

Of the 73 Christmases I have lived through, none has been as memorable as the first Christmas that my husband, Jim, and I volunteered for the St. Vincent de Paul Society at St. Michael the Archangel Parish in Indianapolis.

Having received a call about a family of 13 children who had very little, we decided to spend Christmas Eve shopping for each of the children and bought gifts for the less fortunate.

Thanksgiving was crying and so were we, and when we told our five children that we could share what God had given to us, we gave thanks on Christmas morning for that family, who helped us to know even more the true meaning of Christmas.

As we were having our Christmas dinner, the telephone rang. It was the mother of the 13 children calling to express her gratitude and tell us there would have been no Christmas gifts without our shopping trip. The mother was crying and so were we, and when we told our five children about her call there wasn't a dry eye among them.

God had truly blessed us in being able to share with the less fortunate.

There were many other St. Vincent de Paul holiday visits, but none were so memorable as that special Christmas, which gave real meaning to the word “Christmas.” It also started our 25-year ministry as volunteers for the St. Vincent de Paul Society.

(Margaret Polak is a member of St. Luke Parish in Indianapolis.)}
Father’s gift made lasting Christmas heirloom for girl

By Anita Thompson
Special to The Criterion

Us! using the family on day trips to parks, swimming holes, on his work, Mom and Dad’s vacations were limited to take-and I were paddle-boating on Mom’s lake. We but, unfortunately, he died shortly after we moved there. lake in 1972 and built their dream house for our family out, whether it was church or school related.

God and made sure we went to church. She also encour-
me in my endeavors and decisions. She raised us to love accepted. She believed in me and always tried to support
my mind is the Christmas of 1995. My siblings and I were
the creativity and camaraderie we experienced in that
cold wintry garage returns as a precious memory for me
each December. As I place the stable under my Christmas tree each

(Anita Thompson is a member of St. Christopher Parish in Indianapolis.)

Children surprise their mother with a trip to Alaska in 1995

By Pamela Proctor
Special to The Criterion

One of the sweetest memories that stirred up in my
mind is the Christmas of 1995. My siblings and I were able to surprise our mother, Jeannine Domescic, with the
dream trip of her life.

Dad and Mom made many sacrifices to make sure
their five charges were fed and clothed and their needs were met. Mom was a stay-at-home mother until the youngest child was in school. After that, she got a job in the school kitchen so she would always be home when we were out of school.

To this day, I am grateful for her generosity of always being there for us. I always felt loved, wanted and accepted. She believed in me and always tried to support me in my endeavors and decisions. She raised us to love God and made sure we went to church. She also encour-
aged us to be involved in activities that would round us out, whether it was church or school related.

Our father had purchased some property on a small
lake in 1972 and built their dream house for our family
but, unfortunately, he died shortly after we moved there.
On one hot summer day in July, some family mem-
bers and I were paddle-boating on Mom’s lake. We talked about our dreams and wishes for ourselves and for Mom, and somehow traveling came up in our con-
versation.

Except for a trip to Hawaii that Dad had won through his work, Dad and Mom’s vacations were limited to tak-

Winter savings plan is back! You will save! No cost to you - no cards. The more you buy, the more you save.

Only available at... 4076 S. Keystone Ave. 317 787-7205

OUT OF THIS WORLD BUY!

Every Wednesday, every non-prescription item in the store is 10% off.

CH敏捷est Village Assisted Living

Affordable, quality living at Crestwood Village Assisted Living includes:
• 24-hour certified nursing staff and 24-hour accessible licensed staff
• Daily nutritious meals
• Free, scheduled bus transportation
• Crestwood Village Assisted Living’s Commitment to be fit - personalized, supervised exercise programs in the Crestwood Village Assisted Living Club Fitness Center
• Weekly housekeeping service and laundering linens

WEST-OFF Girls School Road (between 10th St. & Rockville Rd.)
Call us today! 273-8800 West 356-4173 East

www.justus.net

Justus Assisted Living

Crestwood Village Assisted Living

Crestwood Village Assisted Living

Crestwood Village Assisted Living

Crestwood Village Assisted Living

Crestwood Village Assisted Living

Crestwood Village Assisted Living

Crestwood Village Assisted Living

Crestwood Village Assisted Living
The spirit of Christmas is the spirit of love

By Lisa Marie Taylor
Special to The Criterion

I believe in Santa Claus. I met him face to face through the spirit of a young child and the hope of a young mother.

In early January of 1991, I was sitting behind the desk in my second-grade classroom at St. Mary School in Rushville when Katie ran into the room with an excited voice.

“Mrs. Taylor! Mrs. Taylor! Santa visited me and look, my dad got a picture,” she said as she reached out to give me the Polaroid photo she held tightly in her hand.

There it was. I couldn’t believe it. Santa’s red sleeve was caught in their front door.

“And look! He gave me this bell and a note, just like the story you read to us,” she said as she rang the bell that hung from a ribbon around her neck.

As she turned to leave, tears filled my eyes at the pure belief and excitement of a child. No other gift was more important that year.

About a month earlier, I met with each parent during parent-teacher conferences at the school. I explained to each of them that I would be reading a book called The Polar Express to the class.

I told them Santa had given me a small package to place under each child’s tree—a bell on a ribbon and a note. I explained that I wanted the children to understand the true spirit of Christmas and that love lives in each one of us as we believe. I asked them to place the package under their tree.

With tears in her eyes, one mother of five children expressed her belief in the true spirit of Christmas. I believe in Santa!” she exclaimed. She reached for a tissue as she explained that there were many years when she wondered how she would be able to afford to give Christmas presents to her five children. And yet somehow, some way, they had Christmas every year.

“She lives in the spirit of Love,” I told her. Today I am a stay-at-home mother of four children.

Every year, my husband and I wonder how we are going to give our kids a nice Christmas without the use of credit cards.

Given no other choice, in May of this year we ripped up the credit cards. This year would be a credit-free Christmas. But as each month approached and no gifts were bought, I wondered again how my husband and I would be able to do it.

We prayed. And we turned it over to God.

An overtime check answered our prayer. Christmas will be small, but each gift was bought with care. Each gift was bought with a special thought for each child. It will be a wonderful Christmas with the true spirit alive as we share what we have with those we love.

The spirit of Christmas is alive in each of us as we share love with one another.

And through this belief, I have come to know the Holy One, the child Jesus born in a stable.

I saw him in the kindness of a friend who gave from the heart this year.

I was inspired by him while I watched my husband care for our family.

I heard him in the messages of Father Jim Farrell and Father John McCaslin, our priests at St. Barnabas Parish.

I was encouraged by him as my parents cared for my children in various ways.

I saw him in the joy of my children as they prayed with precious hearts of innocence.

I saw him in the gift of a stranger, who gave to our family with love.

I met him in the quietness of my nightly prayers. I believed that many years ago a Son was born so that we can know the incredible love of a Father for his children—the true spirit of Christmas.

“God is love, and anyone who lives in love is living with God and God is living in him. And as we live with Christ, our love grows more perfect and complete” (1 Jn 4:16b-17).

(Lisa Marie Taylor is a member of St. Barnabas Parish in Indianapolis.)

World War II soldiers had to leave behind many of their Christmas presents

By Mary C. Vinci
Special to The Criterion

One of my most memorable Christmas memories was during World War II.

My two brothers were called to active duty during the war. One brother was sent to Europe and the other brother was sent to the Hawaiian area.

At the beginning of the Christmas season, I sent them each a package containing many items made especially for servicemen and women.

I was so happy to receive a special thank you letter from my brother stationed in Europe.

He was fighting in the Battle of the Bulge during the Christmas holiday.

In his letter, he indicated that the service members were informed that their company had to retreat, and they were told by their commander that they could only take along one Christmas package. Other presents from family members and friends would need to be left behind.

I remember so well that the present my brother chose to keep with him was the one from me because the package was so compact and held a variety of items.

This was a very joyous Christmas for me, and a memory that I have cherished all my life.

(Mary C. Vinci is a member of Holy Name Parish in Beech Grove.)
Faith Alive!

Christmas mystery of Incarnation remains unfathomable

By Dan Luby

We instantly recognize all the icons of the Christmas season, and they are comforting to us. But there is also a subtle risk in this. Knowing precisely what everything means at this time of the Incarnation—antithetically exactly what to expect—can invite an imperceptible but powerful shift of our attitude from comfort to complacency.

Are we open to being surprised by Jesus, as his first followers were? As Christmas approaches, plaster Nativity characters emerge from tissue-paper cocoons and resume their customary places around the manger. Familiar Christmas carols played on heirloom records create a scratchy, nostalgic soundtrack for these busy days. And in treasured stories read aloud, heard on the radio or seen in TV specials, the season’s comforting narratives resound in our ears.

Christmas is so familiar! We respond to the images, we remember the feelings and we know the story by heart.

But the Jesus whose birth we celebrate at Christmas was neither familiar nor predictable to the people who were part of the original Nativity scene. To the innkeeper in Bethlehem who could offer only a place among the animals in the stable, Jesus must have seemed an ordinary, if pitiable, baby—

Birth of Jesus is God’s gift to us

By Brian M. Kane

The celebration of Christmas probably developed a few centuries after the founding of the Catholic Church. It replaced older pagan festivals with a message that God came into the world in a very particular place and time.

The Nativity holds the promise of our future life with God. The birth of Jesus, fully human and fully divine, in an out-of-the-way town in humble surroundings to a young poor Jewish woman is signifi-

In ordinary circumstances or in explicitly Christian settings—on retreat or at Mass or in Scripture—we obscure our ability to recognize him in the ordinary and the secular, and we miss him.

Bethlehem is the reminder that no setting is so lowly, no situation so routine that Christ cannot use it to make himself known to us.

Christ made flesh: Christmas is the time to rediscover him in the warp and woof of ordinary human existence, which is forever transformed by God’s unique, unrepeatable act of generosity and communion in the Incarnation.

((author information included)"

Discussion Point

Pray for peace in the world

This Week’s Question

In your own words, what is the message of Christmas for these unique times?

“Peace. Christ brought peace, and we need peace.”

(Margaret Dunnam, Chickasaw, Ala.)

“ ‘Peace. Christ brought peace, and we need peace.’

(Nancy Turner, Saint Marys, Idaho)

Lend Us Your Voice

An upcoming edition asks: If someone asked who God is for you, how would you respond?

To respond for possible publication, write to Faith Alive! at 3211 Fourth St. N.E., Washington, D.C. 20017-1100. All contents are copyrighted © 2004 by Catholic News Service.
Perspectives

From the Editor Emeritus/John F. Fink

God ‘emptied himself’ to become a human

Only one baby born into this world was born to die. Sure, it’s true that all of us were born to die, and we love and serve God in this world in order to avoid eternal death in the hereafter. But Jesus’ purpose was to become a human—become an animal, emptying himself or himself or himself, for the limitations of an animal, in order to become a human, in order to become a human. Can we imagine a pet lover who has accepted the authority of Jesus, who has come to believe that he is the Son of God, who has become a member of the church, who has been born again? Can we imagine a pet lover who would become a member of the church, who would accept the authority of Jesus, who would believe that he is the Son of God, who would become a human? Can we imagine a pet lover who would become a human?

Philippians says, “he emptied himself” (Jn 8:58). “Before Abraham came to be, I am” (Jn 8:58). “I am the way, the truth, and the life. No one comes to the Father except through me” (Jn 14:6). “I have come not to be served but to serve and give my life for the sake of the many” (Jn 12:28). “I tell you, when you did it for the least of these my brothers and sisters, you were doing it for me” (Mt 25:40). “He who is hungry will eat; he who is thirsty will drink, and the heart of the fields shall rejoice” (Jn 6:35). “Jesus answered, ‘The only one who can save civilization is the savior who saves us from our sins’”.

Children are the supreme gift of marriage

A few months ago, my wife and I started practicing a traditional form of marriage in order to know other families and religious orders. One of the things I love about this form of marriage is that it is called “blessing out.”

Just before I leave for the airport, I kneel on one knee, my wife places a hand on my shoulder, and she prays that God may bless me on my way and bring me home safe.

Well, a few weeks ago, after noticing that my son Michael’s powers of observation were not as sharp as I expected, I asked him instead of my wife to pray the blessing.

Despite my intuition, I was joyously surprised when after I knelt down on one knee before him, he put a hand on my shoulder and said, “Keep safe, come home, Father, Son, Holy Spirit.”

Can Michael grasp in any fundamental way a prayer such as this? Certainly not in a way that adults can. But that does not mean that there wasn’t a great amount of significant, to what he did the morning and has continued to do since then.

For me and my wife, Michael’s little blessing is a touching sign of the great truth, founded in Sacred Scripture and proclaimed at the Second Vatican Council, the “Pastoral Constitution on the Church in the Modern World,” that children “are the supreme gift of marriage.”

These toddler steps that Michael is taking in his life of faith are a great blessing to us. It is one of the reasons why we have chosen to let our eighteen-month-old son, Michael, not only not to stoped to cooperate with us in Michael’s very creation but continue to do so in his time to come, this grace, to bring him closer to his Son.

I witnessed in this another way recently when another child was playing with a little Nativity set that we had given him. At one point, he couldn’t find baby Jesus and so was walking away very upset. As a friend, I thought they came. I wonder if modern wise men in their jets would chart their course by GPS instead of a star?

Just over 2,000 years ago, it is also a time for us to see the power of Christmas to bring the birth of every child.

For when Christ was born so long ago, he not only revealed God to man, but also revealed himself to man, and, by extension, the Holy Family, we begin to see what it truly means to be human.

I witnessed in this another way recently when another child was playing with a little Nativity set that we had given him. At one point, he couldn’t find baby Jesus and so was walking away very upset. As a friend, I thought they came. I wonder if modern wise men in their jets would chart their course by GPS instead of a star?

Just over 2,000 years ago, it is also a time for us to see the power of Christmas to bring the birth of every child.

For when Christ was born so long ago, he not only revealed God to man, but also revealed himself to man, and, by extension, the Holy Family, we begin to see what it truly means to be human.

I witnessed in this another way recently when another child was playing with a little Nativity set that we had given him. At one point, he couldn’t find baby Jesus and so was walking away very upset. As a friend, I thought they came. I wonder if modern wise men in their jets would chart their course by GPS instead of a star?

Just over 2,000 years ago, it is also a time for us to see the power of Christmas to bring the birth of every child.
Feast of the Holy Family of Jesus, Mary and Joseph/
Msgr. Owen F. Cunningham

The Sunday Readings
Sunday, Dec. 26, 2004

• Sirach 3:2-7, 12-14
• Colossians 3:12-21
• Matthew 2:13-15, 19-23

The Book of Sirach is part of the Wisdom Literature of the Old Testament. As with so many other books in this body of writings, it is highly practical.

When these books were written, albeit at different times and in different places, Jewish parents and students should have consulted them along with their contemporaries and to future generations a knowledge of the Revelation given to the Chosen People by God.

Very often, the culture around them was hostile. Of course, they had to conform to the irreligious leanings of human nature.

In this reading, the book looks very carefully at the basic unit of society and of civilization, namely the family. It calls for honor to be paid to parents. Here, the egalitarian sense of the ancient Jewish writings is clear. While the father is acknowledged as head of the household, the mother is entitled to equal respect and veneration. She is in no sense a servant or merely a provider. Especially, Sirach calls upon children to care for their parents when their parents are old.

The second reading for this feast is from the Epistle to the Colossians. The first part of the reading is addressed to all disciples. It admonishes followers of Christ to love one another. More than a charming platitude, this address is meant to the growth of the family, and by extension upon family life itself.

These readings have strong, practical lessons. Families must bond themselves into reflecting upon the Holy Family, and Christmas, we today follow the Church from the plots of an evil king.

Finally, this text identifies Jesus of Nazareth, whom many heard and saw, as the Lord’s mission is clearly stated in

Reference

Still in the warmth and happiness of Christmas, we today follow the Church into reflecting upon the Holy Family, and by extension upon family life itself.

These readings have strong, practical lessons. Families must bond themselves into reflecting upon the Holy Family, and by extension upon family life itself.

In the next part of the reading, Paul urges wives to obey their husbands. It is obviously a thought much influenced by the culture of the time. However, he doesn’t end his admonition with these words. He says that husbands should love their wives.

This advice may seem to be little better than a truism. At the time of Paul, spouses rarely wed for love. Parents offered their daughters to the most promising suitors. In a sense, it was almost as if the father of the bride sold his own daughter to the highest bidder.

Once married, wives often merely were toys or means to the end of parenthood or domestic tidiness for the husband.

The fact that Paul urged husbands to love their wives was revolutionary. St. Matthew’s Gospel supplies the last reading.

Of the four Gospels, only Matthew and Luke mention details of the Lord’s birth and early years on earth. This reading is the familiar story of the flight into Egypt.

Shrines in modern Egypt declare themselves to be the sites of the Holy Family’s movement away from the threat of the king’s order in Judea, or of their respite in Egypt. In fact, by using “Egypt,” this Gospel is not as geographically precise as some might prefer.

What is certain is that the Holy Family fled from Palestine to safeguard Jesus. They fled into the unknown, into pagan territory, indicated by the term “Egypt.”

Finally, this text identifies Jesus of Nazareth, whom many heard and saw, as the Chosen One of God.

A Abide With Us, We Pray

Of gifts received and given
None greater will abide
Than that of presence given
In Christ, our peace and guide

Born to us this day
Our Advent waiting whole
No sin prevent incarnate love
Our Advent waiting whole

Abide us with love
From manger balcony to crypt
My Journey to God

By Father Joseph B. Moriarty

(Father Joseph B. Moriarty is the sacramental minister of Good Shepherd Parish in Indianapolis and the vocations director for the Archdiocese of Indianapolis. The Virgin Mary and Christ Child are depicted in a 15th-century painting by Italian master Manassio. In the work titled “Madonna col Solletico,” or “Tickling Madonna,” the infant Jesus grasps Mary’s arm as she gently touches his chin. The painting is located in the Palazzo Vecchio in Florence, Italy.)

Daily Readings

Monday, Dec. 27
John, Apostle and Evangelist
1 John 1:1-4
Psalm 97:1-2, 5-6, 11-12
John 20:1a, 2-8

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

Wednesday, Dec. 29
Psalm 96:1-3, 5-6
Luke 2:22-35

Thursday, Dec. 30
Psalm 96:1-7
John 2:12-17
Psalm 97:1-2, 5-6, 11-12

Friday, Dec. 31
Psalm 96:1-2, 11-13
John 1:1-18

Saturday, Jan. 1
The Blessed Virgin Mary,
Mother of God
Numbers 6:22-27
Psalm 67:2-3, 5-6, 8
Galatians 4:7-9
Luke 2:16-21

Sunday, Jan. 2
The Epiphany of the Lord
Isaiah 60:1-6
Psalm 72:1-2, 7-8, 10-13
Ephesians 3:2-3a, 5-6
Matthew 2:1-12

Monday, Jan. 3
The Most Holy Name of Jesus
1 John 3:2-26:6
Psalm 2:7-8, 10-12a
Matthew 4:12-17, 23-25

Tuesday, Jan. 4
Elizabeth Ann Seton, religious
1 John 7-10
Psalm 72:1-2, 7-8
Mark 6:34-44

Belief in fallen angels is rooted in Scripture

Monday, Dec. 27
John, Apostle and Evangelist
1 John 1:1-4
Psalm 97:1-2, 5-6, 11-12
John 20:1a, 2-8

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

Wednesday, Dec. 29
Psalm 96:1-3, 5-6
Luke 2:22-35

Thursday, Dec. 30
Psalm 96:1-7
John 2:12-17
Psalm 97:1-2, 5-6, 11-12

Friday, Dec. 31
Psalm 96:1-2, 11-13
John 1:1-18

Saturday, Jan. 1
The Blessed Virgin Mary,
Mother of God
Numbers 6:22-27
Psalm 67:2-3, 5-6, 8
Galatians 4:7-9
Luke 2:16-21

Sunday, Jan. 2
The Epiphany of the Lord
Isaiah 60:1-6
Psalm 72:1-2, 7-8, 10-13
Ephesians 3:2-3a, 5-6
Matthew 2:1-12

Monday, Jan. 3
The Most Holy Name of Jesus
1 John 3:2-26:6
Psalm 2:7-8, 10-12a
Matthew 4:12-17, 23-25

Tuesday, Jan. 4
Elizabeth Ann Seton, religious
1 John 7-10
Psalm 72:1-2, 7-8
Mark 6:34-44

continued on page 21

My question arises not only from my own curiosity, but also from my children’s questions. I realize that no one can say whether or not anyone is in hell since we have no window into God’s mercy. But I don’t understand this “irrevocable choice” of the angels, which the Catechism of the Catholic Church speaks of (1093).

What made it irrevocable? Was there no turning back? (Illinois)

It is Catholic teaching, going back centuries, that some angels sinned against their Creator in such a grave way that they lost their presence with God forever.

This belief is rooted, most of all, in numerous Scriptural passages, in both the Old and New Testament, such as Satan fallen from heaven (Lk 10:18), being driven from heaven (Rv 12), and “the devil and his angels” occupying a place apart from God, where those who reject our Lord’s command of love and service to neighbor are destined to go (Mt 25:41).

Apart from this, and that we humans enjoy the guardianship of some angels, we know little or nothing about details of the angels’ nature and fate. Our information comes almost entirely from philosophical reasoning about what pure spirits must be like, and from the often obscure references mentioned in the Scriptures.

There are theological guesses have tried to identify what their sin may have been, but there is general agreement that somehow it involved a grievous offense of pride against God.

If angels, as Christians believe, have no body or bodily functions and passions like ours, they are simply incapable of many of the immoral actions that we humans are prone to in life. This is a logical question, but your question about how angelic sin could be irrevocable is reasonable. One of the consequences of the angels’ sinful actions would be that their intelligence and will functions quite differently from ours. They would not seem subject to all the limitations and weaknesses of mind that afflict human beings, especially considering the consequences of “original sin.”

Whatever our original fault may have been exactly (the catechism calls it “sin” only in an analogical sense) or precisely how it came about, the natural limits that our human nature places on us are worsened by the fact that this nature is somehow wounded. We are inclined to stumble, fall, misjudge and see so many circumstances only partially and darkly. All of us have plenty of personal experience of this sightlessness and frailty.

As the catechism notes, quoting Vatican Council II, our weak situation extends even “to the negative influence exerted on people by communal situations and social structures that are the fruit of men’s sin” (#407, Church in the Modern World, 3/7).

Apparently none of this infirmity and partial blindness would apply to angels. Because of their nature, their intellects not being clouded as ours are, their knowledge would be more immediate and encompassing, and their decisions more definitive. They would, so to speak, become aware of nothing “tomorrow” that they didn’t know today.

In other words, there would be no surprises in the consequences of their rejection of intimate friendship with God, no new insights or wonder to bring them to repentance.

It’s a most interesting subject that arouses our curiosity, but I believe this is not far from the Gospels.

The catechism discusses the angels’ sin briefly in #391-395.

The Criterion Friday, December 24, 2004 Page 19
December 24
Holy Rosary Church, 520 Steven St., Indianapolis. Catholic Choir of Indianapolis, 4 p.m. concert before Christmas Eve Mass. Information: 317-636-4478.

December 23
St. Rita Church, 1733 Dr. Andrew J. Brown Ave., Indianapolis. Kvitvonz Kvitvoonz celebration, 7 p.m. Information: 317-632-9349.

December 28
St. Rita Church, 1733 Dr. Andrew J. Brown Ave., Indianapolis. Kvitvoonz Kvitvoonz celebration, Kuja98, 7 p.m. Information: 317-632-9349.

December 31

January 1
St. Rita Church, 1733 Dr. Andrew J. Brown Ave., Indianapolis. Kvitvoonz Kvitvoonz celebration, 7 p.m. Information: 317-632-9349.

January 2
Marquette College, Ruth Lilly Student Center, 3200 Cold Spring Road, Indianapolis. Epiphany Chapel Eucharistic Shower, noon-2 p.m., sponsored by the Sisters of the Holy Names of Jesus and Francisca Order Fraternity, benefits Holy Family Shelter in Indianapolis. All are welcome. Bring a generous gift of diapers, size 4 or 5, or other baby items. Information: 317-955-6775.

January 3
St. Rita Church, 1733 Dr. Andrew J. Brown Ave., Indianapolis. Kvitvoonz Kvitvoonz celebration, Nia, 7 p.m. Information: 317-632-9349.

January 31
December 24

January 1
St. Rita Church, 1733 Dr. Andrew J. Brown Ave., Indianapolis. Kvitvoonz Kvitvoonz celebration, 7 p.m. Information: 317-632-9349.

January 2
Marquette College, Ruth Lilly Student Center, 3200 Cold Spring Road, Indianapolis. Epiphany Chapel Eucharistic Shower, noon-2 p.m., sponsored by the Sisters of the Holy Names of Jesus and Francisca Order Fraternity, benefits Holy Family Shelter in Indianapolis. All are welcome. Bring a generous gift of diapers, size 4 or 5, or other baby items. Information: 317-955-6775.

January 3
St. Rita Church, 1733 Dr. Andrew J. Brown Ave., Indianapolis. Kvitvoonz Kvitvoonz celebration, Nia, 7 p.m. Information: 317-632-9349.

January 31-January 31

January 1
St. Rita Church, 1733 Dr. Andrew J. Brown Ave., Indianapolis. Kvitvoonz Kvitvoonz celebration, Kuja98, 7 p.m. Information: 317-632-9349.

December 28
St. Rita Church, 1733 Dr. Andrew J. Brown Ave., Indianapolis. Kvitvoonz Kvitvoonz celebration, Kuja98, 7 p.m. Information: 317-632-9349.

December 23
St. Rita Church, 1733 Dr. Andrew J. Brown Ave., Indianapolis. Kvitvoonz Kvitvoonz celebration, Kuja98, 7 p.m. Information: 317-632-9349.

December 28
St. Rita Church, 1733 Dr. Andrew J. Brown Ave., Indianapolis. Kvitvoonz Kvitvoonz celebration, Kuja98, 7 p.m. Information: 317-632-9349.

December 24
St. Rita Church, 1733 Dr. Andrew J. Brown Ave., Indianapolis. Kvitvoonz Kvitvoonz celebration, Kuja98, 7 p.m. Information: 317-632-9349.
Daily Readings, continued from page 19

Wednesday, Jan. 5
John Neumann, bishop
1 John 4:11-18
Psalm 72:1-2, 10, 12-13
Mark 6:45-52

Thursday, Jan. 6
Blessed André Bessette, religious
1 John 4:19-5:4
Psalm 72:1-2, 14, 15bc, 17
Luke 5:12-16

Friday, Jan. 7
Raymond of Peñafort, priest
1 John 5:5-13
Psalm 147:12-15, 19-20
Luke 5:1-10

Saturday, Jan. 8
1 John 5:14-21
Psalm 98:1-6a, 9b
John 3:22-30

Sunday, Jan. 9
The Baptism of the Lord
Isaiah 42:1-4, 6-7
Psalm 29:1-2, 3-4, 9-10
Acts 10:34-38
Matthew 3:13-17

Monday, Jan. 10
Hebrews 1:1-6
Psalm 97:1, 2b, 6, 7c, 9
Mark 1:14-20

Tuesday, Jan. 11
Hebrews 2:5-12
Psalm 8:2ab, 5-9
Mark 1:21-28

Wednesday, Jan. 12
Hebrews 2:14-18
Psalm 105:1-4, 6-9
Mark 1:29-39

Thursday, Jan. 13
Hilarry, bishop and doctor of the Church
Hebrews 3:7-14
Psalm 93:6-11
Mark 1:40-45

Friday, Jan. 14
Hebrews 4:1-5, 11
Psalm 78:3, 4bc, 6c-8
Mark 2:1-12

Saturday, Jan. 15
Hebrews 4:12-16
Psalm 19:8-10, 15
Mark 2:13-17

Sunday, Jan. 16
Second Sunday in Ordinary Time
Isaiah 49:3, 5-6
Psalm 40:2, 4, 7-10
1 Corinthians 1:1-3
John 1:29-34

If you are planning your wedding between January 30 and July 1, 2005, 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 Thursday, January 13, 2005, 10 a.m. (No announcements or photos will be accepted after this date).

— Use this form to furnish information —

Order Today! Please send ____ copies of the Archdiocesan Directory and Yearbook at $22.50 per copy, plus $3.95 S&H.

Name __________________________
Address _________________________
City/State/Zip _________________
Telephone _______________________

Enclosed is my check in the amount of $____________
Or charge my: ❑ Visa ❑ MasterCard Account No. __________________________
Exp. Date ________ Signature _______________________

Name of Bride (first, middle, last) __________________________
Address _________________________
City/State/Zip _________________
Telephone _______________________

Name of Bridegroom (first, middle, last) __________________________
Address _________________________
City/State/Zip _________________
Telephone _______________________

Signature of person furnishing information __________________________
Relationship __________________________
Married to __________________________

Mail check and order form to: Criterion Press, Inc., P.O. Box 1717, Indianapolis, IN 46206-1717

Marian College is a Catholic college dedicated to excellence in teaching and learning in the Franciscan and liberal arts traditions. We believe that it is part of our responsibility to prepare students for ordained ministry or religious life, for lay leadership, and for careers pursued in the light of the call to service from God.

In this spirit, with generous support from Lilly Endowment Inc, and others, we have established "Rebuild My Church," a multifaceted program that includes scholarships, coursework, guest speakers, pilgrimages, community service opportunities, internships, retreats and more. It is designed to help students at Marian College explore their faith, their relationships, and their calling in life. Find out more today. Visit us at www.marian.edu on the web.

FOR ADMISSIONS INFORMATION, CALL 1.800.772.7264
3200 COLD SPRING ROAD INDIANAPOLIS, IN 46222-1997

Strong Foundations. Remarkable Futures.
MARIAN COLLEGE
www.marian.edu

Prayers in Bethlehem
Sister Saera Eligia Di Palma, from Italy, lights a candle before Mass on Dec. 19 at St. Catherine Church, adjacent to the Church of the Nativity, in Bethlehem, West Bank.
Real Estate

Classified Directory

For information about rates for classified advertising, call (317) 236-1572.

 Classified Coupon

2 Lines $5, 3 or more lines $10.00 $2.00 each additional line.

Write your classified ad on this coupon and send it to us with $5 payment. This coupon does NOT apply to Commercial advertising which costs $27.00-$30.00. Call (317) 236-1572 or our commercial line, (317) 236-1555. Write your ad below with ONE coupon DOES NOT APPLY to Commercial Business ads. Commercial advertisers accepted; however, you may apply by e-mail to: bosco_youth_ministry@evansville-diocese.org

or

Please, NO faxed or in-person résumés will be accepted; however, you may apply by e-mail to:

ministry, including the supervision of both volunteer and staff programming. This includes the coordination of faith formation, youth ministry programming and retreats. The candidate should be able to coordinate these programs within the boundaries of the diocese.

The candidate should have a minimum of a Bachelor’s Degree with a major in Catholic pastoral or youth ministry studies. The candidate should have at least five years of youth ministry experience. The candidate should be able to work with people at various levels of maturity and provide effective leadership in a variety of settings.

High School Principal

Bethlehem High School, Bardstown Kentucky, is seeking a principal beginning in the 2005-06 school year. Qualified candidates must be practicing Roman Catholics and have a Kentucky principal’s certification. Inquiries and résumés should be submitted by February 1, 2005 to:

Principal Search Committee
P.O. Box 584
Bardstown, KY 40004
principalssearch@bhschurch.org

For more information about Bethlehem High School, visit our web site at wwww.bethlehemhhs.org

Prayers Answered -

Thanks to St. Jude & Blessed mothers for prayers answered.

ICCC to present series on embryonic stem cell research

The Indiana Catholic Conference is presenting a series of events featuring an eminent Catholic neuroscientist and ethicist who will address the debate regarding embryonic stem cell research.

Father Tadeusz Pacholczyk, director of education for the National Catholic Bioethics Center based in Philadelphia will address the conference on Jan. 11 at the Lilly Auditorium at the library of Indiana University-Purdue University Indianapolis.

Father Pacholczyk will also be featured with Dr. David Slocum, director of the IU Center of Regenerative Biology and Medicine, and Dr. Eric Meslin, director of the IU Center of Bioethics. All three will not only give their perspectives, but also respond to questions from the medical and scientific community.

Father Pacholczyk will also speak on “Science and Ethics: Stem Cells and Cloning” at 7 p.m. on Jan. 12 in the Chapel in Maran Hall at Maran College, 3200 Cold Spring Road, in Indianapolis.

The newly formed Maran College Center for Ethics in Business and the Professions is co-sponsoring this event.

Lilly Auditorium will speak on “Stem Cell Research Myths: Getting the Science and the Ethics Straight” at 7 p.m. on Jan. 13 at Malloy Hall on the campus of the University of Notre Dame in Notre Dame, Ind.

The Notre Dame Center for Ethics and Culture and the Diocese of Fort Wayne/South Bend Office of Family Life are co-sponsoring this event.

The Indiana Catholic Conference said in a press release that “the debate regarding stem cell research is a serious topic for the nation, and in particular, Indiana, due to our state’s efforts to become a life science and biotech center for research and products.”

For more information about these events, call Glenn Tebbe, executive director of the Indiana Catholic Conference, at 317-257-2431 or write gtebbe@archindy.org

Beckham receives $1.7 million grant for new institute

By Brandon A. Evans

Saint Meinrad School of Theology in Saint Meinrad was recently awarded a $1.7 million grant from Lilly Endowment Inc. to fund programming at the newly established Saint Meinrad Institute for Priestly Development.

The new institute will provide education, formation and mentoring to priests during two key points: when they are first ordained and when they first become a pastor.

“The Lilly Endowment grant will aid us in providing further programming that speaks directly to the mission of the School of Theology of the Archdiocese of Indianapolis and our ongoing formation of priests,” said Benedictine Father Dustin DuVall, vice rector and provost of the school.

Saint Meinrad is one of 20 schools to receive the grant, part of the Endowment’s national initiative titled “Making Connections,” which is designed to find ways to expand and energize collaborations that will foster excellent clergy and engage congregations.

“By their participation in the institute’s programs,” Father Justin said, “new priests and new pastors can be holier, healthier and happier. This, in turn, will enable them to better lead and minister to their parishes.”

“This program will also provide additional support that will help them make the transition from seminary to parish life. It will also give the men opportunities to interact with other new priests from across the nation.”

For new priests, the institute will support them as they take on a leadership role, and groups of 15 to 20 pastors will participate in a two-year program to orient and mentor them in their new position.

The institute will also work with dioceses to strengthen their presbyteries, that is, the group of ordained and their bishop.

The director of the institute is Father Ronald Koot, a priest of the Archdiocese of Louisville, who recently served as the director of vocations for that diocese and the pastor of the Cathedral of the Assumption Parish in Louisville. Lilly Endowment’s “Making Connections” also seeks to address the declining number of young people entering the ministry.

“We are hopeful that another benefit of this continuing educational formation and education for priests and presbyteries may be the encouragement of more vocations to the priesthood,” Father Justin said. “Men who are discerning a vocation to the priesthood are attracted to a life that appears to be fulfilling and rewarding.”

---

High School Principal

Bethlehem High School, Bardstown Kentucky, is seeking a principal beginning in the 2005-06 school year. Qualifications for the position include:

1. Experience as a school principal or director of a school-related program.
2. Strong leadership and communications skills are also desired.
3. Bethlehem is a coed school of 300 and features a college preparatory curriculum. Our school, the oldest in the state, recently celebrated its 188th anniversary and currently serves students from several central Kentucky counties.
4. Qualified candidates must be practicing Roman Catholics and have a Kentucky principal’s certification. Inquiries and resumes should be submitted by February 1, 2005 to:

Principal Search Committee
P.O. Box 584
Bardstown, KY 40004

For more information about Bethlehem High School, visit our web site at wwww.bethlehemhhs.org

---

Stewardship Coordinator

Our Lady of Mt. Carmel Church in Carmel, Indiana is seeking an individual to coordinate all aspects of Christian Stewardship in the Parish. Job responsibilities include promoting and coordinating volunteerism and coordinating all aspects of parish fund raising. The successful candidate must possess very good communication, organizational and financial skills. Two to three years of experience as a banker at public relations/communications or related field is required. Please submit resume to:

Glen Richter, Business Manager
Our Lady of Mt. Carmel Church
11708 Oakland Manor
Carmel, IN 46052

---

Classified Directory

For information about rates for classified advertising, call (317) 236-1572.

---

Stewardship Coordinator

Our Lady of Mt. Carmel Church in Carmel, Indiana is seeking an individual to coordinate all aspects of Christian Stewardship in the Parish. Job responsibilities include promoting and coordinating volunteerism and coordinating all aspects of parish fund raising. The successful candidate must possess very good communication, organizational and financial skills. Two to three years of experience as a banker at public relations/communications or related field is required. Please submit resume to:

Glen Richter, Business Manager
Our Lady of Mt. Carmel Church
11708 Oakland Manor
Carmel, IN 46052
We know you’ll have questions. We suspect you’ll be both excited and apprehensive. We understand that you’ll want reassurance as well as expertise. We expect all of that, and more. Because at St. Francis Hospital & Health Centers, we’ve been delivering babies and caring for their parents for more than 75 years.

Each year, thousands of expectant parents choose the advanced obstetric care of our Indianapolis and Mooresville campuses. Each location takes a family-centered approach to childbirth that’s focused on personalized attention to your needs. This approach is apparent in everything from our wide selection of maternity education classes, to birthing options that enable you to experience labor, delivery and recovery in the same room, to the sophisticated treatment of high-risk newborns provided by our Neonatal Intensive Care Unit. We also care for you and your child’s needs after delivery, with our dedicated Pediatrics Unit and comprehensive Women’s Health Services.

So when you’re ready to bring your baby into the world, turn to St. Francis. Our family of caring professionals will see to it that you have everything you could possibly need to deliver a miracle.

Celebrate your spirit by joining the St. Francis Spirit of Women membership program. Call (317) 865-5865 for details.