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Criterion

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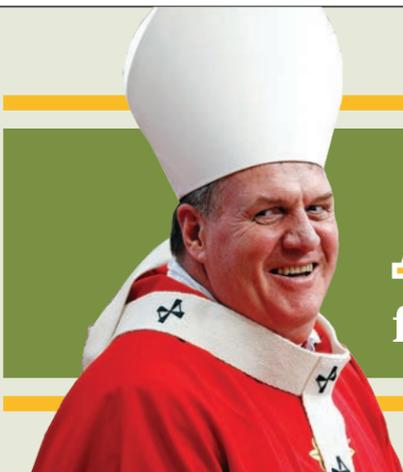
Season of sharing

Readers share their favorite Christmas memories, pages 8 and 9.

CriterionOnline.com

December 20, 2013

Vol. LIV, No. 12 75¢



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



CNS/Brigman Art Library

Mary and the Christ Child are depicted in the painting "Madonna of the Fir Tree" by Marianne Stokes. The feast of the Nativity of Christ is celebrated on Dec. 25.

**'Glory to God
in the highest,
and on Earth
peace to those
on whom his
favor rests!'**

(Lk 2:14)

Dear Sisters and Brothers in Christ:

Christmas came early this year. God surprised the Church with a great gift back in March—March 13, to be exact.

At a little past seven in the evening, Rome time, white smoke poured from the chimney of the Sistine Chapel, signaling the election of a new pope. An hour or so later, he was introduced to the world as Francis. He greeted with smiling simplicity the throngs in St. Peter's Square and asked them to pray for him, even that *they* bless *him*.

Since his election, Francis has charmed and puzzled people across the world, including Catholics.

His pronouncements and gestures have served to broaden the "tent" of the Church, while challenging her pastors to remain close to the people entrusted to their care.

I suppose that the most precious gift of my first year as Archbishop has been the election of Pope Francis. I met Blessed John Paul II a few times, worked closely with Pope Benedict XVI and loved and respected them both.

But, as the pastor of the Catholic Church in central and southern Indiana, I thank God each day for the words and example of Pope Francis.

When he talks about shepherds, his words resonate in my daily service to the Archdiocese of Indianapolis. I am grateful to have him as a model of what a bishop should be.

The Holy Father has given me a lot to think about this Christmas, and his inspiration casts a special light on how I read the story of Jesus' birth this year. I would like to share with you some thoughts about the shepherds.

Here the word of God is speaking to all of us, not simply those baptized who exercise ordained ministry. The shepherds illustrate the vocation of every Catholic Christian to rejoice in the Gospel and bring good news to a waiting and often weary world.

We meet these shepherds in the account of the birth of Jesus according to the Gospel of Luke. They are not the center of the story, which features the Holy Child and his parents. The shepherds, however, are the first to receive the news of the birth of the Savior. Having learned the news from an angel, they go to Bethlehem "to see this thing that has taken place, which the Lord has made known to [them]" (Lk 2:15).

They bring to Mary and Joseph the "good news for all the people that the angel had communicated: the birth of one who is Messiah and Lord" (Lk 2:10-11). We can well imagine how they might have stammered as they repeated the song of the heavenly host: "Glory to God in the highest, and on

Earth peace to those on whom his favor rests!" (Lk 2:14)

The Gospel remembers that all who heard the shepherds "were amazed" (Lk 2:18) by what the humble witnesses reported. The shepherds exit, "glorifying and praising God for all they had heard and seen, just as it had been told to them" (Lk 2:20).

The shepherds help us to understand our vocation. At first, they were bewildered, even frightened by the message that reached them as they were tending their flocks.

After finding the courage to investigate further what this message was all about, they met Jesus Christ, an encounter that provoked in them an incredible joy. That joy led them to be bearers of good news, even as they returned to their normal occupations.

Pope Francis' recent apostolic exhortation, "*Evangelii Gaudium*" ("The Joy of the Gospel"), begins with an extraordinary claim: "The joy of the Gospel fills the hearts and lives of all who encounter Jesus. Those who accept his offer of salvation are set free from sin, sorrow, inner emptiness and loneliness. With Christ, joy is constantly born anew" (#1).

Here is where the so-called new evangelization has to begin: in meeting Jesus Christ and his saving power, an encounter that produces an incredible joy. It is only then that you and I will be able to announce a message that is both "good" and "news."

In the coming year, our archdiocese will consider how we can better live our vocation as bearers of good news. What does the call for a "new evangelization" mean in central and southern Indiana? We will step through the door that God is opening for us and, like the shepherds, carry a message that still has the power to amaze those who hear it. Together we will praise and glorify God for all that God will do through us.

But the mission begins with an encounter. So, this Christmas, I invite you to listen to the story as if you have never heard it before. Allow the arrival of Christ to soften your heart and awaken your hope. He is with us in our joys and sorrows, our victories, our frustrations and our darkness. He is Emmanuel, God-with-us. Do not be afraid to be happy.

May this encounter enkindle exuberant joy and lasting peace.

Sincerely yours in Christ,

+ Joseph W. Tobin, C.Ss.R.

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

Christians can't be gloomy because Jesus always brings joy, pope says

VATICAN CITY (CNS)—Sadness is a sign of being far from Christ because Jesus offers everyone the strength to persevere with hope and joy, Pope Francis said.

"God is the one who came to save us and offer help, especially to hearts gone astray," he said before praying the Angelus on Dec. 15, Gaudete (Rejoice) Sunday.

"The Church is not a refuge for sad people, the Church is a house of joy" because the Christian message is "Good News"—"a proclamation of joy for all people," he said.

Despite the rain, tens of thousands of pilgrims turned out in St. Peter's Square for the weekly prayer and to have the pope bless the figurines of Baby Jesus that children bring and then place in their Nativity scene at home or at school.

The pope asked the children to remember him when they pray in front of their Nativity scenes just as he remembers them in his prayers.

Before the Angelus, the pope said that no matter how big people's sins and limits, Christians are not allowed "to be

weak and waver before difficulties and our own flaws.

"On the contrary, we are invited to toughen our hands, steady our knees and have courage and not be afraid because God always shows the greatness of his mercy."

Perhaps people may think their sins are so great that it is impossible to start over, he said. "You're wrong. You can. Why? Because God is waiting for you, he loves you," is merciful and will give the strength needed for a fresh start and to overcome all pain and sorrow, the pope said.

"This true joy even remains during times of trial, suffering, too, because it is not superficial, but lies deep in the person who trusts in God and confides in him."

Christian joy and hope are grounded in God's fidelity, "in the certainty that he always keeps his promises," he said, adding that this joy flows from knowing you are welcomed and loved by God.

Before the pope appeared at the window of the apostolic palace, people in the square sang "Happy Birthday" ahead of his



Pope Francis replaces his skullcap after this young boy removed it during an audience in Paul VI hall at the Vatican on Dec. 14. The audience was held for families who have been receiving care at the St. Martha Dispensary, a maternal and pediatric clinic located at the Vatican.

Dec. 17 birthday when he turned 77.

The day before, children and parents he met in the Vatican's Paul VI audience hall gave him a surprise birthday party marked with singing and a real cake with candles. The children and families use the Vatican's St. Martha Dispensary, a maternal and pediatric clinic.

The pope first visited the dispensary, which is staffed by volunteers and serves mainly immigrant families, before he met in the audience hall with the families who have been receiving care.

In the hall, a group of children piled large blocks on top of each other to reveal the pope's picture and the Italian word

"Auguri," meaning "Happy Birthday."

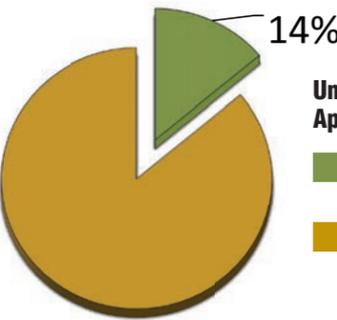
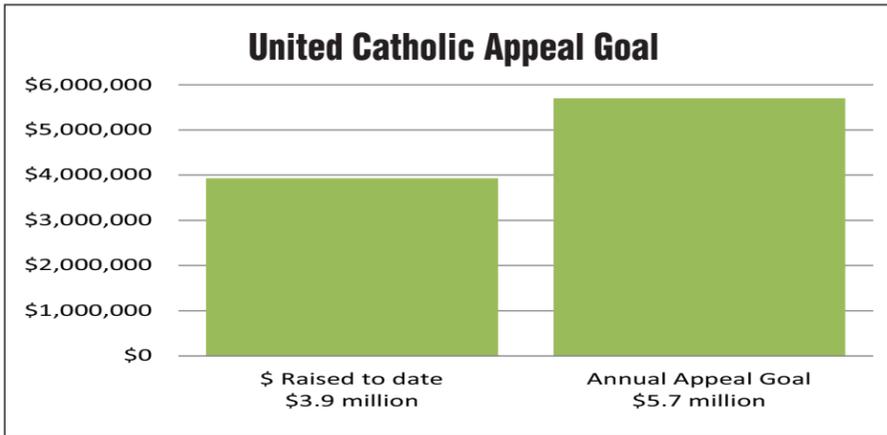
Another group of kids wearing white T-shirts with a yellow letter printed on each one, assembled themselves to spell out "Happy Birthday, Pope Francis" in Italian.

When presented with the cake, the pope blew out the candles. He joked, "I'll tell you later if it's good or not." He thanked the children for their joy and gifts, which included a sweater.

Rather than giving a talk, the pope spent the audience greeting, holding and blessing the children there. One small boy the pope was holding plucked the pope's skullcap off his head. The pope laughed and managed to put the cap back. †



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ARCHDIOCESE OF INDIANAPOLIS

Archdiocesan Catholics donate \$171,000 to typhoon relief effort

By John Shaughnessy

Catholics in the archdiocese have donated more than \$171,000 to help people in the Philippines whose lives were devastated by Super Typhoon Haiyan on Nov. 8.

The donations have continued pouring in ever since Archbishop Joseph W. Tobin announced that there would be a special second collection at churches in the archdiocese, starting on the weekend of Nov. 16-17.

"It's just another example of the generosity of people in the archdiocese," said Father Gerald Kirkhoff, director of the archdiocesan Mission Office. "That's a significant amount of money.

"It says that Catholics have a vision of need that's not just for people in the archdiocese, but for their brothers and sisters around the world."

People in the Philippines are still recovering from one of the strongest storms in history. Nearly 6,000 people

are dead and more than 1,700 are missing because of the storm that devastated towns and villages in the central Philippines, according to the Associated Press.

The generosity that archdiocesan Catholics have shown concerning the Philippines' relief effort reflects a common desire to offer assistance that directly helps people, according to Father Kirkhoff.

"To me, it says a lot that Catholics like the person-to-person response of their gifts," said Father Kirkhoff, who is also pastor of Good Shepherd Parish in Indianapolis. "It's the feeling of one person helping another person."

Father Kirkhoff saw that same spirit of giving on a recent evening when he was approached by a member of Good Shepherd Parish.

"He gave me a \$1,000 in cash and said, 'Father, use it for the poor,'" Father Kirkhoff said. "I plan to give most of it to St. Vincent de Paul Society because of the good work they do." †

The Criterion and Catholic Center are closed from Dec. 24 to Jan. 1 for Christmas holiday

This week's issue of *The Criterion*, which is our annual Christmas publication, is the last issue of 2013.

The Criterion will be published again on Jan. 10, 2014, and resume its weekly schedule.

The Archbishop O'Meara Catholic Center will be closed from Dec. 24 through Jan. 1 in observance of the holidays.

Archdiocesan agencies will reopen at 8 a.m. on Thursday, Jan. 2, 2014. †

The Criterion

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Criterion office: 317-236-1570
 Advertising: 317-236-1454
 Toll free: 1-800-382-9836, ext. 1570
 Circulation: 317-236-1425
 Toll free: 1-800-382-9836, ext. 1425

Price: \$22.00 per year, 75 cents per copy

Postmaster

Send address changes to *The Criterion*, 1400 N Meridian St., Indianapolis, IN 46206

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: 1400 N. Meridian St., Indianapolis, IN 46206. Periodical postage paid at Indianapolis, IN. Copyright © 2013 Criterion Press Inc. ISSN 0574-4350.

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

1400 N. Meridian St.
 Indianapolis, IN 46202-2367
 317-236-1570
 800-382-9836 ext. 1570
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Periodical postage paid at Indianapolis, IN.
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 Criterion Press Inc.

Postmaster:
 Send address changes to:
 Criterion Press Inc.
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The Criterion 12/20/13

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Sweeping changes to Batesville Deanery and NCYC top local news stories

By Brandon A. Evans

The multitude of changes that parishes in the Batesville Deanery saw as a result of the “Connected in the Spirit” parish planning process, Indianapolis hosting 23,000 youths at the National Catholic Youth Conference (NCYC), and local reaction to the resignation of Pope Benedict XVI and the election of Pope Francis were voted the top three local news stories of 2013.

Other stories of note include coverage of Archbishop Joseph W. Tobin receiving his pallium from Pope Francis, a Madison family business winning a federal appeal against the Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) mandate, Marian University opening its school of osteopathic medicine and a record amount of money raised for Catholic education.

Working in the custom of other news agencies, *The Criterion* editorial staff votes each year for the top 10 local stories that were published 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 of our original coverage.

Among the hundreds of locally produced news stories during 2013, here is our “Top 10” list:

1. Sweeping changes are announced and implemented for parishes in the Batesville Deanery.

On June 6, Archbishop Joseph W. Tobin spoke before hundreds of people gathered at St. Louis Church in Batesville to announce a series of decisions that would affect 26 of the 27 parishes in the Batesville Deanery and three other nearby parishes.

The decisions had been made as part of the ongoing “Connected in the Spirit” parish planning process which the deanery had been participating in for two years.

The result for the Batesville Deanery was that 12 parishes would close by Dec. 1 of this year; other parishes would be linked together in such a way that they would share a priest, other staff members and create joint programs, ministries and committees; still others would create partnerships to collaborate with nearby parishes.

Archbishop Tobin’s own childhood parish in Detroit was closed, and he said that he identifies with the pain and anger coming from some of the affected parishes.

“It’s not perfect, as no human process is entirely perfect. But I think it does favor—at least in the first stages—the impetus coming from the ground up rather than from the archbishop down. I think that’s really important. ... Having worked in other dioceses that have gone through this sort of reconfiguration, it was much more of a top-down process in those other places.”

2. Indianapolis hosts 23,000 youths at NCYC.

It’s no small feat to play host to more than 23,000 high school-aged Catholics from all over the country for a weekend. It’s even more impressive that this is the second time in the past two years that Indianapolis has hosted the biannual National Catholic Youth Conference (NCYC).

The three-day event is a chance for young people to come together and grow in the faith of Jesus Christ through worship, meeting new people, learning more about Catholic beliefs and celebrating the sacraments.

Archdiocesan staff, the National Federation for Catholic Youth Ministry and more than 600 local volunteers made the event a success.

The closing Mass featured Archbishop Tobin as the principal celebrant, joined by 12 bishops and 237 priests.

“I believe it’s safe to say that tonight we formed the national parish of the United States of America,” he said. “Can you recall another occasion when there are people from all 50 states gathered around the Lord’s table in word and his sacrament? I can’t.”

3. Archdiocesan Catholics respond to the resignation of Pope Benedict XVI and the election of Pope Francis.

The resignation of Pope Benedict XVI—the first such resignation in nearly 600 years—made waves all around the world.

Catholics in the archdiocese reacted with a variety of emotions, and our news stories covered the spectrum as we talked to a number of people.

Franciscan Sister Maureen Irvin said that the decision offered a lesson in humility and hope. Nick Lesch, then a junior at Indiana University Purdue University in Indianapolis, said that the pope’s example has inspired him to work harder in his studies. Maxine Ferguson, 82, understands the challenges of aging and had admiration for his decision.

After the resignation became official on Feb. 28, the archdiocese joined the world in prayer for the election of a new pope—something that happened less than two weeks later.

Reaction to the election of Cardinal Jorge Mario Bergoglio of Buenos Aires, Argentina, as Pope Francis was immediate, and was covered in a number of stories in *The Criterion*.

“We rejoice that the Lord has given us this holy and learned figure to lead the Church,” Archbishop Tobin said. “And I know that everyone in the archdiocese joins me in promising our obedience and our cooperation to Pope Francis.”

4. Archbishop Tobin receives his pallium from Pope Francis.

On June 29 at a Mass in St. Peter’s Basilica, Archbishop Tobin joined other new archbishops of the world to have a pallium put around his shoulders by Pope Francis.

The pallium—a circular band made from lamb’s wool—symbolizes both the archbishop’s role as the shepherd of the Church in central and southern Indiana and his communion with the pope.

To celebrate the event, an archdiocesan pilgrimage to Rome was organized from June 26 to July 1. In addition, those unable to go on the pilgrimage were given the chance to pray for daily intentions and to follow their fellow archdiocesan Catholics online.

During the pallium Mass, Archbishop Tobin kneeled before Pope Francis and the two had a warm exchange in Spanish. As he laid the pallium on the shoulders of the archbishop, Pope Francis told him, “May the cross bear good fruit.”

Archbishop Tobin, in the response, said, “You can count on us.”

Later, he said that during the Mass he “was thinking of Peter, who was buried there [under St. Peter’s Basilica], and whose feast day we were celebrating today. He was someone who could speak easily and whose deeds didn’t always measure up.”

5. A Madison family business wins a federal appeal against the HHS mandate.

On May 22, a three-judge panel of the 7th U.S. Circuit of Appeals in Chicago heard arguments in a lawsuit filed by Grote Industries, a family-owned, worldwide manufacturer of vehicle lighting products in Madison.

The Grote family argued that they should have relief from the “U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) mandate that forces most employers to provide abortion-inducing drugs, sterilizations and contraceptives to their employees in company health plans.”

The legal challenge is part of many across the country and is part of a nationwide campaign led by the U.S. bishops to fight for religious liberty. Rallies and calls to prayer occurred in the archdiocese throughout the year.

On Nov. 8, a ruling was handed down that gave the Grottes a victory.

“We hold that the plaintiffs—the business owners and their companies—may challenge the mandate,” U.S. Circuit Judge Diane Sykes wrote (emphasis in original). “We further hold that compelling them to



Maggie McAuliffe holds hands with other pilgrims from St. John the Evangelist Church in Spencerport, N.Y., while saying the Our Father during the closing Mass of the National Catholic Youth Conference on Nov. 23 at Lucas Oil Stadium in Indianapolis. More than 23,000 youths from across the country took part in the conference.

cover these services substantially burdens their religious exercise rights.”

6. The opening of a new medical school at Marian University in Indianapolis is a first for a Catholic college.

“Some people called it a ‘leap of faith’ when Marian University in Indianapolis announced its plan to be the first Catholic college in the country to have a school of osteopathic medicine,” wrote John Shaughnessy, *Criterion* assistant editor.

“Yet, Marian’s President Daniel Elsener prefers to use a different phrase as the university’s first group of 162 medical students gets ready for the historic first day of classes on Aug. 12.

“‘It’s a response to faith, a response to a call,’ Elsener said as he sat in the sparkling, \$48 million, state-of-the-art Michael A. Evans Center for Health Sciences that is now the home of the university’s longtime nursing program and the second medical school in Indiana.”

The call Elsener referred to can be seen in recent studies that showed there could be a shortage of 2,000 primary care physicians in Indiana alone by 2020 if more doctors weren’t trained.

“We want to be a great Catholic university in a great American city for service to the world,” Elsener said. “To do that without resources is a pipe dream. So we say that if we want to be a great Catholic university, we have to have great resources, starting with a medical school.”

7. A record \$3 million is raised to send children to Catholic schools.

Each year, the archdiocese hosts the Celebrating Catholic Schools Values Awards event, honoring those with a commitment to Catholic education and raising money for schools.

The previous record for money raised was \$1.1 million in 2012. This year, the event nearly tripled that amount, raising \$3 million to help children attend Catholic schools.

The \$3 million was raised mostly through the Education CHOICE Charitable Trust for Tax Credit Scholarships, according to G. Joseph Peters, special consultant to the archdiocese’s Office of Catholic Education.

“Many things changed in the school choice laws this year, but the most important allowed for Tax Credit Scholarships to apply to income-eligible students already in our Catholic schools from kindergarten through 12th grade,” Peters said.

8. The Indiana voucher program is upheld in the courts and expanded by the legislature.

On March 26, the Indiana Supreme Court unanimously ruled that the state’s school voucher program was constitutional.

“I’m just really happy that Indiana’s constitution provides for and allows for parental choice,” said Glenn Tebbe, executive director of the Indiana Catholic Conference. “It complies with the

Church’s understanding that parents are the first teachers, and have the right and responsibility to educate their children consistent with their values and their child’s educational needs.”

Statewide, the program—which is the nation’s broadest school voucher program—gave school vouchers to more than 9,300 students.

A day after the ruling, the state Senate approved House Bill 1003, a proposal to expand the voucher program.

9. Three men of diverse cultural background are ordained priests for the archdiocese.

Three men were ordained priests for the archdiocese on May 18 during a Mass at SS. Peter and Paul Cathedral in Indianapolis: Fathers John Kamwendo, Douglas Marcotte and Martin Rodriguez.

Each of the new priests comes from a different cultural background: Father Kamwendo is originally from Tanzania, Father Rodriguez grew up in Mexico, and Father Marcotte was raised a Hoosier.

At the ordination Mass, which was standing-room only (and streamed online), Archbishop Tobin gave advice to the new priests.

He said that they would “be able to speak to the hearts of your people only if you know their joys and sorrows, their anxiety and their hope.

“You must never let the burden of administration or the pursuit of your own interests deafen you to the cry of our sisters and brothers who, like you, search for God and hunger for God’s word,” Archbishop Tobin said.

10. Archbishop Tobin visits each of the 11 deaneries during his first months as archbishop.

Fulfilling a promise he made upon arriving in the archdiocese, Archbishop Tobin celebrated a series of Masses in each of the 11 deaneries during the first months of 2013.

The Masses were covered in a series of stories and photos in *The Criterion*.

An estimated 1,000 people attended a Jan. 29 Mass at St. Mary-of-the-Knobs Church in Floyd County. “I thought that Hoosier hospitality was just a bumper sticker,” Archbishop Tobin told those gathered, “but it’s the real thing.”

Henry Andres, a lifelong member of St. Mary-of-the-Knobs Parish, called the new archbishop “awesome. He’s on our level. I think he’s someone we can talk to.”

The archbishop said that he was energized by the Masses and the welcome he received, and was struck by what he called the “anomalous location of the cathedral.”

“I don’t think that I will forget that there’s a lot of the archdiocese outside of Indianapolis,” he said. “I wouldn’t want them to feel like there’s Indianapolis and, as an afterthought, there’s the rest of us.”

(To read the original coverage, including additional links of interest, click on the headline for this story on our website at www.CriterionOnline.com.) †



Rev. Msgr. Raymond T. Bosler, Founding Editor, 1915 - 1994

Most Rev. Joseph W. Tobin, C.Ss.R., Publisher
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John F. Fink, Editor Emeritus

Editorial



Pope Francis leads a meeting with the poor in early October at the archbishop's residence in Assisi, Italy. In his first extensive piece of writing as pope, Pope Francis lays out a vision of the Catholic Church dedicated to evangelization, with a focus on society's poorest and most vulnerable, including the aged and unborn.

On serving the poor

"Behold those Christians. Look how they love one another."

These are words in the *Apology* of Tertullian, who died in 230. It's reported that a man named Aristides, sent by Emperor Hadrian to spy on the Christians, uttered the words.

At this Christmas time, let's ask ourselves if we Catholics can still be identified by the way we love one another. The evidence seems to indicate otherwise. Today we have Catholics who identify themselves as conservative, liberal, orthodox, progressive, traditional or whatnot.

It's so bad that Pope Francis, in his apostolic exhortation *"Evangelii Gaudium"* ("The Joy of the Gospel"), had to say, "No more warring among ourselves." He describes some people, correctly we believe, as not content with "belonging to the whole Church in all its rich variety," but insist on belonging "to this or that group which thinks itself different or special."

Right now that seems to apply to people who consider themselves conservatives. Among them are those who have criticized Pope Francis as being liberal, as if what he is saying about wanting the Church to "be poor and for the poor" is some kind of new teaching.

Yes, it's quite true that Pope Francis has been giving extra emphasis to serving the poor. But that has been part of Catholic teaching and practice from the very beginning. The Council of Jerusalem, held in the year 51, approved the work that Paul and Barnabas were doing among the Gentiles, but told them "we were to be mindful of the poor, which is the very thing I was eager to do" (Gal 2:10).

How did service to the poor become part of only the liberal agenda? It's something that every Catholic should be doing if he or she accepts all that the Church teaches. Fortunately, we believe that most good Catholics do try to help the poor. In our experience, those who are considered conservative because of their views on the so-called social issues are also those who volunteer for the Society of St. Vincent de Paul or similar Catholic organizations.

It's our society that has somehow decided that liberals care for the poor and conservatives are interested only

in opposition to abortion—which simply isn't true. The problem comes when we have to make political choices since neither the Democratic nor Republican Party stands for the same things that the Catholic Church teaches.

Catholics must be political, though, if we are to do the things Pope Francis is calling us to do. As he said in his exhortation, service to the poor doesn't just mean handouts. "It means working to eliminate the structural causes of poverty and to promote the integral development of the poor. This means education, access to health care and, above all, employment."

Whether you think that those are liberal or conservative issues might say more about you than about the pope. Liberals and conservatives alike say that they favor better education, greater health care, and higher employment rates. They just disagree on how to accomplish those things.

There should be agreement, though, about the pope's criticism of "ideologies that defend the absolute autonomy of the marketplace and financial speculation" that, he said, led to the current financial crisis and an "idolatry of money." Certainly the poor need safety nets.

The pope was thinking globally when he wrote his exhortation, but there's plenty of poverty right here in the United States, despite its being the wealthiest country in the world. Almost 20 percent of our population, or about 47 million people, have annual incomes of \$12,000 or less, and another 18 million people earn \$15,000 or less.

As the year 2013 draws to a close at a time when so many people are hurting financially, we encourage those who are not below the poverty level to be more generous. Naturally, we suggest contributions to Catholic Charities. It has offices throughout the archdiocese—in Indianapolis, Terre Haute, Bloomington, Tell City and New Albany.

We invite you to check the archdiocese's website at www.archindy.org to see all that Catholic Charities does for the poor.

It's true that non-Catholics should be able to identify Catholics by the way they love one another. But not only one another, but all others, too.

—John F. Fink

Coming of Age/Erick Rommel

Learning about a person in 140 characters or less

One complaint about our growing reliance on communicating via the Internet is that we place less value on the words we use.

Many years ago, people communicated by writing letters. The person receiving the message understood that it took time on the part of the sender to craft a message.

And because it took some time to deliver each message, great value was placed on what was said.

With the invention of the telephone, communicating with one another became more immediate. You could talk with anyone, anywhere, if you were willing to pay. Time, literally, was money. Words were expensive.

Today, communicating with one another is as instant as with a telephone, but not as expensive or limiting. It's easy to share a message with one person or 100, and it costs the same. Because communicating is simple and inexpensive, we often mistakenly believe that those words have little meaning.

That belief is incorrect. You can still learn a lot about a person in just a few words. You can learn far more than you probably imagine.

Take for instance, the Twitter messages of two people we would expect to be quite similar: Pope Francis and Pope Benedict XVI.

Pope Benedict's first message, sent out in December 2012, matched his public persona: He was caring but academic. It read: "Dear friends, I am pleased to get in touch with you through Twitter. Thank you for your generous response. I bless all of you from my heart."

His tweets in the days that followed were equally formal. On Dec. 21, 2012, Pope Benedict wrote, "At the end of the year, we pray that the Church, despite

her shortcomings, may be increasingly recognizable as Christ's dwelling place."

It's a powerful Christmas message, but not exactly a personable one.

From the moment of his election, Pope Francis demonstrated a different clerical style. In his first tweet, he asked people to pray for him, making it clear that he was now the shepherd, but he strongly felt part of the flock as well.

Following his election, it became easier to see the man behind the miter. Pope Francis' words on Twitter are less academic and more embracing. "God loves us. We must not be afraid to love him," he tweeted on April 4, 2013. "The faith is professed with the lips and with the heart, through words and through love."

That word, "love," is found throughout Pope Francis' tweets. If you look at his @Pontifex Twitter feed and search for it, you'll find it's repeated numerous times. As a result, the person we perceive him to be, by reading his feed, is an accurate representation of the person in real life.

Does our online reflection match who we are as closely? Are we the same person online as we are in person? Or, do we create a different person—someone who is better, or worse, than the reality?

If people formed an opinion of you based on how you present yourself online, would they leave with an accurate picture?

We know it's unlikely that Pope Francis personally tweets his messages on his phone, computer, laptop or tablet. But that doesn't make the tweets any less honest or powerful.

We see that his message is one of love of others. It's also about love of self. And, what is that love?

Pope Francis shared his answer on Twitter as well. "Are you angry with someone?" he asked via Twitter on June 17, 2013. "Pray for that person. That is what Christian love is."

(Erick Rommel writes for Catholic News Service.) †

The Human Side/Fr. Eugene Hemrick

God's gift of love is greater than the material gifts of the season

In 2005, some news outlets reported that then-Speaker of the U.S. House of

Representatives Dennis Hastert told federal officials that the lighted, decorated tree on the lawn of the U.S. Capitol should be referred to as the "Capitol Christmas Tree," as it was called until the late 1990s.

Some were calling it the "holiday tree." Though this happened in 2005, it raises a troublesome question for 2013: Is the true meaning of Christmas being lost?

I believe it is.

Pope Francis in his apostolic exhortation *"Evangelii Gaudium"* ("The Joy of the Gospel") says, "The great danger in today's world, pervaded as it is by consumerism, is the desolation and anguish born of a complacent yet covetous heart, the feverish pursuit of frivolous pleasures, and a blunted conscience.

"Whenever our interior life becomes caught up in its own interests and concerns, there is no longer room for others, no place for the poor. God's voice is no longer heard, the quiet joy of his love is no longer felt, and the desire to do good fades."

It's not an exaggeration to say we are "rushed" toward Christmas. Sales urge us to snap up items at the store, to purchase

airplane or train tickets before they run out, and to take advantage of Black Friday—all of this make us race toward consumption.

Consider that there are those who use the stock market as their standard of joy: If it goes up, it's a good day; if not, it's a bad day.

Does this point out that something is out of order?

It's true that the Christmas season produces much goodness. People extend themselves in order to bring joy to those less financially fortunate. Heartfelt gifts are exchanged and a warm uplifting spirit of happiness is generated.

And yet one senses that God's voice is no longer heard because it is overridden by feverish activity that distracts us from it. We sing "Silent Night," but silence and the peace it generates is nowhere to be found. How, then, should we celebrate Christmas? One sensible way is to employ our interior life more fruitfully.

Christmas is an opportunity to prayerfully recall that God came among us out of deep love for us.

Gifts come and go, but God's gift of love never ends when it's cherished.

Consumerism leaves us empty while God's love fills us to the brim with joy.

The glitz of the holidays can't compare to the bliss of realizing we are God's chosen ones.

(Father Eugene Hemrick writes for Catholic News Service.) †

24 Sisters of Providence celebrate milestone jubilees

Criterion staff report

In 2013, two Sisters of Providence of Saint Mary-of-the-Woods celebrated 80 years in the congregation, two celebrated 75 years, seven celebrated 70 years and 13 celebrated 60 years.

In addition to other ministries, all 24 sisters ministered in the Archdiocese of Indianapolis at some time, giving 504 total years of service within the Church in central and southern Indiana.

Sister Mary Esther (formerly Francis Gertrude) Lane celebrated her 80th jubilee. In the archdiocese, she taught at St. Charles Borromeo School in Bloomington from 1940-41, the former St. Joseph School in Terre Haute from 1952-57 and St. Paul School in Sellersburg from 1957-58. In Indianapolis, Sister Mary Esther ministered at the former St. Anthony School from 1945-46, the former St. Agnes Academy from 1967-69, the former Ladywood-St. Agnes High School from 1972-75 and at Fatima Retreat House from 1975-76. Currently, Sister Mary Esther has a special prayer ministry at the motherhouse.

Sister Marceline Mattingly celebrated her 80th jubilee. In the archdiocese, she taught in Indianapolis at the former St. Anthony School from 1938-40 and St. Philip Neri School from 1942-46. In Richmond, she ministered at the former St. Mary School from 1940-41. Sister Marceline taught at Our Lady of Providence Jr./Sr. High School in Clarksville from 1968-70, and also served as pastoral associate at St. Mary Parish in New Albany from 1983-89, followed by ministry to the retirement community at Saint Mary-of-the-Woods from 1989-91. She ministered at St. Mary-of-the-Woods College from 1966-68, from 1991-93 and from 1994-2001. Since 2001, sister has volunteered in health care services.

Sister Rita (formerly Edward Clare) Lerner celebrated her 75th jubilee. In the archdiocese, she ministered in Indianapolis at St. Matthew School from 1977-83 and at Saint Mary-of-the-Woods in residential and health services from 1983 to 2006. Her current ministry is prayer.

Sister Alexa Suelzer celebrated her 75th jubilee. In the archdiocese, she taught in Terre Haute at St. Patrick High School from 1941-46 and at the former St. Agnes Academy in Indianapolis from 1946-50. Sister Alexa ministered at Saint Mary-of-the-Woods in several capacities: teacher and professor at Saint Mary-of-the-Woods College from 1962-65 and from 1982-2002; at Providence Juniorate High School from 1965-68; as a member of the Sister of Providence General Council from 1972-76; and in residential services from 2002-12.



Sr. Margaret Louise Bernard, S.P.



Sr. Ann Brendan Burget, S.P.



Sr. Adrian Marie Conrad, S.P.



Sr. Teresa Costello, S.P.



Sr. Elaine Doucette, S.P.



Sr. Mary Catherine Duffy, S.P.



Sr. Sheila FitzSimons, S.P.



Sr. Donna Marie Fu, S.P.



Sr. Michaela Galvin, S.P.



Sr. Jane Gibson, S.P.



Sr. Carolyn Glynn, S.P.



Sr. Marilyn Ann Kofler, S.P.



Sr. Mary Esther Lane, S.P.



Sr. Rita Lerner, S.P.



Sr. Jeanette Marie Lucinio, S.P.



Sr. Marceline Mattingly, S.P.



Sr. Francine McGriffin, S.P.



Sr. Ann Kevin O'Connor, S.P.



Sr. Ann Paula Pohlman, S.P.



Sr. John Mary Rifner, S.P.



Sr. Martha Ann Rifner, S.P.



Sr. Louise Schroeder, S.P.



Sr. Alexa Suelzer, S.P.



Sr. Helen Vinton, S.P.

Sister currently has a special prayer ministry at the motherhouse.

Sister Margaret Louise Bernard celebrated her 70th jubilee. In the archdiocese, she ministered in Indianapolis at the former St. Catherine School from

1945-46; St. Joan of Arc School from 1946-48; Holy Cross School from 1949-50; St. Philip Neri School from 1956-58; the former St. Anthony School from 1961-62; and St. Matthew School from 1962-63. Sister Margaret Louise also served at

St. Paul in Sellersburg from 1969-70. She currently resides in Bradenton, Fla.

Sister Adrian Marie Conrad celebrated her 70th jubilee. In the archdiocese, she served at the former

See JUBILEES, page 16

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May the peace and joy of the Christ Child be with you this Christmas season.



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Society of St. Vincent de Paul
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Events Calendar

December 20

St. Joseph Parish, Upstairs Classroom, 1375 S. Mickley Ave., Indianapolis. **The Bible for Beginners**, 1p.m., an informative overview of what you should know before reading the Bible. Information: 317-244-9002.

December 21

Bishop Simon Bruté College Seminary, 2500 Cold Spring Road, Indianapolis. **Men's Day of Discernment with Archbishop Tobin**, men age 18-50 who are open to the possibility of the priesthood, 9 a.m.-3 p.m., registration required. Information: 317-236-1490 or archindy.org/heargodscall/events.html.

Planned Parenthood, 8590 Georgetown Road, Indianapolis. **Empty Manger Caroling event**, 9-10 a.m. Information: 317-527-9531.

December 27

St. Joseph Parish, Upstairs Classroom, 1375 S. Mickley Ave., Indianapolis. **The Bible for Beginners**, 1p.m., an informative overview

of what you should know before reading the Bible. Information: 317-244-9002.

December 28

St. John the Evangelist Church, 126 W. Georgia St., Indianapolis. **Rosary procession and empty manger caroling at Monument Circle**, following 12:10 p.m. Mass, pray and process through the streets of downtown Indianapolis to Monument Circle, empty manger caroling event, 1-2 p.m. Information on rosary procession: faithful.citizens2016@gmail.com. Information on empty manger caroling event: ronmarykramer@comcast.net or 317-527-9531.

December 31

The Slovenian National Home, 2717 W. 10th St., Indianapolis. **New Year's Eve Celebration**, 5 p.m.-close, \$5 donation for food, bring a side dish to share. Information: 317-632-0619 or slovenianindy@gmail.com.

January 4

St. Michael Church, 145 St. Michael Blvd.,

Brookville. **First Saturday Devotional Prayer Group**, Mass, exposition of the Blessed Sacrament, rosary, confession, meditation and petitions, 8 a.m. Information: 765-647-5462.

January 8

Archbishop O'Meara Catholic Center, 1400 N. Meridian St., Indianapolis. **Solo Seniors**, Catholic, educational, charitable and social singles, 50 and over, single, separated, widowed or divorced. New members welcome. 6:30 p.m. Information: 317-370-1189.

January 9

St. Mark the Evangelist Parish, Media Center, 541 Edgewood Ave., Indianapolis. **Hope and Healing Survivors of Suicide support group**, 7 p.m. Information: 317-851-8344.

January 15

St. Malachy Church, 9833 E. County Road 750 N., Brownsburg. **"Catholics Returning Home,"** six-sessions, 7 p.m. Information: 317-650-5751. †



Submitted photo by Theresa Graham

Haiti fundraiser

Participants listen as a Scripture reading is proclaimed on Dec. 12 at St. Paul Catholic Center Church in Bloomington during a Festival of Lessons and Carols. The event was held to raise money for a mission trip by Indiana University students to St. Paul Catholic Center's sister parish in Haiti in 2014. The event began with a cookie reception, followed by a series of nine readings and songs led by the St. Paul adult choir.



Submitted photo

Prayer to end hunger

The Society of St. Vincent de Paul's Indianapolis Council participated in Pope Francis' launch of the prayer campaign to end global hunger on Dec. 10. Copies of the Holy Father's prayer for hunger were distributed to volunteers and clients at the society's Client Choice Food Pantry, 3001 E. 30th St., in Indianapolis, and the shopping session was briefly halted at noon when the prayer to end global hunger was recited by pantry volunteers and clients. Pictured is Jim Witchger, Tuesday pantry manager, reading the prayer to end global hunger over the Client Choice Pantry's public address system.

Society of St. Vincent de Paul still seeking end-of-year vehicle donations

As the 2013 calendar year comes to a close, year-end, tax-deductible donations of vehicles of all kinds are still desired to benefit the Society of St. Vincent de Paul.

The vehicle donation program accepts not only cars but also trucks, motorcycles and even boats, and they do not even have to be in running order.

All vehicles are auctioned off, and the proceeds are distributed to the parish conference that is closest to the donor's home. All donations ultimately provide for the purchase of food and other essential assistance to the poor, as well as emergency assistance to families in need, including rent, utilities, transportation and medicines.

"By the end of the third quarter of this year, 42 vehicles had been donated, and the net proceeds earned from the donations

totalled \$22,866," said Bernie Weitekamp, coordinator of the program for the Indianapolis archdiocesan council.

While there are minimal "flat" fees associated with the transport of a vehicle, title work and the sale of a vehicle at auction, the fees assessed are not a percentage of the value of the vehicle. This maximizes the proceeds that go to the society.

Unlike similar vehicle donation programs offered by other charitable groups, the proceeds of all donations benefit local needs and rely on local promotional efforts by the society's various archdiocesan councils.

To donate or find out more information about the program, log on to www.svdpuscars.com or call 800-322-8284. †



Submitted photo

Annual concert on Dec. 22

In this December 1963 photo, former Most Holy Name of Jesus Parish music director Jerry Craney poses with members of the parish's third annual Christmas concert which he coordinated. The concert will be held for the 50th time this year at Most Holy Name of Jesus Church, 89 N. 17th Ave. in Beech Grove, at 3 p.m. and 7 p.m. on Dec. 22. What started out in 1961 as a boy's and men's choir accompanied by an organ, the concert now includes the Holy Name School choir and adult choir, which includes high school youths, and an orchestra consisting of horn, percussion, wind and string sections, as well as a harp and grand piano. Tickets for limited seating are \$7 and are available at the door or in advance by calling Marcia at 317-787-1682.



Submitted photo

Women's Day of Reflection

Women listen during a session at the second annual Advent African-American Catholic Women's Day of Reflection on Nov. 23 at Fatima Retreat House in Indianapolis. The event, sponsored by the Black Catholic Ministry of the archdiocesan Office of Multicultural Ministry, was attended by 75 African-American Catholic women. The guest speaker, Adrienne Curry, spoke on women of the Bible, particularly Rebekah, Leah, Rachel and Dinah, and how these women encountered the same everyday trials, tribulations, temptations and crises that women face today. Curry holds a masters in divinity from Catholic Theological University. Due to the great success of the day of reflection, next year's event will become a weekend retreat taking place on Dec. 5-6.

Correction

On page 6 of the Dec. 13 issue of *The Criterion*, Mary Young and Virginia Marten were incorrectly identified as residents of St. Augustine Home for the Aged in a photograph with Archbishop Joseph W. Tobin. †

Letter shares amazing story of Savior's birth, Holy Family's plight

By John F. Fink

The following is a letter sent from Elizabeth, the wife of Zechariah, to Mary, the wife of Clopas, sent during the 22nd year of the reign of the Roman emperor Caesar Augustus.

Dear Mary,

I just received a letter from Mary, the wife of Joseph, and she asked me to tell you what has happened to her. She thought you might be worried about her since she has been gone for so long. The letter came from Egypt! How that happened is what she wanted me to tell you, and it's an amazing story indeed.

The last time I saw Mary was soon after the birth of my son, John. As you know so well, Mary is always thinking of how she can help others, so when she learned that I was pregnant with John she made that long trip from Nazareth to Ein Karem to help me. She thought I would need some help since I was old for bearing children.

I was six months along when Mary suddenly appeared at our home and greeted me. As she did so, John leaped in my womb and I somehow realized that Mary, too, was pregnant. Not only that, but I was inspired enough to realize that her baby was the Son of God!

I couldn't help but cry out, "Most blessed are you among women, and blessed is the fruit of your womb. And how does this happen to me? For at the moment the sound of your greeting reached my ears, the infant in my womb leaped for joy. Blessed are you who believed that what was spoken to you by the Lord would be fulfilled" (Lk 1:42-45).

While Mary was with us for three months, she told me more astonishing news. She said that an angel had appeared to her! And yes, I believe her. The angel told her that, of all the women in the world and throughout all the centuries, she had been chosen to be the mother of the Messiah we've been waiting for.

Of course, Mary wondered how that could happen since, as she told you as one of her best friends, she intended to remain a virgin. The angel said that the Holy Spirit would come upon her, and the child would be called the Son of God. And that's also when the angel told Mary that I was six months pregnant.

After John's birth, Mary thought that she'd better return home. She was greatly

concerned about what would happen when she got back to Nazareth since she hadn't told Joseph about her pregnancy, and she wasn't sure what he would do. As you know, they had gone through the first part of their marriage ceremony, when they became husband and wife, but not the second part when the man takes his wife into his home.

It wasn't until I received Mary's letter that I learned what happened. Joseph was very upset, as any man would be. He knew that he wasn't the father of her child, so it seemed obvious that she had had relations with someone else, probably while she was staying with me.

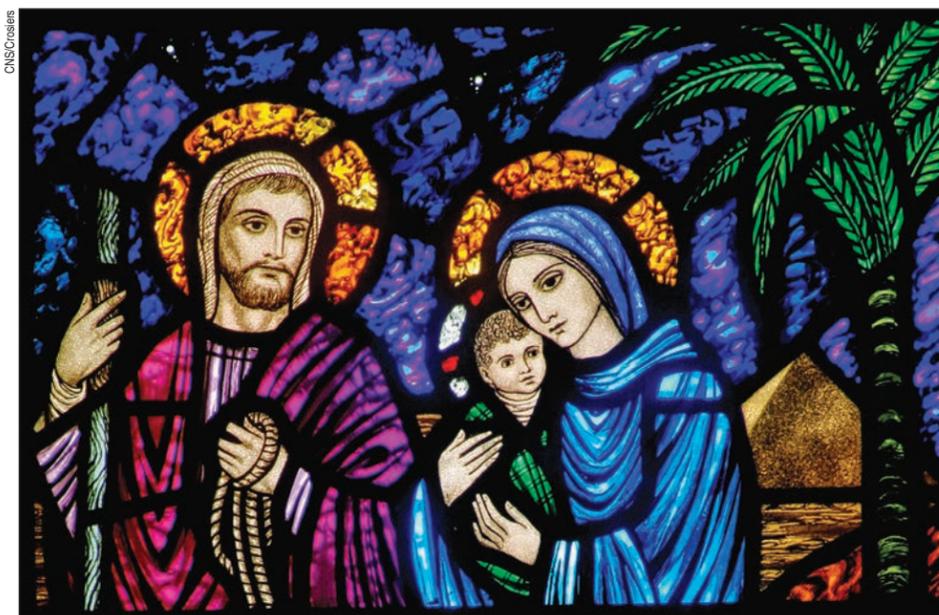
But he's such a good man. He didn't want to accuse her of adultery since the Jewish penalty for that is death by stoning as described in Deuteronomy 22:23-24. So he decided to divorce her quietly. But then, Mary wrote, another remarkable thing happened: Joseph had a dream in which an angel told him that Mary's child had been conceived through the Holy Spirit.

Joseph believed the angel and took Mary into his home during the usual great feast that accompanies that part of the wedding ceremony. (In her letter, Mary apologized for not letting me know about that sooner. Naturally, I couldn't help but wonder what happened when she got back to Nazareth.)

Mary wrote that she had a very easy pregnancy. But about the time she was ready to deliver, Caesar Augustus ordered that census you're so familiar with. That meant that Joseph had to go to Bethlehem, the home of his ancestors, to be enrolled.

Mary insisted on going along because she knew that Jesus was meant to be born in Bethlehem, the City of David. As you know, Mary, we Jews have long believed that the Messiah would be born in Bethlehem. Mary was convinced that the census was God's way of providing the reason for Jesus to be born there.

After their five-day trip to Bethlehem, they had a hard time finding a place where Mary could have her privacy because so many descendants of David were there for



A detail of a stained-glass window from St. Edward's Church in Seattle shows Jesus, Mary and Joseph on their flight into Egypt. The feast of the Nativity of Christ, a holy day of obligation, is celebrated on Dec. 25. The feast of the Holy Family is marked on Dec. 29.

the census. They eventually found a dry cave that was used as a stable. They were able to have their donkey put up in the stable, and there was also an ox there.

And that's where Jesus was born. Mary wrapped him in swaddling clothes and laid him in a manger.

Not long after his birth, Mary wrote, they had some visitors. It seems that some shepherds had been tending their flocks when an angel appeared to them and told them that "a savior has been born for you who is Messiah and Lord" (Lk 2:11). Then, the shepherds told Mary, a whole multitude of angels appeared singing, "Glory to God in the highest, and on Earth peace to those on whom his favor rests" (Lk 2:14).

Naturally, they had Jesus circumcised when he was eight days old. I think by that time Joseph had been able to find a house for them since most of those who had come to Bethlehem to register had returned to their homes. They didn't want to try to travel back to Nazareth with a newborn baby, so they decided to remain in Bethlehem until it was time for Mary's purification 40 days after Jesus' birth, as prescribed by Leviticus 12:2-8.

Since they were only five miles from Jerusalem, they went to the Temple for the purification. After she did that in one of the *mikvot* (baths) built for that purpose

outside the walls of Jerusalem, they went into the Temple and offered two pigeons. Since Jesus was their first-born son, they consecrated him to the law as Exodus 13:2-12 requires.

While they were there, Mary wrote, an elderly man named Simeon recognized Jesus as the Messiah and said a prayer in which he told God that he could now take him because his eyes had seen God's salvation. Also, an 84-year-old prophetess named Anna praised Jesus to all who were around. One sorrowful thing happened, though: Simeon told Mary that a sword will pierce her soul, whatever that means.

Mary said that the shepherds weren't their only visitors while they were in Bethlehem. One day some men, wearing Eastern attire like Persians, arrived at the house. They told Mary that they were magi, or astrologers, who were searching for the newborn king of the Jews because they had seen his star at its rising.

They said that they had been to Jerusalem where they met with King Herod. He asked the chief priests and scribes where the Messiah was to be born, and they told him that it would be in Bethlehem. So Herod sent the magi there. They arrived at the house and prostrated themselves before Jesus. They also offered valuable gifts of gold, frankincense

See LETTER, page 10

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Readers share their favorite Christmas memories

‘A Simple Wish’: A wife shares her words of wisdom about life and love

By Bernie Price
Special to The Criterion

I am known to my friends and family as the one who does not share personal feelings. Instead, I am the one who always has to come up with the first joke or remark about everything. So there may be a few expressions of disbelief on the faces of family and friends as they read this Christmas note.

In life and in death, we never know what surprises and challenges may come our way. No “special” orders are honored in life and death. It is not for us to say or control when the death of a loved one will take place. With that being said, I want you to know that my words are from the heart for all of you. Please take a few moments to walk down the path with me of “a simple wish.”

It was Dec. 21, 2011. I had just arrived home around 9 p.m. from work. I unlocked the back door, and I heard a faint voice say, “Bernie, where have you been?” It was the voice of my husband, Jack, and it sounded very strange to me, as he was always very familiar with my work schedule.

He was not sitting in his usual chair working on his computer. As I passed through the kitchen, I saw him lying on the dining room floor. When I bent down to touch his hand, I immediately realized that he was not able to move. I called 911 and then told him in a very calm voice, “Jack, I have called 911 for help. Everything is going to be fine.”

The ambulance arrived within five minutes. As the emergency medical technicians were preparing Jack, I began to gather all of his medical information. A list of his meds was close at hand, which was very helpful upon our arrival to the emergency room.

Jack was 6 feet, 4 inches tall and quite stately, so we were all going our best to hold him down on the emergency room table and keep him comfortable. I knew by the look in his eyes that he had no idea where he was or what was going on inside him. His body began to feel very cold.

When the first doctor came into the room, I could tell by the expression on his face that we were in the middle of a critical situation. I looked at him with determination and strength and said, “Tell me what is going on. I want all answers straight up, with no sugar-coating or maybe’s or might’s.”

He was very honest with me and explained that Jack had severe abdominal bleeding. He added that in some cases this can be catastrophic.

I did not ask any questions, but answered questions about Jack’s medical history, his medications and any other information that I could provide the medical team. Jack’s last and only words to me in the emergency room were, “Who is going to take me home?” I knew by the sound of his voice that this was not the Jack that I know. His voice had the sound of sadness and desperation, which was not his nature.

It was now close to midnight. We were beginning to struggle a bit trying to keep Jack comfortable, warm and even steady on the emergency room table. This went on for several hours. About 3 a.m., we were taken up to the intensive care unit where

the team confirmed that the internal bleeding was very severe. They also said they would not be able to perform any type of surgery due to the severity of the bleeding.

Again, I asked the team of doctors and nurses as they gathered, “What are his chances of survival?” The doctor immediately responded, “If Jack should survive, it will be a long and very difficult recovery.” I went with my gut on this one and said to myself, “You begin to prepare not only yourself, but everyone around you for what is about to happen.”

My mind began to process the order of events that I knew were yet to come. Jack and one of our best friends were scheduled to go to Ireland on Dec. 27. We were scheduled to take a cruise down the Amazon River in several months. And Jack was signed up to teach a full schedule of classes at two local universities. My thoughts began to turn to my organizational side, by writing notes and listing priorities.

About 6 a.m., my first phone calls were made to a couple of close friends, to family and to my co-workers. My words to all of them were, “Jack is in the ICU unit, and his chances of survival are not very good at this point.”

I explained to them that this happened very quickly. All were welcomed to come up, if they were comfortable with it. These were very painful phone calls to make because I knew what the reaction would be to my news. I also realized that, as the leader, I needed to stay focused and to be strong for everyone around me. I was very aware that many were about to lose a son, brother, mentor and friend.

During the next two and a half days, hundreds of people gathered. It was the Christmas season, so out-of-towners were beginning to arrive for their family celebrations. I made a point of updating everyone from time to time as I spoke with nurses and doctors.

Ours was an open door policy. All friends and family were welcomed into Jack’s room. I wanted everyone to feel as comfortable as possible. After all, I had Jack in my life for over 40 years. It was their time to be with him.

At one point, the doctor handed me Jack’s wedding band. I immediately placed it on my thumb. Somehow, this gave me such a sense of closeness and comfort. I would not let go of the ring—for this was the symbol that made it all very clear what life and love is all about.

At 1:30 p.m. on Dec. 22, I knew that Jack was not responding to the dialysis. I told everyone camped in the hospitality area that he was not getting any better. I knew that within a day or two I would have to make the decision to continue Jack’s infusions or let him pass away naturally. This was not up for discussion as I had to be the one to move forward.

As I thought about this, I returned to Jack’s room and saw how comfortable and peaceful he looked. He was unconscious and not able to respond, but I knew that a sense of fairness had to be my priority, not only to Jack, but to family and friends.

Later that evening, I allowed the team to do one more round of infusions. I told myself that if there was no response we would discontinue this process.

The next day was a day of waiting, reminiscing and hugging—and believe me



Bernie and Jack Price were happily married for many years before Jack suddenly died in December of 2011.

I am not a “hugger.” At 6 a.m. on Christmas Eve, I told everyone present that it was time to let Jack go, that it was time to let him be our angel to watch over us.

Two hours later, as the sun rose, Jack passed away. I knew that he was at peace.

We waited until after Christmas to have the calling and the funeral for Jack. More than 1,500 people attended the calling. With the help of family and friends, we were able to spend a personal moment with each one. We planned our celebration around a quote from Helen Keller: “What we have once enjoyed we can never lose. All that we love deeply becomes a part of us.”

On the day of Jack’s funeral, we packed the church. The celebration was amazing. At the end, I got up and shared the closing words. I never even felt a knot in my stomach. I was so relaxed that it was almost scary. Jack was truly watching over all of us and giving us strength.

As I began to speak, a big grin came over my face. I was very brief in my words, but spoke of the Jack I knew and loved. He was a great husband—faith-filled, very kind, smart and witty. He also had an extreme sense of fairness and an appreciation of diversity.

I projected with enthusiasm “my simple wish” that everyone should be as fortunate as I am—to have a relationship with a great person like Jack for more than 40 years, to know where you stand with someone every day, to be thankful for your faith, family and friends. I also told everyone to always remember to leave nothing unsaid.

At that point, I asked everyone to rise and to give a standing ovation for a great guy. As we processed out of the church, I knew in my heart and soul that we were all in a good place.

Jack was my best friend. I miss him very much. He will always have first place in my heart and soul.

If you are in a situation that you think is impossible for you to handle, you can take control or you can let it control you. I chose to take control. This is “my simple wish” for all of you.

(Bernie Price is a member of Good Shepherd Parish in Indianapolis.) †

A wonderful Christmas memory that brings a family together each holiday season

By Rene Becher
Special to The Criterion

It was the year of 1985. My generous Grandma Brown always gave us a check for our Christmas present. At this time, our daughter Cindy was 3 years old. She was always intuitive and would give her strong opinion in a reserved way. So my husband Jim exclaimed, “What will we do with Grandma’s money this year?”

Cindy was an earshot away and replied, “We need one of those Baby Jesus cribs in our yard.”

Jim glanced at me, shrugged his shoulders and said, “It’s a done deal.”

Later that day, I pulled out the Sears catalog and was able to order “the set.” This set has brought us so many positive memories over the years. Jim constructed a manger and stable. However, other things have transpired. One year, the Baby Jesus was stolen. And, of course, Cindy took charge and ordered a new one.

One of the best things is that Baby Jesus appears on Christmas Eve. Each member of the family has taken care of the babe to make sure he is placed in the shining lights. For our family, the Advent season moves forward on this glorious night.

(Rene Becher is a member of St. Simon the Apostle Parish in Indianapolis.) †

Family learns to ‘stop and smell the roses in life’ thanks to grandpa’s wisdom

By Mark Hummer
Special to The Criterion

Here are just a few Christmas memories from over the years that I’d like to share:

- Since two of our daughters go to Cardinal Ritter Jr./Sr. High School in Indianapolis, I kick off the Christmas season by helping the students and the teachers unload Christmas trees from trucks at Chapel Hill Shopping Center in the rain, snow and wind.
- Taking in the school’s annual Christmas concert, which features the best of the holiday standards.
- Trying to pass along the theme of giving

to our children through the Giving Tree for needy families at St. Christopher Parish in Indianapolis.

- Growing up, my Grandpa Hummer used to play Santa Claus. After he passed away, it was my dad who took over the family tradition.
- The Christmas in 1991 when my wife, Siming, first came to this country from China. My dad took her out to look at the Christmas lights in our hometown, and he told her to “stop and smell the roses in life.” Ever since, she has told that to me and later to our kids.

(Mark Hummer is a member of St. Christopher Parish in Indianapolis.) †

Sled mishap, homemade ornaments leave lasting impression on writer

By Ann Wathen
Special to The Criterion

Before World War II, glass ornaments were imported from Czechoslovakia. My parents bought a few each year. They were just plain balls of various colors but different sizes. Each year, after the holidays, the ornaments were carefully wrapped in tissue paper and stored.

Then came the year we got the sled. On Christmas morning, it was under the tree. Since there was no snow on Christmas that year, the sled just stayed there. I think I was 7 or 8 and had not yet learned laws of action and reaction. I put a heavy toy on the sled, the back end went up, and the tree went over, hitting the dining room table.

All the glass ornaments were smashed. My parents were upset, but I wasn’t punished. After all, I hadn’t put the sled there, and no one had told me not to add weight to one end.

For several years, we had to make ornaments. We were at war, and no ornaments were imported. However, we had an inventive mother. Milk was delivered in glass bottles, capped with a heavy foil. We saved those caps throughout the year and invented many ways of cutting and bending them into pretty, shiny ornaments.

When we could, at last, buy ornaments, our homemade ones were trashed. I still miss them.

(Ann Wathen is a member of Our Lady of the Greenwood Parish in Greenwood.) †

Shop owner’s kindness leads to a memorable Christmas Eve

By Cecelia Kiley
Special to The Criterion

My youngest daughter was 4 years old, and highest on her Christmas list was for Santa to bring her a little table and chairs.

At this time (the late 1970’s), there was a popular Toy and Hobby Shop in town, Ed Schock’s.

I had found the perfect table set and put it in the layaway. About three days before Christmas, I made the final payment and took the table home.

It was Christmas Eve. The kids were now in bed (around 8 p.m.), and it was time for parents to get things ready. As my husband and I began to assemble the

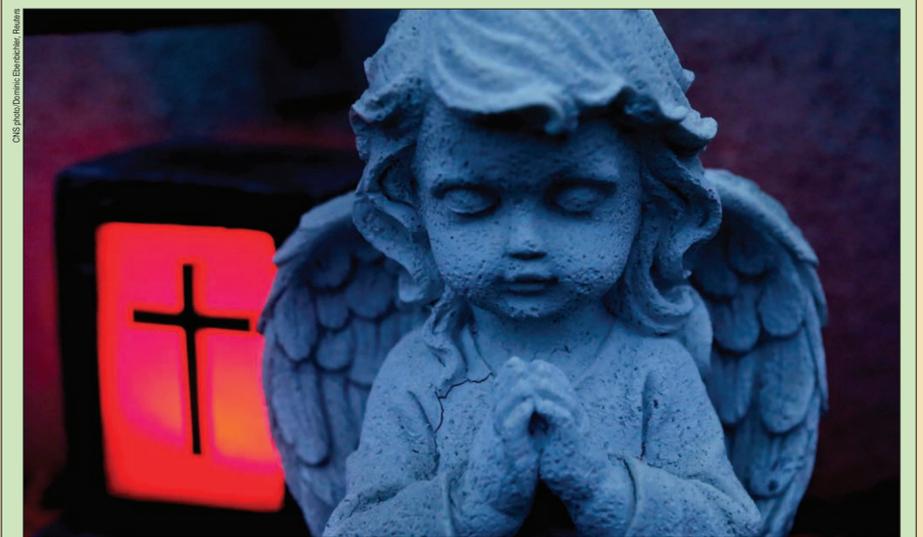
table, we realized with horror that the legs were missing!

Good Grief! What do we do now? How can Santa deliver a table without legs? I got out the phone book and was able to find the personal phone number of Mr. Schock.

I explained my dilemma and that the legs must surely be back at the store and could he please get them for me! He met me at the store a little before 9 p.m. and, sure enough, the legs were still in storage!

This store owner was an example of the true Spirit of Christmas that night long ago ... to me he was an angel in disguise.

(Cecelia Kiley is a member of Holy Trinity Parish in Indianapolis.) †



An angel statue is pictured at a grave during dusk at a cemetery in the western Austrian village of Absam on Oct. 30. Criterion reader Mary Jean Wethington shares a poignant story about how she “sang” a retirement resident home to heaven during one Christmas season.

Bonnie’s Christmas Angel moves her and sings her to her heavenly home

By Mary Jean Wethington
Special to The Criterion

It was a snowy white Christmas day, and my elderly mother was slowly returning from the effects of yet another mini-stroke. The week before, both Momma and I had selected names from the Giving Tree of a nearby retirement center, promising to bring our gifts to the residents on Christmas.

Keeping this commitment, I communicated to Momma that I would deliver her selected name’s gift and mine for the both of us. Because of the cold and snow, I had donned my full-length, white, hooded winter coat and white boots. Momma said I looked like her angel.

As I approached the retirement center’s entrance, I received a strange look from the receptionist as I asked for the room number for my resident’s name—Bonnie B.

I delivered Momma’s gift first and received a grateful response from the dear, elderly woman, Ruth. Then I went to drop off Bonnie’s gift. As I entered the darkened room, the gaily wrapped gift fell away from my hands in total dismay as I encountered Bonnie. There, lying upon a thin mattress on the floor, like a throw-away doll, was a young woman, frail and comatose.

Her dull blue eyes pulled me down beside her, and my massive white coat surrounded her small frame. No wrapped gift would be received by this young woman.

Thrown into a deep compassion, unknown ever before by me in this manner, all I could do was begin to pray beside Bonnie on that floor. Then slowly and softly, I began to sing to her the beautiful “Silent Night”—“sleep in heavenly peace.”

For one brief moment, she turned her dull blue eyes toward me, and a light flickered within their depths. Bonnie was the one who gifted me, blessed me and expanded my faith, creating a sacred space that only sung prayer can enter and touch.

One word breathed forth from her lips—“angel.” Promising Bonnie I would return to visit her the next day, I left her side, more deeply moved by this Christmas encounter than ever before. When I came the next day to try to see her, I was told that Bonnie had died exactly one hour after our Christmas visit. Stunned, I again simply turned to prayer and asked God what this all meant.

Three years later at this same retirement center, I became spiritual care coordinator there for 12 years—all because of a beautiful soul named Bonnie B. That Christmas, our newborn king allowed me, as my gift to both the Christ Child and Bonnie, to be the angel who sang her home.

(Mary Jean Wethington is a member of St. Teresa Benedicta of the Cross Parish in Bright.) †

Brother’s actions many years ago lead family to unique Christmas experience

By Dolores Francis
Special to The Criterion

Our Christmas trees never looked like the ones in magazines and books.

Instead of graceful, downward swooping branches, ours resembled a pine cone standing on end with branches curving upward. I was probably in third grade before I saw “store-bought trees,” and realized that many people did not tramp out in the field and cut down a cedar tree for Christmas.

One year, my brother, Paul, was charged with going to a neighbor’s house where they had a row of large cedar trees. We had the neighbor’s permission to cut off a limb for use as our Christmas tree.

Instead, he climbed that prickly, poky tree and cut the top out of it. My uncle was beside himself with worry, sure that Paul had killed the tree.

He had not. The row of cedar trees still stands, one without a top. As far as I know, the neighbors never complained.



The Vatican Christmas tree glows after a lighting ceremony in St. Peter’s Square on Dec. 13. Criterion reader Dolores Francis shares a humorous story about her brother’s actions one year obtaining them a Christmas “tree.”

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

‘I projected with enthusiasm “my simple wish” that everyone should be as fortunate as I am—to have a relationship with a great person like Jack for more than 40 years, to know where you stand with someone every day, to be thankful for your faith, family and friends. I also told everyone to always remember to leave nothing unsaid.’

Our Lady of Guadalupe celebration

Submitted photos by Donna Hasty

Far right top, dressed in traditional costumes, Sophia Crews, left, Mariell Fowler and Nicole Schneider, third-grade students at Our Lady of the Greenwood School, process toward the altar with their offering of red roses during a Dec. 12 liturgy honoring the feast of Our Lady of Guadalupe at Our Lady of the Greenwood Church in Greenwood. It was the parish's 18th annual Mass honoring the patroness of the Americas. Our Lady appeared to St. Juan Diego in 1531.

Far right bottom, flags from the Americas are carried into Our Lady of the Greenwood Church in Greenwood on Dec. 12.

Right, Mike Martin and Robin Robison process with an image of Our Lady of Guadalupe through the aisles of Our Lady of the Greenwood Church in Greenwood after a special Dec. 12 Mass honoring the patroness of the Americas.



LETTER

continued from page 7

and myrrh.

That all sounds great. But then came the bad news. Joseph had another dream. This time the angel told him to get up immediately and take Mary and Jesus and flee to Egypt because Herod was about to search for Jesus and kill him! It must have been a nightmare journey, taking about a week, through

deserts where it was difficult to find water, and worrying that Herod's men might be chasing them.

They weren't though, because, as you probably heard, Herod sent soldiers to Bethlehem to massacre all the boys 2 years old or younger. The soldiers weren't chasing Joseph, Mary and Jesus because they thought they had already killed Jesus.

So that's why Mary wrote her letter from Egypt. She wrote that they intend to stay there until Herod dies. Then they

plan to return to Nazareth. Mary said that they wouldn't want to return to Bethlehem after the massacre there, with the only boy who survived. Besides, it's too close to Jerusalem in case Archelaus succeeds his father Herod.

Mary wrote that they hope to be able to stop at your home in Emmaus on their way back to Nazareth, whenever that happens. Until then, she asked to be kept in your prayers as you are in hers.

Elizabeth

Obviously, the letter is fictional, but the events reported are factual. Mary, the wife of Clopas, remained a friend of the Blessed Virgin and stood with her by the cross when Jesus was crucified (Jn 19:25). It's possible, because of the closeness in spelling, that she also could have been the wife of Cleopas, one of the two disciples Jesus met on the road to Emmaus after his resurrection. Since the other disciple isn't named, it could have been Cleopas' wife.

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



Cathedral of Saints Peter and Paul
1347 N. Meridian Street
(Corner of 14th and Meridian)

Christmas Mass Schedule

Christmas Eve, 5:00 PM
 Fr. Noah J. Casey, Presiding

Liturgy of the Hours: Readings and Carols, 11:20 PM
 Fr. Noah J. Casey, Presiding

Midnight Mass
 Archbishop Joseph W. Tobin, CSsR, Presiding

Christmas Day, 10:30 AM
 Fr. Joseph Newton, Presiding



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Northwestern Mutual Recognizes McGinley with Forum Membership
Financial Security Company Recognizes Financial Professionals at Annual Conference

Northwestern Mutual is honoring Indianapolis financial advisor Mike McGinley with membership in its 2013 Forum group, which recognizes individuals for an outstanding year of helping clients achieve financial security. McGinley is affiliated with Northwestern Mutual Indiana based in Indianapolis. This is the third time that McGinley received the Forum honor.

"Our 2013 Planning & Progress study shows that half (51%) of Americans feel less financially secure than they thought they'd be at this point in their lives," says Northwestern Mutual Executive Vice President Todd M. Schoon, CLU®, ChFC®, J.D. "In an uncertain economy, consumers are seeking guidance and are turning to experienced financial professionals like Mike to plan for their future financial security."

The honorees were recognized at a conference held on November 3 to 6, 2013, in Scottsdale, AZ. At the conference, honorees learned new insights from prominent speakers, gained access to advanced training and leadership development, and shared knowledge with fellow colleagues. The Forum conference is an extremely exclusive achievement, with approximately five percent of Northwestern Mutual's more than 6,500 financial representatives invited to attend.

About Northwestern Mutual

Northwestern Mutual is the marketing name for The Northwestern Mutual Life Insurance Company, Milwaukee, WI, and its subsidiaries. Northwestern Mutual is among the "World's Most Admired" life insurance companies in 2013 according to FORTUNE® magazine and has helped clients achieve financial security for more than 156 years. As a mutual company with \$1.4 trillion of life insurance protection in force, Northwestern Mutual has no shareholders. The company focuses solely and directly on its clients and seeks to deliver consistent and dependable value to them over time. Northwestern Mutual and its subsidiaries offer a holistic approach to financial security solutions including: life insurance, long-term care insurance, disability income insurance, annuities, investment products, and advisory products and services. Subsidiaries include Northwestern Mutual Investment Services, LLC, broker-dealer, registered investment adviser, member FINRA and SIPC; the Northwestern Mutual Wealth Management Company, limited purpose federal savings bank; Northwestern Long Term Care Insurance Company; and Russell Investments. Further information can be found at <http://www.northwesternmutual.com>.

About the Northwestern Mutual Planning & Progress Research

This study was conducted by independent research firm Harris Interactive, and included 1,546 Americans aged 25 or older who participated in an online survey between January 9, 2013 and January 23, 2013. Results were weighted as needed for age by gender, education, race/ethnicity, region and household income. Propensity score weighting was also used to adjust for respondents' propensity to be online. No estimates of theoretical sampling error can be calculated; a full methodology is available.



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Be watchful at Christmas for special gifts in those we love

By David Gibson

Is there something magical in Christmas gifts? Children think so.

As if struck by a holiday contagion, children hunt feverishly, furtively among the packages under the Christmas tree during the last days before the big day, hoping to learn precisely what magic awaits them there.

But what adults learned over time and children have yet to discover is that the most magical gifts on Christmas are not hidden under the tree.

Consider the 4-year-old's Christmas gift, finely crafted for Mom or Dad under a preschool teacher's watchful eye. Parents celebrate these gifts excitedly.

True, the parents are happy at their child's increased ability to cut out and glue rough drawings onto colorful construction paper. But isn't it less the craft and far more the child that the parents celebrate when the gift is presented?

The child is the true gift here. And as Pope Francis might put it, the love between these parents and their child creates music in their home.

It is precisely this kind of music that households everywhere hope to play loudly on Christmas. They have the pope's assurance that this music mixes well with home-based fun.

A family's life together is filled with events of all kinds, Pope Francis observed when he spoke in October to an international pilgrimage of families. But he said that "if love is missing" in a family, joy is missing too, and "nothing is fun."

For him, love is a gift, one to give and receive.

Pope Francis speaks of home life often. His thoughts on gifts and where to find them are noteworthy, too.

He is convinced that gifts await us in others. In a recent interview published in major Jesuit publications, he called attention to "what the Spirit has sown in the other as a gift for us."

Both home life and gifts were on the pope's mind last May when he visited the Casa Dono di Maria soup kitchen and women's shelter inside the Vatican walls. The Missionaries of Charity, founded by Blessed Teresa of Calcutta, operate the shelter.

As a home, the shelter itself is a gift, Pope Francis said. Calling it a home means it is a place of "warmth, affection"—the kind of "love that can be felt in a family."

A home is a crucial place where gifts are given and received, the pope made clear. For him, a home is "where life grows and can be fulfilled because it is a place in which every person learns to receive love and to give love."

Pope Francis then affirmed that all the people encountered inside the homeless shelter are a "mutual gift" for each other.

First, there are the gifts of "hospitality, material and spiritual sustenance" given by those who work there, he observed. As a home, he said, the shelter is "a 'school' of charity, which instructs me to go encounter every person,



The most magical gifts of Christmas are not hidden under a tree. They are often found in the giver of the gift, not the gift itself.

'Something as small as the smile on the right person's face can be an amazing gift on Christmas.'

not for profit but for love."

Those working in the shelter are not its only gift givers, however. To locate all the gifts hidden there, it is essential to look to its homeless and hungry guests. To them, Pope Francis said:

"You are also a gift for this home and for the Church. You tell us that to love God and neighbor is not something abstract, but profoundly concrete. It means seeing in every person the face of the Lord to be served. ... You are, dear brothers and sisters, the face of Jesus."

In this home, this shelter, "one tries to love one's neighbor, but also to allow oneself to be loved by one's neighbor," he said. Those "two attitudes," he insisted, "go together."

"The music ... of this home is love," said Pope Francis.

His reflections on the exchange of gifts in a homeless shelter are food for thought at Christmas. Where will gifts for you or me be found this Christmas?

One thing is certain: You can take the Christmas out of gift giving, but you cannot take the gift giving out of Christmas!

I will enjoy gifts that come wrapped in colorful packages.

And when I open something handmade for me by a grandchild, I will relish the gift while celebrating the giver far more.

Truth be told, however, to discover some of the finest gifts of Christmas, it is essential to do what the shepherds did the night Jesus was born: Be watchful.

The watchful shepherds were fearful when "the angel of the Lord appeared to them" (Lk 2:9-10). But soon, upon arriving in Bethlehem, their fears dissipated, replaced by excited joy.

It is a great gift when someone eases our fears or clears a space for hope.

Something as small as the smile on the right person's face can be an amazing gift on Christmas. Someone else's announced plan to make important, needed life changes might be received not as a magical gift, but a miraculous one.

So be watchful on Christmas. Be on the lookout for "what the Spirit has sown" in others as a gift for you.

(David Gibson served on Catholic News Service's editorial staff for 37 years.) †

Mary is a model of gratitude for the gifts of God at Christmas



A stained-glass window portrays the Blessed Virgin Mary praying before the Christ child. Mary gives Catholics a model for gratitude to God at Christmas.

By H. Richard McCord

Like many families, we have happy Christmas memories saved in photos.

There is one of our son at age 6 seated on his first bicycle by the Christmas tree. His head is thrown back with an exuberant smile. We were pleased to be able to give him this "best gift ever," and he was equally delighted to receive it. Such a memory reminds us that Christmas is as much about receiving gratefully as it is about giving generously.

A gift requires a giver and a receiver to be a complete experience. This truth can get lost in the Christmas frenzy of acquiring and checking off items on our list. The commercial message of Christmas focuses attention on what we're going to give when really it's asking the bottom-line question: How much are you going to spend? The successful Christmas season always seems to be measured in dollars and cents.

Giving generously, especially to those in need, is a truly blessed act. St. Paul

even tells us that "God loves a cheerful giver" (2 Cor 9:7). Giving is more than just a good human action. For a Christian, it's a participation in the divine activity by which God the Father gives us his Son whose unconditional love brings us salvation.

At Christmas, we rejoice in God's supreme gift by celebrating the earthly coming of his Son. Our Christmas giving is meant to be an act of gratitude acknowledging what and whom God has first given to us.

As important as it is to imitate the divine generosity by knowing how to give, it also is necessary to know how to receive a gift. We can look to Mary as the best example of one who receives.

In St. Luke's account of the birth of Jesus, Mary sings God's praises to her kinswoman Elizabeth for all that he has done for her. "My soul proclaims the greatness of the Lord; my spirit rejoices in God my Savior" (Lk 1:46).

Mary's canticle offers a perfect example of how to receive a gift graciously,

sincerely and humbly. Realizing what she has been given, Mary expresses gratitude. "The Mighty One has done great things for me, and holy is his name" (Lk 1:49).

In this way, Mary places the emphasis where it should be, namely, on what God does for us. We receive all that we have and all we will ever need from his generous hand.

To receive a gift at Christmas, no matter how small or simple, with delight and a grateful heart symbolizes our openness to receive all that God gives us.

When we open presents this Christmas, might we reclaim some of the simple joy we once had as children when we received that special gift? If so, let this experience open our hearts not only to the gift giver but also to the one who himself is the divine gift.

(H. Richard McCord is the former executive director of the U.S. bishops' Secretariat of Laity, Marriage, Family Life and Youth.) †

From the Editor Emeritus/John F. Fink

The visit of the Magi and the flight into Egypt

(Fourth of four columns)

In the infancy narratives, Luke's Gospel says that the Holy Family returned to Nazareth after Jesus' presentation in the Temple. He obviously didn't know about the events that are in Chapter 2 of Matthew's Gospel—the visit of the Magi, the flight into Egypt, the massacre of the infants, and the Holy Family's return from Egypt.

Who were the Magi from the East? They certainly were Gentiles, and they must have been astronomers to recognize a new star. They are assumed to be members of the Persian priestly caste, and they were highly motivated men to travel a great distance to pay homage to the newborn king of the Jews.

Christian lore made them kings, as they're depicted in crèches. Since there were three gifts, it was assumed that there were three kings. Then tradition

conceived them as kings from the three continents known at the time: Africa, Asia and Europe. One king became black. They were given names: Gaspar, Melchior and Balthasar. But none of that is in Matthew's Gospel.

Was there really a new star? Astronomers have debated that for centuries, pointing particularly to the conjunction of the planets Jupiter and Saturn in the constellation Pisces in 7-6 B.C., which is probably when Jesus was born. But that doesn't explain the movement of the star and its stopping over the place where Jesus was. There are some things we simply can't explain.

The Magi stopped in Jerusalem, the logical thing to do since it was the capital of Judea. That's how King Herod learned about their mission. The Jewish high priests and scribes were able to tell him where the Messiah was to be born—in Bethlehem.

So the Magi continued their journey and entered the "house" (they were no longer living in a cave) where they saw Jesus and his mother. People have asked, "Where was Joseph?" I've always thought that he was out working somewhere; he had to support

his family.

After the Magi returned to their homes without returning to Jerusalem, an angel warned Joseph that Herod was going to search for Jesus to kill him. So Joseph took Jesus and Mary and fled to Egypt. Matthew tells us that this happened "that what the Lord had said through the prophet might be fulfilled, 'Out of Egypt I called my son'" (Mt 2:15). The reference is to the prophet Hosea (Hos 11:1).

For Matthew, it's important for Christ to relive the Jewish Exodus experience. Just as Jacob took his family to Egypt and Moses took their descendants back to the Holy Land, so the Holy Family fled to Egypt and then returned.

When Herod learned that the Magi deceived him, he ordered the massacre of all the boys in Bethlehem 2 years old and younger—the feast we observe on Dec. 28. It's true that there is no record of this massacre from non-biblical sources, but it's true to Herod's character. He had already killed three of his own sons and one of his wives.

Then Matthew has the Holy Family moving to Nazareth. †



Who were the Magi from the East? They certainly were Gentiles, and they must have been astronomers to recognize a new star. They are assumed to be members of the Persian priestly caste, and they were highly motivated men to travel a great distance to pay homage to the newborn king of the Jews.

Christian lore made them kings, as they're depicted in crèches. Since there were three gifts, it was assumed that there were three kings. Then tradition

Our Global Family/Carolyn Woo

God is with us, even in the tragedies we witness each day

I just completed a talk for the commemoration of the Jesuit priests martyred in El Salvador in 1989. In my preparation, I encountered others martyred in El Salvador: Archbishop Oscar Romero and the four American Churchwomen whose deaths also fell



in the month of December.

When reviewing the readings for the Christmas octave, the feast of St. Stephen held my thoughts. Thus the accounts of martyrdom form the spiritual brackets in which Advent and Christmas of 2013 come into view.

Also dominant are reflections of 2013, which has not been an easy year. On a personal note, I lost a good friend and spiritual director in Bishop John M. D'Arcy, who called last Christmas to tell me of an aggressive cancer that would give him only months to live.

At work, at Catholic Relief Services, we were confronted with the plight of the Syrian refugees, hardships of the countries that extended hospitality to them, the

bombing of Christian churches in various parts of the world, security threats to our staff and now the millions of Filipinos left without shelter and livelihood in the wake of a terrible typhoon.

What does Christmas mean when there is so much suffering, darkness and violence? Without fully comprehending the meaning of the choice, we crafted the theme "Where God Is" for our annual report. We wanted to proclaim that where there is poverty, hunger, disasters, oppression, there is God.

That has been our experience. We have seen assistance, generosity, commitment, God's abundance in the people he sent. We have seen joy in the faces of folks at the arrival of strangers who claim them as family and give them the assurance that they have not been forgotten.

We cannot help but say "amen" when communities marginalized and ravaged by disease rise in health, prosperity and dignity.

When reading the accounts of the martyrs, what gripped me most was not the way they died, but their love. They made choices for what they loved: God and the people they lived with.

The Jesuit priests martyred in El Salvador were unshaken in their commitment to a Catholic university, where justice was

in every activity and truth would be the language in which their students were schooled. Maryknoll Sister Maura Clarke, one of the Churchwomen also martyred in El Salvador, wrote to her teenage niece imparting a wish that she would find something she loves enough to die for.

Bishop D'Arcy reminded me that he was going to see God, to whom he had dedicated his life. He did so on the anniversary of his ordination.

Joy and peace, these are the standing wishes we see in most religious Christmas cards. They are not just promises.

God came into our world and lives to make these real. Against all odds, human frailties and our limited imagination, God invites us not to be afraid. Hope is not audacious because it is not based on what we can do, but on what God can do.

Like Stephen, the martyrs saw Christ not only in the crib on Christmas Day, but standing at their side in their daily lives.

Stephen's feast makes the connection between Christ's birth and new life for us.

For the people who inspire this essay, the Christmas message, "Emmanuel: God with us," never dimmed.

(Carolyn Woo is the president and CEO of Catholic Relief Services.) †

Catholic Education Outreach/Margaret Hendricks

Keeping Christ in Christmas in our family of faith

Advent is a time of preparation and waiting to celebrate the birth of Jesus. At the heart of Catholic education is the commitment to assist parents as the first and best educators of their children. This holy season provides an opportunity for us to reflect upon the family—the domestic Church.

While I make an effort to keep my prayer and faith life on track, I find myself getting caught up in the secularism and materialism associated with the celebration of Christmas.

The words "making a list, checking it twice" from a secular Christmas carol reminds me of the shopping I still need to finish. Of course, I delight in finding the perfect gift for each of my grandchildren.

This year seems different, perhaps due in part to the spirit and simplicity of Pope Francis. In less than a week, we celebrate the Nativity of Our Lord, followed by the feasts of the Holy Family, the Solemnity of Mary, the Epiphany and the Baptism of Our Lord. As Catholics, this

is a beautiful time to celebrate and worship!

The feasts that we will celebrate afford us an awesome opportunity to witness to our children and families, in a powerful and practical way, the love of Christ for his people. So, if you are like me and looking for a few ways you may experience the "sacred in the ordinary" and celebrate these feasts with purpose, I suggest the following:

- Read, pray and chat with your children at bedtime. Those few quiet minutes with your child can create life-long memories that will shape a child or teenager for years to come. Maybe even generations to come!

- While sharing the Nativity narrative with your children, consider finding time to tell your children about their own birth.

As parents, this was a time of preparation and anticipation. Share with them the people who came to visit them, just like the shepherds and wise men after Jesus' birth.

- The teen years can be a "roller coaster" for your children. Be intentional with your schedule. The times a teen returns to or departs from the home are important opportunities to "touch base." Commit to being home as often as possible at these times.

- Make your marriage a priority. Treat your spouse tenderly in the presence of your children. Use words of affirmation and encouragement. Sometimes a gesture as simple as helping clear the dishes speaks volumes for the care you have for a spouse. Simply taking a walk or holding hands are visible signs of affection for one another.

This list is in no way complete. Take these ideas and adjust them to meet the needs of your family.

I am blessed to have eight grandchildren. In addition to the gifts my grandchildren will open this Christmas season, I am committed to making time for each of them individually to share my memories of their birth and of their mom's birth.

These everyday acts of kindness and striving for holiness in our relationships have the potential to reap big results in our families.

Merry Christmas, and Christ's peace to you and yours!

(Margaret Hendricks is the program coordinator for Adolescent Growth Programs for the Archdiocese of Indianapolis. You can e-mail her at mhendricks@archindy.org.) †

Faith and Family/Sean Gallagher

Love is at the root of the reality of Christmas

Christmas has become such a driving commercial and secular reality in society at this time of year that it can be easy for Catholics to allow the overwhelming truth at the heart of this holiday to pass by unnoticed.

We celebrate at Christmas the reality that Christ, the Second Person of the

Blessed Trinity, freely chose to take on human nature with all its limits. He who had existed from all eternity in a way that infinitely transcends anything we can ever know in this world bound himself to all of the trials and tribulations of our human existence.

Yes, this life has many blessings. But it also has more than its fair share of suffering that Christ never experienced in his life in the Trinity. Yet he chose to embrace this life in its fullness nonetheless.

Msgr. Romano Guardini was a mid-20th century German theologian whose father was an Italian diplomat. He struggled to understand this reality of Christ taking on human flesh, which we call the Incarnation.

In his classic book about Christ, *The Lord*, Msgr. Guardini acknowledged the difficulty of understanding why someone so utterly transcendent would do such a thing. "Before such an unheard of thought, the intellect bogs down," he wrote.

Then a friend invited him to view the problem from a different perspective, which "helped my understanding more than any measure of bare reason." The simple explanation his friend gave for God's motivation behind the Incarnation was, "But love does such things!"

In those five short words, something of the veil of the great mystery of the Incarnation is lifted up and we are brought at least part of the way into the very heart of God.

It helps us, within the limits of this world, to get a grasp on this divine reality that makes life in this world bearable. It is love that leads young spouses to do such things as forgoing worldly pleasures by opening themselves to the gift of children—children who lead those parents to spend hours awake in the middle of the night, not out on the town, but with a baby that has trouble sleeping or in the bedroom of a sick child.

It is love that leads parents to do such things as have high hopes for their children, but allow them to shape their own dreams and aspirations as they grow.

And it is love that leads spouses to do such things as to care for each other as their bodies and minds fail in old age.

It is these things and so many more that love leads us to do in our families. Love leads us to forget ourselves and look after the good of other people.

"If even human love has its own reasoning, comprehensible only to the hearts open to it, how much truer must this be for God," Msgr. Guardini asked. "When it is the depth and power of God that stirs, is there anything of which love is incapable?"

If we take these reflections of Msgr. Guardini to heart, then Christmas is no longer a time to celebrate a historic relic of the past or a secular holiday devoid of meaning. It becomes tangible here and now and sheds the warm and beautiful light of love on all the challenges of our daily lives.

Knowing in this way the love of God that leads him to do such things for us can be a powerful grace. It can impel us to give of ourselves in love to others in our lives—the greatest gift we can give them. †



Fourth Sunday of Advent/Msgr. Owen F. Campion

Sunday Readings

Sunday, December 22, 2013

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

This weekend, the Church celebrates the fourth and last Sunday of Advent 2013.

For its first reading, this weekend's liturgy offers a reading from the first section of the Book of Isaiah. This reading refers to King Ahaz of the southern Hebrew kingdom of Judah. The reference allows scholars to date this prophecy.

Ahaz reigned in the last third of the eighth century before Christ. To be kind, he is not regarded as having been a remarkably successful king. It is easy to understand why Isaiah prodded him more than once.

Prompting Isaiah's interest in Ahaz, or in any king, was not necessarily the monarch's obvious power and prestige, but rather the fact that the king first and foremost was the servant of God. The rulers were God's assigned and anointed agents. This religious fact overtook all other considerations. The final judgment of how well kings performed was whether or not they were truly loyal to God.

Urged to be loyal and devoted, Ahaz was promised a sign of God's favor. It was the birth of a son, whose mother was Ahaz's young bride or a virgin who was his concubine.

St. Paul's Epistle to the Romans provides the second reading. Introducing himself, Paul firmly states that he is an Apostle, called by the Lord to proclaim the Gospel. Above and beyond everything, he was God's servant, obediently following Jesus. Of course, the Apostle devoutly believed that Jesus was Lord and Savior.

For its last reading, the Church presents a section from the Gospel of St. Matthew. Only two of the four Gospels, both of them synoptics, recount the birth of Jesus. Matthew is one of these Gospels. Luke is the other.

This weekend's reading recalls the

conception of Jesus. It is very clear, as in Luke, that Jesus had no earthly father. He was the son of Mary, a human being, and since she alone was the earthly parent, Jesus received human nature itself from her.

In this story, Joseph is concerned, to say the least. He first understandably wonders if his betrothed has been unfaithful to him. How else could Mary have become pregnant? An angel relieves Joseph's mind by revealing to him in a dream that the unborn child is in fact the Son of God.

It is more than simply a chronicle of the conception and birth of Jesus, divine though these events may have been. The coming of the Messiah is a sign, perfect and penultimate, of God's everlasting love for humankind. God never fails, is never absent from people.

Reflection

This weekend, the Church calls us to observe the last Sunday of Advent. The season of Advent is the careful and focused period preceding Christmas. It is more than a time to prepare for a festive day of good food and good cheer.

Of course, it looks to the occasion of remembering the Lord's birth. The Church sees another purpose, and it provides Advent to assist us in this purpose, in our effort personally to unite with the Lord.

Our union with God, so intimate that we can possess even God's eternal life, occurred because of our unity first with Jesus in a common humanity. This union, established by creation, was completed in the Lord's own humanity.

We ratify and reinforce our own personal unions with God by individually choosing holiness. Thus, Advent is at our disposal. The question is if we shall respond.

Growth in faith and in discipleship has never been easy. Advent liturgies often centered on John the Baptist, killed because of his fidelity to God.

Facing our own temptations, the Church reassures us. Be strong, it advises. God will strengthen and enlighten us. He has never failed in love, mercy and guidance, given in and through Jesus. †



Daily Readings

Monday, December 23

St. John of Kanty
Malachi 3:1-4, 23-24
Psalm 25:4bc-5ab, 8-10, 14
Luke 1:57-66

Tuesday, December 24

2 Samuel 7:1-5, 8b-12, 14a, 16
Psalm 89:2-5, 27, 29
Luke 1:67-79

Vigil of the Nativity of the Lord (Christmas)

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

Wednesday, December 25

The Nativity of the Lord (Christmas) Midnight

Isaiah 9:1-6
Psalm 96:1-3, 11-13
Titus 2:11-14
Luke 2:1-14
Dawn

Isaiah 62:11-12
Psalm 97:1, 6, 11-12
Titus 3:4-7
Luke 2:15-20
Day
Isaiah 52:7-10
Psalm 98:1-6
Hebrews 1:1-6
John 1:1-18 or
John 1:1-5, 9-14

Thursday, December 26

St. Stephen, the first martyr
Acts 6:8-10; 7:54-59
Psalm 31:3cd-4, 6, 8ab, 16bc-17
Matthew 10:17-22

Friday, December 27

St. John, Apostle and evangelist
1 John 1:1-4
Psalm 97:1-2, 5-6, 11-12
John 20:1a, 2-8

continued on page 16

Question Corner/Fr. Kenneth Doyle

At ordination, bishops receive a ring that is a sign of their faithfulness to the Church

Q Why do Catholics kiss the pope's ring? Did our Lord walk around with such a ring? I don't know whether our new Pope Francis has had a ring designed for himself. It seems that he is trying to live the simple apostolic life. For that, he is making news both in Catholic and in secular circles, and it seems that he was sent just at the right time. (Jamestown, Ky.)



A For centuries, popes have worn a ring called the fisherman's ring. It shows an image of Peter, the first pope, marking Peter's original occupation and Christ's invitation to the first Apostles to become "fishers of men" (Mt 4:19).

Until 1842, the ring was used to stamp official papal decrees in wax as a sign of their authenticity, a fact reflected in the present-day symbolic destruction of a pope's ring at his death or resignation.

Characteristic of Pope Francis' preference for modesty, the new pope's ring is actually not one newly designed at his election. The wax model for it was created decades ago for Pope Paul VI.

Though a ring itself was never produced at that time, Paul VI's priest-secretary kept the wax model, and sometime later it was cast in gold-plated silver. When he was shown the "leftover" ring, Pope Francis chose it as his own.

Bishops, too, wear a ring that is presented to them in their episcopal ordination as a symbol of their faithfulness to and nuptial relationship with the Church.

When people kiss a bishop's ring (a practice seen less frequently these days and often replaced by a simple handshake), they are expressing their respect for the bishop's role and responsibility in guiding the Church.

Q I am an 82-year-old woman who lives alone. I would like very much to have a deeper relationship with God.

I pray and meditate on the rosary and, although I have several booklets with devotional prayers in them, those prayers seem to be very short and not enough to satisfy me. I have heard of the Liturgy of the Hours and the Divine Office, but I am not familiar with them.

Do they require that certain prayers be

recited at particular hours in the day? I still have to run errands, go grocery shopping, etc., and wonder whether I could keep to a specific regulated schedule. (Albany, N.Y.)

A The Liturgy of the Hours, the Divine Office and the breviary all refer to the same thing—namely, an official set of prayers that is required to be recited by members of the Catholic clergy and members of religious orders.

Consisting of psalms, hymns and readings, they are part of the public prayer life of the Church and are offered at various times to sanctify the day. The Divine Office has a long history in the Church. The earliest Christians tended to continue the Jewish practice of reciting prayers at certain hours of the day and night.

With the reform of Pope Paul VI following the Second Vatican Council, the Liturgy of the Hours consists of morning prayer, daytime prayer (divided into midmorning, midday or midafternoon), evening prayer, night prayer and the office of readings, a component that features extended excerpts from Scriptural and other spiritual writings.

Monastic communities gather in their chapel at certain times throughout the day, while diocesan clergy and non-monastic religious often tend to pray the office individually, fitting it at their own convenience into their other pastoral responsibilities.

I admire your desire for a deeper prayer life and encourage your efforts. I believe, though, that to take on the entire Divine Office might become too burdensome for you. What many of the laity have found helpful instead, and what I would recommend, is a publication called *Magnificat* (you can request it via this toll-free telephone number: 1-866-273-5215).

You are mailed a monthly booklet, which, for each day, includes morning prayer, evening prayer and the Mass texts for that day, together with some brief additional devotional readings.

The entire text can be read and prayed in about 20 minutes, and it can be done at any point in the day, depending on your schedule.

(Questions may be sent to Father Kenneth Doyle at askfatherdoyle@gmail.com and 40 Hopewell St., Albany, N.Y. 12208.) †

My Journey to God



Music

By Louis John Kiefer

Music comes from heaven
For the night our Savior came
A band of holy angels
Sang praises to his name.

Their voices blended sweetly
In melodies of prayer.
And filled with peace, and love, and joy
The shepherds watching there.

Such music man had never heard!
So strong! So true! So bright!
For ages had the angels sung
In practice for that night!

They made no vocal error
As when we mortals sing
They had for their director
A mighty infant King.

He lay there in a manger
And simply moved his hand,
And all those great musicians
Were made to understand.

(Now deceased, Louis John Kiefer was a member of St. Ambrose Parish in Seymour. His daughter, Mary Jane Kiefer, a member of Our Lady of Greenwood Parish in Greenwood, submitted this poem to The Criterion. Kindergarten students dressed as angels sing in the annual Christmas show at Corpus Christi School in Piedmont, Calif.)

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.

BAMFORD, William Harold, 87, St. Barnabas, Indianapolis, Dec. 7. Husband of Nina (Pansini). Father of Rebecca Long, Katherine Lykins, Susan Mikels, David Creely, Joseph and William Bamford. Grandfather of 16. Great-grandfather of eight.

BRYANT, Mary Isabelle, 90, St. Mary, New Albany, Nov. 29. Mother of Anita Leonard and Diane Presley. Grandmother of four. Great-grandmother of one.

CAMPBELL, Bernard R., Sr., 77, Annunciation, Brazil, Dec. 3. Husband of Mary Campbell. Father of Beth Christopher, Bernie, Michael and Paul Campbell. Brother of Charles, Donald and Robert Campbell. Grandfather of 11. Great-grandfather of two.

DIJAK, Dennis, 65, St. Michael, Greenfield, Nov. 15. Husband of Diana Dijak. Father of Suzanne Dijak-Robinson and Daniel Dijak. Brother of Gloria Portney, James, Robert and William Dijak.

DONNELLY, Claire, 87, St. Michael the Archangel, Indianapolis, Nov. 27. Wife of Robert Donnelly. Mother of Keith and Kevin Donnelly. Grandmother of five. Great-grandmother of four.

DWENGER, Harold B., 104, St. Roch, Indianapolis, Nov. 29. Father of Jean Bohn, Martha Curd, Linda Kestler and Joseph Dwenger. Grandfather of 16. Great-grandfather of 28. Great-great-grandfather of two.

FORD, Marshall, 56, St. Therese of the Infant Jesus (Little Flower), Indianapolis, Nov. 28. Father of April Hudson, Andrea and John Ford. Brother of Mae Brown, Betty Howard and Bobby Ford. Grandmother of six.

GARRETT, Norma Lee, 88, St. Charles Borromeo, Bloomington, Nov. 27. Wife of Thomas Garrett. Sister of Charlotte Price.

GEIS, Harold Joseph, 89, St. Michael, Brookville, Dec. 2. Father of Greg Geis. Brother of Corinne Johnson and James Geis.

HAIRE, Dawn R., 46, St. Lawrence, Lawrenceburg, Dec. 6. Wife of Roger Haire. Mother of David and Dustin Gillespie. Sister of Kelly Hannah and Chris Riley. Grandfather of one.

JOUBERT, Alyce A., 79, St. Gabriel, Indianapolis, Nov. 29. Wife of Raymond Joubert. Mother of Therese Andry, Angela Cox, Jennifer Fernandes and Michael Joubert. Daughter of Bruno Rakowski

Sr. and Rose Chlopecki. Sister of Arnie, Bruno Jr. and Paul Rakowski. Grandmother of seven.

MARTIN, Robert A., 82, St. Margaret Mary, Terre Haute, Dec. 6. Husband of Kathleen (Sweeney) Martin. Father of Sarah Easton, Bridget, Michael and Timothy Martin. Grandfather of eight.

MULLIN, John William, 91, St. Roch, Indianapolis, Dec. 4. Husband of Virginia (Diver) Mullin. Father of Margaret Bowers, Mary Smith, Martha Weber, John and Timothy Mullin. Grandfather of nine.

PITTS, Jeannette H., 89, St. Teresa Benedicta of the Cross, Bright, Nov. 25. Mother of Barbara Holodnak, Beverly Weber, Robert and William Pitts. Sister of James Hemphill. Grandmother of 10. Great-grandmother of 14.

PUSHOR, Chrystal M., 81, St. Bartholomew, Columbus, Dec. 4. Mother of Mary Deckard, Cathy Franke, Peggy Stam, John and Larry Pushor. Grandmother of 11. Great-grandmother of four.

QUINN, Patricia A., 64, St. Michael the Archangel, Indianapolis, Nov. 14. Wife of Phillip Price. Mother of Colleen, Richard and William Quinn. Sister of Mary Quinn Burke, Joan, Nancy, James and Philip Quinn.

SIEMER, Nicholas, 25, St. Teresa Benedicta of the Cross, Bright, Nov. 17. Son of Jeff Curtis and Susan Siemer Yust. Father of Hailyn Marie Siemer. Brother of Austin Curtis, Jeffery Montano and Jacob Yust. Grandson of Irene Curtis, Joyce and Joseph Siemer. †



Honoring Mary

Jesus Arias carries a banner of Our Lady of Guadalupe on Dec. 8 as a procession of more than 100 horses and riders makes its way past the Shrine of Our Lady of Guadalupe in Des Plaines, Ill. as part of a pre-celebration for the Dec. 12 feast day. More than 100,000 people make a pilgrimage to the shrine each year for the event. The feast celebrates the appearance of Mary to indigenous peasant St. Juan Diego in 1531 near present-day Mexico City.

Joseph F. Casey, the father of Father Noah Casey, loved the Irish community of St. John the Evangelist

Joseph F. Casey, 88, the father of Father Noah Casey, rector of SS. Peter and Paul Cathedral Parish in Indianapolis, died on Dec. 8. He was 80.

The Mass of Christian Burial was celebrated on Dec. 16 at St. John the Evangelist Church. Burial followed at Holy Cross Cemetery in Indianapolis.

A native of Indianapolis, he was a longtime member of St. John the Evangelist Parish in the city and attended the former St. John School and Manual High School.

He was employed by General Motors, Chevrolet and later Allison Engine, for 55 years.

Throughout his life, he was devoted to the Church, especially to the priests of the Archdiocese of Indianapolis and the monks of Saint Meinrad Archabbey in St. Meinrad.

He also loved the Irish community of St. John the Evangelist Parish, and was proud of his Irish heritage and of the commitment to faith and family that he helped in handing down to future generations.

He is survived by his son, Father Noah, and his two sisters Helen M. (Casey) McGrath (Robert) and Patricia A. (Casey) Beidelman, who cared for him beautifully in his later years. He was also the uncle of Father Patrick Beidelman, executive director of the archdiocesan Secretariat for Spiritual Life and Worship.

Donations may be made in his memory to St. John the Evangelist Parish or SS. Peter and Paul Cathedral Parish, both in Indianapolis, or to Saint Meinrad Archabbey in St. Meinrad, Ind. †



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Priest's commitment to vocation, others shines in new novel

Reviewed by Mike Krokos

At 82, "Father T" is still active, living out his priestly vocation as full-time pastor of a parish and staying very involved not only in his faith community but in the local community that he loves.

But that part of his life is put on hold when he learns that his former archbishop and now cardinal is being threatened in Rome by a left-wing terrorist group trying to intimidate and frighten the Church into changing its position on several issues.

In his latest novel *Father Turiddu Returns: The Cardinal and the Inquisitor*, author Daniel Conway advances the fictional story of Father Salvatore E. Turiddu, a priest modeled after Msgr. Salvatore Polizzi, an 83-year-old priest who currently serves as pastor of St. Roch Parish in St. Louis, Mo., and is a longtime friend of Conway.

"I decided to create a fictional character, Msgr. Salvatore Turiddu, or Father T, based on my friend Msgr. Polizzi. The adventures are fictional, but the character of Father T—and that of his family and friends who appear in the novels—are all true to life!" Conway noted. "I hope that by telling stories about Father T, I am

sharing with others the wonderful life and pastoral ministry of Msgr. Polizzi."

Similar to the first novel, *Father Turiddu: The Savior of the City*, Father T learns of a challenge affecting someone or something he cares about and jumps into action to address the situation.

When Father Turiddu hears that his former shepherd, now a cardinal in Rome leading the Apostolic Signature (the Church's Supreme Court), is moved from his residence to inside the Vatican after receiving death threats from the Sword of Justice terrorist group, he jumps on a plane to Italy to see what he can do to help.

The cardinal is later moved to a Benedictine monastery, then kidnapped and taken to Naples where the Grand Inquisitor of the terrorist group attempts to intimidate him to "confess to crimes" committed by the Church throughout its history.

Entrusting the situation to the Sacred Heart, readers will again see Father T's unbridled commitment to helping others no matter what the cost—"end of story."

"I may be 82 years old, but while I have good health and a sound mind, I'm going to use all the gifts God gave me to help my family

and friends," Father Turiddu said. "The Cardinal was very good to me when he was our archbishop. Now it's payback time. End of story!"

Though there are no real-life situations shared in the book, Conway said some of the fictional stories have their roots in real-life situations.

One truth that cannot be ignored is the author's commitment to the printed word. Conway, who serves as senior vice president for planning, marketing, and advancement at Marian University in Indianapolis and occasionally writes editorials for *The Criterion*, admitted that writing is a "labor of love" for him.

That love shines through not only in his characters in the novel, but also as he discusses clergy who have influenced him.

"During the past 45 years, since I entered the college seminary at Saint Meinrad, I have come to know and love hundreds of priests of all ages, temperament and ecclesial points of view—liberal, conservative and everything in between," Conway said.

"I can honestly say that I have never met a priest whose pastoral instincts and commitment to his people was more genuine than Msgr. Polizzi. His heart always

goes out to people in need—no matter who they are, no matter what their station in life, and no matter what sins they have committed. When Pope Francis talks about our Christian duty to represent the God of mercy, not the judgmental God, I think of Msgr. Polizzi."

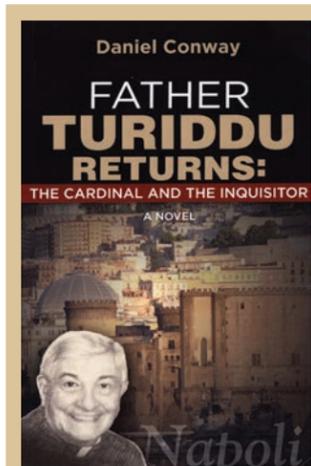
As readers peruse the fast-paced novel, they too will no doubt gain a better understanding of a priest whose vocation shapes all he says and does.

Readers will also appreciate how Conway is able to blend intrigue and action with the story's strong faith backdrop.

Family, including Father T's strong Sicilian roots, is at the heart of the story, too.

"In my book, *A Communion of Saints*, I wrote 'nothing is more important than family because family binds us to each other and to God,'" Conway said. "I was blessed to be born and reared in a remarkable family—very real people with lots of problems and difficulties who were sustained by their faith. Msgr. Polizzi would be the first to agree. Family comes first."

(Mike Krokos is editor of *The Criterion*.) †



Author
Daniel Conway

Father Turiddu Returns: The Cardinal and the Inquisitor is available online at www.amazon.com.

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Employment



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Applicants for this position must possess an administrator's license, be a practicing Catholic, and have a minimum of three years educational administrative experience. The successful candidate will understand and embrace the Catholic mission of Bishop Chatard High School while demonstrating outstanding academic leadership in the areas of faculty and curriculum development.

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For further information about this position, please visit: www.bishopchatard.org/about/principal-position
Interested applicants are invited to visit the following website to apply: <http://oce.archindy.org/office-of-catholic-education/employment.aspx>

Please send resumé and letter of interest to:

Rob Rash
Office of Catholic Education
Archdiocese of Indianapolis
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ADMINISTRATIVE ASSISTANT PRO-LIFE AND FAMILY MINISTRIES PART-TIME

The Roman Catholic Archdiocese of Indianapolis is seeking a part-time administrative assistant for Pro-Life and Family Ministries to work with us as we proclaim and uphold the dignity of each human person from the moment of conception to natural death. The administrative assistant will oversee all aspects of general office coordination for the office director and other staff. Duties include answering phones, processing check requests, coordinating mailings, greeting and directing visitors and other duties as needed.

Applicants should be proficient in Microsoft Word, Excel, Access and PowerPoint, have strong verbal and written communication skills, the ability to handle multiple tasks and outstanding interpersonal skills.

A minimum of a high school diploma or its equivalent is required; an associate's degree with three years of administrative experience is preferred. Spanish verbal and written communication skills are also preferred.

Please e-mail cover letter, resumé, and list of references, in confidence, to:

Courtney Mitchell
Human Resources
Archdiocese of Indianapolis
1400 North Meridian St.
Indianapolis, IN 46206
E-mail: cmitchell@archindy.org



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Daily Readings Cont.

Saturday, December 28

The Holy Innocents, martyrs
1 John 1:5-2:2
Psalm 124:2-5, 7c-8
Matthew 2:13-18

Sunday, December 29

The Holy Family of Jesus, Mary and Joseph
Sirach 3:2-6, 12-14
Psalm 128:1-5
Colossians 3:12-21 or Colossians 3:12-17
Matthew 2:13-15, 19-23

Monday, December 30

1 John 2:12-17
Psalm 96:7-10
Luke 2:36-40

Tuesday, December 31

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

Wednesday, January 1

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

Thursday, January 2

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 98:1-4
John 1:19-28



CNS photo/Sam Lucero, The Compass

A Nativity scene and wall decoration depicting the birth of Christ are seen in the home of Verna Bechard in New London, Wis. Bechard displays at Christmas time nearly 200 sets she has collected over the years. The liturgical season of Christmas begins with the vigil Masses on Christmas Eve and concludes on the Feast of the Baptism of the Lord. During this season, we celebrate the birth of Christ into our world and into our hearts, and reflect on the gift of salvation that is born with him ... including the fact that he was born to die for us.

Friday, January 3

The Most Holy Name of Jesus
1 John 2:29-3:6
Psalm 98:1, 3-6
John 1:29-34

Saturday, January 4

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

Sunday, January 5

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

Monday, January 6

St. André Bessette, religious
1 John 3:22-4:6
Psalm 2:7-8, 10-12a
Matthew 4:12-17, 23-25

Tuesday, January 7

St. Raymond of Penyafort, priest
1 John 4:7-10
Psalm 72:1-4, 7-8
Mark 6:34-44

Wednesday, January 8

1 John 4:11-18
Psalm 72:1-2, 10, 12-13
Mark 6:45-52

Thursday, January 9

1 John 4:19-5:4
Psalm 72:1-2, 14, 15bc, 17
Luke 4:14-22a

Friday, January 10

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

Saturday, January 11

1 John 5:14-21
Psalm 149:1-6a, 9b
John 3:22-30

Sunday, January 12

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

JUBILEES

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St. Mary School in Richmond from 1946-50 and at the former Sacred Heart School in Terre Haute from 1972-76. In Indianapolis, she ministered at the former Bishop Chartrand High School from 1968-70; the former Ladywood-St. Agnes High School from 1971-72; and Cathedral High School from 1976-78. She provides volunteer service as an outreach minister in Los Angeles.

Sister Sheila (formerly Marie Sheila) FitzSimons, a native of Indianapolis, celebrated her 70th jubilee. In the archdiocese, she taught at St. Thomas Aquinas School in Indianapolis from 1955-56 and as adult education teacher in New Albany at Providence Self Sufficiency Ministries from 1999-2002. She served in transportation at Saint Mary-of-the-Woods from 2002-10. Sister Sheila devotes time now to a special prayer ministry at the motherhouse.

Sister Michaela Galvin celebrated her 70th jubilee. In the archdiocese, she ministered at Saint Mary-of-the-Woods in residential and health care services from 2000-11. Sister now devotes herself to a special prayer ministry at the motherhouse.

Sister Francine McGriffin celebrated her 70th jubilee. In the archdiocese, she served in Indianapolis at St. Thomas Aquinas School from 1950-54; at the former Aspirancy High School at Saint Mary-of-the-Woods from 1963-64; at the former Ladywood High School and the former Ladywood-St. Agnes High School from 1966-72; as a licensed practical nurse at several Indianapolis facilities from 1973-76 and in adult education at United Southside Community Organization from 1976-81. When she returned to Saint Mary-of-the-Woods in 1997, she

served for seven years on the residential services staff. Sister now has a special prayer ministry at the motherhouse.

Sister Ann Kevin O'Connor celebrated her 70th jubilee. In the archdiocese, she taught at St. Charles Borromeo School in Bloomington from 1954-55 and at St. Matthew School in Indianapolis from 1963-64. At Saint Mary-of-the-Woods, she served on the General Administrative staff from 1994-97 and from 1998-2002 in various departments and programs. Currently Sister Ann Kevin's ministry is prayer.

Sister Louise (formerly Edward Louise) Schroeder celebrated her 70th jubilee. In the archdiocese, she served at St. Joan of Arc School in Indianapolis from 1959-62. Since 1991, she has ministered in various departments at Saint Mary-of-the-Woods, including residential and health care services.

Sister Ann Brendan Burget celebrated her 60th jubilee. In the archdiocese, she ministered in Indianapolis at Nativity School from 1958-61; St. Jude School from 1961-65; the former St. Andrew School from 1965-67; and Holy Cross Central School from 1974-87. Sister Ann Brendan also served at St. Patrick School in Terre Haute from 1967-74; and at Woods Day Care/Pre-School, Saint Mary-of-the-Woods from 1987-2005. She currently volunteers in The Gift Shop at Providence Center at Saint Mary-of-the-Woods.

Sister Teresa (formerly Ellen Maureen) Costello celebrated her 60th jubilee. In the archdiocese, she taught in West Terre Haute at Educational Family Services from 1995-96. Sister currently ministers as a citizenship teacher and visitor to the elderly in Weymouth, Mass.

Sister Elaine (formerly Elaine Marie) Doucette served in Indianapolis at the former St. Agnes Academy from 1959-62 and St. Jude School from 1963-66. She

ministered at Saint Mary-of-the-Woods in residential and health care services from 1980-98. Sister Elaine now has a special prayer ministry at the motherhouse.

Sister Mary Catherine (formerly Marie Michele) Duffy, a native of Indianapolis, celebrated her 60th jubilee. In the archdiocese, she has spent more than 25 years serving the Hispanic community in Indianapolis and currently ministers at the Marian Center in Indianapolis in immigration assistance. She served in Provincial Administration from 1978-86, and taught at St. Matthew School in Indianapolis from 1986-87.

Sister Donna Marie Fu celebrated her 60th jubilee. In the archdiocese, she ministered in Terre Haute at the former Sacred Heart School from 1956-57 and at the former St. Ann School from 1972. Sister currently is a vocation promoter for Asia.

Sister Jane (formerly Dorothy Jane) Gibson celebrated her 60th jubilee. She ministered in Indianapolis at Holy Cross School from 1972-74; as housekeeper at the Cathedral from 1974-77 and at Cathedral High School from 1979-80; in outreach ministry from 1980-92; as a home health care giver from 1994-2008 and at St. Rita Parish from 2008-10. Sister Jane devotes time now to a special prayer ministry at the motherhouse.

Sister Carolyn (formerly John Michael) Glynn celebrated her 60th jubilee. In the archdiocese, she ministered at the former St. Anthony School in Indianapolis from 1958-61. Currently, Sister Carolyn is a volunteer with Catholic Charities in Bradenton, Fla.

Sister Marilyn Ann Kofler celebrated her 60th anniversary. In the archdiocese, she served in Brownsburg at St. Malachy School from 1959-61. Sister Marilyn Ann currently volunteers in immigration services in Chicago.

Sister Jeanette Marie Lucinio

celebrated her 60th jubilee. In the archdiocese, she ministered at St. Paul School in Sellersburg from 1955-56 and at the former St. James the Greater School in Indianapolis from 1959-60. She currently ministers as director of the office for women religious in the Diocese of San Diego, Calif.

Sister Ann Paula Pohlman, a native of Indianapolis, celebrated her 60th jubilee. In the archdiocese, she taught at the former St. Catherine of Siena School in Indianapolis from 1968-74 and served as principal there from 1974-76. Sister Ann Paula currently tutors at St. Joseph School in Bradenton, Fla.

Sister John Mary Rifner celebrated her 60th jubilee. In the archdiocese, she taught at the former St. Anne School in New Castle from 1966-69; at St. Susanna School in Plainfield from 1969-81; and St. Simon School in Indianapolis from 1981-85. She ministered at Saint Mary-of-the-Woods in the Transportation Department from 1985-2011. Sister currently volunteers at the motherhouse.

Sister Martha Ann Rifner celebrated her 60th jubilee. In the archdiocese, she ministered at St. Michael School in Greenfield from 1966-68; at St. Margaret Mary School in Terre Haute from 1968-77; and served in the Transportation Department from 1987-2001 at Saint Mary-of-the-Woods. She continues to serve there in residential services.

Sister Helen (formerly Helen Jean) Vinton celebrated her 60th jubilee. In the archdiocese, she served at the former St. Mary School in Richmond from 1958-64, and in Indianapolis at the former Ladywood High School from 1964-70 and at the former Ladywood-St. Agnes High School from 1970-75. Sister currently ministers as assistant executive director at Southern Mutual Health Association in New Iberia, La. †