‘A savior has been born for you who is Messiah and Lord.’ (Lk 2:11)
Immigration response tops local news stories for 2007

By Brandon A. Evans

The involvement of our local bishops in immigration reform was voted the top news story for the archdiocese this year, but it was far from being the only newsworthy event.

Working in tandem with the custom of other news agencies, including Catholic News Service (see story, page 3), The Criterion editorial staff votes each year for the top 10 local stories that appeared in our newspaper.

Many of the stories selected this year were actually made up of several individual articles, and you can read them all by logging on to www.CriterionOnline.com and checking out the list there.

So, amid the more than 450 locally produced news stories this year, here is our top 10:

1. The bishops of Indiana release a pastoral letter on immigration

As the country continues to debate the issue of immigration, the five bishops of Indiana released a joint document in January titled “I Was a Stranger and You Welcomed Me: Meeting Christ in New Neighbors.”

It was the first such document released by the bishops in recent times and was our lead story in the first issue of 2007.

The story read, in part: “Typically, statements from the bishops are done through the Indiana Catholic Conference, the Church’s official public policy voice. However, the pastoral letter is a unique move by the bishops, giving the statement a distinctive teaching authority which carries more significance and weight—that of shepherds addressing the faithful.”

Calling Catholics to welcome the stranger as Christ himself, the bishops called for balance between “the right of a sovereign state to control its borders,” and “the right of human beings to migrate so that they can realize their God-given rights.”

The pastoral said that “the state may impose reasonable limits on immigration, but the common good is not served when the basic human rights of the individual are violated.”

The Criterion also covered an immigration mass marking the 10th anniversary of the progress of immigration legislation as it was discussed throughout the United States.

2. Three men ordained to the priesthood

The ordination of priests always seems to end up as one of our top stories, in no small part because it marks the beginning of a long journey for these men, and for all of us who will cross paths with them in the years to come.

This year, three men were ordained on June 2 at SS. Peter and Paul Cathedral: Fathers Thomas Kovatch, Rick Nagel and Randall Summers.

“They today, you put yourself at Christ’s disposal,” Archbishop Buechlein told the three men during the ordination. “You offer yourselves to serve the people of our local Church, to do that in the person of Christ, the high priest and bridegroom of the Church.”

Father T. Eric John, archdiocesan vocations director, said that it was a happy day for the Church.

“We have three wonderful men that have come forward and said not only ‘yes’ to God’s call but, in doing that, are themselves kind of an image of faith for the rest of us,” he said.

Each one of the men has their own story of how God led them to the priesthood. You can log on to our Web site to read them.

3. St. Theodore honored at masses across the archdiocese

Last year’s top story spilled over into 2007 in the form of celebration.

The October 2006 canonization of St. Theodore Guerin—foundress of the Sisters of Providence of Saint Mary of the Woods and Indiana’s first saint—kicked off a year of special masses celebrated by Archbishop Buechlein in each of the archdiocese’s 11 deaneries.

The first Mass was celebrated on Dec. 8, 2006, at St. Joan of Arc Church in Indianapolis and the last was held at Our Lady of Providence J.S. High School in Clarksville on Oct. 3—St. Theodore’s new feast day.

“Many of us, myself included, were educated by the Sisters of Providence … Our heritage goes back to this saint,” the archbishop said at the final Mass.

Throughout the year, The Criterion included coverage and photos of all the Masses as well as details of a seminarian pilgrimage to Saint Mary-of-the-Woods, the dedication of a portrait and a statue of the saint, other related celebrations and a hymn written by two monks of Saint Meinrad Archabbey.

Links to all of those can be found in the online companion to this story.

4. Arson fire destroys St. Anne Church in New Castle

The largest capital campaign in the history of the archdiocese continued to be a major focus of parishioners throughout central and southern Indiana.

Reporters Sean Gallagher wrote that, “When it was launched in 2004, the Legacy for Our Mission: For Our Children and the Future campaign had an ambitious goal of raising $100 million. “By accomplishing this goal, the archdiocese will be able to finance several capital projects, including construction of a new archbishop’s residence, Diocese of Indianapolis headquarters and the St. Vincent Medical Center.”

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As of late October, nearly $90 million had been pledged toward the campaign. Those pledges came from more than 25,000 participants from 115 archdiocesan parishes.

Throughout the year, The Criterion featured stories about how parishes have been affected by the campaign, and what they are planning to do with the money they have raised. For all those parish updates, be sure to check our Web site.

6. Archbishop Buechlein celebrates 20 years as a bishop

While the Criterion is limited to a single news story and a photo essay, it was of no small mention that Archbishop Buechlein celebrated his 15th anniversary as shepherd of the Archdiocese of Indianapolis and the 20th anniversary of his episcopal ordination in the same year.

Editor Mike Krokos wrote that “To celebrate his 20th years as a bishop, Archbishop Buechlein recently went on a personal retreat to reflect on his time as a
Immigration named top story of 2007, pope is top newsmaker

WASHINGTON (CNS)—The national debate over immigration issues was the top religious news story of 2007 and Pope Benedict XVI was the top newsmaker, according to the annual poll of client editors of Catholic News Service.

Catholic response to the war in Iraq took second place among the 30 news stories on the ballot, while developments in the stem-cell field came in third.

Pope Benedict dominated the newsmakers list, with 20 of the 24 first-place votes cast. U.S. President George W. Bush was a distant second, followed by Blessed Teresa of Calcutta.

The poll was the 46th annual survey of CNS client newspapers. This year’s ballots were distributed on Dec. 4 and the deadline for returns was Dec. 13.

When the editor’s poll was first conducted in 1962, the overwhelming choice for top story was the opening of the Second Vatican Council. Last year, editors chose Islam’s relations with church and society as the top religious story of the year and Pope Benedict as the top newsmaker.

Editors were asked to vote for the top 10 news stories from a list of 30 selected by CNS staff, and the top five newsmakers from a list of 20. Votes were weighted by the rankings editors gave—10 points for a first-place vote, nine points for second, etc., and five points for top newsmaker, four for second, etc.

With 24 editors in the United States and Canada submitting ballots, the maximum points a story could have received was 240. Some ballots included ties, resulting in half points in some cases.

The year’s immigration developments included multiple efforts—all ultimately unsuccessful—to bring federal legislation to address the situation. The flight of hundreds of thousands of Christians from Iraq could lead to the end of a Christian presence there, they said.

A pair of breakthrough studies later in the year that showed success in creating embryonic-like stem cells without destroying human embryos brought praise from Catholic and pro-life officials around the world, along with hope that embryonic stem-cell research will soon be abandoned. Bush vetoed legislation that would have expanded federal funding of embryonic stem-cell research, and New Jersey voters rejected a bond question that would have dedicated millions of state dollars for that purpose.

The year’s immigration developments were developments in Catholic dialogue with Muslims and Jews and Pope Benedict’s ruling allowing wider use of the traditional Latin Mass.

That decision—along with his landmark letter to Chinese Catholics, his travels and an upcoming trip to the United States, his naming of 23 new cardinals from 14 countries and a new encyclical and book—earned Pope Benedict the top spot as 2007’s religious newsmaker.

Bush was second for his vetoes of the embryonic stem-cell bill and legislation expanding the State Children’s Health Insurance Program, his first meeting with Pope Benedict and the continued criticism directed at him over the war in Iraq.

Ten years after her death, Mother Teresa was the third top newsmaker of 2007 as a result of a new book of her writings revealed her doubts about her faith, which Vatican officials said revealed her spiritual strength. She also moved closer to sainthood when Pope Benedict named her to the College of Cardinals for an upcoming trip to the United States, his travels and other actions.

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More on the pope’s year, page 9.

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This week’s issue of The Criterion, which includes the annual Christmas Supplement on pages 13-21, is the last issue of 2007.

The Criterion will be published again on Jan. 11 and resume its weekly schedule.

The Archbishop O’Meara Catholic Center will be closed from Dec. 21 through Jan. 1 in observance of the holidays.

Archdiocesan agencies will reopen at 8 a.m. on Wednesday, Jan. 2.

Patron of the Americas

Msgr. Mark Svanzakopf, center, pastor of Our Lady of the Greenwood Parish in Greenwood, was the main celebrant at the 12th annual solemn Mass at the parish in honor of Our Lady of Guadalupe on Dec. 12. Also concelebrating priests included Msgr. Charles Koch, a retired priest from the Diocese of Evansville; Father Berne Cox, pastor of Mary, Queen of Peace Parish in Danville; Father John Hall, pastor of St. Martin of Tours Parish in Martinsville; Convivial Franciscan Father Leopold Keffler of Marion College; Franciscan Father Elias M. Mills of the Mother of the Redeemer Retreat Center in Monroe County; Father Rick Nagel, associate pastor of Our Lady of the Greenwood Parish, and Father Mauro Rodas, a retired archdiocesan priest who assists with Hispanic ministry at Our Lady of the Greenwood Parish. In his homily, Msgr. Svanzakopf reminded those attending the bilingual Mass that “Wherever we come from ... we are all equal in dignity. There is not a beat in God’s ear. ... All cultures, all people, have an equal dignity.”

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The Criterion Friday, December 21, 2007 Page 3
Editorial

This work depicting Mary and the Child Jesus of Chicago artist Melville Steinels, hangs in the Madonna della Strada Chapel (also known as the Way) Chapel on the grounds of Loyola University Chicago. The Dec. 25 Christmas feast commemorates the birth of Christ. The Christmas season begins with the Dec. 24 evening vigil and ends on the feast of the Baptism of the Lord, which is Jan. 13.

Christmas celebrates defenselessness or vulnerability of God

“The child Jesus, the defenselessness of God is apparent. God comes without weapons, because he does not wish to conquer from outside but desires to win and transform us from within. If anything can conquer man’s vainglory, his violence, his greed, it is the vulnerability of the child. God assumed this vulnerability in order to conquer us and lead us to himself.” (From a Christmas homily of Cardinal Joseph Ratzinger, now Pope Benedict XVI)

God comes to us once again this Christmas in all his weakness. No chariots or fire or mighty armies. No grandeur or opulence.

Just a simple child born into a poor family to wander through the world and seek out the lost sheep of God. He is our friend and our brother.

“In the child Jesus, the defenselessness of God is apparent,” Pope Benedict said. “It is a fact that in the face of God’s love, we are completely defenseless. The weakness of the child Jesus is an invitation to cease all our efforts to gain power and influence over other people.”

The paradox of Christmas is the warmth and comfort and joy that come from celebrating our weakness, our dependence on God. You tell people that self-sufficiency is the way to happiness. But Christmas exposes all our vainglory, violence and greed for what they are—distorted images of the simple truth that joy is found in humility, simplicity and peace.

The child Jesus reminds us of what matters most in life: trust in God, the gifts of life and family, and the ability to grow in wisdom, age and grace in a community of believers who strive to live simply and honestly for the greater good of all.

It’s no accident that Christmas is everyone’s favorite time of year. Christmas invites us to relax (and relive) the most basic truth of our faith. God is with us:

He brings light into our darkness and warmth into our cold hearts. A child is born—reminding us once again that family and friends and community are among our most precious gifts. Peace and great joy are proclaimed to people of good will everywhere no matter what their race, creed or social status may be. Vainglory, violence and greed are utterly rejected in favor of generosity, justice and peace. For the first time in history, we are always totally dependent on God’s grace.

For this, we give thanks. With the angels, we sing Glory to God Hosannah in the highest! Peace on earth! Christmas has come again, bringing peace and warmth and joy into our weary world.

Let us rejoice and be glad that our defenseless God has come in all his weakness to save us from our illusions of strength and independence. He comes once again to transform our world with his simple message: be poor, have nothing, depend on God’s grace for everything. To share with us the transforming gifts of faith, hope and love. And to show us the way to true joy and lasting peace.

Merry Christmas! —Daniel Conway

Letters to the Editor

Freedom for all means putting an end to abortion

Enduring freedom must be for all. It requires that nothing—no person and/or power—he granted permission to target innocent human life.

No exceptions! This principle helped end slavery. It is why we can justifiably call Hitler, Stalin and/or power—be granted permission to vote. Forms are available online. Just go to the Archdiocese of Indianapolis website and print your form before January 1.

Today, this same principle is being used by the “globalist elite” to order the extermination of a whole generation. One big problem: The evil we are fighting is but a shadow of the evil we are doing. Let me explain.

Since the early 1970s, more than 48 million surgical abortions have been performed legally in the U.S. The word “legally” amazes me. The more than 48 million human lives destroyed by “legally” amazes me. The more than 48 million human lives destroyed by violence, we refer to as a “post abortus.”

Note the definition of “posterity”: “the people of the United States” have not shown the blessings of liberty, justice, tranquility and welfare. Even if we win the “War on Terror” so what?

Some final notes for Catholics Returning Home:

1. It is my prayer that every concerned American reading this letter will register to vote. Forms are available online. Just go to your state’s voter registration form and vote-pro-life in 2008.

2. May we all learn to better love God and our neighbor during the Christmas season as we reacquaint ourselves with the way Mary and Joseph beheld Jesus was conceived and how God was revealed to us.

3. If you are a woman who is experiencing—or know a woman who is suffering from the aftermath of an abortion, please call Servants of the Gospel of Life at 317-236-1521 or 1-888-828-8368. Ext. 1231. All calls are confidential.

4. You may want to take a tax-deductible challenge gift to help bring about an end to abortion during this 2008 election cycle, I encourage you to do it! Perhaps the charitable donation should be equal to or greater than what was spent on Christmas gifts this holiday. Pray about it. Return Return to Indianapolis

O P I N I O N

Go and Make Disciples

John Valenti

New outreach to inactive Catholics

Most of us do not have to look very far to find “non-practicing Catholics” in our circle of family and friends.

Many of us are concerned about these loved ones, but we don’t know how to help them.

Obviously, most of them are searching, but how can we help them find their way to God in the defenseless vulnerability of Christ?

St. Michael Parish in Greenfield wants to welcome home those who have been away. “The child Jesus has come again, bringing peace and joy to the parish’s efforts,” the pastor said. “We need to do our part to bring the Church to the community of believers who strive to be good to family with the Church is good preparation for the rest of our lives. Davis-Fuller added, “There are no accidental conversions, but it is well known to know how to ride out the waves that than to expect to be able to avoid all of them. Whatever the reason, we have a precious gift of faith and love, and sometimes, we are more sinning than others.”

Davis-Fuller explained how important it is to know that “the Church does not ordain and establish this Constitution for sisters,” she said.

With our non-practicing brothers and sisters, “We need to do our part to bring the Church to the community of believers who strive to be good to family with the Church is good preparation for the rest of our lives. Davis-Fuller added, “There are no accidental conversions, but it is well known to know how to ride out the waves that than to expect to be able to avoid all of them. Whatever the reason, we have a precious gift of faith and love, and sometimes, we are more sinning than others.”

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Evangelization outreach resources can be found at: archindy.org/evangelization/ outreach.html

John Valenti is the associate director of Evangelization and Faith Formation for the Archdiocese of Indianapolis. Email him at valenti@archindy.org
A baby boy lying in a manger is called the Light of the World and the Word-made-flesh. How strange and how abstract: to call a person “luz” or “verbo.” Sin embargo, si nos detenemos qué abstracto: llamar a una persona “luz” y a las drogas y por el dinero para comprar las poblados, un hermano mata a otro por el primero asesinato. En nuestras ciudades y enceguecedora de la envidia; él cometió el enemigo y a los hombres y mujeres, hombres y mujeres de los santos y no santos. Una celebración de amor roto descubren la peor de las oscuridades. Hombres y mujeres destinados a ser compañeros para vivir y a las iglesias, otorguen la vida y a los santos y no santos. Una celebración de amor se convirtió en uno de nosotros, y a la vida y a la conocimiento, por eso es el regalo de Dios. La Navidad es el propio Dios! El regalo es gratis y es para todos nosotros por igual: santos y no santos. Una celebración de la Navidad es nuestra forma de agradecerle a Dios. ¡Feliz Navidad y las bendiciones más excelsas de Dios para el 2008! †

Una celebración devota de la Navidad es nuestra para que rezar mientras nos arrodillamos ante el Nazareno. La promesa de nuestro salvador comenzó. Nuestra luz de la historia de la Navidad y nuestro en ella. ¡También nos recuerdan que debemos dar gracias a Dios por su obsequio de Navidad! La Navidad celebra el misterio que ofrece el único camino a la seguridad humana. Y es un regalo gratis. Dios está a cargo del destino; nosotros no tenemos que preocuparnos. Él es el plan maestro para lograr que todo funcione. La condición que viene con el estupendo regalo de Navidad de “la bendita de Dios y al verbo el amor es” que creamos y aceptemos su amor, y que entendamos que esta vida no es lo todo. Todo va unido y comienza con la Navidad. Jesús hizo algo en el destino humano. Cuando celebramos su nacimiento, celebramos el hecho extraordinario de que Dios se convirtió en uno de nosotros, para mostrarnos cómo vivir y amar, y sí, morir en este mundo transitorio. Celebramos el hecho de que el ganó por nosotros la promesa que existe mucho más en esta vida de lo que podemos ver. Tenemos mucho en qué pensar y lo que rezar mientras miren este niño ante el pesebre navideño. La promesa de nuestra salvación comenzó en la oscuridad de esa humilde cuna en Belén. La intención del Arzobispo Buechlein para vocaciones en diciembre

Escuelas primarias católicas: que ellos puedan enseñar la fe católica a nuestros niños y puedan ayudarles a oír y contestar la llamada de Dios para ser vir en la iglesia, sobre todo como sacerdotes o religiosas.
December 21
St. Andrew Church, 235 S. 5th St., Richmond.
Simbang Gabi Mass, 7 p.m. Information: 317-962-3902.

December 23
MKVS and Divine Mercy Center, Revsville, located on 925 South. 8 mile east of 421 South and 12 miles south of Versailles, Confession, 1 p.m., followed by holy hour, Mass, 2 p.m., groups of 10 pray the new Marian Way, 1 p.m. Father Ender Borwinkel, celebrant. Information: 812-680-3551.

December 24
SS. Peter and Paul Cathedral, 1347 N. Meridian St., Indianapolis. Christmas Eve Mass, 5 p.m. and midnight. Archbishop Daniel M. Buechlein scheduled as celebrant for Christmas Eve Mass, 7 p.m., Vigils, midnight. Information: 317-634-4519.

December 25
SS. Peter and Paul Cathedral, 1347 N. Meridian St., Indianapolis. Christmas Mass, 10:30 a.m. Information: 317-634-4519.


Saint Meinrad Archabbey Church, 200 Hill Drive, St. Meinrad. Vigil, 7 p.m., Christmas Eve Mass, midnight. Information: 800-682-0988 or e-mail news@saintmeinrad.edu.


December 26–28
SS. Peter and Paul Cathedral, 1347 N. Meridian St., Indianapolis. Catholic Charismatic Renewal of Central Indiana and Cursillo, renewal Mass of Thanksgiving, Father Glenn O’Connor, celebrant, 1 p.m. Information: 317-392-1992 or ccri@holyspirit.org.

December 28
Congregation of the Sisters of the Third Order of St. Francis, Motherhouse, Oldenburg. “Christmas Tours,” 6-8 p.m. Information: 812-933-6491.

December 29
St. Rita Church, 1733 Dr. Andrew J. Brown Ave., Indianapolis. Christmas Mass, Mass, 6 p.m. Information: 317-632-9349.

December 31
St. Rita Church, 1733 Dr. Andrew J. Brown Ave., Indianapolis. Wkanza program, Mass, 6 a.m. Information: 317-632-9349.

MKVS and Divine Mercy Center, Revsville, located on 925 South. 8 mile east of 421 South and 12 miles south of Versailles, Confession, 1 p.m., followed by holy hour, Mass, 2 p.m., groups of 10 pray the new Marian Way, 1 p.m. Father Ender Borwinkel, celebrant. Information: 812-680-3551.

January 1
SS. Peter and Paul Cathedral, 1347 N. Meridian St., Indianapolis. Catholic Charismatic Renewal of Central Indiana and Cursillo, renewal Mass of Thanksgiving, Father Glenn O’Connor, celebrant, 1 p.m. Information: 317-392-1992 or ccri@holyspirit.org.

January 2
St. Mary Parish, 317 N. New Jersey St., Indianapolis. Solo Seniors, Catholic, educational, charitable and social single seniors 50 and over, single, widowed or divorced, new members welcome, 6:30 p.m. Information: 317-897-1128.

January 3
Our Lady of the Holy Rosary Church, 520 Stevens St., Indianapolis. Lumen Dei meeting, Mass, 6:30 a.m., breakfast and program at Priori Hall, “Mission of Medicine,” Dr. Chuck Dietzen, founder of The Tunney Foundation, presenter, 310 members, 515 guests. Information: 317-919-5316 or e-mail LumenDei@globalnet.net.

January 4

January 5
St. Francis Weight Loss Center, 700 E. Southport Road, Indianapolis. “Eat for Life Wellness Program,” 6 p.m. Information: 317-782-7352 or e-mail weightloss@sfhs.org.

January 11
St. Roch Parish, Family Center, 3603 S. Meridian St., Indianapolis. Single Seniors meeting, 1 p.m., age 50 and over. Information: 317-784-1102.

January 12
Roncalli High School, 3300 Prague Road, Indianapolis. Makeup date for high school placement test for incoming freshmen, 7-45-11:45 a.m. Information: 317-787-8227, ext. 234.

January 13
St. Malachi Parish, 336 N. Green St, Brownwood. “Divorce and Beyond” program, 6-8 p.m. Information: 317-852-3195.

Daily events
St. John the Evangelist Church, 126 W. Georgia St., Indianapolis. Liturgy of the Hours, Mon.-Fri., morning prayer, 7:30 a.m., evening prayer, 5:15 p.m. Information: 317-635-2021.

Sacred Heart of Jesus Church, 1550 Union St., Indianapolis. Liturgy of the Hours, Mon.-Fri., morning prayer, 7:05 a.m., evening prayer, 5:30 p.m. Information: 317-638-5551.


Eagle Scout
Eric Burns, right, receives an Eagle Scout pin on Dec. 1 during a ceremony held at Ryves Youth Center in Terre Haute. Eric, who has Down syndrome, is a member of Scout Troop #42, which is based at Ryves Hall, and a program of Catholic Charities Terre Haute. He received his Eagle Scout pin, the highest award in Boy Scouts, from Dan Smider, left, who is a Scout troop leader and the assistant director of Ryves Hall.

Spell Bowl champions
Members of the fourth, fifth- and sixth-grades at St. Gabriel School in Connersville pose on Nov. 15 at Knightstown Elementary School in Knightstown with the first-place pins they earned for being the 2007 Elementary Spell Bowl champion in Class 2. The students are, from left in the front row, Samantha Fair, Lindsey Hackleman, Maddie Rose, Jacob Hackleman, Andrew Silles, Emily Stine and Matthew Watkins. In the back row, the students are, from left, Madison Fain, Pashyn Drew, Casey Fohi, Olivia Frazee, Kramer Moriarty, Andrew Bensott and Logan Neukam. Coach Lisa Hauger, the fifth-grade teacher at St. Gabriel School, stands at the right end of the back row.
New Internet blog serves as resource for Comboni Father Michael Barton’s work in Sudan

By Mary Ann Wyand

Comboni Father Michael Barton’s prayers and his Christmas wish list begin with peace and an end to violence for war-torn Sudan. He also hopes for donations to build a church and school in the village of Marial Baai within St. Theresa Parish in Nyamlell, where he serves as pastor.

Catholics in central and southern Indiana can learn more about his ministry half a world away in southern Sudan by logging on to a new Internet site created by Jane Lichtenberg, a member of Holy Spirit Parish in Fishers, Ind., in the Lafayette Diocese.

The weblog address is www.nyamlell.blogspot.com.

As Community Conversations coordinator for The Indianapolis Star, Lichtenberg has written about the Comboni priest’s ministry.

Father Barton grew up in Indianapolis, and has served the Church as a missionary priest in Sudan from 1978 until 1986 and then from 1993 to the present.

When Lichtenberg talked with him during his home visit last summer, she learned that he is trying to raise funds to build church and school buildings in a village in Northern Bar el Gazelle State.

She decided to create the blog to keep people informed about his ministry and pastoral needs. It includes excerpts from the priest’s ministry. It was published in The Criterion.

“I suggested a blog that would help him keep in touch with his many friends in the Indianopolis area and around the world, and tell people how he would use donations and where to donate.”

—Jane Lichtenberg

The weblog address is www.nyamlell.blogspot.com.

He has spent the past five years based in Nyamlell, another village in the parish,” Lichtenberg explained. “From there, he has traveled hundreds of miles visiting other parts of the parish, administering sacraments and spreading God’s Word to the Sudanese people, many of whom live in great poverty.”

She said his goal is to raise $150,000 for a church and school at Marial Baai.

“I suggested a blog that would help him keep in touch with his many friends in the Indianopolis area and around the world, and tell people how he would use donations and where to donate,” she said.

“Although when he is in Sudan he has no access to computers or the Internet, I asked him to write letters, and have another priest in the parish write as well, to keep all of us up to date on his mission.”

Citing “the extraordinary work he has done in South Sudan,” Lichtenberg said she plans “to continue managing the blog for him, and hope that people who visit the Web site will take time to write comments and include their own thoughts about this extraordinary man and his mission to Sudan.”

During an interview with The Criterion last August at the archdiocesan Mission Office, Father Barton talked about answering God’s call to serve the people in Sudan 30 years ago. Saving souls for God is his first priority as a missionary, he said, and educating the children is a close second.

At the Catholic schools he established in St. Theresa Parish, children study English, Dinka, Swahili, Arabic, science, agriculture, geography, civics, history and Christian religious education, including the Gospels and the Acts of the Apostles during the last three years of school.

While ministering in Sudan for three decades, Father Barton has been sick with malaria, was imprisoned for 15 days in August 1996 and had to kill a poisonous snake at the parish last year.

That is all part of serving God’s people in Sudan, he said. “I just have to do something.”

For more information about how to help Comboni Father Michael Barton with his mission’s work in Sudan, call the archdiocesan Mission Office at 317-236-1485 or 800-382-9636, ext. 1485.

February 8, 2008, issue of The Criterion

If you are planning your wedding between January 30 and July 1, 2008, we invite you to submit the information for an announcement on the form below.

Pictures

You may send us a picture of the bride-to-be or a picture of the couple. Please do not cut photograph. The picture must be wallet-size and will be used as space permits. 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.

E-mailed photos

Photos should be saved in jpg format, be a minimum 200 dpi/resolution and at least 3 inches or 600 pixels wide. Please send your photo as an attachment to the e-mail.

Deadline

All announcements and photos must be received by Thursday, January 17, 2008, 10 a.m. (No announcements or photos will be accepted after this date).

Use this form to furnish information

**City and mail to:**

**ATT: BRIDES, The Criterion, P.O. Box 1717, Indianapolis, IN 46206**

**Deadline:** Thursday, January 17, 2008, 10 a.m.

Please print or type:

- **Name of Bride (first, middle, last)**
- **Daytime Phone**
- **Name of Bride’s Parents**
- **City**
- **State**
- **Mount St. Joseph**
- **Daytime Phone**
- **Name of Bride’s Parents**
- **City**
- **State**
- **Note:**
- **Photo Enclosed**
- **No Picture**
- **The Criterion**
- **Friday, December 21, 2007**
- **Page 7**
shepherd of the Church in Memphis and Indianapolis.

“When on retreat, he responded to a series of questions from The Criterion that afforded him the opportunity to share his thoughts on his 20 years of ministry as a bishop.”

You can read the entire question-and-answer interview on our Web site, but here is an excerpt from a question about what the archbishop looks to in the future:

“God has not let me down in the past and present, so I am confident that his Providence will care for me in my evening years.”

“With God’s blessing and the help of good priests and people, I don’t plan to carry on my ministry ‘by looking in the rear-view mirror,’ as the saying goes.

“I look forward to our celebration of our 175th anniversary [as an archdiocese] in 2009.”

7. Super Bowl Champion Indianapolis Colts

The Indianapolis Colts’ victory over the Chicago Bears in Super Bowl XLI on Feb. 4 was one of the major secular news stories in Indiana in 2007.

The hype and excitement was also reported in our newspaper as our staff took a closer look at one of the more low-key storylines: the Colts’ chaplain, Father Peter Gallagher, who also is chaplain of Cardinal Ritter Jr./Sr. High School in Indianapolis.

“I’m fortunate to have been asked to be a part of this organization and what I’m doing to promote our Catholic faith,” Father Gallagher told The Criterion.

This fall, the newspaper also featured a front-page story about the Catholic faith of Colts players.

Other Colts-related coverage included the renaming of the now Peyson Manning Children’s Hospital at St. Vincent in Indianapolis, and a story about a Colts Fitness Camp at St. Anthony of Padua School in Clarksville.

8. Deacon Chlopecki becomes first archdiocesan permanent deacon

On May 1, a little piece of history occurred in the archdiocese.

It was, according to Sean Gallagher, “the day on which the incardination process was completed whereby Deacon John Chlopecki went from being a deacon of the Archdiocese of Chicago—to which he was ordained in 1991—to being a deacon of the Archdiocese of Indianapolis.”

Thus, Deacon Chlopecki became the archdiocese’ first permanent deacon. The diaconate will grow in numbers next spring when 25 men will be ordained permanent deacons after four years of formation.

Deacon Chlopecki served on the committee that, starting in 2002, helped develop the current archdiocesan deacon formation program.

“When I first moved down to the archdiocese, I prayed that there would be a diaconate someday,” Deacon Chlopecki said. “And I prayed, ‘Dear God, please let me be a part of it. Let me help bring this to fruition.’ And the good Lord gave me exactly what I prayed for, and more so than I ever thought it would be.”

9. Local Catholics observe the 10th anniversary of Mother Teresa’s death

The 10th anniversary of the death of Blessed Teresa of Calcutta was marked all over the world, including in our archdiocese in which several sisters of her order, the Missionaries of Charity, now minister to the poor.

Members of that order, along with women and children from an emergency shelter that the sisters operate and about 100 other people, gathered for Mass with Archbishop Buechlein at the cathedral on Sept. 5.

The Criterion also wrote a special story that shared the thoughts of a variety of Catholics in our community on the memories of Mother Teresa.

“Catholics throughout central and southern Indiana are drawn to this woman unlike nearly any other spiritual figure of our time,” wrote Sean Gallagher.

“She is this woman. She is someone who, unlike others, provided inspiration of fire within the church.”

“Some of them are leaders in the faith and notable television personalities. Others are average people in the pew.

“No matter who they are, Blessed Teresa has a special place in their heart.”

10. SS. Peter and Paul Cathedral celebrates its centennial year

To celebrate the centenary of its dedication on Dec. 21, 1906, by Bishop Francis Silas Chastard, the staff and members of SS. Peter and Paul Cathedral Parish in Indianapolis planned a year’s worth of special events.

Those events included a speakers series, concerts, liturgies and a banquet after the closing centennial Mass.

Archbishop Buechlein presided over the June 29 Mass that closed the year of celebration, and recalled “not so much the glory of the cathedral church, but of the celebration, and recalled ‘not so much the glory of the cathedral church, but of the worship given to God in it by scores of Catholics during the past 100 years.’

“The cathedral has been an important place for many people throughout the archdiocese.”

Nearly 5,800 weddings have taken place there and 124 men have been ordained to the priesthood.

Father Patrick Beidelman, the rector and pastor of the parish, remarked on the parish’s future at the June 29 Mass.

“As we remember the past today, let us look forward to a future full of hope,” Father Beidelman said. “Knowing that God will guide us on a path of profound change as the fashions us into the image of his only Son, our Lord.”

(To read more about these 10 stories, including links to all our original Criterion news coverage, log on to our Web site at www.CriterionOnline.com.)

The new directory contains up-to-date information:

• Parishes
• Pastors
• Parish staff
• Schools
• School staff
• Religious education staff
• Archdiocesan administration
• Offices and agencies
• Telephone numbers
• Mass times
• Addresses
• E-mail addresses

Three ways to order your new directory

• Mail in order form
• Call 317-236-1570 or 1-800-382-9836 ext. 1570
• www.criteriononline.com

Our Lady of Fatima Retreat House

The advisory board, volunteers and staff wish to thank our 10,000+ visitors over the past year! We are blessed to be able to serve you!

We want to wish all of you a very peace-filled & joyous Christmas season!

AND

We hope to see all of you again in 2008!

Our Lady of Fatima Retreat House
5535 E. 56th Street
Indianapolis, IN 46226
(317) 545-7681
www.archindy.org/fatima

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VATICAN CITY (CNS)—Pope Benedict XVI never gives the impression of being overburdened, yet a look back at 2007 reveals a long list of papal activities and achievements.

The pope’s output included four major documents and a lengthy book, more than 200 speeches and sermons, two foreign trips and three in Italy, the creation of new cardinals, and encounters with a lineup of world leaders, including U.S. President George W. Bush.

In April—just before celebrating his 80th birthday—the pope published Jesus of Nazareth, which made the case that Jesus must be understood as the Son of God on a divine mission, not as a mere moralist or social reformer. In six months, the book had sold more than 2 million copies worldwide.

In June, the pope issued a 55-page letter to Chinese Catholics, setting out new guidelines to favor cooperation between clandestine Catholic communities and those officially registered with the government.

The pope’s letter strongly criticized the limits placed by the Chinese government on the Church’s activities, but it invited civil authorities to a fresh and serious dialogue. Hopeful signs followed as China and the Vatican agreed on several bishops’ appointments.

In July, in a long-awaited much-debated document, the pope relaxed restrictions on the use of the traditional Latin Mass, the liturgy that predates the Second Vatican Council.

The pope said Mass celebrated according to the 1962 Roman Missal should be made available in every parish where groups of the faithful desire it—though he said the new Roman Missal, intro- duced in 1970, remains the ordinary way of Catholic worship.

November saw the release of the pope’s second encyclical, “Spe Salvi” (“On Christian Hope”), which warned that without faith in God humanity lies at the mercy of ideologies that can lead to “the greatest forms of cruelty and violations of justice.

One brief and unexpected document came in June, when the pope stipulated that a two-thirds majority is always required to elect a new pope. The document did away with a more flexible rule that allowed for a simple majority election in case of an impasse.

The pope approved publication of other documents issued at the Vatican in 2007, including a text by the International Theological Commission that critiqued the traditional concept of limbo and said there are good reasons to hope that babies who die without being baptized go to heaven.

He traveled to Brazil in May, his first papal trip to Latin America and the longest journey of his pontificate.

Opening the Fifth General Conference of the Bishops of Latin America and the Caribbean, he warned against inroads by secularism, threats against the family and an erosion of traditional Latin American values.

Visiting Austria in September, the pope prayed at a Marian shrine with tens of thousands of pilgrims. His Italian travels took him to Pavia, where he prayed before the tomb of St. Augustine, to Assisi in the footsteps of St. Francis, and to Naples for the opening of an interreligious conference.

The pope continued to gradually replace Roman Curia officials, but his most important set of appointments came this fall when he named 23 new cardinals. Those receiving the red hat in a November ceremony included two Americans: Cardinal John P. Foley, head of the Knights of the Holy Sepulcher, and Cardinal Daniel N. Nardо of Galveston-Houston.

In June, the pope met Bush for the first time for talks focused on the precarious situation of Christians in Iraq and other conflicts in the Middle East. The Vatican took the opportunity to express the hope for a negotiated settlement to “the conflicts and crises that are tormenting the region.

On other issues, the pope and the president examined moral and religious questions, including “the defense and promotion of life, marriage and the family,” the Vatican said.

The pope enhanced the Vatican agency that coordinates relations with Muslims, appointing Cardinal Jean-Louis Tauran as head of the Pontifical Council for Interreligious Dialogue.

In October, 138 Muslim experts wrote a letter to the pontiff calling for new dialogue efforts based on the shared belief in one God, in God’s love for humanity and in people’s obligation to love one another. In response, the pope invited a varied group of Muslim scholars to meet with him and Vatican experts sometime next year.

The Vatican’s saintmakers were busy in 2007 with 17 beatification liturgies. The pope canonized five people, including a Franciscan friar who was Brazil’s first native-born saint.

One papal priority that rarely made headlines was his weekly audience talk. In 2007, the pope focused on early Christian witnesses and theologians, in essence continuing his version of Church History 101. Throughout the year, the pope and Vatican officials gave increased attention to environmental concerns. Global warming was the subject of a Vatican-sponsored conference, and at the United Nations the Vatican’s representative said protecting the environment was a “moral imperative.”

The pope also spoke repeatedly about the moral responsibility to respect creation and share resources. In Austria, he even proposed that Sunday be considered not just a day of rest, but as “the Church’s weekly feast of creation.”

The Vatican also collaborated in a refor- mation project in Hungary designed to offset carbon emissions from Vatican City, and announced it would install solar panels to meet the energy needs of its audience hall.

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Vatican paper says The Golden Compass lacks hope and leaves viewers feeling cold

VATICAN CITY (CNS)—The Vatican newspaper criticized the movie The Golden Compass, saying the film depicts a fantasy world that is without emotion, without hope and without love.

In that sense, the movie reflects the anti-Christian ideology of Philip Pullman, the author of the book on which the movie is based, the newspaper, L’Osservatore Romano, said, in a review on Dec. 18.

“It’s a film that leaves one cold because it brings with it the emptiness and is “very far away from humanity,” it said.

In the movie, human freedom is depicted as doing what it wants without obeying anyone’s orders, it said. Emotions and love are even when the young protagonist finds her father.

It is a world in which machines count more than human life, it said.

“The spectator of this film, if he is honest and gifted with a critical spirit, will feel no particular emotion, except for a great coldness—which is not only due to the polar scenes,” it said.

All this seems to confirm that “when God is pushed off the horizon, everything is made smaller, sadder, colder and lesshuman,” it said.

The article noted that the Golden Compass was not as faring as expected at the box office, and said it appeared this could block plans for cinema adaptations of the other books in Pullman’s trilogy, titled His Dark Materials.

“If that should happen, it wouldn’t be a big loss,” it said.
By Julie McCarty

Years ago, when I was teaching fifth-grade students in a Catholic school, a priest came to speak with our class about vocations. During the question-and-answer period, one boy blurted out, “Do you ever get lonely?”

Without missing a beat, the priest responded, “Sure I do—but everyone gets lonely sometimes.” Tuming to me, he said, “Isn’t that true, Mrs. McCarty? Don’t even married people get lonely?”

Frankly, I hadn’t given it much thought, but I found myself agreeing with him aloud. Who was I to contradict a priest, especially in front of the children?

Now, in middle, I heartily agree. All of us feel lonely now and then—for grandchildren living far away, for friends or relatives who have passed away or for hoped-for spouse or children who never materialized. Christmas-time, with its great expectations and memories of Christmases past, may be an even more difficult time for those who feel alone.

When I feel the pinch of loneliness, one person who comforts me is Dorothy Day. In her young adult life, Dorothy experienced loneliness of the kind that, when she first moved to New York.

In all that great city of seven million,” she wrote, “I found no friends, I had no work, I was separated from my fellows.”

Not having been raised in any particular faith tradition, Dorothy felt the spiritual loneliness of her early adult years, something akin to the wildness of St. Francis of Assisi or St. Ignatius Loyola. As a result, Dorothy conceived a child out of wedlock. Because the child’s father threatened to leave her if she didn’t get an abortion, she aborted her baby—something Dorothy would deeply regret for the rest of her life. Her lover abandoned her anyway, leaving her with a double loss.

A couple of relationships later, Dorothy was happy to discover that once again she was carrying the miracle of life within her. At the same time, she was growing more and more interested in the Catholic faith, and wanted to have her baby baptized. Again, the man she loved threatened to leave her unless she had an abortion.

This time, Dorothy found the inner courage to have her baby, a little girl named Tamar, despite her lover’s threats and the stigma of being an unwed mother. As a result, the man she loved left her—but she gained a daughter and the two were baptized Catholic.

Loneliness was woven like a thread through Dorothy’s life even after becoming Catholic. Living in a time when unwed motherhood was considered scandalous, some people criticized her way of life. In those days, few people would have understood the challenges that single parents face in juggling the demands of work, parenting, church attendance, prayer and service to others. Additionally, Dorothy received criticism about her moral positions and even spent time in jail more than once for taking a stand.

Despite the unpleasantness of loneliness, it can become a catalyst for reaching out to others who suffer, just as Dorothy Day did again and again.

We can build community or “family” in new ways. We can look to comfort other who feel loneliness. In the process, we can also view loneliness as an opportunity to deepen our reliance upon God’s love and mercy.

When we feel lonely, abandoned or rejected, we can take heart that Jesus, too, knew these experiences. Surely he felt loneliness when his family thought he was crazy (Mk 3:21), burned with jealousy. His friends deserted him from the tomb (Jn 11:35), people rejected his teachings about the Eucharist (Jn 6:66) or his hometown residents tried to kill him (Lk 4:29).

On the night before Jesus died, when he most wanted companionship, his friends fell asleep. On the cross, he cried out, “My God, my God, why have you forsaken me?” (Mt 27:46).

In chapter 14 of John’s Gospel, Jesus promises us that loneliness is not a permanent condition: “Do not let your hearts be troubled. In my Father’s house there are many dwelling places . . . I will come back again and take you to myself, so that where I am you also may be” (Jn 14:1-3).

Christmas is not only a celebration of Christ’s coming 2,000 years ago, but also a reminder that Christ will come again.

In heaven, sorrow and loneliness will cease for all who will be embraced in the loving arms of God. Come, Lord Jesus!”

Reflective questions:

Which people in my life might be experiencing loneliness? How might I reach out to them?

What loneliness? Feel lonely now and then—for grandchildren who have passed away or for hoped-for spouse or children who never materialized. Christmas-time, with its great expectations and memories of Christmases past, may be an even more difficult time for those who feel alone.

VATICAN CITY (CNS)—With a letter to the world’s bishops and a 40-page illustrated brochure, the Vatican’s Congregation for the Clergy is encouraging eucharistic adoration, thanksgiving, praise, petition and self-offering, prayer and penance.

The letter asked bishops to promote in their dioceses a “movement of prayer” centered on perpetual eucharistic adoration “for the repa
tation of faults and sanctification of priests.” But they also hoped to promote “a commitment on the part of consecrated feminine souls,” who, following the example of Mary Magdalene, might wish to spiritually adopt priests in order to help them with their self-offering, prayer and penance.

The letter asked bishops to promote in their dioceses a “movement of prayer” centered on perpetual eucharistic adoration and involving priests, religious and laypeople.

They said they hoped “a movement of prayer, thanksgiving, praise, petition and reparation will be raised to God inessantly and from every corner of the earth.”

The 40-page brochure, “Adoration, Reparation, Spiritual Motherhood for Priests,” was focused specifically on encouraging women to pray for priests.

“The vocation to be a spiritual mother for priests” is not well-known enough and so it is seldom practiced even though it is “fundamental and vitally important,” said the brochure, prepared by Archbishop Piacenza.

The brochure ends with the story of the Mater Ecclesiae clustered convent established by Pope John Paul II in the Vatican in 1994 as a center for contemplative nuns who would pray constantly for the pope and his ministry.

Through this initiative, John Paul II made a very clear statement to the whole world about the indispensable importance of silent prayer and hidden sacrifice for our modern and hectic world.” It said.

Benedictine Mother Maria Sofia Cicchetti, prioress of the Mater Ecclesiae community, is quoted in the brochure as saying, “We know that we have been called to become spiritual mothers in our silent and hidden life. Priests and seminarians have a privileged place as our spiritual sons, as do all of those who turn to us asking for support in their priestly life and ministry, in the trials and anxieties they encounter.”


Readers can contact McCarty via her Web site at www.juliemccarty.com.

Catholics move to end Illinois funds for embryonic stem-cell research

ROMEOVILLE, Ill. (CNS)—In light of new scientific evidence demonstrating how primitive embryonic-like stem cells can be created without destroying human embryos, the Catholic Conference of Illinois is pushing for state legislation to end state-sanctioned funding of embryonic stem-cell research through the Illinois Regenerative Medicine Institute.

“Human embryos should not be used in any type of research, and that should be in the law,” said Zach Wichmann, associate director of education for the conference, the public policy arm for the state’s Catholic bishops.

In addition to being immoral, he said, there is no scientific reason to continue using embryos.

“We think now that science has progressed to a point where it seems that embryonic stem-cell research is no longer necessary—that we can ban that procedure,” Wichmann told the Catholic Explorer, Joliet diocesan newspaper, in a telephone interview from the Springfield office.

Recently, two research studies independently confirmed that ordinary skin cells can be genetically reprogrammed to work as effectively as embryonic stem cells.

Wichmann said the new research poses no moral conflict since human embryos are not needed.

Dr. Patrick Stiff, director of Loyola’s California Institute for Regenerative Medicine Institute in New Orleans, De La Salle seeks to better any serious drug problem by helping to ensure that no student at the school is using illegal drugs.

“Each student receives a hair-analysis drug test at least once during the school year. Once a student has been tested, his or her name is returned to the pool for random drug selection again. A positive drug test is followed by a conference with parents and counseling is recommended for a second positive test results in expulsion.”

The De La Salle policy also deals with another aspect of the drug problem: abuse of prescription and over-the-counter medications.

“The goal is to deal with this as a public health problem and not a policing problem. And above all, to prevent.”

—Bertha Madras, deputy director of the Office of National Drug Control Policy

WASHINGTON (CNS)—Although it was sometimes overshadowed by former Sen. George Mitchell’s Dec. 13 report detailing drug use among dozens of Major League Baseball players, another report released earlier in the week had better news about drug use among middle and high school students.

The annual Monitoring the Future survey of eighth-, 10th- and 12th-graders found that the percentage of students reporting illicit drug use in the past month is continuing a decline that began in 2001.

The percentage of those in the three grades who said they had used any illicit drug—including marijuana, Ecstasy, LSD, amphetamines, inhalants, methamphetamine, steroids, cocaine, heroin, alcohol and cigarettes— in the past month went from 19.4 percent in 2001 to 14.8 percent in 2007, a 24 percent drop.

“The drug problem was not dramatic among eighth-graders, but was also seen among those in 10th and 12th grades. The 2007 study involved 105,025 8th-, 10th- and 12th-graders in a nationally representative sample of public and private schools.”

The Catholic conference has started a public education campaign on the basis of a report coming from the archdiocese’s diocesan newspaper, in a telephone interview with the archbishop and the heads of faith-based and community organizations that work with youth.

“We have representatives of schools where random drug testing of the student body has made a difference, including De La Salle High School in Kenner, La., near New Orleans. In 1998, the 500-student school run by the Christian Brothers became one of the first schools in the country to require random drug testing for the entire student body. Initial test results found that as many as 20 percent of the students had used drugs or alcohol, but the number quickly plunged as the program continued.”

When the program was briefly suspended after Hurricane Katrina, the percentage of students found to have used drugs or alcohol went up, but the numbers came back down when testing resumed, school administrators reported.

Joshua Lavantine Jr., a 16-year-old De La Salle senior, told the president that the drug-testing program helps students resist peer pressure.

“If someone offers you drugs and you don’t have any reason to say no, you can say that my school drug-tests and if I take drugs I am at risk of getting expelled,” Lavantine said. “You have a reason, and no one looks down on you.”

The 2007-08 Drug Testing and Education handbook says, “The main goal of De La Salle’s drug screening is to ensure that the school is a safe learning environment for all the students and the larger community of De La Salle.”

Lavantine said, “You have a reason, and no one looks down on you.”

“De La Salle handbook says, “The main goal of De La Salle’s drug screening is to ensure that the school is a safe learning environment for all the students and the larger community of De La Salle.”

De La Salle seeks to deter any serious drug problem by helping to ensure that no student at the school is using illegal drugs.

Each student receives a hair-analysis drug test at least once during the school year. Once a student has been tested, his or her name is returned to the pool for random drug selection again. A positive drug test is followed by a conference with parents and counseling is recommended for a second positive test results in expulsion.

The De La Salle policy also deals with another aspect of the drug problem: abuse of prescription and over-the-counter medications.

“The goal is to deal with this as a public health problem and not a policing problem,” Madras told a regional gathering of educators from 18 states. “And above all, to prevent.”

Catholics play a positive role in new drug report

U.S. President George W. Bush addresses a national summit on teen drug use in Washington on Dec. 11. (CNS photo/Jim Young, Reuters)
Pope says joy of Christmas season comes from Jesus’ presence

VATICAN CITY (CNS)—Despite severe economic challenges and political tensions, Christians in Israel and the Palestinian territories continue to hold on to the Holy Land “with our fingerprints” if need be, said the head of the Franciscan Custody of the Holy Land.

While the number of Catholics in Israel remains stable, the number of Christians in the Palestinian territories and the surrounding lands continues to plummet, said Franciscan Father Pierbattista Pizzaballa, superior of more than 300 Franciscans who provide pastoral care at the Christian holy sites.

The Franciscan priest spoke with journalists at the Vatican on Dec. 17 in conjunction with the release of “Terra Sancta: Guardians of Salvation’s Sources,” a three-hour DVD about the Franciscan Custody dubbed in eight languages, including English, Spanish and Arabic.

Father Pizzaballa said there were about 120,000 Christians left in Israel and the Palestinian territories. About half of them are Catholic and the vast majority are Palestinians.

The Catholic schools, especially in the Palestinian territories, are a key resource not only for educating children, but also for keeping families rooted in their faith and for promoting peaceful coexistence between Catholics and Muslims, he said.

Since the late 1940s, he said, Catholic schools in the region have welcomed Muslim students.

Where Christians and Muslims live side by side and where their children study together, the Franciscan said, it is easier to promote interreligious dialogue and respect for the belief of others.

“The situation is completely different with the Jewish community,” he said. “Israelis do not need our schools or hospi-
tals, but dialogue is equally important.

“This is an area where we need to invest more effort,” he said. “We have an obligation to dialogue.

On an eccumenical level, he said, “there is a dialogue of the condominium, because we literally ‘live under the same roof,’” shared space in several of Christianity’s holiest sites, including the Church of the Holy Sepulcher, where tradition says Jesus was buried.

But political uncertainty and the serious economic challenges coming from an unemployment rate hovering around 40 percent are forcing Christians to leave the territories.

“In 1967, Christians formed the majority of Bethlehem’s population,” Father Pizzaballa said. “Today it is less than 10 percent.”

The fact that 2007 marked a boom in pilgrims to the Holy Land, including Bethlehem, has helped ease the suffering somewhat, he said, because most Christians work in jobs connected to the tourist trade.

For Church personnel working in Israel, there is still a problem with obtaining visas, especially if the priest or religious comes from an Arab country, although Father Pizzaballa said some new visas were issued just before Christmas.

Archbishop Antonio Veglio, secretary of the Vatican’s Congregation for Eastern Churches, said the Vatican nuncio to Israel was scheduled to meet on Dec. 18 with Israeli officials to try to further ease the visa situation.
SHELBY COUNTY—A small brick church stands like a faithful witness amid the fallow wintertime fields. Lights from nearby homes and farmhouses dot the landscape that is slowly being covered by a dark, nighttime sky.

Cars filled with worshipers wind their way through the country roads to St. Vincent de Paul Church in rural Shelby County.

It’s Christmas Eve 2006.

Everyone has finished their Christmas shopping. Throughout the season of Advent, they may have set aside a moment here or there to contemplate and prepare for Christ’s future coming in glory.

Now, as they open the doors to the church and go from the darkness of an early winter night into the glow of warm lights inside, they kneel in prayer beside their family, friends and fellow parishioners.

In the hour to come, young children will show their love for Jesus. Adults, perhaps filled with the youthful joy that is a hallmark of Christmas, will listen to the proclamation of God’s Word and take part in the Eucharist, the sacrifice of love that is the reason that Christ came into the world.

It is time to welcome the Christ child, the Word-made-flesh, once again.

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It is time to welcome the Christ child, the Word-made-flesh, once again.

Cody Smiley, a St. Vincent de Paul parishioner, carries a drawing of a crown to the front of his parish church during a Christmas pageant prior to the Christmas Eve Mass.

Charles Collins, a member of St. Vincent de Paul Parish in Shelby County, holds his granddaughter, Lindsey Pahl, as he awaits the start of Christmas Eve Mass on Dec. 24, 2006.

After the Mass is over, St. Vincent de Paul parishioner Dustin Roell talks with his daughter, Jillian, about the Nativity scene at his parish’s church.

Father Paul Landwerlen, pastor of St. Vincent de Paul Parish in Shelby County, shows his Christmas joy during the homily he preached during a Christmas Eve Mass celebrated in his parish’s church on Dec. 24, 2006.

St. Vincent de Paul parishioner Carol Shaw kneels in prayer during the Christmas Eve Mass.

Cody Smiley, a St. Vincent de Paul parishioner, carries a drawing of a crown to the front of his parish church during a Christmas pageant prior to the Christmas Eve Mass.
The Christmas story as Joseph might have written about it

By John F. Fink

Mary and Joseph kneel at the crib of the infant Christ in this icon from the Church of the Nativity in Bethlehem. The Dec. 25 Christmas feast commemorates the birth of Christ. The Christmas season begins with the Dec. 24 evening vigil and ends on the feast of the Baptism of the Lord on Jan. 13.

Jesus' birthday was on Dec. 25, the date of the pagan festival of Saturnalia. The early church adopted this date to counter the back-to-back celebration of the pagan feast of the winter solstice, which took place on Dec. 25.

Arrival home

Mary and Joseph arrived in Bethlehem to register for the census ordered by Caesar Augustus. They registered at the Great Hotel, which we think was the inn at Bethlehem. The census only lasted three days, so the inn was crowded with many people. If there were a room available, we might not have been able to find a place to stay.

We had to move to the stable to be able to have our donkey put up in the stable, and there was also an ox there. And that is where Jesus was born. Mary wrapped him in swaddling clothes and laid him in a manger.

When she got back and told me that she was with child, I was shocked. Mary is the holiest person I have ever known, and it was hard for me to imagine that she would be unfaithful to me. We had, in fact, agreed that we would not have sexual relations during our marriage and that she would remain a virgin. But now, since she was with child, apparently she had had sexual relations with a man.

Mary explained that an angel appeared to her. I know this will be hard for you to believe, but this is what Mary said. The angel, whose name was Gabriel, told her that, of all the women in the world and throughout all the centuries, she had been chosen to be the mother of a man who would be known as the Son of God.

That is also when the angel told her that Elizabeth was six months pregnant. I had wondered how she knew about that, but had assumed that she had received a letter from Elizabeth. Mary then told the angel that she did not want to do that, that she would not want to return there. Besides, it is too close to Nazareth. In case Archelaus succeeds his father, Herod, I think it would be best for us to go to Galilee.

We hope to see you soon. We will keep you in our prayers.

Your brother, Joseph

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Christmas Supplement

Friday, December 21, 2007

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Every now and then, archaeologists discover something from the time that Jesus lived. The village is believed to be the Emmaus to which two disciples were walking when Jesus appeared to them after his resurrection (Lk 24:13-35). One of the disciples was Cleopas, and the church is built over what is believed to be his home.

Some scholars believe that Cleopas was the brother of Joseph, Mary’s husband. It was probably his wife—who John the Evangelist calls “Mary the wife of Cleopas”—who stood with Mary at the foot of the cross when Jesus was crucified (Jn 19:25).

Dear Cleopas,

Yes, after all this time it is I, Joseph. I am sorry it has been so long since you last heard from me, and I am sure you are surprised to be getting a letter from Egypt. So much has happened since my Mary and I last saw you, and your wife, Mary, at our wedding in Nazareth. I thought it was about time that I wrote to you with news.

The best news is that our baby, whom we named Jesus, was born. I apologize for being so late in telling you about that. I am writing now, though belatedly, to explain just how marvelous God has been to us.

We were living in Bethlehem. Some men from the East happened, though. Simeon told Mary that a sword will pierce her heart, and Jesus to all who were around. One sorrowful thing happened, though. Simeon told Mary that a sword will pierce her heart.

So now we are in Egypt. We intend to stay here until Jesus is able to return there. We worry that Herod’s men might be chasing us. They were not, of course, as we have just learned. I am sure you know more about what happened than we do, but word has just come that Herod sent soldiers to Bethlehem to massacre all of the boys who were 2 years old or younger. The soldiers were not chasing us because they thought they had already killed Jesus (Mt 2:16).

It was a nighttime journey, taking a week, through deserts where it was difficult to find water, and I worried that Herod’s men might be chasing us.

They were not, of course, as we have just learned. I am sure you know more about what happened than we do, but word has just come that Herod sent soldiers to Bethlehem to massacre all of the boys who were 2 years old or younger. The soldiers were not chasing us because they thought they had already killed Jesus (Mt 2:16).

We were able to have our donkey put up in the stable, and there was also an ox there. And that is where Jesus was born. Mary wrapped him in swaddling clothes and laid him in a manger.

Also, an 84-year-old prophetess named Anna praised Jesus to all who were around. One sorrowful thing happened, though. Simeon told Mary that a sword will pierce her heart.

So now we are in Egypt. We intend to stay here until Herod dies. We had reason to think we would go back to Nazareth after the massacre of the babies in Bethlehem, but we would not want to return there. Besides, it is too close to Nazareth in case Archelaus succeeds his father, Herod. I think it would be best for us to go to Galilee.

We hope to see you soon. We will keep you in our prayers.

Your brother, Joseph

(John F. Fink is editor emeritus of The Criterion.)
Reader’s share favorite Christmas memories

Neighbor’s special present thrills girl with its magic

By Helen F. Welter
Special to The Criterion

As a child, I was one in a family of seven children and my parents struggled to “make ends meet.” Our Christmas was small, and most of the gifts that Santa brought us were homemade. However, one gift that we received each year, usually a few days before Christmas, was new and came from an older couple who lived next door to us.

Their only child was grown and had moved out of the city. Every year, these neighbors would wrap an individual gift for each of the seven of us—something bought in a store that we would never have thought of asking Santa to bring us.

One year, when I was about 6 years old, my gift was a small, child-size suitcase. Even today, 50-plus years later, I remember the shiny maroon leather-like grain of the case and the zipper that held it closed.

When my grandmother died the following fall, I remember how proud I was to be able to carry my own little suitcase—none of my sisters had such a thing!—as we traveled to another city for her funeral.

I remember the delight it was to open that zipper and “check” to see that my clothing was still in place. That little suitcase became my own secret, magic bag that carried me to far-off imaginary places.

So now, many years later, as I wrap and send Christmas gifts to a child whose single Mom struggles to provide gifts to her daughter—who is about the age I was when I received that special gift—I recall the joy and pleasure of the wonderful present I received and hope that she, too, finds some secret magic in the gifts that I send to her.

(Helen F. Welter is a member of St. Barnabas Parish in Indianapolis.)†

Boy surprises family with solo at Christmas Eve Mass

By Mary Ann O’Riley Lassuy
Special to The Criterion

My favorite Christmas memory happened many years ago. It was Christmas Eve in 1934. A crystal clear sky was filled with bright, shiny stars, and a soft layer of freshly fallen snow covered the ground and lined the branches of the trees. It was magical.

Mom, Dad and the five of us children piled into our—even then—vintage car, a Durand, and headed for Remington, Ind., because our town of Wolcott, Ind., did not have a Catholic church.

Sacred Heart Parish had a school for first-through sixth-grade students. Our brother, Jim, attended the parish school. We filed into the church and settled into our pew. The altar was decorated with flowers and candles.

The Christmas crieche was awaiting the arrival of Baby Jesus, who was to be placed in the manger by Father Fitzgerald. The organist began playing the organ and a beautiful, young voice began singing “Silent Night” then “O Little Town of Bethlehem” and “Ave Maria.” It was extraordinary.

My sister and I turned to see who the vocalist was and we were surprised to see that it was our little brother, who was then in the fourth-grade. Only he and our mother knew of the “special surprise.” To top it off, there was a second surprise. When we turned around, sitting behind us were our grandparents, several uncles and our favorite aunt, who had driven through the snow from Hoopeston, Ill., to share in the special surprise.

That multi-talented little boy grew up, went to war in Europe, came home and went to college, studied art in Chicago then music and dance in New York, and performed on Broadway as well as in Canada, Texas, and up and down the East Coast.

He finally gave up show business, came back to Indianapolis and became a mortician. Our three brothers were all morticians.

Finally, as we always thought he would, he entered the seminary. That little boy became Father James K. O’Riley. He served as God’s servant in the Archdiocese of Indianapolis for more than 25 years until he joined the celestial choir in 2004.

He filled our lives with prayer, joy, laughter and music—all starting with our “special surprise” at midnight Mass and our parents’ decision to send Jim to Catholic school.

(Mary Ann O’Riley Lassuy is a member of St. Malachi Parish in Brownsburg.)†

Mother and Child

A bronze statue depicting the Virgin Mary holding the Christ Child graces a gravesite at Our Lady of Peace Cemetery in Indianapolis. Each section of the north side Catholic cemetery is named for a Marian image.
Child treasures memories of books, handmade gifts

By Bonnie Schott
Special to The Criterion

When I was growing up in the 1950s and '60s in Indianapolis, my father was the janitor and school bus driver for St. Roch School first then Immaculate Heart of Mary Church and School for about 30 years.

Money was always tight as Mom tried to feed and clothe all 10 of us children on Dad's income and keep us in Catholic schools.

Looking back, Christmas must have been a challenge for her as she heard us pour out our heart's desires to Santa. Even though she couldn’t afford new dolls for us girls each year, she always found ways to sew beautiful new doll clothes for us from scraps of fabric that people gave her. She did the sewing after we went to bed so they would be a surprise for us on Christmas morning.

Sporting our little “overnight” suitcases of homemade doll clothes, we were the proud owners of miniature works of art, and didn’t realize it until years later when we were trying to pull together memorable Christmases for our own families.

Growing up in Sacred Heart of Jesus Parish, we lived near an early Goodwill Store, which was about a mile’s walk north of our house. It was always an adventure to walk there with our mother and Dad to provide Christmas presents for all of us.

And I thank God for all the generous Christmas Angels who reach out to the poor at Christmas every year and make dreams come true for children who would otherwise have nothing. Many of those Angels are my friends. Now my Mom and Dad—Joseph and Hazel Burns—are enjoying “The Ultimate Christmas” in heaven with Jesus. May God reward them for the hard work and sacrifices they made for so many years to take care of our family.

(Bonnie Burns Schott is a member of St. Roch Parish in Indianapolis.)

Visit of Magi

The visit of the Magi is portrayed in a stained-glass window at St. Michael’s Cathedral in Toronto. The feast of the Epiphany of the Lord in the Catholic Church in the West is Jan. 6, 2008. It commemorates the adoration of the newborn Christ by the Magi, or Wise Men.

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Mother cherishes memories of son born on Christmas

By Margi Logan
Special to The Criterion

The best Christmas for me was Dec. 25, 1968. God gave my husband, Mike, and I a baby boy, Tim, our third son, born on Jesus Christ’s birthday.

Our day started quite early because of our other two sons, Brian and Joe, could not wait any longer to see what Santa had brought them.

Sleeping in for them that day was probably around 5 a.m. or 6 a.m. Grandma had spent the night with us and she enjoyed watching the children open their presents. She made our day extra special by being there.

My Auntie Vi called before 8 a.m. to tell me that she knew I was going to have a Christmas baby. She did not know that I had been having labor pains for the past three days so I was hoping that she was right.

As the day progressed, the labor pains became a little more frequent, but not bad enough to call the doctor. I was so grateful that I could be home on Christmas morning to see the boys open their presents. But there were still some places I wanted to go that day.

My brother and his wife were having a wonderful Christmas dinner and party. My husband’s family had hosted us the night before for another great time. I have to admit that I was really enjoying all of these family celebrations. I did not have to cook, clean up or help with anything.

By 6 p.m., my husband and I decided that it was time to call the doctor and go to the hospital.

When I informed the nurses about what a great day I had enjoying the holiday food, they were not too happy with me. I had planned to forgo anesthesia and stay awake for the birth of my baby, but I realize now how careless it was to eat meals while in labor.

God was on our side and our baby was delivered about 9:30 p.m.

Later in the evening, the nurse brought our baby to us dressed in a Christmas stocking. They also gave him a beautiful silver cup.

We were also blessed with two daughters, Beth and Trisha, in later years. Christmas babies are special, and I feel very honored to have my son share Christ’s birthday.

Our son, Tim, will be 39 this Christmas. How fast the years have gone by. Thank you, son, for the great memories and most of all for being there for us in the good and bad times. We love you.

(Margi Logan is a member of Holy Spirit Parish in Indianapolis.)

Christmas Mass unites family in their love for Jesus

By Catherine Gramm McCleary
Special to The Criterion

Remembering past Christmases, I recall my family—my Mom and Dad, my five brothers and me—going to Mass at 5 a.m. at SS. Peter and Paul Cathedral in Indianapolis.

I was very young for my first memory around the 1940s. We would get up in the dark and drive a long time to the church. Then we would go into this big gray church with columns taller than even my parents.

Inside, there were beautiful lights and decorations and all kinds of people kneeling.

I remember the beautiful Christmas music and Mass in Latin. I didn’t know much about it. As I grew older, I learned how important it all was.

There, on the side of the railing, was the Baby Jesus with Mary and Joseph and all the animals.

I learned that this was my friend, who was born on Christmas.

Every year after, to my recollection, we knelt to pray and say “hi” and how much we love Jesus, too.

When I grew older, I was also able to receive Jesus in holy Communion.

By this time, we were attending midnight Mass at the cathedral. Still, all our family attended Mass and received holy Communion.

Each year, we would go back home, have breakfast, open Christmas presents and enjoy each other’s company. This tradition still goes on. Every year on one Sunday in December, we—the sons and daughters and our families—meet at one of the parish churches in Indianapolis, Brownsburg or Mooresville.

We attend Mass and receive holy Communion. Then we go somewhere to have dinner and enjoy each other’s company. We’ve had aunts and uncles and cousins and other relatives join us. Sometimes we have around 75 to 80 people.

Oh, yes, we sing Christmas carols and songs, too. That was also a tradition that my parents started years ago.

So every year we all remember and thank the good Lord because we are still able to continue celebrating Baby Jesus’ birthday together.

Our Mom and Dad, two brothers, my husband and other relatives join us from heaven.

(Catherine McCleary is a member of St. Thomas More Parish in Mooresville.)

Please join Archbishop Daniel M. Buechlein, O.S.B., the pastor and parishioners of SS. Peter and Paul Cathedral on Christmas Eve to celebrate Christ’s coming in Christmas.

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Children teach Santa about true meaning of Christmas

By Frank Wiseman
Special to The Criterion

I have many great Christmas memories, but this one has a special place in my heart.

I have dressed up as Santa Claus each Christmas for 39 years, and visited schools, churches, an orphanage and private homes.

It was Christmas morning in 2001. I live in Floyd Knobs, and at the time my only two grandchildren lived in Franklin, Tenn. Caleb was almost 4 and Katie was 15 months old.

I had driven to within an hour and a half of their house on Christmas Eve and spent the night. I left there at 4:30 a.m. so I would be standing beside the tree as they awoke on Christmas morning.

I arrived and—as arranged in advance with my son and daughter-in-law—let myself in. I placed the presents under the tree and sat in a chair to await the sound of tiny footsteps descending the staircase.

It was not long before I heard Caleb say, "Mommy! Mommy! Santa is still here!"

As they entered the room, I acted as if I was startled. I told them that I must have fallen asleep, and that I hoped that I did not wake them up.

Caleb assured me that if I had then that was quite all right.

I got down on one knee and started handing out gifts. I helped Katie with the wrappings on her gifts then I sat each of my grandchildren on my knee and told them that I did not wake them up.

I got down on one knee and started handing out gifts. I helped Katie with the wrappings on her gifts then I sat each of my grandchildren on my knee and told them that I did not wake them up.

“Santa,” Caleb said. “Katie and me wants to show you what we did yesterday.”

He took one of my hands and Katie took the other, and they led me to the kitchen. There on the counter was a cake that I could see looked like they had indeed helped to decorate with icing.

As we got closer, I could see that it had “Happy birthday, Jesus” written on it.

Caleb told me that he, Katie and Mommy made Jesus a birthday cake. This old Santa got a tear in his eye and a lump in his throat. Through all the glitter and glamour and the hustle and bustle of getting ready for Christmas, my son and daughter-in-law had taken the time to make sure that their children knew the true meaning of Christmas.

That three-hour drive home by myself on Christmas morning gave me time to do a lot of thinking about how proud I am of my family.

My wife is a nurse and she was working so that the nurses with younger children could be home with them on Christmas morning.

I was proud of knowing that my grandchildren were being taught what and why we celebrate at this time of year.

This Santa’s rosy cheeks were not red from the cold, but from the tears of joy that rested upon them all the way home.

“Merry Christmas to all, and to all a good night! Happy birthday, Jesus!”

(Frank Wiseman is a member of St. Mary-of-the-Knobs Parish in Floyd Knobs.)

Woman misses yesteryear and old-fashioned Christmas in city

By Mary C. Vinci
Special to The Criterion

If this writer were asked today whether I like Indianapolis with all its fast life, my answer would be, “No, I prefer the beauty of our times during the early years when we were known as the city of ‘Indiana-noplace.’ ”

I loved our small-town atmosphere in a time when life was easy.

As a girl of 13, I would walk downtown from my home in Sacred Heart of Jesus Parish on the near south side to shop in the stores.

During the Christmas season, the downtown was all aglow with decorations, especially the L.S. Ayres department store’s front windows. I also remember the L.S. Ayres and William H. Block tearooms.

All the downtown stores were decorated. It has been 20 years since the true meaning of Christmas was celebrated at Monument Circle with the Nativity scene, the crosses, the angels and the Star of Bethlehem as well as Santa Claus and his reindeer all decorated.

There was a shelter to house the many carolers representing groups from all over the state that came to sing at Monument Circle.

In those days, we all realized the true meaning of the Christmas season.

And, in those days, we did not need to lock our doors and windows. Now we have alarm systems. With all the crime, we don’t know if and when we may return to our homes safe and sound.

We are a growing city, but I prefer the “good old days” in the small but beautiful ‘Indiana-noplace’.

(Mary C. Vinci is a member of Holy Name of Jesus Parish in Beech Grove.)
Broken Nativity set leads woman to conversion experience

By Denise Bossert
Special to The Criterion

Over 20 years ago, I bought an unpainted plaster Nativity set from an arts and crafts store during their after-Christmas sale. I spent a substantial amount of time during the next year painting each little piece and constructing a stable for the Holy Family. For years, my children used the figurines like puppets as they practiced retelling the story of the first Christmas. Last year, the Nativity set had a little accident. During the installation of built-in bookshelves, my husband rested a large piece of wood against the fireplace mantel. It slipped, hit the coffee table and broke half of my Nativity set. I was not happy. I had a deep sentimental attachment to that hand-painted Nativity set. Every Advent, when I lifted the tissue-wrapped pieces from a box, I would smile and replay the memories of creating it. With one loud crash, it had all come to an end. After some heavy sighs and an errant tear over the mishap, I began to realize that it wasn’t the tragedy that I was making it out to be. The set was far from a realistic depiction of the first Christmas. The diminutive figurines were cartoon-like little boys and girls dressed up in biblical costumes like a caricature of some children’s Christmas pageant at a local community center. They had infantile smiles on their painted faces. The angel wasn’t very special in our previous faith journey, and we didn’t want to see any of it come to an end. There is comfort in familiarity. Change is painful, no way around it. Even so, we realize that incomplete truth and familiar memories must step aside for the fullness of truth to take root, but putting away childish things isn’t easy. It takes time and a whole lot of grace to make it happen. It’s so final. As Catholics who recognize the wellspring we have in our faith, we might respond to potential converts like my husband did when I voiced my deep sadness over the powdery mess of the broken plaster figures on my coffee table. “What’s your problem?” he had asked me. “We were long overdue for a new set anyway.” That may be the case, but it still isn’t easy to see it all come crashing down before my eyes. It’s so final. Likewise, potential converts struggle with deep attachments to the past. The set was far from a realistic depiction of the first Christmas. The diminutive figurines were cartoon-like little boys and girls dressed up in biblical costumes like a caricature of some children’s Christmas pageant at a local community center. They had infantile smiles on their painted faces. The angel wasn’t very special in our previous faith journey, and we didn’t want to see any of it come to an end. There is comfort in familiarity. Change is painful, no way around it. Even so, we realize that incomplete truth and familiar memories must step aside for the fullness of truth to take root, but putting away childish things isn’t easy. It takes time and a whole lot of grace to say what has happened to us is really very good. A year has gone by, and I don’t miss the old Nativity set that much. The memories are still beautiful to me—like the memories of the spiritual journey that came before my conversion to the Catholic Church. It isn’t so much a letting go or a throwing away as it is a growing and accepting of God’s full design for his Beloved. It is such a relief when we see that the faith we once cherished has not been lost, but has been converted into something more, something deeper, something fuller, something long overdue. The original Nativity set was very special, but the one that graces my fireplace mantel today simply takes my breath away. And so it is with conversion. (Denise Bossert is a member of Immaculate Heart of Mary Parish in New Melle, Mo.)
My favorite Christmas memory is reminiscing about Christmas Eve as a child at our family’s Mount Street home in an inner city neighborhood on the near west side of Indianapolis. Our family had an annual tradition of opening simple gifts for each other in the late evening around 9 p.m. then getting ready for midnight Mass at the former Assumption Church. When I was a child, we followed the three hours of fasting before receiving Communion. After midnight Mass, we would come home and Dad would fix scrambled eggs, homemade sausage, biscuits and gravy. Then we children would go to bed exhausted, and in the morning wake up to find gifts from Santa. You would only appreciate this story about our traditional after midnight Mass breakfast that my father cooked—men didn’t cook in this “Archie Bunker” era—if you understand that the eggs and gravy were always good, the biscuits were hard as rocks and the strong smell of garlic from the hand-ground pork, sage and garlic sausage lingered in the house for days. To this day, our 90-year-old mother has never revealed to any of us where the gifts from Santa were hidden every year. It’s still a mystery. (Michael A. Mick resides in Naples, Fla. He is a former member of St. Pius X Parish in Indianapolis, St. Malachy Parish in Brownsburg and the former Assumption Parish in Indianapolis.)

A beautiful Christmas memory that I will always cherish was my first musical Christmas concert in the convent in 1965. The cloistered Benedictine sisters in Clyde, Mo., had never heard the beautiful carol titled “Do You Hear What I Hear?” There were 40 young novices at that time, and their pure and clear voices soaring in the descant and arrangement that I had written and directed was truly a gifting surprise for our first Christmas Chorale. It was a real challenge back then to practice and practice this song without the professed sisters hearing it! This was a great part of what made the surprise so meaningful. The Christ-centered holiness of that beautiful carol echoed the true meaning and message of Christmas for one cloistered community of contemplative nuns who lived very focused lives. (Mary Jean Wethington is a member of St. Teresa Benedicta of the Cross Parish in Bright.)

It had been an extremely trying year for our family in 1999 as we had been separated geographically from my original family for a year and a half. We were experiencing a great trial at the time, and I was sad and homesick. With a little creativity and great loving hearts, the folks back home found a way to stay connected with us and lift our droopy spirits. We had moved across the country, and with great difficulty left family and friends behind. I am very close to my Mom, siblings and their families so leaving them was hard. During our time away, our family began to experience some painful contradictions. So much of it was out of our control, and I was at a low point and feeling more discouraged. Meanwhile, back home, my family put their heads together and decided to videotape happenings going on with them. They filmed my Mom, brothers and sister and their families, and the new dog, Bandit. They made a special effort to include various scenes and family gatherings complete with greetings, well wishes and singing around the Christmas tree. Before the video was finished, we were suddenly able to return home to live. The happy finale to this recording project was that our family was included in the Christmas videotape. Now we were home for Christmas and sharing in the festivities. I cannot help the tears that well up in me whenever I watch that video. It is a reminder of the generosity and love of God blessing us with the gift of family—not just at Christmas, but every day. (Pamela Domescik is a member of Our Lady of the Greenwood Parish in Greenwood.)
Family’s Christmas dinner continues late into the night

By Hilda L. Buck
Special to The Criterion

Our family is scattered all over the country so when we get together at special times we really enjoy being with each other and getting caught up on all the news.

One such time was Christmas a few years ago. We all went to midnight Mass then the next morning slept a little later than usual. There were no believers in Santa by then.

So many gifts were under the tree that we decided to open them in shifts. We had brunch then opened a few brightly decorated boxes, and had time to “Oooh” and “Aaah” and enjoy what we received.

Then there were snacks along with more gifts and socializing.

Finally, when it was time to put the finishing touches on the dinner scheduled for 6 p.m., we realized that no one had remembered to put the turkey in the oven. That was a problem for Santa, how could we do?

But what would we do? We did what any “normal” family would do. We put the turkey in the oven. We are a pretty laid-back group so it was no problem to wait for dinner.

Anyway, we thoroughly enjoyed our holiday dinner at 10 p.m. on Christmas night. It was a magical night filled with good food, good friends and the excitement of our grandchildren—then the door would open to hear him read the Christmas story about the birth of the Christ Child in Bethlehem and a poem on the meaning of family, whether it be by blood or friendship.

He read this story and poem every Christmas for 56 years, even telling it from memory after he lost his sight in the last few years. For the few minutes that it took to read this wonderful account of Christ’s birth and the story of family, there were no differences, troubles or problems in the world or in our small family.

My Dad believed in the true meaning of Christmas. To him, it was about the love of family and time well-spent celebrating family.

Before gifts were exchanged, we all gathered around his chair in the living room to hear him read the Christmas story about the birth of the Christ Child in Bethlehem and a poem on the meaning of family, whether it be by blood or friendship. He read this story and poem every Christmas for 56 years, even telling it from memory after he lost his sight in the last few years.

For the few minutes that it took to read this wonderful account of Christ’s birth and the story of family, there were no differences, troubles or problems in the world or in our small family.

Although I have heard the account of Christ’s birth many times over the years, nothing will ever compare to hearing my Dad read it to us on Christmas Eve then look at us and say, as Mary did with her Son, “Ponder this in your hearts throughout the year, and remember how lucky we are to be here tonight celebrating once again our family and the family of our Lord. Let’s think about and say a prayer for those in our family that are not fortunate to be here with us tonight… Now let’s open presents.”

Dad has been gone for two years, but the family tradition is living on—and the memories of what Christmas means and memories of my Dad are just as bright.

(End)

Grandma’s house and Dad’s stories are special memories

By Laura Stevenson
Special to The Criterion

My mother’s family always got together on Christmas Eve every year. My Grandma had a big old house that was great for family gatherings. There was lots of good food brought in by everyone. The living room looked just like something out of a magazine and presents were everywhere.

As an adult, I realize that there really weren’t that many presents and the decorations were beautiful but normal. But as a child, it was the anticipation, the love, and the gathering of family and cousins that made this night so magical in my mind.

My Dad believed in the true meaning of Christmas. To him, it was about the love of family and time well-spent celebrating family.

Before gifts were exchanged, we all gathered around his chair in the living room to hear him read the Christmas story about the birth of the Christ Child in Bethlehem and a poem on the meaning of family, whether it be by blood or friendship.

He read this story and poem every Christmas for 56 years, even telling it from memory after he lost his sight in the last few years. For the few minutes that it took to read this wonderful account of Christ’s birth and the story of family, there were no differences, troubles or problems in the world or in our small family.

Although I have heard the account of Christ’s birth many times over the years, nothing will ever compare to having my Dad read it to us on Christmas Eve then look at us and say, as Mary did with her Son, “Ponder this in your hearts throughout the year, and remember how lucky we are to be here tonight celebrating once again our family and the family of our Lord. Let’s think about and say a prayer for those in our family that are not fortunate to be here with us tonight… Now let’s open presents.”

Dad has been gone for two years, but the family tradition is living on—and the memories of what Christmas means and memories of my Dad are just as bright.

(Laura Stevenson is a member of the Franciscan and Clare Parish in Greenwood.)

Christmas greetings from Poland

A group of students from Poland sing during Pope Benedict XVI’s weekly general audience in Paul VI Hall at the Vatican on Dec. 12.

The Criterion
Christmas Supplement
Friday, December 21, 2007
Page 21

IT’S EASY TO FIND A LONG-LASTING GARAGE DOOR. JUST LOOK FOR THE RIBBON.

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PLATINUM SAVINGS PLAN is back! YOU WILL SAVE! No cost to you – no cards. The more you buy, the more you save. Only available at ...
**Christmas Eve procession was a tradition in Madison**

By Michael Moore and Mary Ann Wyand  
Special to The Criterion

MADISON—Childhood memories of Christmas Eve Mass at St. Patrick Church in 1938 are still vivid for Prince of Peace parishioner Marie (Behr) Hoskins. Her family lived in a house across the street from the church, which became St. Patrick Chapel after St. Mary, St. Michael and St. Patrick parishes in Madison and St. Anthony Parish in nearby China were consolidated as Prince of Peace Parish by Archbishop Daniel M. Buechlein in 1993.

On Christmas Eve 70 years ago, Hoskins recalled, children in the parish dressed as angels for a procession into the church with a figurine of the baby Jesus at the start of midnight Mass.

“The weather was freezing cold,” she said. “We did not have coats, but white robes. We all had ropes of silver tinsel around our necks crossed in the front and around our waists. The sponsors made a halo of the silver rope around our heads. We marched to the church. … I was 6 years old … We were holding unlit candles. We did not light them until we got inside the church. We did not need light. It was a cold, starry night.”

At the church, “two real tall doors were opened and we processed in,” Hoskins remembered. “… The last one in was the one who carried Jesus … My sister, Helen, was an angel after me … Father Joseph Brown would be up front at the altar looking down with the servers as we marched in. After Mass, the children were so sleepy that the parents rounded them up and carried them home.”

Fifteen to 25 children dressed up as angels for the Christmas Eve procession every year, she said, and in later years they carried small flashlights instead of candles. This tradition continued until St. Patrick’s Church was merged into Prince of Peace Parish 14 years ago.

Hoskins still serves as a lector for Communion services at her parish church. Located adjacent to Pope John XXIII School and Shawe Memorial Jr./Sr. High School, St. Patrick Chapel is used often for school Masses, Hispanic liturgies, weddings, funerals, Communion services and rosaries.

Among the traces of Christmas past at St. Patrick Chapel is the historic manger built by Wendel Jacobs in the 1920s. It is assembled in mid-December every year then the figures of Joseph, Mary and the animals are placed on straw. On Christmas Eve, the figure of the infant Jesus is reverently placed on a bed of straw. The figures trace their existence back to the old St. Patrick’s Church built by Father Hyppolytus Dupontavice in 1853. Jacobs brought them to the new church in 1910.

In the 1950s, the figures of Joseph and Mary were looking a little worse for wear so parishioner Bertha Schafer paid to have them refurbished.

About 30 years later, Alice Cassavy, president of St. Patrick’s Altar Society, and parishioner Delores Hellman arranged the purchase of new images of the Holy Family from a store in Louisville for use at St. Patrick Chapel.

The old figurines dating back to the late 1800s were donated to Shawe Memorial High School for display there during Advent.

People die and church buildings are replaced, yet this parish community—which was founded by a French priest to restore the Irish railroad workers back to their faith—still maintains traces of the customs begun by the Irish workers and German farmers who migrated there.

*(Michael Moore is a member of Prince of Peace Parish in Madison.)*

*Submitted photo*

This historic Nativity set was photographed in front of the statue of St. Joseph holding the Christ Child at St. Patrick Chapel in Madison.

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**Did you know**

Did you know that the Archdiocesan Council of the Society of St. Vincent de Paul can help leverage every one dollar you contribute to obtain over $14 worth of food to feed the needy 52 weeks of the year? We can because we are a 100% volunteer organization and we stretch every one dollar to obtain $14 worth of food!!

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Faith Alive!

Grasp full Christmas festival in person of Christ

By James Schellman

Try for a moment to imagine Christmas without Christ. Sadly, it is actually pretty easy.

Witness the “holiday season” as it is observed in our contemporary culture. It seems to become longer each year, now starting sometime before Thanksgiving and concluding with Christmas Day or, for those people with more stamina, lasting through New Year’s Day.

We cannot deny that there are good aspects of this experience. Our fractured society actually comes together in an unusual if partial way at this time. A sense of goodwill and solidarity takes temporary hold of us.

Even so, many Christians are in danger of losing an understanding and observance of the full season under the force of a “cultural Christmas.”

How many Christians grasp the full Christmas festival, which begins four weeks before Christmas with the preparatory season of Advent—the beginning of the Christian year? The Christmas season reaches a climax on Christmas Day and continues for a few weeks into the New Year until the feast of the Baptism of the Lord.

What is there in this ancient Christmas season of extended preparation and celebration that we lose at our peril?

In short, we lose Christ, the whole person of Christ. The Christ of the Christmas season is not simply the babe in the manger. This Christ went on to live, to die an unspeakable death and to rise from the dead.

And this same Lord will come again! All of this history is held together in the few weeks of the Christmas season, which precede the beginning of the end of the world as we know it—and that end itself.

Through prayers and Scriptures, we hear again the story of our darkened world and of that world’s only salvation: the feast of God’s first coming in Christ is the occasion for us to long anew for that time when God will come again to make of us, and the beloved broken world we share, what God intended from the beginning—a garden place of graccd communion.

The Feast of the Holy Family inserts us into the family formed and nurtured in the bosom of an incarnate Lord, who for three decades was unselfishly, voluntarily identified through sign and symbol as the royal one destined to pay the dearest price for our redemption—thus, the Magi’s gifts of frankincense and myrrh.

No sooner is Jesus’ birth celebrated than we turn our minds and hearts to the major mysteries proclaiming his purpose and power. The Feast of the Holy Family inserts us immediately into the full identity of this incarnate Lord, who for three decades was formed and nurtured in the bosom of an extended family.

Then, contrary to the usual chronology, we return to the days after Christ’s birth in the feast of the Epiphany to celebrate the mystery of Jesus’ mission as the gift of God to all peoples.

No sooner have we reflected on this than we find ourselves at the edge of the Jordan River with John the Baptist, who accedes to the now mature Lord’s desire and plunges him in the waters of the Jordan. Jesus’ baptism ends his 40-day sojourn in the desert apart from all that he loved, and launches Our Lord on his brief public life and the fullness of his mission.

This sacramental season immerses us anew in our baptismal calling to lay down our lives for that new world where all tears will be wiped away, where broken individuals, families and communities will be made whole, and where war can never again be waged, let alone imagined.

The birth of Christ is depicted in stained-glass at St. Michael’s Cathedral in Toronto. The Dec. 25 Christmas feast depicts the birth of Christ. The Christmas season begins with the Dec. 24 evening vigil and ends on the feast of the Baptism of the Lord on Jan. 13. This sacramental season immerses us anew in our baptismal calling to lay down our lives for that new world where all tears will be wiped away, where broken individuals, families and communities will be made whole, and where war can never again be waged, let alone imagined.

(Thomas Schellman is executive director of the North American Forum on the Catechumenate, which can be accessed online at www.naforum.org.)

Discussion Point

This Week’s Question

How would you change Christmas if you could?

“Their little boobs might be more appealing than real,” (“They” with but too often that gets way out of line.”) (Frank Gesmer, Upper Deerfield, N.J.)

“I’d like to be done with all the preparation and events so I could concentrate on the spiritual side. Before we open gifts on Christmas morning, we read a Scripture passage or a story with spiritual significance. I’d like to see more people celebrate Christmas by first acknowledging the sparing for a God who with unimaginable humility became like us so that we might become like God.”

That transforming power and grace is meant to be shared. It is Christ’s continuing mission and now it also is our mission.

(Thomas Schellman is executive director of the North American Forum on the Catechumenate, which can be accessed online at www.naforum.org.)

Lend Us Your Voice

An upcoming edition asks: Do you ever use the Bible in prayer or meditation? How?

To respond for possible publication, send an e-mail to cgreene@catholicnews.com or write to Faith Alive! at 3211 Fourth St., N.E., Washington, D.C. 20017-1100. © 2007 by Catholic News Service.

least , and and for our death, it rising you destroying our life, Lord Jesus, come in glory!“

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CNS photo/Mike Crupi, Presidio, Texas)
Faith and Family/Sean Gallagher

Families can spread Christmas joy

On a cold, dark, dizzyingly winter day nearly three years ago, my first child, Cindy, was born. It was a joyous, challenging day, but I also spent the day away from my wife, Cindy, and baby, Cindy. The shepherds received “news of the birth” of Jesus in this challenging time. But the shepherds received “news of the birth” of Jesus in this challenging time. But the shepherds received “news of the birth” of Jesus in this challenging time. But the shepherds received “news of the birth” of Jesus in this challenging time. But the shepherds received “news of the birth” of Jesus in this challenging time.
The Church is observing the last Sunday of Advent. In only two days, joyfully and in spirit, the Church will celebrate the Feast of the Nativity of the Lord on Christmas.

For the first reading this weekend, the Church selects a passage from the Book of Isaiah. Central in the reading is King Ahaz of the southern Hebrew kingdom of Judah, who reigned in the last third of the eighth century before Christ. His reign is distinguished. He was not a great leader. Nevertheless, two days will be enough for any of us to use the opportunity of Advent to cleanse ourselves of attitudes and sin instead make our souls worthy of receiving the Lord. Christmas can be deeply personal for us because if we have made ourselves worthy, Jesus will come to us personally on this great feast.

The Church encourages us, therefore, to accept Advent invitation to come. If we have conscientiously observed Advent, then the Church urges us to continue to do so until Christmas. If we have allowed Advent to slip past us, the Church calls us to use the time left to us, God wants us to love him as God loves us. Again and again, God has reached out to people to empower them in coming in Him. He sent a son to Ahaz that the nation might have a good king. He sent Jesus to us. Jesus sent us the Apostles. God loves us so much. He reaches out to us. He provides for us in ways we cannot understand. Even in only two days, we can reach out to God. There still is time.

My Journey to God

A Child’s Christmas in Vincennes

Dylan couldn’t remember
The 12 days or six nights,
But he could remember snow,
Much snow.
Few flakes fell on me or mine,
But we had Christmas
As magical as those in Wales.

The white-flocked tree
Became a jeweled lady
Who watched and twinkled
As Nana cooked in the old kitchen
Of the old house, on the old street
In the old town.

Aproned and flour-dusted, she
Performed culinary wonders
On her stamping stovetop
Green mints and flannel-red cherries
Became small presents on
White frosted cakes.
Raisin pies hummed from their own
And divinity wined from its plate
Of lace.

Outside, a plastic Joseph
And a plastic Mary watched over
A plastic Baby Jesus
In a stable made of old boards and pine.
A radio under the crib reminded
Neighbors strolling by

That herald angels sang praises to
The newborn King, even if He was plastic,
And that Santa Claus was considering
Coming to try out a sleigh.

Even if it didn’t get a flake of snow.

By Susie McAllister

God’s saving grace is there for everyone who does not reject it

A Jewish friend tells me that,
According to her rabbis, Catholics
believe this is that she does not rejecting Jesus as her Jewish
and Savior she will go to hell.
Does this seem right? How can I reply? (Louisiana)

If your friend is distinguishing her rabbis
correctly, he is wrong.
The Catholic Church does not teach what is reflected in his remark.
I cannot deny that many Catholics and other Christians have believed it. I also
deny that some groups, even
nations, calling themselves Catholic have believed this and even acted on it.
But while some official Church statements have been at best ambiguous about explicit belief in Jesus Christ and/or membership in the Catholic Church being necessary for salvation, Catholic teaching today is clear.

Within the past two generations, through a host of official documents and papal letters and discourses, the Church has repeated its position that the great non-Christian religions represent part of the sincere effort of people everywhere to find answers to the huge, haunting questions about life and death and God.

Furthermore, these efforts, some times
noble and sometimes stumbling, represent the work of the Holy Spirit in the world. They take place, we believe, under the influence of Jesus, the incarnate Word of God, whose saving grace and love lie underneath all honest searches for truth, even if those searches do not always lead to explicit belief and faith in him.

Such belief is not new. The principle is an ancient one in Christianity: God’s saving grace is there for everyone who does not deliberately place an obstacle to that gift.

One classic statement to that effect comes from Pope Leo IV (853) during a controversy with certain heretics of his day.

“Just as there is no human being past, present or future whose nature was not assumed by Jesus Christ, our Lord,” said
Pope Leo, “so there is no human being
past, present or future for whom he did not suffer and die.”

Any failure to profit from that death would derive only from a deliberate refusal to believe when one clearly recognizes that such a belief is God’s will.
The Second Vatican Council reaffirmed this position.

“The Declaration on the Relationship of the Church to Nostra Aetate, ‘Religions,’ declares, that while the Church always remembers its mission to proclaim that the great religious life is found in Christ, it also “looks with sincere respect on those ways of conduct and of life, those rules and teachings which, though differing in many particulars from what she holds and sets forth, nevertheless often reflect a ray of that truth which enlightens all peoples”

Church teachings of centuries ago were hugely influenced by the assumption that all known people, mainly in Europe and a small part of Asia, had by then had the opportunity to hear and accept the Gospel of Christ.

Renaissance discoveries of vast new populations and cultures and continents and religions changed all that. The Christian Church has grown much since then in understanding its mission and in its theology of salvation.

The misunderstanding of your Jewish friend is unfortunate. I should forcefully remind us of another sentence in that same declaration: “All should take pains that, in catechetical instruction and in preaching the Word of God, nothing is taught out of harmony with the truth of the Gospel and the Spirit of Christ, which is a spirit of love and respect, not of hate and rejection.”

All this applies in a particular way to our Jewish brothers and sisters, the people with whom we believe God established his first covenants, and through whom we have received so much of our Christian faith.

A free brochure on ecumenism, including questions on intercommunications and other ways of sharing worship, is available by sending a stamped, self-addressed envelope to Father John Dietzen, Box 3315, Peoria, IL 61612. Questions may be sent to him at the same address or by e-mail to jdietzen@swel.com.

Daily Readings

Sunday, Dec. 23, 2007

• Isaiah 7:10-14
• Romans 1:1-7
• Matthew 1:18-24

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Even if it didn’t get a flake of snow.

By Susie McAllister

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Rest in peace

Please submit in writing to our office by 10 a.m. Thursday before the week of publication; be sure to state date of death. Obituaries of archdiocesan priests serving in this diocese are listed elsewhere in The Criterion. Order priests and religious sisters mentioned here are included, unless otherwise noted, among the archdiocese or have other connections to it; those are separate obituary notices on this page.


Brother Martin professed solemn vows at the Basilica of Our Lady of Consolation in Carey, Ohio. He served in retreat ministries in Carey, Ohio, and Pitor Lake, Minn.

In the archdiocese, Brother Martin served in diverse ministry as a staff member of the Metropolitan Tribunal at the Archdiocese of Mecca Catholic Center in Indianapolis. From 1985-90, Brother Martin taught theology classes and served as a counselor at Cardinal Ritter Jr./Sr. High School in Indianapolis. He is survived by several cousins, nieces and nephews.

Memorial gifts may be sent to the Order of Friars Minor Conventual, 1101 S. Anthony Drive, Mount St. Francis, IN 47146-1461.

Conventional Franciscan Brother Martin Masler taught at Cardinal Ritter

Conventional Franciscan Brother Martin Masler, a former teacher at Cardinal Ritter Jr./Sr. High School in Indianapolis, died on Dec. 1 at Cedar Hill Nursing Home in Missouri. He was 63.

The Mass of Christian Burial was celebrated on Dec. 6 at the chapel at Mount St. Francis in southern Indiana. Burial followed at the friars’ cemetery.

Fr. Frederick Gilbert Masler was born on Jan. 13, 1944, in Toledo, Ohio. He entered the novitiate of the Order of the Friars Minor Conventual on July 14, 1962, and took the religious name of Martin. He professed first vows on July 15, 1963, at Auburn, Ind., and was assigned to Our Lady of Carey Seminary in Carey, Ohio, as assistant to the director of retreats.

On July 16, 1966, Brother Martin professed solemn vows at the Basilica of Our Lady of Consolation in Carey, Ohio. He served in retreat ministries in Carey, Ohio, and Pitor Lake, Minn.

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Daily Readings

continued from page 25

Saturday, Dec. 29

The Fifth Day in the Octave of Christmas

Thomas Becket, bishop and martyr

John 1:3-11
Psalm 96:1-3, 5-6
Luke 2:22-35

Sunday, Dec. 30

The Holy Family of Jesus, Mary and Joseph

Strach 3-7, 12-14
Psalm 124-1-2
Colossians 3:12-21 or Colossians 3:12-17
Matthew 2:13-19, 15-23

Monday, Dec. 31

The Seventh Day in the Octave of Christmas

John 1:18-21
Psalm 96:1-2, 11-13
John 1:18-19

Tuesday, Jan. 1

The Octave Day of Christmas:

The Blessed Virgin Mary, the Mother of God

Numbers 6:22-27
Psalm 67:2-3, 5-6, 8
Galatians 4:7-17
Luke 1:26-21

Wednesday, Jan. 2

Basil the Great, bishop and doctor of the Church

Gregory Nazianzen, bishop and doctor of the Church

John 1:22-28
Psalm 98:1-4
John 1:19-28

Thursday, Jan. 3

The Most Holy Name of Jesus

John 2:29-36
Psalm 98:1, 3-6
John 1:29-34

Friday, Jan. 4

Elizabeth Ann Seton, religious

John 3:7-10
Psalm 98:1, 7-9
John 1:35-42

Saturday, Jan. 5

John Neumann, bishop

Psalm 100:1-5
John 1:43-51

Sunday, Jan. 6

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. 7

Raymond of Peaafort, priest

John 1:3-22
Psalm 2:7-8, 10-12a
Matthew 4:12-17, 23-25

Tuesday, Jan. 8

John 1:7-10
Psalm 1:21-7-8
Mark 6:34-44

Wednesday, Jan. 9

John 1:41-48
Psalm 72:1-2, 10, 12-13
Mark 6:45-52

Thursday, Jan. 10

John 1:19-54
Psalm 72:1-2, 14, 15bc, 17
Luke 4:14-22a

Friday, Jan. 11

John 5:5-13
Psalm 147:12-15, 19-20
Luke 5:12-16

Saturday, Jan. 12

John 1:5-14
Psalm 1:4-7, 6a, 9b
John 3:22-30

Sunday, Jan. 13

The Baptism of the Lord

Isaiah 42:1-4, 6-7
Psalm 29:1-4, 3, 9-10
Acts 10:34-38
Matthew 3:13-17

This angel statue represents a smaller angel as the centrepiece for a new memorial for the unborn at Our Lady of Peace Cemetery in Indianapolis. It was made possible by several parishes and Knights of Columbus councils in Indianapolis.

Angelic memorial

Photo by Mary Ann Wyand

†
Parish Administrator
Holy Spirit Catholic Church is seeking a professional to focus on the business affairs of the parish, including the supervision of parish staff and school principal, and the appropriation of physical, financial and human resources functions. This committed, practicing Catholic must possess a four-year degree or equivalent (MBA and/or religious studies) and be willing to work towards Archdiocesan certification to become a parish administrator. Ability to exercise judgment and diplomacy in a wide variety of parish situations, reliable in meeting deadlines, well organized, possesses strong communication and presentation skills, and strong knowledge of computers and business applications. The candidate must maintain confidentiality of any information encountered. For a detailed job description please visit www.hspirit.org

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Michael E. McGinley
Financial Representative

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Mass Appeal

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Vacation Rentals

BEACHFRONT CONDO, Maderia Beach, FL, 2BR/1BA balcony overlooking the Gulf of Mexico. Most pets ok. owner, See Photos. Call Scooter at 317-385-5998

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5 MINUTES from DISNEY® 4 BR, pool home on golf course. Lake view, fish, swim, paddle boat, hiking trails. Awesome! www.steiner4.com/cabin. Call 317-697-0981 or email fricknakag@gmail.com. Weekends and some weekdays available.

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The Catholic Charities Indianapolis Christmas Store is in need of the following NEW items:

✓ Kids’ games and toys
✓ Winter hats and gloves
✓ All genders/ages sweatshirts
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