A father’s gift

Members of the extended Hammans family help to keep alive the Holy Cross Parish tradition of feeding the needy at Thanksgiving and Christmas. Andrea Hammans, left, Mary Hammans Qualls, Ann Tobin Pillar, Candice Qualls, Lori Hammans Tobin, Amy Tobin Kinnaman, Cecelia Hammans and Kelly Qualls stand with bags of food.

By John Shaughnessy

Lori Hammans Tobin has learned to believe at least two realities of Christmas: Sometimes Christmas arrives early. And the best gifts don’t often come in a box.

For Tobin, her best gift as a child came in a phone call, a phone call that left her mother crying tears of joy, and she and her siblings dancing and clapping in delight.

Looking back on that moment, Tobin shares the story of that special gift that changed a person, a family, a parish and the larger community.

It’s a Christmas story that began nearly 50 years ago—with a promise from a father who was dying.

It’s a Christmas story that continues today as that man’s children and grandchildren try to help other families who are struggling in perhaps the toughest and most heartbreakingly holiday season in recent economic times.

A father’s promise

In 1960, Francis Hammans was a young husband and father trying to make a good life for his family. He didn’t have a high school diploma because his father had died when he was 15 and he needed to go to school to get his GED because his father had died.

Still, he had a strong work ethic and most heartbreaking holiday season in recent economic times.

“Keep the promise”

In 1960, Francis Hammans was a young husband and father trying to make a good life for his family. He didn’t have a high school diploma because his father had died when he was 15 and he needed to go to school to get his GED because his father had died.

Still, he had a strong work ethic and most heartbreaking holiday season in recent economic times.

“Keep the promise”

In 1960, Francis Hammans was a young husband and father trying to make a good life for his family. He didn’t have a high school diploma because his father had died when he was 15 and he needed to go to school to get his GED because his father had died.

Still, he had a strong work ethic and most heartbreaking holiday season in recent economic times.

“A father’s promise”

In 1960, Francis Hammans was a young husband and father trying to make a good life for his family. He didn’t have a high school diploma because his father had died when he was 15 and he needed to go to school to get his GED because his father had died.

Still, he had a strong work ethic and most heartbreaking holiday season in recent economic times.

“A father’s promise”

In 1960, Francis Hammans was a young husband and father trying to make a good life for his family. He didn’t have a high school diploma because his father had died when he was 15 and he needed to go to school to get his GED because his father had died.

Still, he had a strong work ethic and most heartbreaking holiday season in recent economic times.

“A father’s promise”

In 1960, Francis Hammans was a young husband and father trying to make a good life for his family. He didn’t have a high school diploma because his father had died when he was 15 and he needed to go to school to get his GED because his father had died.

Still, he had a strong work ethic and most heartbreaking holiday season in recent economic times.

“A father’s promise”

In 1960, Francis Hammans was a young husband and father trying to make a good life for his family. He didn’t have a high school diploma because his father had died when he was 15 and he needed to go to school to get his GED because his father had died.

Still, he had a strong work ethic and most heartbreaking holiday season in recent economic times.

“A father’s promise”

In 1960, Francis Hammans was a young husband and father trying to make a good life for his family. He didn’t have a high school diploma because his father had died when he was 15 and he needed to go to school to get his GED because his father had died.

Still, he had a strong work ethic and most heartbreaking holiday season in recent economic times.

“A father’s promise”

In 1960, Francis Hammans was a young husband and father trying to make a good life for his family. He didn’t have a high school diploma because his father had died when he was 15 and he needed to go to school to get his GED because his father had died.

Still, he had a strong work ethic and most heartbreaking holiday season in recent economic times.

“A father’s promise”

In 1960, Francis Hammans was a young husband and father trying to make a good life for his family. He didn’t have a high school diploma because his father had died when he was 15 and he needed to go to school to get his GED because his father had died.

Still, he had a strong work ethic and most heartbreaking holiday season in recent economic times.

“A father’s promise”

In 1960, Francis Hammans was a young husband and father trying to make a good life for his family. He didn’t have a high school diploma because his father had died when he was 15 and he needed to go to school to get his GED because his father had died.

Still, he had a strong work ethic and most heartbreaking holiday season in recent economic times.

“A father’s promise”

In 1960, Francis Hammans was a young husband and father trying to make a good life for his family. He didn’t have a high school diploma because his father had died when he was 15 and he needed to go to school to get his GED because his father had died.

Still, he had a strong work ethic and most heartbreaking holiday season in recent economic times.

“A father’s promise”

In 1960, Francis Hammans was a young husband and father trying to make a good life for his family. He didn’t have a high school diploma because his father had died when he was 15 and he needed to go to school to get his GED because his father had died.

Still, he had a strong work ethic and most heartbreaking holiday season in recent economic times.

“A father’s promise”

In 1960, Francis Hammans was a young husband and father trying to make a good life for his family. He didn’t have a high school diploma because his father had died when he was 15 and he needed to go to school to get his GED because his father had died.

Still, he had a strong work ethic and most heartbreaking holiday season in recent economic times.

“A father’s promise”

In 1960, Francis Hammans was a young husband and father trying to make a good life for his family. He didn’t have a high school diploma because his father had died when he was 15 and he needed to go to school to get his GED because his father had died.

Still, he had a strong work ethic and most heartbreaking holiday season in recent economic times.

“A father’s promise”

In 1960, Francis Hammans was a young husband and father trying to make a good life for his family. He didn’t have a high school diploma because his father had died when he was 15 and he needed to go to school to get his GED because his father had died.

Still, he had a strong work ethic and most heartbreaking holiday season in recent economic times.

“A father’s promise”

In 1960, Francis Hammans was a young husband and father trying to make a good life for his family. He didn’t have a high school diploma because his father had died when he was 15 and he needed to go to school to get his GED because his father had died.

Still, he had a strong work ethic and most heartbreaking holiday season in recent economic times.

“A father’s promise”

In 1960, Francis Hammans was a young husband and father trying to make a good life for his family. He didn’t have a high school diploma because his father had died when he was 15 and he needed to go to school to get his GED because his father had died.

Still, he had a strong work ethic and most heartbreaking holiday season in recent economic times.

“A father’s promise”

In 1960, Francis Hammans was a young husband and father trying to make a good life for his family. He didn’t have a high school diploma because his father had died when he was 15 and he needed to go to school to get his GED because his father had died.

Still, he had a strong work ethic and most heartbreaking holiday season in recent economic times.

“A father’s promise”

In 1960, Francis Hammans was a young husband and father trying to make a good life for his family. He didn’t have a high school diploma because his father had died when he was 15 and he needed to go to school to get his GED because his father had died.

Still, he had a strong work ethic and most heartbreaking holiday season in recent economic times.

“A father’s promise”

In 1960, Francis Hammans was a young husband and father trying to make a good life for his family. He didn’t have a high school diploma because his father had died when he was 15 and he needed to go to school to get his GED because his father had died.

Still, he had a strong work ethic and most heartbreaking holiday season in recent economic times.

“A father’s promise”

In 1960, Francis Hammans was a young husband and father trying to make a good life for his family. He didn’t have a high school diploma because his father had died when he was 15 and he needed to go to school to get his GED because his father had died.

Still, he had a strong work ethic and most heartbreaking holiday season in recent economic times.

“A father’s promise”

In 1960, Francis Hammans was a young husband and father trying to make a good life for his family. He didn’t have a high school diploma because his father had died when he was 15 and he needed to go to school to get his GED because his father had died.

Still, he had a strong work ethic and most heartbreaking holiday season in recent economic times.

“A father’s promise”

In 1960, Francis Hammans was a young husband and father trying to make a good life for his family. He didn’t have a high school diploma because his father had died when he was 15 and he needed to go to school to get his GED because his father had died.

Still, he had a strong work ethic and most heartbreaking holiday season in recent economic times.

“A father’s promise”

In 1960, Francis Hammans was a young husband and father trying to make a good life for his family. He didn’t have a high school diploma because his father had died when he was 15 and he needed to go to school to get his GED because his father had died.

Still, he had a strong work ethic and most heartbreaking holiday season in recent economic times.

“A father’s promise”

In 1960, Francis Hammans was a young husband and father trying to make a good life for his family. He didn’t have a high school diploma because his father had died when he was 15 and he needed to go to school to get his GED because his father had died.

Still, he had a strong work ethic and most heartbreaking holiday season in recent economic times.

“A father’s promise”

In 1960, Francis Hammans was a young husband and father trying to make a good life for his family. He didn’t have a high school diploma because his father had died when he was 15 and he needed to go to school to get his GED because his father had died.

Still, he had a strong work ethic and most heartbreaking holiday season in recent economic times.

“A father’s promise”

In 1960, Francis Hammans was a young husband and father trying to make a good life for his family. He didn’t have a high school diploma because his father had died when he was 15 and he needed to go to school to get his GED because his father had died.

Still, he had a strong work ethic and most heartbreaking holiday season in recent economic times.
Holy Father begins Advent by asking Christians to be signs of hope

VATICAN CITY (CNS)—Pope Benedict XVI condemned the wave of terrorist attacks in India as acts of “cruel and senseless violence,” and led prayers for the more than 170 people who died and the hundreds injured in the bloodshed.

A Vatican spokesman, meanwhile, said that if extremists continue to exploit the ethnic and religious tensions of southern Asia, the results could be even more tragic.

Speaking at his noon blessing on Nov. 30, the pope asked for prayers for the victims of the attacks in Mumba, the Indian financial capital, where suspected Islamic militants assailed at least 10 targets in a three-day siege that began on Nov. 26.

The pope also expressed concern for the clashes between rival ethnic and religious groups in Jos, Nigeria, where at least 200 people were killed on Nov. 28-29. Churches and mosques were burned in the rioting.

“The causes and circumstances of these tragic events are different, but there should be a common sense of horror and condemnation for the exploitation of such cruel and senseless violence,” the pope told pilgrims from his apartment window overlooking St. Peter’s Square.

“If we ask the Lord to touch the hearts of those who defile themselves by thinking that this is the way to resolve local or international problems,” he said.

The morning after gunnnmen attacked the targets in Mumba, including the luxurious Taj Mahal hotel, the pope deplored the brutality of the violence in a telegram sent to Cardinal Oswald Gracias of Mumba.

The papal telegram “for an end to all acts of terrorism, which gravely offend the human family and severely destabilize the peace and solidarity needed to build a civilization worthy of mankind’s noble vocation to love God and neighbor.”

The Vatican spokesman, Jesuit Father Federico Lombardi, said the well-coordinated attacks were reminiscent of the Sept. 11, 2001, terrorist attacks against U.S. targets.

In a commentary on Vatican Radio, Father Lombardi said the terrorists had clearly chosen India, a place of tensions and conflicts, as a “critical point at which to try to ignite an even more frightening conflagration, whose consequences are difficult to imagine, given the demographic dimensions of southern Asia and its role in world development.”

In addition to political tensions in the region, he said, India has been troubled by “persistent and perhaps growing fundamentalist currents, not only in the Islamic world but also among Hindus.”

“Let us ask the Lord to touch the hearts of those who use violence. Fundamentalism is one of the most dramatic risks faced by humanity, and it challenges the conscience of every religious person,” the Vatican spokesman said.

In India, Cardinal Gracias immediately expressed the Church’s shock and sadness at the terrorist attacks, which he said were an attack upon the entire country.

“The Church in India condemns this attack in the strongest possible terms. Innocent and unconnected people have been killed. Very brave police officers have been killed,” the cardinal said in an appeal issued on Nov. 27. He said the Catholic Church in Mumba was making all its medical services available to the wounded.

“We must fight together as a nation and as a united people to combat the terrorists. We must never give up hope because ultimately hope will prevail,” the cardinal said.

India’s National Security Guard commanded the last group of terrorists when they battled their way into an area of the Taj Mahal hotel on Nov. 29. Shortly before that, the commandos had stormed a Jewish center in the city and found six hostages dead.

Pope condemns terrorist attacks in India, prays for victims

VATICAN CITY (CNS)—In their prayers and through their actions in Advent, Christians are called to be signs of hope for the world, Pope Benedict XVI said.

“Avent is the spirituel season of hope par excellence, when the whole church is called to become hope for itself and for the world,” the pope said on Nov. 29 as he celebrated vespers on the eve of the first Sunday of Avent.

In his Angelus address, the pope said Avent is a time when Christians prepare to celebrate the birth of Christ by making sure they welcome him fully into their hearts and lives.

But, he said, it is also a time for Christians to set their sights on the end of time and to reform their lives in a way that shows they are ready for the Last Judgment.

“This requires a correct detachment from earthly goods, sincere repentance for one’s errors, concrete acts of charity and, especially, humbly and trustingly placing oneself in the hands of God, our tender and merciful father,” the pope said.

“…we do not await the Lord as some beautiful decoration for our world already saved,” he said, but as the only one who can bring to completion the work begun with his incarnation, death and resurrection.

“…”In Avent, as an address, the pope said Avent is a time when Christians prepare to celebrate the birth of Christ by making sure they welcome him fully into their hearts and lives.

“…”In Avent, as an address, the pope said Avent is a time when Christians prepare to celebrate the birth of Christ by making sure they welcome him fully into their hearts and lives.

The Solemnity of the Immaculate Conception of the Blessed Virgin Mary is celebrated on Dec. 8. It is a holy day of obligation due to the fact that it is the “birthday” of the United States.

Dec. 8 is holy day of obligation

The Solemnity of the Immaculate Conception of the Blessed Virgin Mary is celebrated on Dec. 8. It is a holy day of obligation due to the fact that it is the “birthday” of the United States.

Pascal besides a comment from Cardinal Paul II who made a holy year visit to the Holy Land, one of a series of biblical pilgrimages he undertook in his later years as pope.

Sorg-Moran Agency

Insurance & Financial Services

1711 North Shadeland Avenue

Indianapolis, IN 46219

317-356-4396

Toll Free 1-866-374-3921

Jerry Morse offers investment advisory services as a Registered Representative of Personal Financial Planning Services (PFPS), a registered broker-dealer and member of FINRA, SIPC. Merrill Lynch, Pierce, Fenner & Smith Inc. is not affiliated with PFPS. Other products and services may be obtained from: Merrill Lynch, Pierce, Fenner & Smith Inc., 1-800-375-4340 or 1-800-375-4340.

If you are a victim of sexual misconduct by a person ministering on behalf of the Church, or if you know of anyone who has been a victim of such misconduct, please contact the archdiocesan victim assistance coordinator.

Report sexual misconduct now

Jan Link, Archdiocese of Indianapolis

P.O. Box 1410, Indianapolis, Indiana 46206-1410

317-236-1548 or 800-382-9836, ext. 1548

jlink@archindy.org

The Catholic (ISSN 0574-4350) is published weekly except the last week of December and the first week of January.

The Criterion • P.O. Box 1717 • Indianapolis, IN 46206-1717

Phone Numbers: 317-236-1570

Advertising 317-236-1572

Toll free: 1-800-382-9836, ext. 1570

Chase 317-236-1424

Toll free: 1-800-382-9836, ext. 1425

Price: $2.20 per week, 75 cents per copy

Postmaster: Send changes to The Criterion, P.O. Box 1717, Indianapolis, IN 46206-1717

Web site: www.CriterionOnline.com

E-mail: criterion@archindy.org

Published weekly except the last week of December and the first week of January. Mailing address: The Criterion, P.O. Box 1717, Indianapolis, IN 46206-1717. Periodical postage paid at Indianapolis, IN. Copyright © 2008 Criterion Press Inc. ISSN 0574-4350.
Hundreds of candles lit from one flame symbolized the light of faith, the glow of hope and the fire of charity during the ninth annual Interfaith Thanksgiving Service on Nov. 25 at SS. Peter and Paul Cathedral in Indianapolis.

Participants represented the Catholic, Protestant, Jewish, Hindu, Islamic, Buddhist and Sikh faith traditions.

Mgr. Joseph F. Schaedel, vicar general, welcomed the gathering on behalf of Archbishop Daniel M. Buechlein, who was not able to preside at the interfaith service but joined them in prayer.

“We are coming from many different cultures, many different faith traditions,” Mgr. Schaedel said, “and we gather tonight to unite ourselves in the common spirit of thanksgiving, praying for unity and peace in our world. With one voice, let us allpray together.”

Ethnic music from many countries and cultures enabled the participants to experience hymns and chants from a variety of faith traditions as songs of praise and thanks to God.

Keynote speaker James T. Morris of Indianapolis, who directed the United Nations’ World Food Programme from five years from 2002 to 2007, reminded the gathering that people of all faiths and ages go hungry throughout the world every day.

Morris also initiated the Interfaith Hunger Initiative, a coalition of faith-based organizations working to end hunger in the U.S. and abroad.

“No child should ever be hungry,” Morris emphasized. “It’s not right, it’s not fair, it’s not in this world of plenty, of goodwill, of huge brainpower and technology. We know how to feed the world’s population.”

Each day, he said, there are 850 million hungry people in the world and half of them are children.

An estimated 2 billion people live on less than $1 a day, Morris said, and another 1.25 million people live on less than $1 a day.

Tragically, 25,000 people die of hunger every day, he said, and of that number 18,000 are children.

“Every five seconds, Morris said, all day long, someone dies of malnutrition somewhere in the world.

“During the five years that I had the extraordinary gift plus the pleasure and privilege of leading the United Nations’ World Food Programme,” he said, “which feeds more than 100 million people each year in 80 countries, and with a special focus on women and very vulnerable children, often I would come back from fact-finding missions in developing countries to Rome and my office, and be perplexed and bewildered and almost beside myself trying to understand why my children and my grandchildren had life so good [in the U.S.], and were so blessed and so fortunate, and why so many of the children around the world were so at risk. It wasn’t fair. Where was the equity? Where was the justice?”

Morris said he would often seek out clergy from various faith traditions to try to gain some spiritual understanding about the harsh reality of worldwide injustices.

“It’s not acceptable for a single child anywhere in the world to be hungry, or to be hungry and not loved,” he said, because God wants “the world [to] come together and accept as universal the notion that the life of any child, of every child, of any faith, anywhere in the world, is equally sacred, equally blessed and equally precious.”

Turning to the Bible, Morris said, “I would seek out support and encouragement in the holy Scriptures. ... It seemed to me that the universal lessons that human life is created in the image of God, that what we are given must be shared with those who are in need, and that we can reach our highest potential through our sacred community with others, ... these universal truths were affirmed by all of the world’s great faiths.”

The prophet M.shammed taught that one of the five pillars of the Islamic tradition is feeding the hungry, Morris said, and giving the greeting of peace to everyone.

“In the Christian tradition, he said, Jesus taught that what you do for the least among us you do unto me (Mt 25:45).

The Hebrew Scriptures cite the abundance of food in the world, Morris said, and how it is meant to be shared with all people.

“In the words of [Mohandas] Gandhi,” Morris explained, “the great Hindu leader said, ‘To a hungry person, God can only appear as a piece of bread.’

The Buddhist tradition also identifies with the suffering of the poor, he said, and the brainpower and technology to understand why my children and my grandchildren had life so good [in the U.S.], and were so blessed and so fortunate, and why so many of the children around the world were so at risk. It wasn’t fair. Where was the equity? Where was the justice?”

Morris said he would often seek out clergy from various faith traditions to try to gain some spiritual understanding about the harsh reality of worldwide injustices.

“It’s not acceptable for a single child anywhere in the world to be hungry, or to be hungry and not loved,” he said, because God wants “the world [to] come together and accept as universal the notion that the life of any child, of every child, of any faith, anywhere in the world, is equally sacred, equally blessed and equally precious.”

Turning to the Bible, Morris said, “I would seek out support and encouragement in the holy Scriptures. ... It seemed to me that the universal lessons that human life is created in the image of God, that what we are given must be shared with those who are in need, and that we can reach our highest potential through our sacred community with others, ... these universal truths were affirmed by all of the world’s great faiths.”

The prophet M.shammed taught that one of the five pillars of the Islamic tradition is feeding the hungry, Morris said, and giving the greeting of peace to everyone.

“In the Christian tradition, he said, Jesus taught that what you do for the least among us you do unto me (Mt 25:45).

The Hebrew Scriptures cite the abundance of food in the world, Morris said, and how it is meant to be shared with all people.

“In the words of [Mohandas] Gandhi,” Morris explained, “the great Hindu leader said, ‘To a hungry person, God can only appear as a piece of bread.’

The Buddhist tradition also identifies with the suffering of the poor, he said, and the
Miss Rev. Daniel M. Bueschlein, O.S.B., Publisher Greg A. Otolski, Associate Publisher Mike Kinsky, Editor

OPINION

Your Family 

Bill and Monica Dodds

Tips for a festive, frugal Christmas celebration this year

We are not going to say the recent economic turmoil has a silvery lining for families, (If it did have one, many families would have grabbed it and sold it by noon!) But it does offer some opportunities. It is likely that what you have wanted to do—or at least have talked about doing—for several Christmases past. And that is to spend less. So here is the good news. This year, you probably will spend less. The not-so-good news? You will do that because you have less to spend or you have a well-founded concern (or fear) that all too soon will be the case.

Here are some tips and reminders for those who in the not-so-distant past may have been "frugally challenged":

1. Decide on a realistic budget and stick to it.

2. Tell the kids that this year, when it comes to gifts, simple (read "not expensive") is "im". (Or, to paraphrase a popular expression, "Twenty dollars is the new 50 dollars."

3. Stick to your guns! There is no better way to help your sons and daughters learn that:
   a. You stick to your guns!
   b. It is possible to have a wonderful Christmas without spending a wad of money and ringing up more credit card debt.

This January can be the first year in a long time that begins without a visit from the terrifying Ghost of Christmas Past (i.e., a big, fat credit card bill in the mail).

And a speaking of things to watch out for:

4. Avoid choosing to give a homemade gift that ends up costing more than something store-bought. As every craftsperson and hobbyist knows, that can easily happen.

5. Don’t "re-gift" an item to someone unless you are sure that he or she didn’t first give it to you. (And neither did you.)

6. Never give an item to senior family members without seriously considering: a. Will she just see this as one more object that has to be dusted once a week?
   b. Is he just going to toss this into the sock drawer with so many other gifts from so many other years?

If either seems likely, give the gift of yourself. A pledge that you will call or visit on a regular basis. (Keep that promise!) A speaking of gifts and visits.

7. Remember that at that Christmas the initial celebration was low-budget. No, we aren’t referring to the table. We mean the angels sang and the shepherds came to praise God. It was only later that the wise men showed up with packages.

And, while the Gospels don’t tell us, it seems possible that Mary and Joseph later “returned” those presents to raise some more money for the Holy Family. Needed: a way to cover expenses for the flight into Egypt.

(Bill and Monica Dodds are the founders of the Friends of St. J ohn the Caregiver and editor and publisher of My Daily Visitor magazine. Their Web site is www.FSC.org. They can be contacted at MonicaDodds@usa.net.)

Letter to the Editor

When it comes to immigration, ‘right is right because it is’

Regarding Joseph Kelly’s article on immigrants in the “Faith Alive!” section of this year’s 14 issue of The Criterion, the do the immigrants of the past—which included my grandparents—have to do with the escalating costs coming across the border?

My grandparents came in legally (at the time through Ellis Island), became citizens and then were naturalized as part of the United States of America.

The article gave a true and proper view of immigrants during our history.

The difference between my grandparents, and other immigrants of that time, and today’s Hispanics coming in is that the former obeyed the laws of this country while those coming from Mexico do not, have or hold any intention of becoming citizens, and hope to take as much advantage of the largesse of this country as they possibly can. It is said that our hierarchy has fallen into this trap and lost sight of “right is right because it is,” and have decided to play the semantics game with a faithful who are already wondering what will happen in the future.

Breaking a duly constituted law is wrong. The good news taught me that many years ago. We need to return to what they taught.

We obviously need a Mexican hierarchy willing to take a stand to help their people in Mexico rather than condoning their breaking the laws of a neighboring country, the U.S. We need a U.S. hierarchy to work with them in this endeavor.

Do not compare those here illegally now with my grandparents and those of my friends, who obeyed the laws and worked hard but were not even allowed citizenship in our children and grandchildren.

Barbara L. Maness

Vevay

Letters Policy

Letters from readers are published in The Criterion as part of the newspaper’s commitment to “the responsible exchange of freely-held and expressed opinion among the People of God” (Communion and Progression, 116). Letters from readers are welcome and every effort will be made to include those letters from as many people and representing as many viewpoints as possible. Letters should be submitted to help us. Relevant, well-expressed and temperate in tone. They must reflect a basic sense of courtesy and respect.

The editors reserve the right to select the letters that will be published and to edit letters from readers as necessary based on space limitations, pastoral sensitivity and concern (including spelling and grammar). In order to encourage opinions from a variety of sources, letters to the editor will ordinarily be limited to one letter every three months. Concise letters (usually less than 300 words) are more likely to be printed.

Letters must be signed, but, for serious reasons, may be printed anonymously. Send letters to: “Letters to the Editor,” The Criterion, P.O. Box 2171, Indianapolis, IN 46206-2171. Readers with access to e-mail may send letters to criterion@archindy.org.
Seeking the Face of the Lord

BUCANDO LA CARA DEL SEÑOR

ARCHBISHOP/Arzobispo Daniel M. Buechlein, O.S.B.

Looking for a positive contribution to our society

Immigrants make a positive contribution to our society

Our Lady of the Immaculate Conception is the patroness of the United States. We celebrate her feast as a solemnity on the 8th of December. Our Lady of Guadalupe is the patroness of America, North, Central and South America. The latter declaration was decreed by the late Pope John Paul II on the occasion of Synod of October 2008. It was an appropriate declaration considering that Our Lady’s appearance to St. Juan Diego in Tepeyac, Mexico, is a unique appearance in America. In that same synod, Pope John Paul II spoke of our continent as being one America. The feast of Our Lady of Guadalupe has been entered into the liturgical calendar of the United States on Dec. 12. Both celebrations honor the same Mother of God and Mother of the Church, and add a unique recognition of Mary in the joyful and hope-filled season of Advent.

I believe that the Blessed Mother Mary is a young and beautiful queen that has never left us. Two women under the same name, Mary Magdalene and Mary of Bethany, have always been present in our lives to encourage us and help us to welcome and embrace the Lord in our midst.

When we observe the feast of Our Lady of Guadalupe, we join our Catholic sisters and brothers of Mexico for whom this feast is enormously important.

The Mother of God appears to a simple peasant with whom poor people everywhere can identify. I can’t help but think of the thousands of Mexican immigrants who find hope and solace in their devotion to Our Lady of Guadalupe. La Madre de Dios parece ser una simple campesina con la cual los pobres de todos lados pueden sentirse identificados. No puedo menos que pensar en los inmigrantes mexicanos que encuentran esa afiliación en nuestro país.

The Synod of America was celebrated in Washington, D.C. on October 2-5, 2008. I believe that the Synod was one celebration in which we give thanks to Mary who is the patroness of the Church in America. When we ask her for her assistance, she always comes to our help.

I also believe that the Blessed Mother Mary is a queen who is close to us. On the 8th of December, we observe the feast of Our Lady of Guadalupe, but we are not the only country in which this feast is celebrated. She is a mother of all of us, especially to those who have been here a long time, to the Hispanic communities in our country. She is a mother who is close to us, a mother who has never left us.

The Synod on America: North, Central and South is a celebration of the Synod on the Church in America. This Synod, which was decreed by the late Pope John Paul II on the occasion of Synod of October 2008, was celebrated in the United States.

The Synod’s intention was to focus on the Church in America and the Synod’s intention was to focus on the Church in America. The Synod was a celebration of the Church’s life and mission in the Americas and a call to the Church to be active and engaged in the life of the Americas.

In that same synod, Pope John Paul II spoke of our continent as being one America. The feast of Our Lady of Guadalupe has been entered into the liturgical calendar of the United States on Dec. 12. Both celebrations honor the same Mother of God and Mother of the Church, and add a unique recognition of Mary in the joyful and hope-filled season of Advent.

I believe that the Blessed Mother Mary is a young and beautiful queen that has never left us. Two women under the same name, Mary Magdalene and Mary of Bethany, have always been present in our lives to encourage us and help us to welcome and embrace the Lord in our midst.

When we observe the feast of Our Lady of Guadalupe, we join our Catholic sisters and brothers of Mexico for whom this feast is enormously important.

The Mother of God appears to a simple peasant with whom poor people everywhere can identify. I can’t help but think of the thousands of Mexican immigrants who find hope and solace in their devotion to Our Lady of Guadalupe. La Madre de Dios parece ser una simple campesina con la cual los pobres de todos lados pueden sentirse identificados. No puedo menos que pensar en los inmigrantes mexicanos que encuentran esa afiliación en nuestro país.

The Synod of America was celebrated in Washington, D.C. on October 2-5, 2008. I believe that the Synod was one celebration in which we give thanks to Mary who is the patroness of the Church in America. When we ask her for her assistance, she always comes to our help.

I also believe that the Blessed Mother Mary is a queen who is close to us. On the 8th of December, we observe the feast of Our Lady of Guadalupe, but we are not the only country in which this feast is celebrated. She is a mother of all of us, especially to those who have been here a long time, to the Hispanic communities in our country. She is a mother who is close to us, a mother who has never left us.

The Synod on America: North, Central and South is a celebration of the Synod on the Church in America. This Synod, which was decreed by the late Pope John Paul II on the occasion of Synod of October 2008, was celebrated in the United States.

The Synod’s intention was to focus on the Church in America and the Synod’s intention was to focus on the Church in America. The Synod was a celebration of the Church’s life and mission in the Americas and a call to the Church to be active and engaged in the life of the Americas.

In that same synod, Pope John Paul II spoke of our continent as being one America. The feast of Our Lady of Guadalupe has been entered into the liturgical calendar of the United States on Dec. 12. Both celebrations honor the same Mother of God and Mother of the Church, and add a unique recognition of Mary in the joyful and hope-filled season of Advent.

I believe that the Blessed Mother Mary is a young and beautiful queen that has never left us. Two women under the same name, Mary Magdalene and Mary of Bethany, have always been present in our lives to encourage us and help us to welcome and embrace the Lord in our midst.

When we observe the feast of Our Lady of Guadalupe, we join our Catholic sisters and brothers of Mexico for whom this feast is enormously important.

The Mother of God appears to a simple peasant with whom poor people everywhere can identify. I can’t help but think of the thousands of Mexican immigrants who find hope and solace in their devotion to Our Lady of Guadalupe. La Madre de Dios parece ser una simple campesina con la cual los pobres de todos lados pueden sentirse identificados. No puedo menos que pensar en los inmigrantes mexicanos que encuentran esa afiliación en nuestro país.

The Synod of America was celebrated in Washington, D.C. on October 2-5, 2008. I believe that the Synod was one celebration in which we give thanks to Mary who is the patroness of the Church in America. When we ask her for her assistance, she always comes to our help.

I also believe that the Blessed Mother Mary is a queen who is close to us. On the 8th of December, we observe the feast of Our Lady of Guadalupe, but we are not the only country in which this feast is celebrated. She is a mother of all of us, especially to those who have been here a long time, to the Hispanic communities in our country. She is a mother who is close to us, a mother who has never left us.
Events Calendar

December 5
Our Lady of the Most Holy Rosary Church, 520 Stevens St., Indianapolis.
Lumen Dei meeting, 6:30 a.m. Information: 317-819-5316 or email LumenDei@stglobal.net.

December 6
St. Lawrence Parish, Father Conor Hallen, 6944 E. 46th St., Indianapolis. One-day retreat, “Touch My Heart.” Information: 317-635-2021.

December 7

December 8

December 9
Our Lady of Fatima Retreat House, 5353 E. 56th St., Indianapolis. Third annual dinner and Advent concert with Tony Avallone, 6:30 p.m., dinner, 7:30 p.m., concert, $35 per person. Information: 317-545-7681 or spoetical@archindy.org.

December 10
St. John the Evangelist Church, 126 W. Georgia St., Indianapolis. Missa relictris, 11 a.m. Information: 317-288-7780.

December 12

December 13

December 14
Oldenburg Franciscan Center, Oldenburg. “Evangelizing Scripture,” 4-5 p.m. Information: 812-933-6437.

December 18
Our Lady of Fatima Retreat House, 5353 E. 56th St., Indianapolis. “Day of Silence,” 8 a.m.-4 p.m., $25 per person includes continental breakfast and lunch. Information: 317-545-7681 or spoetical@archindy.org.

December 21-22

January 1

January 7

January 10
Our Lady of Fatima Retreat House, 5353 E. 56th St., Indianapolis. “Day of Silence,” 8 a.m.-4 p.m., $25 per person includes continental breakfast and lunch. Information: 317-545-7681 or spoetical@archindy.org.

January 15
Our Lady of Fatima Retreat House, 5353 E. 56th St., Indianapolis. “Day of Silence,” 8 a.m.-4 p.m., $25 per person includes continental breakfast and lunch. Information: 317-545-7681 or spoetical@archindy.org.

January 17

January 19
Our Lady of Fatima Retreat House, 5353 E. 56th St., Indianapolis. “Day of Silence,” 8 a.m.-4 p.m., $25 per person includes continental breakfast and lunch. Information: 317-545-7681 or spoetical@archindy.org.

January 24
Oldenburg Franciscan Center, Oldenburg. “A Church to Believe In,”” Father Norman Larangerbun and Jeanne Hunt, presenters, 9-11:30 a.m. Free will offering. Information: 812-933-6437.

February 13-15

Retreats and Programs

December 6
St. Lawrence Parish, Father Conor Hallen, 6944 E. 46th St., Indianapolis. One-day retreat, “Touch My Heart.” Information: 317-635-2021 or new@stsimairied.org.

December 6
St. Lawrence Parish, Father Conor Hallen, 6944 E. 46th St., Indianapolis. “Men’s Night,” Franciscan Father Carl Haever, presenter, 7-8:30 p.m. Information: 812-933-6437.

December 10

December 13

December 14
Oldenburg Franciscan Center, Oldenburg. “Evangelizing Scripture,” 4-5 p.m. Information: 812-933-6437.

December 18
Our Lady of Fatima Retreat House, 5353 E. 56th St., Indianapolis. “Day of Silence,” 8 a.m.-4 p.m., $25 per person includes continental breakfast and lunch. Information: 317-545-7681 or spoetical@archindy.org.

December 19-21
Saint Meinrad Archabbey, 100 Hill Drive, St. Meinrad. Couples retreat. “A Church to Believe In,”” Benedictine Brother Christian Raab, presenter. Information: 800-581-6905 or M_Zoeller@stsimairied.org.

January 17

January 19
Our Lady of Fatima Retreat House, 5353 E. 56th St., Indianapolis. “Day of Silence,” 8 a.m.-4 p.m., $25 per person includes continental breakfast and lunch. Information: 317-545-7681 or spoetical@archindy.org.

January 24
Oldenburg Franciscan Center, Oldenburg. “A Church to Believe In,”” Father Norman Larangerbun and Jeanne Hunt, presenters, 9-11:30 a.m. Free will offering. Information: 812-933-6437.

February 13-15

Retreats and Programs

December 6
St. Lawrence Parish, Father Conor Hallen, 6944 E. 46th St., Indianapolis. One-day retreat, “Touch My Heart.” Information: 317-635-2021 or new@stsimairied.org.

December 6
St. Lawrence Parish, Father Andrew J. Brown Ave., Indianapolis. New Evangelization Sisters of M other of Perpetual Help, presents, 9 a.m.-4 p.m., free will-offering. Information: 317-845-9070.

December 8
Oldenburg Franciscan Center, Oldenburg. “Men’s Night,” Franciscan Father Carl Haever, presenter, 7-8:30 p.m. Information: 812-933-6437.

December 10

December 13

December 14
Oldenburg Franciscan Center, Oldenburg. “Evangelizing Scripture,” 4-5 p.m. Information: 812-933-6437.

December 18
Our Lady of Fatima Retreat House, 5353 E. 56th St., Indianapolis. “Day of Silence,” 8 a.m.-4 p.m., $25 per person includes continental breakfast and lunch. Information: 317-545-7681 or spoetical@archindy.org.

December 19-21
Saint Meinrad Archabbey, 100 Hill Drive, St. Meinrad. Couples retreat. “A Church to Believe In,”” Benedictine Brother Christian Raab, presenter. Information: 800-581-6905 or M_Zoeller@stsimairied.org.

January 17

January 19
Our Lady of Fatima Retreat House, 5353 E. 56th St., Indianapolis. “Day of Silence,” 8 a.m.-4 p.m., $25 per person includes continental breakfast and lunch. Information: 317-545-7681 or spoetical@archindy.org.

January 24
Oldenburg Franciscan Center, Oldenburg. “A Church to Believe In,”” Father Norman Larangerbun and Jeanne Hunt, presenters, 9-11:30 a.m. Free will offering. Information: 812-933-6437.

February 13-15
Parishes announce Masses, fiestas for feast days of St. Juan Diego and Our Lady of Guadalupe

Masses and celebrations for the feast days of St. Juan Diego and Our Lady of Guadalupe in December are scheduled at various parishes in the archdiocese. Liturgies and other events reported to The Criterion include the following activities listed by deanery and date:

Batesville Deanery
• Dec. 12—St. Louis Church, 13 St. Louis Place, Batesville. Misa (Español), 6 p.m.
• Dec. 12—St. Joseph Church, 405 S. Broadway St., Shelbyville. Misa (Español), 8 p.m.

Bloomington Deanery
• Dec. 11—St. Paul Catholic Center, 1413 E. 17th St., Bloomington. Misa (Español), 6 p.m.; Las Mañanitas, 7:30 a.m.

Connersville Deanery
• Dec. 14—St. Andrew Church, 235 S. 5th St., Richmond. Bilingual Misa, 7:30 a.m.

Indianapolis East Deanery
• Dec. 11—St. Mary Church, 317 N. New Jersey St., Indianapolis. Procession from Monument Circle to the church, 9 p.m.; semana, 11 p.m.; Misa (Español), midnight.
• Dec. 12—St. Mary Church, 317 N. New Jersey St., Indianapolis. Bilingual Misa, noon; bilingual Misa, 7 p.m.
• Dec. 12—St. Philip Neri Church, 550 N. Rural St., Indianapolis. Mass, 10 a.m.; Misa (Español), 7:30 p.m.
• Dec. 12—Holy Spirit Church, 7243 E. 10th St., Indianapolis. Rosario, 6:30 p.m.; Misa (Español), 7 p.m.

Indianapolis North Deanery
• Dec. 12—St. Lawrence Church, 6944 E. 46th St., Indianapolis. Misa (Español), 7 p.m.

Indianapolis South Deanery
• Dec. 11—St. Patrick Church, 950 Prospect St., Indianapolis. Rosario, 8:30 p.m.; Danza Azteca, 9:30 p.m.; Misa (Español), 11 p.m.; Las Mañanitas, midnight.
• Dec. 12—St. Patrick Church, 950 Prospect St., Indianapolis. Las Mañanitas, 6 a.m.; Narración, 6:30 a.m.; procesión/Danza, noon; M胴arichi, 6 p.m.; Misa (Español), 7:30 p.m.

Indianapolis West Deanery
• Dec. 11—St. Anthony Church, 379 N. Warman Ave., Indianapolis. Misa (Español), 6 p.m.; rosario, 7 p.m.; Danza de Niños, 7:30 p.m.; mariachi, 9 p.m.; Danza de Adultos, 10 p.m.; vigilia, 11:30 p.m.
• Dec. 12—St. Anthony Church, 379 N. Warman Ave., Indianapolis. Las Mañanitas, 7:15 a.m.; bilingual Misa, 8:15 a.m.; Misa (Español), 6 p.m.; procesión, 7 p.m.; mariachi, 8:30 p.m.; representación, 9:30 p.m.; convivio, 10:30 p.m.
• Dec. 12—St. Gabriel the Archangel Church, 6000 W. 34th St., Indianapolis. Las Mañanitas, 4:30 a.m.; rosario, 5:30 a.m.; Misa (Español), 6 p.m.; fiesta, 7 p.m.; fiesta, 11 p.m.

New Albany Deanery
• Dec. 11—St. Mary Church, 100 Keely St., New Albany. Misa (Español), midnight.
• Dec. 12—Holy Trinity Church, 100 Keely St., Edinburgh. Las Mañanitas, 4 a.m.; Misa (Español), 6:30 p.m.
• Dec. 12—St. Ambrose Church, 325 S. Chestnut St., Seymour. Las Mañanitas, 5:30 a.m.; Masa with school children, 2 p.m.; Misa (Español), 7 p.m.; fiesta after Mass.
• Dec. 12—Prince of Peace Church, 413 E. Second St., Madison. Bilingual Misa, 8:15 a.m. at Father Misha Shave Memorial Jr. High School, 201 W. State St., Madison; Misa (Español), 7 p.m., at St. Patrick Chapel, West State Street, Madison.

Terre Haute Deanery
• Dec. 12—St. Margaret Mary Church, 2405 S. Seventh St., Terre Haute. Misa (Español), 7:30 p.m.

Catholics are invited to celebrate Simbang Gabi Misa Masses, a Filipino Advent tradition, are scheduled in four deaneries throughout the archdiocese during December. The liturgies are sponsored by the archdiocesan Multicultural Ministry Commission and are open to the public.

The Misa Masses will be celebrated at the following churches:
• Dec. 18—7 p.m. at St. Paul Catholic Center, 1413 E. 17th St., Bloomington.
• Dec. 19—7 p.m. at St. Mary Church, 7243 E. 10th St., Indianapolis.
• Dec. 20—4 p.m. at St. Patrick Church, 1807 Poplar St., Terre Haute.
• Dec. 22—7 p.m. at St. Barbara Church, 8301 Alabama Ave., Indianapolis.

“My heart surgery at St. Francis was the difference between life and death.”

At 33 years old, Chris knew he would eventually need surgery to replace a calcified heart valve. However, he had no idea how urgent it was until his wife encouraged him to attend an Ask the Doc program and to have a cardiac screening, sponsored by the St. Francis Heart Center. “Your symptoms begin so gradually, you think what you are feeling is normal,” he said. With only a small incision, Chris was able to make a quick recovery. Thanks to the work of the heart team at St. Francis, Chris can rest assured he will be there to watch his three small children grow up. “I told them Daddy’s heart had a bad boom-boom before, and has a good boom-boom now.”

St. Francis is the leader in total heart care for South Central Indiana with:
• Nationally renowned heart surgeons and cardiologists that treat high-risk, complex cases
• The most advanced and innovative repair techniques that set new standards for heart valve treatment
• The Midwest Heart Valve Center—the only dedicated heart valve center in Indiana

Are you at risk? Get your FREE Healthy Heart Kit and find out. Call 1-877-888-1777 or visit HeartAttackCare.net today.
food—plus cookies and candy canes—to needy families at the parish church. All in the hope of making their Christmas more joyous.

That Christmas scene promises to be similar to the one at the parish three days before Thanksgiving this year. On Nov. 24, several hundred people lined up outside the parish hall on a gray, damp, chilly day to take home two grocery bags filled with two turkey rolls, apples, potatoes, green beans, corn, pies and bread. There was enough food to feed 585 families.

Some older people in line relied on walkers and canes while young mothers used blankets to cover the babies they held in their arms and the small children who rested in strollers.

To prepare for the distribution of food, about 500 volunteers worked together on Nov. 23 to sort the food donations and put them in grocery bags. Thirty-six members of the Hammans family were among the volunteers from parishes and Catholic schools across Indianapolis who helped that Sunday.

“Greek food is a big part of it,” says Valerie, a 23-year-old granddaughter of Francis Hammans.

“I’m always thinking of my dad”

One of her parents’ eight children, Tobin is moved by the difference that the special food baskets make to people.

“They’re just all in need,” says Tobin, who is 52. “When they come, you see the tired looks on their faces. Then you see the excitement. Some people cry. Others say, ‘God bless you. God bless you.’ A lady said to me one time, ‘Oh, my gosh, there is fresh milk in my bag!’

“We take so much for granted. I’m blessed with my family, my 30-year marriage, my children, my grandchildren, my job. When the bags are being handed out in church, I feel blessed to be there. The people look around. You can tell people are so relieved to have something to provide for their family. They know in that moment their life is being touched. They’re touching us, too.”

That sentiment is echoed by Mike Frazee, a 68-year-old, lifelong member of Holy Cross Parish. Frazee coordinates the special food basket committee on which Tobin also serves.

“Some of these people live in the streets. Some have four or five kids and no father,” Frazee says. “There’s a lot of satisfaction in giving to the people. We also know how lucky we are to be able to help them.”

Frazee is also grateful for having been a friend of Francis Hammans.

“I ran with Francis,” he says. “His kids and my kids ran together, too. Francis was a super guy. You could put him on a pedestal. He enjoyed helping people so much.”

While Hammans died 10 years ago, his legacy lives on in the work of his family, friends and strangers. The people who knew him best insist that he wouldn’t want any special recognition for starting this effort at Holy Cross. For him, the parish was an extension of his family, the spiritual setting that has been home to his family since 1946. For him, the people who rely on the Holy Cross baskets at Thanksgiving and Christmas were part of his understanding of family, too.

“It’s that attitude from her father that leads Tobin to make sure that Frazee and Mark Scott, another longtime coordinator of the effort, get credit for all the hard work they’ve done through the years.

Still, like her siblings, her thoughts always turn to her parents when she’s in the church preparing the baskets and giving them to people.

She mentions how her mother still provides financial support for the food basket effort. She recalls her father’s promise to God to serve others.

“I think my dad would be extremely proud and honored that we’re fulfilling the rest of his bargain to serve others,” she says.

“I’m always thinking of my dad when I’m doing this. It always gives me a sense that he’s right there, that he’s at my shoulder.” †
FOCA's effects seem as dire, but chance of passing still uncertain

WASHINGTON (CNS)—About the only thing everyone agrees on is that the legislation has languished in Congress for 20 years, only once rising—just barely—above the fate of hundreds of bills that are introduced each session and never heard from again.

What is harder to nail down is whether the bill, known as FOCA, is going anywhere under the 111th Congress that begins in January. Although there was no effort in the 110th Congress to move the bill along, pro-life organizations have since the summer been sounding the alarm about what would happen to current restrictions on abortion if a Democrat was elected president.

They also voice concerns for possible administrative actions under Democratic President-elect Barack Obama, such as reversing the ban on federal funding of embryonic stem-cell research, and repealing the Hyde Amendment—which bars federal funding of abortions, and the Mexico City Policy, which prohibits funding abroad for family planning programs that promote and offer abortion.

But stopping FOCA has become the rallying cry for the American Life League, the National Right to Life Committee and Friends of Life, among pro-life groups. It was the central focus of a statement by pro-life leaders, much of which was written in advance, at the National Right to Life Committee, told CNS that FOCA's inertia so far doesn't diminish the danger of it progressing now. FOCA moved forward only in 1993 when Democrats controlled the House, Senate and the White House for the first time in 12 years. Introduced in the first days of the 103rd Congress, the House and Senate judiciary committees heard it on for floor scheduling within weeks.

But it never came up for debate or a vote in the House and Senate.

Johnson is skeptical that pro-life congressional Democrats are numerous enough or powerful enough to stop a serious push to move FOCA forward if the party's leaders want to advance. He is especially skeptical of whether the Senate majority leader would prove any obstacle to FOCA, despite Red's pro-life voting record. “Red would not be intimidated at all,” he said. “His history has been that he may vote against something in the end after doing everything he can to have the pro-abortion side win,” for instance by putting a bill on the floor for a vote.

Johnson acknowledged that it is unclear that either house of Congress has the votes to pass FOCA. He said there are more supporters of legal abortion in Congress than there were in 1993, though that doesn't necessarily translate to votes for the bill.

“A anybody who's even halfway pro-life isn't going to support FOCA,” said Johnson.

FOCA, a bill that supports FOCA and opposes any restrictions on abortion, counts both the Senate and House with the same pro-life majority. It projects 204 House members who generally oppose NARAL's agenda, and 100 who support it. It lays another 46 members have a “mixed” record. NARAL counts 42 opponents of its issues in the Senate and 40 supporters, with 18 of “mixed” records.

Johnson credits a nationwide postcard campaign opposing the bill in 1993 with helping keep it from reaching a vote. But the makeup of Congress has changed significantly since then, he noted.

“A majority of the current members of Congress weren't members in 1993,” he said. “Lots of lawmakers have never paid any attention to FOCA.” He said that raises the risk of “the other side” defining FOCA as an effort to ban abortion how abortion opponents interpret. FOCA opponents plan a new postcard campaign beginning in January.

Sister Carol Keehan, a Daughter of Charity who is president and CEO of the Catholic Health Association, has concerns about people outside Catholic health care saying Catholic health care institutions are going to close” should FOCA become law, she told CNS.

She said CHA has always opposed FOCA and will continue to do so. But “even if this bad legislation were to pass, we would not be forced to participate (in providing abortions) and we will fight for that,” she said.

Catholic health care institutions will not dismantle their systems or compromise their principles, she said. “We have always been in this country of how to respond to unjust laws and we have learned from them. We will protect our Catholic health care in this country without compromising our position on abortion.”

First, however, Sister Carol said, “we must focus on protecting mothers and their unborn children.”

“The first thing we are called to do is redouble our efforts to be sure pregnant women do not see abortion as their only option,” she said in a statement released on Nov. 24. Easily accessible and high quality obstetrical care, assistance with food stamps, housing, education and child care can help women feel they have options other than abortion, she said.

She said the CHA has been in touch with Obama's transition team, but they were with Sen. John McCain's aides, when they were planning a transition. “(Obama) has been more open to discussing health care reform that is a large part of the social safety net.”

Our Lady of Fatima Retreat House
Meet me at 'The Shack'
A day of reflection

Fr. Jim Farrell
January 12, 2009 8:30-2:30

"The Shack" by William P. Young has quickly become a best seller as it touches hearts and gives us pause to think more deeply about our beliefs about healing, faith, hope, forgiveness, reconciliation, and joy that are part of this faith.

Join us as we journey through 'The Shack' and discuss points of connection with our Catholic faith and look at the sacramental moments found throughout the book. We hope you will discover why "Papa is especially fond of you!"

S$15 per person includes continental breakfast, lunch, Mass and the program.
8:30 am registration begins
The program is 9:00 am-2:30 pm

Our Lady of Fatima Retreat House
555 E. 55th Street
Indianapolis, IN 46226
(317) 545-7681

www.archindy.org/fatima

Our Lady of the Assumption Retreat House
5355 E. 55th Street
Indianapolis, IN 46226
(317) 545-7681

www.archindy.org/assumption

Our Lady of the Assumption Retreat House
A Place to Be With God!
During the season of Advent, the Archdiocese of Indianapolis will have a special Web page at www.archindy.org/advent.

Advent resources are available on archdiocesan Web sites.

The page contains various Advent resources, including links to the daily readings, reflections from Archbishop Daniel M. Buechlein, penance service schedules, images of past Criterion Christmas supplement covers and links of interest to other Advent Web sites.
Jesus continues to do miracles through the sacraments

By Fr. Gerald O’Collins, S.J.

Miraculous activity was an essential part of Jesus’ ministry. Any account of what he did for people would be dramatically distorted if we ignore his miracles. Dictionaries define “miracles” as events caused by special divine actions that do not follow the normal laws of nature and carry a particular religious message. Such definitions sound dry as dust until we link them to Jesus himself.

Talk of miracles comes alive when we recall stories preserved in the Gospels. St. Luke summed up much of what Jesus did by saying that “he went about doing good and healing all those oppressed by the devil” (Acts 10:38).

He was called “Jesus, the author of life” (Acts 3:15).

When some disciples of John the Baptist visited Jesus, he said to them, “Go and tell John what you hear and see: The blind regain their sight, the lame walk, lepers are cleansed, the deaf hear, the dead are raised, and the poor have the good news proclaimed to them. A blind man is anyone who takes no offense at me” (Mt 11:4-6).

This saying from Jesus does not reach its climax with the startling reference to the raising of Lazarus (Jn 11:1-44). The raising of Lazarus signals the beginning of the climax of Jesus’ ministry. The raising of Lazarus is important because it caused the Jewish authorities to plot his death (Jn 11:45).

Jesus’ miracles are always signs of God’s healing love. Jesus continues to do miracles today through the healing power that Catholics receive through the sacraments.

Lend Us Your Voice

**Perspectives**

**Faith, Hope and Charity**

David Silver

**Time to move back to the front porch**

Have any of you had a recent conversation that did not include some element of a pandemic or an economic downturn? In my lifetime, I have never seen a crisis related to terrorism or fear related to financial issues—much less both at the same time—certainly justified.

My thoughts are for the women and people already living on the margins of society. The “margin” is widening, and if things continue on our current path, we will have far greater numbers falling off the edge. With the economy just not springing back to a halt and downright turning and running in the wrong direction, we begin to see more and more individuals and families in desperate need of life’s most basic necessities.

There have been numerous surveys conducted in the U.S. recently to find out what personal sacrifices are being made to help. It will come as no surprise that most institutions that rely heavily on donations are already experiencing a significant decline. And at the same time—for the same reason—the number of people seeking charitable assistance is skyrocketing. (A recent survey of Catholic Charities and Secretariat for Catholic Charities conducted in the U.S. recently to find out what personal sacrifices are being made to help. It will come as no surprise that most institutions that rely heavily on donations are already experiencing a significant decline. And at the same time—for the same reason—the number of people seeking charitable assistance is skyrocketing. (A recent survey of Catholic Charities and Secretariat for Catholic Charities.)

I heard a theory today that I hope is true. When economic conditions become more stable, we may see people buying larger purchases like a house or new car, these significant savings (by delaying these purchases) can keep more of their income and, therefore, makes them more able to make charitable contributions. However, for those who are laid off from their jobs, no income leaves nothing to give.

One of my hopes at this time in our history is that we will begin to see a shift in our society—both here in the U.S. and throughout the world—from our staunch independence to a more clear understanding and appreciation for our interdependence, our connection as one human family.

I have always been a great admirer of Henry David Thoreau. When I read his book, *Walden*, I am instead of wanting more. It is not the material things that last. The lesson will be to put our security in the reality will leave us but, as a believer that ultimately makes us happy, but God’s love, which is manifested happy, but God’s love, which is manifested in many ways.

I heard a theory today that I hope is true. When economic conditions become more stable, we may see people buying larger purchases like a house or new car, these significant savings (by delaying these purchases) can keep more of their income and, therefore, makes them more able to make charitable contributions. However, for those who are laid off from their jobs, no income leaves nothing to give.

One of my hopes at this time in our history is that we will begin to see a shift in our society—both here in the U.S. and throughout the world—from our staunch independence to a more clear understanding and appreciation for our interdependence, our connection as one human family.

I have always been a great admirer of Henry David Thoreau. When I read his book, *Walden*, I am instead of wanting more. It is not the material things that last. The lesson will be to put our security in the reality will leave us but, as a believer that ultimately makes us happy, but God’s love, which is manifested in many ways.
Second Sunday of Advent/Msgr. Owen E. Campion

The Sunday Readings

Sunday, Dec. 7, 2008

• Isaiah 40:1-5, 9-11
• 2 Peter 3:18-14
• Mark 11:1-8

The first reading for this Second Sunday of Advent is from the second section of Isaiah.

When this book was written, very bad times seemed about to end for God’s people. Their long, dreary exile of four generations in Babylon was about to end. They looked forward to returning to their homeland. The people’s joy and relief is evident in this reading. Readers can sense their longing to return to their homeland. Also, and importantly, readers can realize that the prophet sees their rescue as a gift from God, given in God’s faithfulness to the Covenant. Divine mercy formed to provide this rescue. The people had neither created their exiles, nor had they earned it. Actually, their sins had caused their troubles. God mercifully forgave them and eradicated the effect of their sins, namely the Exile.

Thus, the prophet urges the people to be thankful, insisting that upon returning to their homeland the people must go to Jerusalem, to the holy mountain where stood the temple, and proclaim aloud the goodness of God there. To whom do you turn? To whom do you go? The prophet declares that this release from exile is proof of God’s existence and God’s love. In the first reading, the prophet Isaiah uttered a prophecy that the prophet is now repeating:

“Rejoice greatly, O daughter of Zion; shout, O daughter of Jerusalem. Behold, your king comes to you...he is righteous, and having salvation...and the scepter of his kingdom will not pass away...and his kingdom will be established forever and never be destroyed.”

Isaiah 9:1-5

Second reading: The Church teaches that we must prepare for the Advent season of devotion and joy. Advent Masses are almost like penitential periods. The Church repeatedly emphasizes that all people need to return to God voluntarily and wholeheartedly.

“...repentance. Advent Masses are almost like penitential periods. The Church repeatedly emphasizes that all people need to return to God voluntarily and wholeheartedly.”

My Journey to God

The Rose Thieves

Nimbly, they tugged at the stems Imbedded in the bouquets Like rubber gloves in the box By the hospice bed.

Only more secure, tightly packed against Chrysanthemums, lilies, Lupine, ivy and fern. They collected the roses ... white, pink and red ... Out of the casket floral offering A man with whom I work. We can discuss carefully all those concerns faced by any parish priest to participate in the usual preparation of the homily. As the introduction to the Daily Readings, the Church clearly, frankly and wholeheartedly should reflect the time of joyous waiting for Jesus.

Daily Readings

Monday, Dec. 8

The Immaculate Conception of the Blessed Virgin Mary

Genesis 3:9-15, 20
Psalm 98:1-4
Ephesians 1:3-11, 12-16
Luke 1:36-38

Tuesday, Dec. 9

Juan Diego, hermit
Isaiah 40:1-7
Psalm 96:1-3, 10-13
Matthew 18:12-14

Wednesday, Dec. 10

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

Thursday, Dec. 11

Damasus I, pope
Isaiah 41:13-20
Psalm 145:1, 12b
Matthew 11:15-15

Question Corner/Fr. John Dietzen

Advent liturgies should reflect time of joyous waiting for Jesus

Q: I am writing about a recent trend in our Church that has the Advent almost indistinguishable from Lent. Only penitential songs are sung, the ‘Alleluia’ is only recited, not sung and no decorations of any kind are allowed until Christmas Eve. The priest’s homilies are on sins and repentance. Advent Masses are almost like Good Friday. It’s all very discouraging and confusing to our family. Isn’t there the idea of Advent to be a time of preparation for Christmas with some anticipation and festivity about it? Or is this change itself? (Illinois)

A: Assuming that you reflect the circumstances accurately, the observance of Advent in your parish’s liturgies is to say the least, unusual. Whomever is responsible for your parish’s liturgical planning seems to be out of touch with, or perhaps has never learned, the Church’s tradition and teaching about this beautiful season.

Certainly, there is a penitential aspect to these weeks, but their framework, spirit and focus differ significantly from that which characterizes the time of Lent.

At least since the time of St. Bernard of Clairvaux, nearly 1000 years ago, the time of Advent has focused on the three coming of our Lord: his birth in the Incarnation, the final coming at the completion of his work of redemption and, between these two, his presence and saving power at work in the Church through the ages.

Advent, in other words, is primarily a time of joyous waiting, anticipating the commemoration of his birth, and celebrating his continued presence and saving grace among us.

All this happens under our awareness that, by the mystery of Christ, we stand with him in his final victory over sin and death. The Church repeatedly emphasizes that all Advent liturgies should reflect this watchful joy. In music, visual environment and the overall tone of the liturgy, it is quite distinct from the penitential time before Easter.

As the introduction to the Roman Missal says, these weeks before Christmas are a “season of devout and joyful expectation.” Throughout the centuries, even before Christianity, the acclamation “Alleluia” (“praise to the Lord”) has been by nature a joyful, jubilant sound, rather than singing, is like reciting instead of singing “Happy birthday to you.”

The Church’s liturgical documents generally simply assume that the “Alleluia” is always sung. (See, for example, the Instruction on Sacred Music of the U.S. Bishops’ Committee on the Liturgy says, “if not sung, the ‘Alleluia’ should be omitted” (46).)

Q: Two years ago, I became friends with a man with whom I work. We can discuss anything and have developed a close relationship. We are beginning to talk of marriage. Is there anything in the Bible that speaks of inter-racial relationships?

A: There is nothing in the Bible specifically about inter-racial marriage. To begin with, you would want to examine carefully all those concerns faced by any other couple preparing for marriage. In addition, of course, you need to ask yourselves very specifically how you would deal together with the social and perhaps economic implications for your biracial family if you marry.

A new major factor is how supportive and accepting both of your families will be for you and your children, and what the “climate” is for interracial families where you will live.

You can tell me. You can be sent to Father Dietzen at the same address: 3400 N. Tatum Blvd., Ste. 400, Phoenix, AZ 85016. Questions may be sent to Father Dietzen at the same address or by e-mail in care of cdf@advent形成了几个方向

Ft. Our Lady of Guadalupe

Zech 9:11-12

or Revelation 11:119a, 12:1-6a, (Jub.)*

Tuesday, Dec. 13

Lucy, virgin and martyr
Sirach 48:1-4, 9-11
Psalm 60:2-3, 15-16, 18-19
Matthew 17:9a, 10-13

Sunday, Dec. 14

Third Sunday of Advent

Isaiah 61:1-2a, 10-11
Revelation 22:1-5, 13-17
Psalm 95:1-3, 4-7, 10-11
Ephesians 3:1-6, 8-11
Matthew 11:14-17

Our Lady of Guadalupe

Second Peter. It also echoes Second Isaiah’s prophecy of divine mercy formed to provide this rescue. The people saw their rescue as a gift from God, given in God’s faithfulness to the Covenant.

Difficult times will come, but God will wonderfully optimistic. This reading is the first reading. The first reading was of St. Mark’s Gospel and relates the story of his message of the first reading. This passage quotes Isaiah’s prophecy that God, as pledged, will send a representative to guide the people from death to life, from the deadly effects of their sins to the bright realms of God’s forgiveness.

The Gospel then tells of John the Baptist, who went throughout Judea calling people to repentance. John reinforced his role as a prophet by being thoroughly detached from the things of this world. His very appearance, and behavior, emphasized the fact that only the spiritual matters. Only God matters.

Mark’s Gospel, however, is careful to say that John himself was not the messenger promised by God in the writings of Isaiah, but rather that John came to prepare the way for the Messiah. The messenger, the Savior, of course, was the Lord Jesus.
Please submit in writing to our office by 10 a.m. Thursday before the week of publication for classification as of death. Obituaries of archdiocesan priests, religious orders and deceased brothers are listed elsewhere in The Criterion. Order priests and religious whose brothers and sisters are included here, unless they are natives of the archdiocese or have other connections to it; those are separate obituaries on this page.

BEER, Patricia (Mason) ... Page 14

Please see the obituary of Joseph Zappia. The Criterion will not publish separate obituaries on this page.

MAKE PLANS WITH DIGNITY.

One of the most important things you can do for your family is also one of the most difficult to think about. Prearranging a funeral or cremation service protects your family from unnecessary stress and anxiety by ensuring they have peace of mind. Dignity Memorial® is a trusted mark of assurance that symbolizes a higher level of funeral care. Our attentive care and expanded services are the highest-quality and backed by a 100% Service Guarantee. Dignity Memorial Funeral and Cremation Plans are exclusively available through the following funeral homes and memorial providers. Call to arrange a personal visit to prearrange your funeral or cremation.

DignityMemorial.com

Service Beyond Expectation

FEENEY-HORNAK MORTUARIES
1307 N. Shadeland Ave.
216 East 21st Street
Indianapolis, IN 46219
(317) 553-6171
DignityMemorial.com

Sister Mary Lucien Dippel, O.S.B.
“...when I realized we needed a diamond jubilee and my picture was in The Criterion, a girl had taught at St. Anthony School...”

Sister Mary Carol Messmer, O.S.B.
“I taught mostly in southern Indiana, just two parishes in the archdiocese that I taught first school year was in 1949. We had only four classrooms and we were crowded. We had more than 220 (students) in four classrooms. One sister had 72 (students); the other sister I taught 80 students in second grade.”

Sister Marie Oliger, O.S.B.
“Last year, I was standing in line at a craft store and the lady in front of me said, "Oh, Sister Marie! ..." Another lady was behind me. When I left, she called my name as we got outside. She said, "Could you be the Sister Marie that taught me at St. Benedict School in Evansville?" That was in 1968, and I said, "Yes," and we stood and talked for about 45 minutes or an hour.”

SHARE IN THE CARE
December 14, 2008

REIRETIREMENT FUND FOR RELIGIOUS

All three Sisters of St. Benedict are charter members of Our Lady of Grace Monastery in Beech Grove. They taught in schools in the Archdiocese of Indianapolis and the Diocese of Evansville before retiring.

About 58 percent of women and men religious are past 70; percent are past age 90. More than 4,900 need skilled nursing care. Even at advanced ages, many work in compensated or volunteer ministry that benefits others.

Religious institutes are financially autonomous and responsible for the support of their members. Income sources include compensated ministry, government benefits and investment return.

Most elderly religious receive, on average, a Social Security benefit of just $4,402 per year. Community living provides some economies of scale, but health care and living costs in most religious communities far exceed income.

Ninety-five percent of donations to the National Religious Retirement Office aid elderly religious.

Franciscan Sister Callista Rosenberg was born on May 28, 1927, in Cedar Grove. She entered the Oldenburg Franciscan community on Dec. 7, 1945, and professed her final vows on July 2, 1951. Sister Callista taught at Catholic grade schools in Indiana, Ohio, Missouri and Illinois for 59 years. In the archdiocese, she taught at St. Nicholas School in Sumner, the former St. Martin School in Yorkville and the former St. Vincent de Paul School in St. Vincent.

In 1980, Sister Callista retired to the motherhouse. Surviving are a sister, Franciscan Sister Mary Helen Rosenberg of Oldenburg, and nieces and nephews. Memorial gifts may be sent to the Sisters of St. Francis, P.O. Box 100, Oldenburg, IN 47036-1000.

From left to right, Sister Mary Lucien Dippel, O.S.B., Sister Mary Carol Messmer, O.S.B. and Sister Marie Oliger, O.S.B.
The nearly 200-page hardcover, tells the story of Catholicism in central and southern Indiana from the arrival of Jesuit missionaries in the present day.

The history book sells for $27 (plus $4.50 for shipping and handling). The coffee table book contains glossy, full-color photographs and graphics. The first half of the book is an historical account of the Catholic Church in Indiana. The second half of the book contains historical information and photographs of each parish in the archdiocese.

**History book recounts 175 years of Catholicism in the archdiocese**

"This history will help all of us learn how our ancestors in the faith revealed the face of the Lord to others and how, over the years, they invited people to 'come and see.' "

— Archbishop Daniel M. Buechlein

---

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

**Music Coordinator & Part-Time Position**

Saint Maria Goretti Parish in Westfield is accepting applications for a part-time Coordinator of Music and Worship. The position, at approx. 20 hrs a week, includes coordinating music for our four Lord's Day Masses; coordinating and directing our adult choir; overseeing and assisting with our school Mass music; training and coordinating our sound technicians; coordinating all wedding and funeral music; and serving our Parish liturgy committee and as an active member of our Parish staff.

Please send resumes to:

**Music Coordinator Search Committee**

St. Maria Goretti Catholic Church

17102 Spring Mill Road
Westfield, IN 46074

---

For information about rates for classified advertising, call (317) 236-1572.
Vatican makes clear its opposition to U.N. homosexuality declaration

WASHINGTON (CNS)—Catholic Charities USA officials have warned against fraudulent e-mails on Internet.

Achieving Catholic Charity’s MiGiore, the Vatican’s apostolic nuncio to the United States, and Vatican spokesman Father Federico Lombardi said undisclosed forms of discrimination against homosexuals must be avoided.

However, the Vatican does not approve of a formal declaration with political weight that might be used to put pressure on or discriminate against countries that do not recognize same-sex marriage, they said.

A draft declaration, drawn up by France and endorsed by the European Union, was to be presented to the U.N. General Assembly on Dec. 10. It condemns discrimination based on sexual orientation and gender identity.

A archbishop MiGiore told the French news agency La Revue that adding these “new categories [to be] protected from discrimination” would create in turn “new and inflexible [forms of] discrimination.”

For example, he said, “states that do not recognize same-sex unions as ‘marriage’ will be pilloried and put under pressure” to do so, France, which holds the rotating presidency of the EU, plans to present the proposal on the 60th anniversary of the U.N.’s Universal Declaration of Human Rights in the hope that U.N. member states will make a nonbinding declaration to decriminalize homosexuality.

A most 80 countries have laws prohibiting homosexual activity, and several nations include the death penalty as a form of punishment for such activity.

Father Lombardi said that “obviously nobody wants to defend the death penalty for homosexuals.”

The Church supports fundamental human rights and opposes every form of “unjust discrimination” which includes “not just the death penalty, but all violent or discriminatory criminal laws against homosexuals,” said he in a commentary on Vatican Radio on Dec. 1.

The Vatican spokesman made his remarks after a archbishop MiGiore’s comments were published. He said the archbishop clearly expressed the Church’s and the Vatican’s position.

Father Lombardi said the problem with the draft proposal is that it does not just ask for the decriminalization of homosexuality. It also includes a declaration that might put pressure on or discriminate against communities that upheld marriage as only being between a man and a woman, the Vatican spokesman said.

Under such a declaration, nations or communities that “do not put every sexual orientation on exactly the same level can be considered contrary to the respect of human rights,” he said.

It is no wonder then, he said, that fewer than 50 U.N. member states have endorsed the draft declaration and more than 150 have not signed on.

“The Vatican is not alone” in its opposition to the proposal, he said.

On Dec. 10, the U.N. General Assembly was also to be presented with a petition to make abortion a universally recognized human right.

Aarchbishop MiGiore told a media that such a proposal was “sad and outrageous” and represented the kind of “modern savagery that will dismantle our society from the inside out.”

The initiative would promote the dismantling of the human-rights system by allowing declarations that are no longer about promoting and protecting fundamental rights but about “personal choices,” he said.

Catholic Charities USA warns against fraudulent e-mails on Internet

WASHINGTON (CNS)—Catholic Charities USA officials have demanded that groups using the Catholic Charities name solicit funds on the Internet discontinue using the trademark and urged potential donors to research the authenticity of an organization before making a contribution.

“Fraudulent e-mails that are misappropriating the name of Catholic Charities USA and its affiliates are being sent to extract money and/or personal information from unsuspecting recipients and are circulating on the Internet,” said Brandon Pinney, spokesman for Catholic Charities USA.

The e-mails are labeled with the subject titles “Grant Opportunity,” “The Catholic Charity,” “The Catholic Charity Foundation” and “From the Office of the Cash Grant Program.”

Pinney told Catholic News Service on Dec. 1.

The name “Catholic Charities” was used within the body of some of the e-mails, said Candy S. Hill, senior vice president for social policy and government affairs at Catholic Charities USA.

The messages—which come from several different e-mail addresses and provide a variety of contact names—ask recipients for detailed personal information, Pinney said.

In an effort to stop the e-mails, Father Larry Snyder, Catholic Charities USA president, replied on Nov. 28 to each of the addresses brought to the organization’s attention, insisting the sender stop disseminating such confusing messages or suffer consequences.

“Your unauthorized use of the name ‘Catholic Charities’ is likely to cause confusion, mistake or deception among the recipients of the e-mail,” Father Snyder said in his statement.

“We insist that you immediately discontinue all further sending of the above e-mail.”

In the statement, he said he wishes to settle the matter in an amicable way and asked for a reply within seven days to confirm they have halted such e-mails.

As of Dec. 1, Catholic Charities did get one automated response from one of the dozen or so e-mails it sent out, but had not received a reply stating the practice would be discontinued, Hill said.

Pope Benedict XVI waves to the media after visiting the United Nations in New York on April 18. At left is Archbishop Celestino Migliore, Vatican permanent observer to the U.N. The Vatican has made clear its opposition to the United Nations endorsing a universal declaration to decriminalize homosexuality.