A Christmas reflection
from Archbishop Joseph W. Tobin, C.Ss.R.

What came to be through him was life, and this life was the light of the human race; the light shines in the darkness, and the darkness has not overcome it” (Jn 1:3b-5).

Dear Sisters and Brothers in Christ,

I am privileged to address the readers of The Criterion for the first time, and I hope that these words will reach all the faithful in central and southern Indiana.

The beginning of my service to the Archdiocese of Indianapolis has been a daily experience of gratitude for the incredible welcome sincerely offered by so many good people.

The competence and generosity of my closest partners in mission give me great confidence as I assume my new responsibilities. I go to bed each evening and arise the next day saying “thank you” to God for having called me to labor in this corner of the vineyard. I would like to thank each of you as well. Hoosier hospitality is the real deal.

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It seems particularly appropriate to write these words as the Church enters the season of the Gif.

At this time of the year, people desperately want to be happy, try to be generous, and generally like to spend time with friends and family. They also have a keen sensitivity to light.

In the northern hemisphere, Christmas comes at the darkest time of the year. The winter solstice means that our portion of the Earth is at its farthest point from the sun, the source of light and life. The greater portion of each 24 hours is spent in shadow and gloom. No wonder we like to decorate our houses, workplaces and churches with an abundance of light!

The shadows remain, but we trust that the light is finally stronger. Our decorations remind us, among other things, that the source of light, the sun, is returning.

Have you noticed how often the Church prays for light during the season of Advent?

The story of the birth of Jesus is a chronicle of light. Hosts of angels blaze across the night sky, while wise men follow a star. You have to look closely at the Nativity to glimpse the shadow, a reality that does not sit well with the more saccharine contemporary versions of the Christmas story.

The birth of Christ is touched by the shadow of the Cross, already the destiny of the holy Child. A subtle scarlet thread of suffering unites Nazareth and Bethlehem.

Consider how the initial consternation of Joseph at Mary’s pregnancy, the hardship of their journey to the city of David, the miserable poverty of the stable, the disturbing content of the prophecy of Simeon on the day of the Jesus’ circumcision, as well as the immense tenacity of Herod and the flight into Egypt, all conspire to shatter the peaceful image of the Madonna and Child bathed in soft light.

The suffering side of the Christmas story leads us to its deepest meaning—that God so loved the world that he sent his only Son (Jn 3:16), who “emptied himself” (Phil 2:7) and became “like us in all things, except sin” (Heb 4:15).

By his birth, the Son of God enters fully into the precarious, violent, unjust and often incomprehensible world of humanity. He is not play-acting. The Gospel of John, which is shot through with references to light, uses that image to describe the Incarnation.

“What came to be through him was life, and this life was the light of the human race; the light shines in the darkness, and the darkness has not overcome it” (Jn 1:3b-5).

This year, I think it is crucial to recognize the suffering side of Christmas. After all, darkness recently has touched families of the archdiocese and generous partners in the mission of this archdiocese.

The story of the birth of Jesus is a chronicle of light. Hosts of angels blaze across the night sky, while wise men follow a star. You have to look closely at the Nativity to glimpse the shadow, a reality that does not sit well with the more saccharine contemporary versions of the Christmas story.

Since Dec 14, our nation has been grieving for the senseless slaughter of innocents at Sandy Hook Elementary School in Newtown, Conn. Many are asking why God “took” these little children and their teachers. A similar question may have occurred to those who loved the Butzes and Horans.

Christmas reminds us that God does not “take” God is both the Giver and the Gift. In the life, death and resurrection of Jesus, God experienced the same sort of darkness that was manifest outside Greensburg and in Newton, and proclaimed forever that darkness will never have the final word. The more pronounced the gloom, the more dramatic is the presence of light.

Our celebration of the birth of Jesus pushes back against a long winter night and, even in our day, “the people who have walked in darkness have seen a great light” (Is 9:2).

Sincerely yours in Christ,

Most Rev. Joseph W. Tobin, C.Ss.R.
Archbishop of Indianapolis

Mary, Joseph and the Child Jesus are depicted in a Nativity painted by Benedictine nuns in Madrid. The Christmas season begins with the Dec. 24 evening vigil commemorating the birth of Christ and ends with the feast of the Baptism of the Lord, on Jan. 13, 2013.

Patroness of the Americas
Parishes and schools celebrate feast of Our Lady of Guadalupe, pages 2, 10 and 15.
Archbishop Tobin joins Hispanic Catholics to honor Our Lady of Guadalupe

By Sean Gallagher

In one of his first visits to a parish in central and southern Indiana after his installation, Archbishop Joseph W. Tobin celebrated a Mass on the feast of Our Lady of Guadalupe at St. Anthony Church in Indianapolis on Dec. 12.

The church was filled to overflowing primarily with Hispanic Catholics, who came to show their love for Mary—who appeared to St. Juan Diego in 1531 on the Hill of Tepeyac near Mexico City.

Dozens of bouquets of flowers surrounded a large image of Our Lady of Guadalupe placed at the front of the church.

Many young boys were dressed as Juan Diego, wearing an imitation of his famous cloak, known as a tilma, on which was imprinted the image of Our Lady of Guadalupe. Young girls were colorful native dresses.

Archbishop Tobin, who spent many years ministering at large Hispanic parishes in Detroit and Chicago, celebrated the entire Mass, including his homily, in Spanish.

Following the Mass, an impromptu parade took place on Warman Avenue in front of the parish church that featured a large statue of “La Virgen de Guadalupe” and Mexican dancers wearing colorful costumes adorned with bells.

The cold December night in Indianapolis was thus made warm with the devotion of these Hispanic Catholics, who showed so much love for the Blessed Mother.

Image of Our Lady of Guadalupe placed at the front of the church.

Jennifer Garza, a member of St. Anthony Parish in Indianapolis, leads the singing of the responsorial psalm during a Dec. 12 feast day Mass in honor of Our Lady of Guadalupe at her parish’s church.

‘No words’ can describe sadness, shock after shooting, says priest


When the enormity of the tragedy began to unfold, other priests, chaplains and Catholic Charities personnel “were on the ground,” Brian Wallace, diocesan director of communications, told Catholic News Service.

In the days since, St. Rose of Lima Parish has been a center stage as people gathered for a prayer vigil the night of the shooting and locked to Sunday Masses seeking solace. They looked to Msgr. Weiss and his staff and other Catholic leaders for pastoral outreach in the aftermath of the violence, which left 20 children and seven adults dead.

Eighteen children died at the school, and two others died after they had been rushed to the hospital. All of the children were first-graders. The two others died after they had been rushed to the hospital.

Police officials identified the shooter as Adam Lanza, 20, and said he killed himself as the gunman.

Weiss, pastor of St. Rose of Lima Parish in Newtown, commented that he was in disbelief when he heard the news.

“We were just stunned. We just couldn’t believe it,” Weiss said.

“We’re just helping one child at a time. This has been torn apart, [and] that all across this land of ours, we have wept with you, we’ve pulled our children tight,” he said.

“And you must know that whatever measure of comfort we can provide, we will provide, whatever portion of sadness that we can share with you to ease this heavy load, we will gladly bear it.

“Newtown—you are not alone.”

In a Dec. 16 statement, Msgr. Gerald A. Doyle, administrator of the Bridgeport Diocese, said, “On this Guadalupe Sunday, we realize how quickly our joy can be turned to sorrow and how our faith can be challenged.

“On behalf of the clergy, religious and all the faithful of the Diocese of Bridgeport, I extend my prayers and condolences to the families of the victims. . . . Our concern and support go out to the whole community of Newtown as you try to assist and support one another, especially those who were directly impacted.

“The Bridgeport Diocese’s website included several other messages of condolences, including one sent on behalf of Pope Benedict XVI by Cardinal Tarcisio Bertone, Vatican secretary of state.

He conveyed the pope’s “heartfelt grief and the assurance of this closeness in prayer to the victims and their families, and to all affected by the shocking event.”

Max Barbon holds his 2-year-old son, Alex, wearing an imitation of the cloak, or tilma, of St. Juan Diego, on which was imprinted the image of Our Lady of Guadalupe, during a Dec. 12 Mass at St. Anthony Church in Indianapolis.

Archbishop Joseph W. Tobin, center, elevates a consecrated host during a Dec. 12 Mass at St. Anthony Church in Indianapolis that honored Our Lady of Guadalupe. Elevating a chalice was, at left, Father Kenneth Taylor, director of the archdiocesan Office of Multicultural Ministry. Also concelebrating the Mass was, at right, Father John McCauley, pastor of St. Anthony and Holy Trinity parishes. Ford Cox, second from left, executive assistant to the archbishop and liaison for episcopal affairs, assisted at the Mass.

The Criterion and Catholic Center are closed from Dec. 21 to Jan. 1 for Christmas holiday.

This week’s issue of The Criterion, which is our annual Christmas publication, is the last issue of 2012.

The Criterion will be published again on Jan. 11, 2013, 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, 2013.
Appointment of Archbishop Tobin and tornado in Henryville top local stories

The appointment of Archbishop Joseph W. Tobin as our sixth archbishop, the response to tornado damage in Henryville by St. Francis Xavier Parish and others, and the city of Indianapolis hosting the National Black Catholic Congress were voted tops in three local news stories of 2012.

Other stories of note include coverage of the local response to the Department of Health and Human Services’ (HHS) mandate, Bishop Christopher J. Coyne’s ad litem mission to Rome with Indians’ other bishops and the ordination of 16 new permanent deacons.

Working in the customs of other news agencies, The Criterion editorial staff votes each year for the top 10 local stories that were covered in our newspaper. Many of the stories selected this year were made up of several individual articles. Read this story online to browse the links to all the original coverage.

Among the hundreds of locally produced news stories during 2012, here is our “Top 10” list:


2. St. Francis Xavier Parish in Henryville helps community rebuild after a deadly tornado.

3. More than 2,200 people gather in Indianapolis for the National Black Catholic Congress.

4. Local Catholics stand against federal health care mandate.

5. Bishop Christopher J. Coyne meets Pope Benedict XVI at the Vatican.

6. Sixteen men are ordained permanent deacons for the archdiocese.

7. Marrian University celebrates its 75th anniversary and $153 million in gifts.

8. Indiana school voucher law is upheld by a county judge.

9. Deacon Jerry Byrd is ordained to the priesthood.

10. Former Anglicans are welcomed into the Catholic Church at the cathedral.

The meeting, which was held with the other bishops of Indiana, was part of the ad litem visit of the bishops of Illinois, Indiana and Wisconsin with the pope and leaders of various offices at the Vatican.

“Each diocesan bishop around the world makes an ad litem visit every five to eight years,” reporter Sean Gallagher noted in our news coverage. “In advance of the trip, surveys of the life of the diocese are filled out by the bishop and his pastoral staff for review by the pope and various cardinals and bishops who assist him.”

“It was a very special moment to be able to drive down for 20 minutes with [the pope],” Bishop Coyne said. “We sat down and had a conversation. He asked questions as he listened to what we had to say. He was very enthusiastic about the work that’s going on in Indiana and in the Church.”

 appointment of Archbishop Joseph W. Tobin, then apostolic administrator, represented the archdiocese during a Feb. 9 meeting with Pope Benedict XVI at the Vatican.

The criterion reporting.

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**No peace in Bethlehem today**

As we meditate on that first Christmas, we can picture in our minds Mary and Joseph slowly making their way from Nazareth to Galilee down to Jericho and then up the mountains to Jerusalem and finally to “the city of David that is called Bethlehem” (Lk 2:4). Other than the hardships of travel, especially for a woman about to give birth, it was a peaceful time, the par August of the Roman emperor Caesar Augustus. Today, as we again celebrate the birth of Jesus Christ in Bethlehem, the land of his birth is anything but peaceful. It is a mess—and not only the small area around Bethlehem and Jerusalem, but also throughout the Middle East.

When Mary and Joseph went from Jerusalem into Bethlehem, they had no trouble. Today, a wall separates the two cities, with Jerusalem in Israel and Bethlehem in Palestine, but according to the United Nations. The U.N. declared Palestine a “non-member state” on Nov. 29. The Vatican and the United States are on opposite sides on this issue. The Vatican immediately praised the 138-9 vote—with 41 abstentions—while the United States was one of the nine votes against. It sided with Israel, which said that the U.N. resolution “does not, and cannot, establish a Palestinian state or even grant it recognition.”

Israel went out to punish the Palestinians for seeking recognition by the U.N. by approving the building of more homes in Israeli settlements located within the boundaries of Palestine but captured by the Israelis in 1967. About 500,000 Israelis now live in these settlements.

The Vatican and the United States agree that the recognition of the two states of Israel and Palestine must be part of the solution to the Israeli-Palestinian problem. The United States and Israel, however, believe that that must come only through negotiations between the two parties. The U.N. vote was a victory for Palestinian President Mahmoud Abbas. But his leadership is recognized only by the West Bank, not in Gaza. Islamist Hamas has reigned supreme there for the past five years, and appears to be even stronger after the recent sparring between Gaza and Israel. The cease-fire there was seen as a victory for Hamas, which has never recognized the right of Israel to exist.

When the Vatican praised the new U.N. status for Palestine, it also encouraged “negotiations in good faith” and “the sincere search for solutions which could become secure foundations for a lasting peace.”

Elections in Israel are slated for Jan. 22, and it is likely that Benjamin Netanyahu will be re-elected prime minister. Aside from approving those expanding settlements and the building of the wall, he has more or less ignored any possible peace with the Palestinians.

This could prove detrimental to Israel. As The Economist observed in its Nov. 24 issue, “With the rest of the Arab world becoming more democratic, depriving Palestinians of their right to self-determination is making Israel look a lodestar that is bound one day to explode in the territories occupied by Israel.”

And yet, peace is possible if both sides could only be persuaded to do it. Most sensible people know what must happen. There must be two states, with the settlements within the state of Israel but with Israel ceding other territory in return. The two states must share Jerusalem. There must be compensation for descendants of the Palestinians, who were forced out of the country in return for the right to return.

At some point, Israel must come to an agreement with the Palestinians, if only for demographic reasons. The Palestinian population in Israel and the West Bank is growing faster than the Jewish population. Israel cannot keep the Palestinians as second-class citizens forever, but if we allowed to them first-class citizenship it could mean the end of a Jewish majority.

Meanwhile, other parts of the Middle East don’t look any more promising, especially for Christians.

In Egypt, the Muslim Brotherhood, under President Muhammad Morsi, is in control and even thou riots broke out in the streets of Cairo. In Syria, the civil war has forced hundreds of thousands of refugees out of the country, and there is danger that extreme Islamists will eventually gain control there, too.

—John F. Finn

**Reflection/Daniel Conway**

“Inferno realized that he had been deceived by the Magi, he became furious. He ordered the massacre of all the boys in Bethlehem and its vicinity 2 years old and under, in accordance with the time he had ascertained from the Magi. Then was fulfilled what had been said through Jeremiah the prophet: ‘A voice was heard in Ramah, sobbing and loud lamentation; Rachel weeping for her children, and she would not be consoled, since they were no more’” (Mt 2:16-18).

Sobbing and loud lamentation have been heard once again, this time in Newton, Conn., following the massacre of 26 people at an elementary school—mostly children under the age of 7. This latest manifestation of the “culture of death” shakes all people of good will to their very foundations.

How could the actions of a single “deranged gunman” cause so much horror and death, especially for so many innocent children? How does a good God permit such evil? What is it about our society that allows the death and destruction of children to become a regular occurrence?

Pope Benedict XVI expressed his “heartfelt grief” over this “senseless violence in Newtown, Connecticut.” He said, “I assure the families of the victims, especially those who lost a child, of my closeness in prayer.”

The pope said he prayed that God “will sustain the entire community with spiritual strength, which triumphs over the power of forgiveness, hope and reconciling love.”

There is no alternative in the face of senseless violence but to pray for spiritual strength. From the very first biblical account of man’s inhumanity to man—Cain’s murder of his brother Abel—no satisfactory explanation has ever been given for the evil that human beings are capable of committing. No consolation is possible—humanly speaking—in the face of such acts.

Deranged persons—whether individuals such as the Connecticut killer or groups such as the Nazis in World War II or modern-day suicide bombers—defy reason. They kill out of madness or a deeply misguided sense of mission, and they always end badly, either dying at their own hands or being overcome finally and often at great cost to the forces of good.

Still, we can’t help but ask, “Why? How could this happen—again?”

There is no answer. The prophet Jeremiah cites Rachel’s weeping for her children and her inability to be consoled “since they were no more” (Jer 31:15). All we can do is weep—and pray—that the day will come when all violence and all tears will be ended forever.

Until then, as Pope Benedict tells us, we must rely on the “spiritual strength which triumphs over violence.” We must place our trust in God, who “triumphs over violence by the power of forgiveness, hope and reconciling love.” Isn’t this what Advent is all about?

This holy season reminds us that without Christ all of us, and the world we live in, are in a very bad way. Unless guided by God’s Word, human freedom brings with it the capacity for unspeakable evil. Unless grounded in Christ’s reconciling love, there can be no real hope or forgiveness. Things will continue as they are—unredeemed by the power of self-sacrificing love—unless the Messiah comes to save us from the power of sin and death.

We Christians believe that this Savior has, in fact, come. We also believe that he has overcome the power of evil and will again come to reconcile us all to himself on the Day of Judgment.

Until then, we wait in hope. We endure suffering and senseless violence—often with Rachel’s bitter tears—confident that God’s love will triumph over sin and death and restore us to the peace and consolation of our heavenly home.

While we wait, we must pray—and weep—for all who suffer from the effects of unspeakable evil. Our sisters and brothers in Connecticut deserve our heartfelt grief. They also deserve our fervent prayer for the Lord’s coming again this Christmas and at the end of time.

Come, Lord Jesus. Free us from the culture of death, and bring us all safely into your kingdom, where you “will wipe every tear from our eyes, and there will be no more death or mourning, wailing or pain” (Rev 21:4).

(Daniel Conway is senior vice president for planning, marketing and advancement for Marian University in Indianapolis, and a member of The Criterion’s editorial board.)

**Where Donations Go**

Each year the religion sector receives the largest share of charitable donations. In 2011 nearly $300 billion was given to charities in these areas.

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*International affairs, 8 percent; public society beneft, 7 percent; arts, culture and humanities, 4 percent; environment and animals, 3 percent. © 2012 Catholic News Service
Thank you to the many generous partners who provided financial support for the Installation Mass of The Most Reverend Joseph W. Tobin, C.Ss.R.

Steve’s Flowers and Gifts
The parishes of the Archdiocese of Indianapolis
The elementary schools of the Archdiocese of Indianapolis

Bishop Chatard High School
Brebeuf Jesuit Preparatory School
Cardinal Ritter Jr/Sr High School
Cathedral High School
Father Michael Shawe Memorial Jr/Sr High School
Father Thomas Scecina Memorial High School
Oldenburg Academy of the Immaculate Conception
Our Lady of Providence Jr/Sr High School
Providence Cristo Rey High School
Roncalli High School
Seton Catholic High School
December 21
Northside Knights of Columbus Hall, 2100 E. 714 St., Indianapolis.

December 22
St. Bartholomew Church, 1306 27th St., Columbus.
Concert series, “Let There Be Light,” St. Bartholomew Choir and Fairlawn Presbyterian Chancel Choir, 7 p.m. Information: 812-379-9351, ext. 237, or mimut_stbh@yahoo.com.
St. John the Evangelist Church, 126 W. Georgia St., Indianapolis.
Faithful Citizens rosary procession downtown after 12:10 p.m. Mass.

St. Barnabas Parish Men’s Club, Indianapolis South.
“Morning for Moms:坐标 axe–The Experience of Prayer Practices,” Benedictine Sister Kathy Huler, 8 a.m.-4 p.m., $30 per person. Information: 317-788-7581 or benedictina@archindy.org.

December 31
Our Lady of Fatima Retreat House, 5353 E. 56th St., Indianapolis.
New Year’s Eve retreat, “Mary, the Mother of God.” Father Aaron Jenkins and Jonathan Higgins, presenters, 5 p.m.-midnight, $65 per couple. Information: 317-788-7581 or benedictina@archindy.org.

January 1
Our Lady of Fatima Retreat House, 5353 E. 56th St., Indianapolis.
Tobit Weekend, marriage preparation retreat, registration required. Information: www.archindy.org/Fatima.

January 3
Our Lady of Fatima Retreat House, 5353 E. 56th St., Indianapolis. Archdiocesan Office of Family Ministries, Pre Cana Conference for engaged couples, 1:15-6 p.m., $45 per couple. Registration www.archindy.org/Parins.

January 9
Mount St. Francis, 101 St. Anthony Drive, Mount St. Francis.

January 13
Our Lady of Fatima Retreat House, 5353 E. 56th St., Indianapolis.
Mount St. Francis, 101 St. Anthony Drive, Mount St. Francis.
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January 14
Our Lady of Fatima Retreat House, 5353 E. 56th St., Indianapolis.
“Come Away and Rest Archdiocese–Silent Self-Guided Day of Reflection,” 8 a.m.-4 p.m., $30 per person. Information: 317-788-7581 or benedictina@archindy.org.

January 15
Benedictin Inn Retreat and Conference Center, 1402 Southern Ave., Beech Grove.
“St. John’s Bible Study: Visio Divina–Seeing the World, The Sower and the Seed.” Benedictine Sister Angela Jabro, presenter, 8:30-9:30 a.m., $55 per session includes dinner. Information: 317-788-7581 or benedictina@archindy.org.

January 19
Benedictin Inn Retreat and Conference Center, 1402 Southern Ave., Beech Grove.

January 20
Our Lady of Fatima Retreat House, 5353 E. 56th St., Indianapolis.
“Morning for Moms: The Experience of Prayer Practices,” Benedictine Sister Kathy Huler, 8 a.m.-4 p.m., $30 per person. Information: 317-785-7681, ext. 15, or ucmccomunity@archindy.org.

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Archdiocese of Indianapolis. Archdiocese of Indianapolis.

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St. John the Evangelist Church, 126 W. Georgia St., Indianapolis.
Faithful Citizens rosary procession downtown after 12:10 p.m. Mass.

Information: 317-327-1089.

January 23
Corydon Cinemas, 2025 E. 27th St., Corydon.
Corydon Youth. Junior high quarterly event, movie, 10 a.m., $6 per person. Information: 812-364-6173, ext. 10.

January 31
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An archangel announces the birth of Jesus

By John F. Fink

Special to The Criterion

My name is Gabriel. I am an archangel. I hope you realize that it is highly unusual for an angel to deliver a message in print, but that’s what God has asked me to do.

I admit that I’m much more accustomed to delivering messages in person—as I did to Zechariah in Jerusalem and to a virgin named Mary in Nazareth. I’ll get to that story in due time.

In the meantime, I should explain that I stand before God and serve as his messenger.

With that capacity, I appeared to the prophet Daniel and announced to him the 70 weeks of years before the coming of an anointed one (Dan 9:20-25). I appeared to Daniel again to give him the vision of the Hellenistic wars (Dan 10-12).

Those messages, though, pale in significance with the mission that God gave me a little more than 2,000 years ago. God gave me a role in the salvation of the whole human race.

Before sending me on my mission, God explained that he had decided that the time had come to redeem humankind from the sin of Adam and Eve.

That is, earthly time. Time doesn’t exist in heaven’s eternity.

Ever since they sinned through disobedience and were expelled from the Garden of Eden, there had been an enmity between God and the descendants of Adam and Eve.

This was a serious break that the gates of heaven had been closed to those who had sinned, beginning with Adam and Eve. They had all been living in limbo.

God told me that no human could rectify that situation because no mere human could represent all humanity. But God could do it, and the way he planned to do it was by becoming human himself. A being who was both God and man would redeem humanity.

That’s where I came in. I was a child, a young girl named Mary to be the mother of the Messiah and Lord. The Lord, of course, I meant the Son of the Most High.

She had been brought up in the Temple and knew Scripture so she understood that I was telling her that she would be the mother of the long-awaited Messiah, especially when I told her that her son, Jesus, would have the throne of David and rule over the house of Jacob.

She had a problem, though. How could this happen, she asked me, since she had never been with a man? I told her that God had prepared me for this role.

Fortunately, God had predestined her to be the mother of the Messiah and Lord, the Son of God. I told her that the Holy Spirit would come upon her and the power of the Most High would overshadow her. Her son would be called the Son of God.

I also told her about Elizabeth’s pregnancy. She didn’t know about it since Elizabeth lived about 80 miles away, and communications were difficult in those days.

I told Mary that since Elizabeth could conceive in her old age so could she, which was a big surprise because nothing is impossible for God.

That’s when Mary replied, “I am the handmaid of the Lord. May it be done to me according to your word” (Lk 1:38).

My mission was accomplished so I left. However, my work wasn’t finished yet. Mary had a problem with Joseph, the man to whom she was betrothed.

At that time, a Jewish wedding had two parts. First, the couple took their vows, the actual wedding. Then, at a later date, there was a big party after which the groom took his bride to his home.

Jesus and Mary had done the first part when he found out that she was pregnant. He was perplexed, to say the least. He knew that he wasn’t the father.

He could have accused her of adultery, the penalty for which was death by stoning. But he didn’t want to do that so he decided to divorce her quietly. Since they had taken their vows, divorce was necessary.

God knew that would happen, of course. He told me at the beginning that he wanted me to tell Joseph not to be afraid to take Mary into his home because it was through the Holy Spirit that the child had been conceived in her. This time, though, I was to do it by appearing in a dream.

Furthermore, I was told, I would be appearing to Joseph in dreams twice more after Jesus was born. The first time would be to warn him that King Herod was going to search for Jesus to kill him and, therefore, he should take Mary and Jesus to Egypt. The second time was to tell him, after Herod’s death, that it was safe to return to the land of Israel.

Fortunately, Joseph realized that his dreams were messages from God. In regard to the first dream, I think he was predisposed to believe that Jesus was conceived without a man because of her insistence that Joseph respect her vow of virginity.

He really couldn’t imagine that she had sexual relations with another man. So Joseph took Mary into his home.

Eventually, Jesus was born in the city of Bethlehem and God entered the human race. It was a cause for great celebration, but no one would have known about it if it weren’t for the next mission that God sent me on. I was selected to be the one to announce this tremendous event.

But I wasn’t sent to the Jewish high priest or some other great religious authority. God sent me to a group of shepherds! This time I really startled them by appearing at night in a great light so I really needed to say, “Do not be afraid.”

Then I delivered the great news. “A savior has been born for you who is Messiah and Lord” (Lk 2:11).

By savior, I meant that he would rescue humanity from the condition of alienation from God. By Messiah, I meant the anointed one whom the Jews were expecting. By Lord, of course, I meant God.

That is the message that I gave to the shepherds, and that is the message I give to you today. Jesus, the Savior, Messiah and Lord, has been born to free you from your sins. Rejoice in his birth! Alleluia!

(John F. Fink is editor emeritus of The Criterion.)
Setting up creche with grandma and aunt is special Advent memory

By Judy Wyso-Treadwell and Kathryn Wyso Koehler

As children of some 50-plus years ago, it was the best time of our lives to be able to help with our beloved Grandmother Kathleen and Aunt Mary—who lived together in a cozy little home on a busy street—set up Christmas lights and manger scene during Advent.

Every ornament and figurine was wrapped with love and care each year. Each year, you'd arrive home to see paper planes packed in cardboard boxes. Unwrapping each item was like opening a present on Christmas morning with much anticipation and so careful not to break the glass ornaments or chip a small piece off the creche set.

Once the tree was set up in the stand and adorned with lights and ornaments, you'd pass by to take the last treesicle one by one on the branches. There was a thrill to pulling the drops off the tree.

If it wasn’t set up right from the icicle placement, it was finally time to set the tree on the floor. This process was nothing short of an anxiety-balancing act. It took a steady hand planning and patience to repeat this process over and over.

The manger scene was not placed people on the floor, but rather in the front room window for all to see. That would seem effortless, you say, but not when you consider the fact that the entire stable and its figurines were placed between the double-paned glass windows just barely measuring only the width of the stable.

Each little figurine had its special spot on which to be placed as evidenced by the left-over results of glue from years gone by. They had to fit just perfectly on those spots or they would topple over and there would be Joseph lying on his side. So with steady hands and many many attempts, the stable and its occupants were placed in between the front windowpanes.

First, you had to place the entire set in an opening that Honolulu would not have figured out how to get out of them the scene a 180-degree angle and push them at least three feet into the center of the front room window.

If we were lucky, it was successful with all figurines standing on the one that ray. It was usually found at least four or five trees before we were successful.

Then came the process of adding the sheep and animals on the outside of the stable. They were delicately placed in their designated areas stage left or right with the aid of long-handled tongs. Yes, ours!

The arms were far too short to place the figurines close to the stable where they belonged so we used tongs. That worked too!

This grand day of helping our grandmother and aunt was usually topped off by a party with grandma as well as Becky’s Christmas party with Uncle Mick,

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Pastor celebrates universal Church with multicultural Christmas wishes

By Julie Williamson
Special to The Criterion

One of my favorite Christmas memories was going to Christmas Eve Mass at Holy Spirit Church on East 10th Street in Indianapolis. During the ’70s, our pastor, Father William Munshower, made that Mass extra special.

As a family, all nine of us along with my Aunt Hermina attended the 7:30 p.m. Christmas Eve Mass.

The cozy, beautifully decorated church came alive with the angelic sounds of the choir, and the booming sound of the trumpets and other instruments. During his homily, Father Munshower would always start by asking for the parishioners to call out “Merry Christmas” in all the different languages represented in our parish. We would hear “Joyeux Noel” (French), “Frohe Weihnachten” (German), “Wesołych Świąt Bozego Narodzenia” (Polish), “Feliz Navidad” (Spanish) and a host of other beautiful ways to say “Merry Christmas.”

I always loved how no matter what background, culture or country that we came from, we all wanted to celebrate the birth of our Lord Jesus Christ together as one.

(Julie Williamson is a member of St. Simon the Apostle Parish in Indianapolis.)

Some Christmas presents are best when bought at the last minute

By Tim Prickel
Special to The Criterion

I grew up in St. Louis Parish in Batesville in a family of seven children and—fortunately—two caring parents.

We had a toaster that would only “toast” two slices at a time—not good for a large family at breakfast time! I suggested a loaf of bread to complement the toaster gift.

Little did I know that she would buy the loaf of bread in early December! When my Mom opened my sister’s present at Christmas, she found a loaf of bread that was green and moldy!

(Tim Prickel is a member of St. Benedict Parish in Nashville.)

New tombstone for mother is unique Christmas present from children

By Judy Mang
Special to The Criterion

We—six children all grown up now—wanted to buy our widowed mother a very special gift, but we told her that she couldn’t use it for a long time.

Our father died in 1951, and his tombstone was very faded. You had to get down on your knees to be able to read the words inscribed on it.

We wanted our mother to pick out a new tombstone, and told her that we would pay for it.

She laughed, and did choose a new tombstone that she liked to mark their graves.

She said it was the nicest thing that we could do for her.

(Judy Mang is a member of St. Louis Parish in Batesville.)

Miracle of flowers surprises homesick woman on Christmas

By Dolores Francis
Special to The Criterion

It had been a rough year.

Job changes for both my husband and me, and a move from a city where we had put down roots had left me feeling homesick, lonely and anything but ready to celebrate Christmas.

On Christmas Day, I rose early to put the turkey in the oven. With that chore finished, I sank into the recliner for a few quiet moments.

I closed my eyes, and asked God to help me put on a happy face and not let my bad mood spoil the holiday for my family.

Taking a deep breath, I opened my eyes and there—on the geranium plant that I had brought in from outside last fall—a small cluster of bright red flowers had burst into bloom.

My own personal gift from God!

(Dolores Francis is a member of St. Agnes Parish in Lafayette.)

Christmas Eve engagement leads to 18 years of happy married life

By Theresa McHolland
Special to The Criterion

One of my favorite Christmas memories goes back to 1993. It was Christmas Eve, and my husband, Don, and I became engaged.

We had both been widowed, and met each other on a blind date.

So all the family members were gathered together—the six children, husbands and wives, and all the grandchildren.

He got down on one knee—which wasn’t too easy at his age—and asked me to marry him.

It’s been 18 years now. Ours has been a good marriage made in heaven, and we live happily ever after. God is good!

(Theresa McHolland is a member of Holy Spirit Parish in Fishers, Ind., in the Lafayette Diocese.)
The humble love of the Christ Child establishes true peace

By Marcellino D’Ambrosio

In the days of Caesar Augustus, an era of peace was established in the Mediterranean world after centuries of strife. But this peace was forged by the proud ambition of emperors and the edge of their armies’ swords. Upon this stage appears a baby acclaimed as king by eastern dignitaries. Neither Caesar nor Herod will brook any rivals. Brutal hordes are sent to slay him at birth although he comes without armies. The thugs are thwarted, but only for a season. The royal child is laid in a manger, and the wood of that manger foreshadows the wood of the Cross.

Caesar and Herod were bound to misunderstand him. They climbed their way to the top, stepping on all who stood in their way. He emptied himself and plunged to the bottom, from the glory of heaven to the squalor of a stable. Pharaohs and Caesars strained toward immortality. Yet he who was immortal by nature embraced mortality. The great ones of the world took every opportunity to exalt themselves. In the very act of being born, he humiliated himself.

You would think that he would have chosen Rome or Athens as the place of his appearance. But he selects an obscure desert town in a dusty provincial outpost. Even in this humble spot, not even a seedy inn would make room for him. So they had recourse to a cave, welcomed only by the animals.

Isaiah said it well. “An ox knows its owner, and an ass its master’s manger, but Israel does not know, my people has not understood” (Is 1:3).

Everything was in fulfillment of Scripture. He was born in Bethlehem, a town whose name means “house of bread.” His crib was a manger, a feeding trough. But they did not understand that he was the bread of life. He was wrapped, in swaddling clothes, but they did not recognize him as the new king and embodiment of divine wisdom.

The only people who recognize him are shepherds, the humblest of society, and Magi, the wisest. But most Israelites, like us, were neither humble nor wise so they missed it.

They especially missed this—that one of the birthday gifts was incense, used in the worship of gods. He was not only king, wise man, messiah and Savior. He was God incarnate.

How could Jews have believed this? God is infinite, invulnerable and omnipotent. What is more vulnerable, fragile and helpless than an infant? Can the Eternal be born in time? Can the Divine Word be a child at the breast, incapable of speech? Can a mere teenage girl be the mother of God?

It was just as hard for the pagans to believe it. Their philosophers had taught that God is spirit and the body is a prison. Salvation means liberation from the confines of the physical body. The idea that a divine Savior would embrace human flesh did not compute.

Love sometimes does strange things. It takes great risks and goes to extreme lengths that many people would call foolish. On that first Christmas day, God’s foolishness was wiser than men, and his weakness was stronger than men. It took them all by surprise.

But this, of course, was part of God’s strategy. The element of surprise is critical in warfare. And Christmas was an act of warfare. It was the day of delivery. The preparation had taken centuries, but now it was time for the conqueror to land on enemy-occupied territory.

He came in humility and would finish the conquest 30 years later by the greatest act of humility the world has ever seen.

“Peace on Earth, good will toward men” (Lk 2:14). True peace can never be forged by steel, but only by love. It is the humble babe in the manger who is the real prince of peace.

(Amcello D’Ambrosio writes from Texas. He is co-founder of Crossroads Productions---www.crossroadsinitiative.com—an apostolate of Catholic renewal and evangelization.)

Christmas can be a time to renew relationships with kindness

By David Gibson

Our grandson, Joseph, hoped to find a hockey helmet from us under the Christmas tree last year—not just any helmet, but a goalie’s helmet. He found it, but getting it there proved stressful.

After driving long distances from one sports store to the next, I learned that goalie helmets for 6-year-olds were not sold in our area. So I passed my task off to our daughter, Joseph’s mother, who located the correct helmet in the city where she and her family live.

Was Joseph happy on Christmas morning? He was ecstatic, jumping and shouting all around.

Does that mean getting the perfect gift for him was worth the effort? Well, it means that with three children and seven grandchildren, my wife and I are fully aware of the effort, fatigue and sometimes great joy represented by Christmas gifts.

It is one thing, however, to share happiness with a child on Christmas and quite another to do that for an adult.

Adults will travel far to be in the “right place” on Christmas. But are they hoping to receive a perfect, wrapped gift? I suspect most adults travel for other reasons that have much to do with relationships.

At Christmas, renewing the riches of key life relationships is what matters.

But according to TV situation comedies that I viewed on Thanksgiving, misery often prevails at holiday gatherings with loved ones.

Are failed holiday celebrations the new norm? Probably not, but stress can assess its toll, particularly at Christmas.

It’s no wonder that ACCORD, the Irish Catholic bishops’ marriage care service, had cautionary words in 2009 for spouses overwhelmed by holiday chaos.

During stressful times, ACCORD warned, it sometimes is tempting “to take out your frustration verbally” on those “closest to you,” like your spouse. That could mean taking things out on your greatest source of support.

For people hoping to reap the riches of rewarding relationships, it seems vital that the “rules” of good relationships remain in place, despite the busyness of Christmas. One rule is to be a good listener, actually hearing what others say. Another rule is to treat each other with respect.

For St. Paul, relationship rules are about love. He described love as patient, kind and neither jealous nor pompous.

In a letter to the Corinthians, “[Love] is not rude, it is not self-seeking, it does not do its own thing and it is not easily angered.” (1 Cor 13:5.)

Christmas companionships could draw support from smiles, humor and kindness. Jesus drew upon such qualities in making himself truly and compassionately present to others, Basilian Father Thomas Rosica recently said.

Father Rosica is founding CEO of Canada’s Salt and Light Catholic Television network.

In December 2011 remarks for a Christmas tree lighting in Gubbio, Italy, Pope Benedict XVI highlighted kindness.

“Every small act of kindness is like a light of this great tree,” he said. “May each of us be a light for those nearby; may we step out of the selfishness that often ... makes us think only of ourselves; may we give a little attention and love to others.”

(David Gibson served on Catholic News Service’s editorial staff for 37 years.)
From the Editor Emeritus/John F. Fink

Year of Faith: Our belief in the Incarnation

“The Word was made flesh and dwelt among us” (Jn 1:14).

That is what we celebrate on Christmas, the narrative of the Incarnation. It is the amazing fact that Almighty God, who has always existed, lowered himself to become a human being. St. John's Gospel tells us as plainly as possible, “In the beginning was the Word”—he existed from all eternity—and “the Word was with God, and the Word was God” (Jn 1:1). Then, even clearer, he identifies the Word with creation, saying, “All things came to be through him and without him nothing came to be” (Jn 1:3).

“The ultimate reason, though, is because God chose to assume our nature, so that he, made man, might make men gods.”†

The Human Side/Fr. Eugene Henrich

My Christmas wish for you, brothers and sisters in Christ

In his letter to the Corinthians, St. Clement captures my Christmas wish for you. St. Clement also leads us to consider that you should be subject to his neighbor in accordance with the grace given to each. The stronger should care for the weak, and the week should care for the stronger. The wealthy should give to the poor, and the poor man should thank God that he has been granted something to supply his needs.

“The wise should manifest their wisdom not in words but in good deeds, and the humble should not talk about their own humility, but allow others to bear witness to it. Since, therefore, we have all this from him, let us be his faithful partners in every good work. It is my Christmas wish that those of us who are blessed with good health and strength will not only cherish this gift, but will use it in greater earnestness for those in need, and that those of us who receive care will be filled with the spirit of thankfulness. May we who are caregivers and care receivers experience more deeply the beauty of unity that exists in Christ. It is my wish that those of us who have means will see their ultimate value in being shared, not only among ourselves, but to those in need. May we open up our pocketbooks, but also our hearts be opened with generosity. And may those of us who are the recipients of generosity imitate the holy leper, who not only remembered Christ’s miracle, but also had the presence of mind to return and thank him.

“It is my wish that those of us who have received formal education here in the United States, which is preciousness and endeavor to employ it to the best of our means to enrich our families, workplaces, and government. May the education we received help in promoting wisdom. And may those of us who are blessed with good health and strength be filled with the spirit of thankfulness. May we who are caregivers and care receivers experience more deeply the beauty of unity that exists in Christ. It is my wish that those of us who have means will see their ultimate value in being shared, not only among ourselves, but to those in need. May we open up our pocketbooks, but also our hearts be opened with generosity. And may those of us who are the recipients of generosity imitate the holy leper, who not only remembered Christ’s miracle, but also had the presence of mind to return and thank him.

“Saints, martyrs, and the poor should not only be remembered by us, but that their names be a constant reminder of the humility that serves as a source of joy for us in our lives. May we who are caregivers and care receivers experience more deeply the beauty of unity that exists in Christ. It is my wish that those of us who have means will see their ultimate value in being shared, not only among ourselves, but to those in need. May we open up our pocketbooks, but also our hearts be opened with generosity. And may those of us who are the recipients of generosity imitate the holy leper, who not only remembered Christ’s miracle, but also had the presence of mind to return and thank him.

“The ultimate reason, though, is because God chose to assume our nature, so that he, made man, might make men gods.”†

Faith and Family/Sean Gallachí

Music expresses the joy of Advent and Christmas

The season of Advent and Christmas are filled with symbols of our faith. Advent wreaths, the Rosary, cornmeal cakes, garlands and gifts closely connected to these seasons are a part of our secular culture—important signs through which we can joyfully express our love for the Christ child.

The music of the season is especially important to me. Some of my fondest and clearest memories of Advent and Christmas from my childhood are bound in music. I can easily conjure up images of singing Advent hymns and Christmas carols at Mass, and hearing a variety of holiday songs playing on our record player at home.

When I was growing up, my mom would play Christmas albums by The Kingston Trio, The Lettermen and The Clancy Brothers that she probably bought in the early 1960s. I’ve found CDs and YouTube videos of most of the songs that I share with my kids.

I’ve also bought Christmas albums that I’ve discovered on my own. One of my favorites is a solo project from the recently deceased Dave Brubeck that he made in the mid-1990s. I can easily conjure up images of singing Advent hymns and Christmas carols at Mass, and hearing a variety of holiday songs playing on our record player at home.

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**Fourth Sunday in Advent/Msgr. Owen F. Campion**

### The Sunday Readings

**Sunday, Dec. 23, 2012**

- **Micah 5:1-4**
- **Hebrews 10:5-10**
- **Luke 1:39-45**

The Book of Micah is the source of the first reading for this fourth and last Sunday of Advent. This book’s author was a contemporary of Isaiah. Little is known about him except that he came from a small community about 28 miles southwest of Jerusalem.

As in the cases of the other prophets, Micah felt the obligation to denounce the disobedience to God that he saw all around him. Also, as in the cases of the other prophets, he devoutly believed that he spoke not just on his own authority, but to more importantly as the spokesman for God.

In this weekend’s reading, Micah predicts that the Savior of Israel will come from Bethlehem. David, the great king of Israel, who established a personal covenant with God—and whose kingship had as its chief purpose the guidance of the Lord who would bring God’s presence with us through Jesus. Micah realized that only a knowledge of, and understanding the greatness—and certainly the reality—of God, could change the lives of the people of all the days of Israel. As in the lives of all human beings, a vacuum was present. In their wisdom—they realized that only a knowledge of, and union with, God could fill this vacuum. So Elizabeth rejoiced when she saw Mary. She rejoiced because she knew Mary was bearing the unborn Redeemer, the Lord who would bring God’s presence and peace to the world.

Reflection

Elizabeth and Zachary, mentioned in this weekend’s Gospel reading, were persons of deep faith. They were mature people. They had pondered life. They understood the greatness—and certainly the reality—of God.

Yet, as in the lives of all human beings, a vacuum was present. In their wisdom—in keeping with this characteristic. Highlighted is the ritual sacrifice, the heart of the ancient Jewish religion. The other central characteristic of this writing is its developed and eloquent Christology. Its message about the Lord, the Lamb of God, the Redeemer, is Christology. Its message about the Lord, the Lamb of God, the Redeemer, is Christology.

Hebrews proclaims the majesty of this Lord. Micah predicted not only the Lord’s eventual coming, but also identified the need for God, a need sensed by Elizabeth. In only a few days, the Church will celebrate the birth of Jesus. His birth occurred at a given time in a given place. Advent points us toward the celebration of this birth. It also reminds us that we await not an anniversary, but the birth of Jesus, His birth was a gift to the world. In Advent, have we recognized the vacuum of living without God? In Advent, have we sought to fill the vacuum, knowing that God alone is the answer?

Jesus the Lord, the Son of Mary, is the Son of God.†

### Daily Readings

**Monday, Dec. 24**

- **2 Samuel 7:1-5, 8b-12, 14a**
- **Psalm 89:2-5, 27, 29**
- **Luke 1:67-79**

Vigil of the Nativity of the Lord

Isaiah 62:1-5

Psalm 89:4-5, 16-17, 27, 29

Acts 13:16-17, 22-25

Matthew 1:1-25

or Matthew 1:18-25

**Tuesday, Dec. 25**

- **The Nativity of the Lord (Christmas)**
- **Night**
- **Isaiah 9:1-6**
- **Psalm 96:1-3, 1:13**
- **Titus 2:11-14**
- **Luke 2:1-14**
- **Dawn**
- **Isaiah 62:11-12**

### Question Corner

Fr. Kenneth Doyle

**Priest does not administer,** but is a witness to sacrament of marriage**

Recently attended the wedding of a young man and bride, who both practicing Catholics. At the end of the ceremony, the congregation was confused when the priest did not pronounce the couple as “man and wife” and introduced them as such to the attendees. It was all very awkward, and no one seemed to know what to do. First, the organist began the recessional music, and the bride and groom exited. We were asked later why he did not introduce the couple, the priest said that it was not a part of the marriage rite of the Church. Weddings should be such joyful occasions, but this put a damper on it. I think that the priest’s rigid adherence to ritual could have alienated people from the Catholic Church. What is your feeling? (Jefferson City, Mo.)

A sometimes at Protestant weddings—and often in television and movie weddings—a minister at the end of the ceremony pronounces and presents the couple as man and wife. That is not—and, to my knowledge, never has been—a part of the Catholic marriage rite.

In fact, for a priest to use that declaration would reflect bad theology. In the Catholic view, marriage is unique among the sacraments in that, in marriage, the priest does not administer the sacrament; he is there simply as the witness.

The ministers of the sacrament of marriage are the couple by virtue of their exchange of vows. The priest then blesses that commitment and prays for the newly married couple. So a Catholic priest would have no right “pronouncing” the couple as man and wife. They have done that already on their own.

What surprises me, honestly, is not so much a question, but your concluding observations—that the priest’s failure to “pronounce” dampened people’s joy, and may have alienated some from the Church. Over 46 years, I have probably done 600 or 700 weddings and have never been told that.

My wife is relatively new to the Catholic Church and absolutely abhors the exchanging of the sign of peace. I remember when this was not a part of the Mass. It seems to have been an accretion that crept into the liturgy during the “feel-good” 1970s, and I agree with my wife that it is quite unnecessary.

My wife is on the shy side and prefers not to have to shake hands with the person who happens to be next to her in the pew. At most, she would nod, but feels that this would be rude. The other option is, if you ran a petition drive to eliminate the sign of peace, I’ll bet that it would be greeted with unanimous approval from Catholics. (Louisville, Ky.)

A far from being a new invention of the 1970s, the restoration of the sign of peace was actually a return to a practice established in the earliest days of the Church.

In those times, Christians, in a reminder of the charity that linked the eucharist community, exchanged a greeting at the offertory—that timing chosen from the suggestion of Jesus (Mt 5:23-24) that one reconcile with others before presenting gifts at the altar.

By the late fourth century, the exchange of peace had been replaced instead right after the Our Father since Christians were committed to live in harmony with those with whom they were about to share the Eucharist. The greeting of peace faded gradually into disuse over centuries and was restored to the Mass during the liturgical reforms following the Second Vatican Council. Technically, the sign of peace is optional. The General Instruction of the Roman Missal prescribes in #184 that it be shared “when appropriate.” But other sections of the General Instruction, #802 and #239, imply that it is customarily used. During a flu epidemic, for example, the exchange of peace could reasonably be suspended. The greeting of peace may be exchanged in a quiet and dignified manner, and Pope Benedict XVI reminded Catholics in 2006 that restraint was needed lest the gesture distort from the reverence appropriate to the reception of Holy Communion. Marriages during which congregants roam the church widely in search of hugs would seem to run counter to that caution.

The particular type of greeting is not prescribed worldwide, but left to be tailored by national conferences of bishops to the customs and culture of the place.

In the U.S., a handshake is common, while an embrace or kiss is often used for family or close friends. Some simply nod or wave, which is surely acceptable. Eye contact, though, would seem to be at least a minimum requirement.

(Questions to Father Doyle may be sent to him at askfatherdoyle@gmail.com or 40 Hopper St., Albany, NY 12208.)†

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**My Journey to God**

**Advent**

I was sitting in a great deal of space and then a tiny thing no bigger than a seed or maybe a pearl rolled into me and I knew from that time that You love me.

By Wendy Vanikoski

(Wendy Vanikoski is a member of Most Sorrowful Mother of God Parish in Versailles. This is an extract from a larger work.)

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**See DAILY READINGS, page 15**
**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 our archdiocese are listed elsewhere in *The Criterion*. Order priests and religious sisters and brothers are included here, unless they are natives of the archdiocese or have other connections to it; those are separate obituaries on this page.


HORSTMAN, Betty, 84, St. Mary, North Vernon, Dec. 3. Sister of Bill Horstmans.


Watch The Criterion every Friday, December 21, 2012

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**Sydney cathedral**

St. Mary Cathedral in Sydney, Australia, is illuminated by a 246-foot-projected “Lights of Christmas” display on Dec. 13. The Archdiocese of Sydney and the Australian Catholic University are presenting the colorful light show through Christmas Day.

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**Providence Sister Mildred Dudine taught music at Catholic schools in several states for 55 years**

Providence Sister Mildred Anne Dudine died on Nov. 21 at Mother Theodore Hall at Saint Mary-of-the-Woods. She was 94. The Mass of Christian Burial was celebrated on Nov. 30 at the Church of the Immaculate Conception at the motherhouse. Burial followed at the sisters’ cemetery. Mildred Veronica Dudine was born on Jan. 3, 1918, in Jasper, Ind.

She entered the congregation of the Sisters of Providence on Jan. 12, 1935, professed her first vows on Aug. 15, 1937, and professed her final vows on Aug. 15, 1943.

Sister Mildred earned a bachelor’s degree in music education at Saint Mary-of-the-Woods College.

During 77 years as a Sister of Providence, she ministered as a music teacher for 55 years at Catholic schools in Indiana, Illinois, California and Washington, D.C.

In the archdiocese, Sister Mildred taught at the former Sacred Heart School in Terre Haute from 1942-43 and St. Philip Ner School in Indianapolis from 1948-53.

In 1992, she retired to the Precious Blood Convent in Jasper, where she taught piano lessons part-time.

In 2003, Sister Mildred moved to the motherhouse and dedicated herself to the ministry of prayer full-time with the senior sisters.

Surviving is a sister, Doris Kirsch of Santa Maria, Calif.

Memorial gifts may be sent to the Sisters of Providence, 1 Sisters of Providence Road, Saint Mary-of-the-Woods, St. Mary-of-the-Woods, IN 47876.
Students celebrate Feast of Our Lady of Guadalupe

To honor the apparition of Our Lady of Guadalupe to the Indian convert St. Juan Diego in 1531, St. Jude School Spanish teacher Kristi Marino led her students on Dec. 12 in a re-enactment of the momentous occasion when Our Lady left a marvelous portrait of herself on the tilma, or cloak, of Juan Diego.

Left, the students also participated in a procession recognizing all countries comprising “the Americas,” celebrating Our Lady as their patroness. Carrying a flag in the procession are, Betsy Cleshey, left, Luke Davy and Sydney Clifford.

Throughout the Mass that followed, students read the readings in Spanish and wave Spanish lyrics into the music of the liturgy. Father Mauro Rodas, a native of Ecuador, concelebrated the liturgy with Father Stephen Banet, pastor of St. Jude Parish in Indianapolis.

Right, pictured as Our Lady of Guadalupe is student Gabrielle Vidya. Chris McKay portrayed St. Juan Diego.

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Daily Readings continued from page 13

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

Saturday, Dec. 29
St. Thomas Becket, bishop and martyr
1 John 2:3-18
Psalm 96:1-3, 5-6
Matthew 2:12-14

Sunday, Dec. 30
The Holy Family of Jesus, Mary and Joseph
St. Basil the Great, bishop and doctor of the Church
St. Gregory Nazianzen, bishop and doctor of the Church
1 John 2:22-28
Psalm 96:1-4
John 1:19-28

Monday, Dec. 31
St. Sylvester I, pope
John 1:28-21
Psalm 96:1-2, 11-13
John 1:18

Tuesday, Jan. 1
Mary, the Holy Mother of God
Numbers 22:2-27
Psalm 67:3-4, 5-6, 8
Galatians 4:4-7
Luke 2:16-21

Wednesday, Jan. 2
St. Basil the Great, bishop and doctor of the Church
Psalm 98:1-4
John 1:19-28

Thursday, Jan. 3
The Most Holy Name of Jesus
1 John 2:22-26
Psalm 98:1-3, 6
John 1:29-34

Friday, Jan. 4
St. Elizabeth Ann Seton, religious
1 John 3:7-10
Psalm 98:1-7, 9-10
John 1:35-42

Saturday, Jan. 5
St. John Neumann, bishop
Psalm 100:1-3
John 1:43-51
Vigil of the Epiphany of the Lord
Isaiah 60:1-6
Psalm 72:2, 7-8, 10-13
Ephesians 3:2-3a, 5-6
Matthew 2:1-12

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

Monday, Jan. 7
St. Raymond of Penyafort, priest
Psalm 149:1-6a, 9b
Matthew 4:12-17, 23-25

Tuesday, Jan. 8
Psalm 147:1-2, 14, 15bc, 17
Isaiah 60:1-6
John 1:47-50
Psalm 72:1-4, 7-8
Mark 6:34-44

Wednesday, Jan. 9
Psalm 1:1-2, 3-4
John 1:11-18
Psalm 72:1-2, 10, 12-13
Mark 6:45-52

Thursday, Jan. 10
Psalm 147:1-12, 19-20
Luke 5:12-16

Friday, Jan. 11
Psalm 1:5-13
John 1:19-54
Psalm 72:2-14, 15b, 17
Luke 4:14-22a

Saturday, Jan. 12
Psalm 147:1-6a, 9b
John 3:22-30

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

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Classified Directory

For information about the classified advertising, call (317) 286-1464.
The football team of Marian University in Indianapolis became national champions of the National Association of Intercollegiate Athletics (NAIA) on Dec. 13 with a dramatic 30-27 overtime win over Morningside College from Iowa.

In describing the comeback victory, Knights head coach Ted Karras Jr. said, “We have guys that don’t quit. We recruit guys that are hungry to play with a never-say-die attitude.”

The Knights displayed that quality after trailing 20-10 in the third quarter of the game at historic Barron Stadium in Rome, Ga. Marian’s senior kicker Michael Josifovski tied the game with a 35-yard field goal as time expired to force overtime. After the Knights held Morningside scoreless on its possession in overtime, Josifovski kicked a 26-yard field goal to win the championship game.

The winning kick led to a joyous celebration for the players and fans of Marian University, which started playing football in 2007.

The celebration continued on the evening of Dec. 14 when the team returned to Marian’s campus where the players and coaches were greeted by a crowd chanting “MU” while fireworks exploded in the sky.

Starting the football program was part of the vision of the school’s president, Daniel Elsener. He viewed it as a way to increase school spirit and male enrollment at the Franciscan university that celebrated its 75th anniversary earlier this year.

The national football championship is the first NAIA title in the school’s history. The championship reflects the spirit that has guided the program since its beginning, Karras noted.

“We really believe that it’s never over till it’s over, and we fight to the end,” Karras said. “I appreciate that so much.”

A Blessing For Our Community.

Franciscan St. Francis Health welcomes Archbishop Joseph W. Tobin to the Archdiocese of Indianapolis.

Franciscan St. Francis Health wishes great success to Archbishop Tobin as he begins his mission as leader of the Indianapolis Archdiocese. His life of stewardship and outreach to all cultures is an inspiration to us as we continue our own mission of compassion and service to others, following in the footsteps of St. Francis.

Embracing the future.

FranciscanStFrancis.org