



The

Criterion

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Building bridges

Education and culture cross paths during principal's visit to Finland, page 3.

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What makes you happy?

Young people share their joys in life

By John Shaughnessy

Are you very happy with your life?

The odds are higher that you will say "yes" to that question if you attend church weekly or more often.

According to a 2005 Pew Research Center survey, "38 percent of all Catholics who attend church weekly, or more, report being very happy while just 28 percent of Catholics who attend church less often say they are very happy."

The national survey of more than 3,000 randomly selected adults also revealed some other interesting findings about happiness:

"Married people are happier than unmarrieds. Republicans are happier than Democrats. Rich people are happier than poor people. Whites and Hispanics are happier than blacks. Sunbelt residents are happier than those who live in the rest of the country."

At *The Criterion*, we wanted to do our own survey on happiness. In our small and unscientific survey, we asked some young people and some elderly people variations of three basic questions:

How do you describe or define happiness in your life; what makes you happy?

What are some of the moments when you have been most happy in your life?

What advice would you give to people in search of happiness?

As you think of your own answers to those questions, consider the answers that our happiness "experts" shared with us.

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Photo by Mary Ann Wyand

St. Paul Hermitage resident Joan Shevlin straightens a ribbon on a Christmas wreath on Nov. 29 near the chapel at the retirement home operated by the Sisters of St. Benedict of Our Lady of Grace Monastery in Beech Grove.

Seniors find happiness in faith and family

By Mary Ann Wyand

Smiling, Joan Shevlin straightened the ribbon on a large Christmas wreath hanging on a wall near the chapel at the St. Paul Hermitage in Beech Grove.

A resident of the hermitage, Shevlin finds happiness in her faith, family and friends.

It is the intangible things, the priceless things, she said, that bring joy and meaning to life.

Shevlin believes that people who are searching for happiness in life will find it if they pray to God and ask him for help.

"I don't know what I would do without prayer," she said, emotion evident in her voice. "I pray for good health and happiness every day. I find great happiness in being able to go to Mass at the chapel here and receive the Eucharist every day. I'm very fortunate."

Shevlin and her late husband, Jim, were longtime members of Our Lady of Lourdes Parish in Indianapolis and the owners of the Anchor Inn, a popular restaurant formerly located in the Irvington neighborhood on the east side.

She wishes that they would have been able to have children, but cherishes her memories of their 40 years in business together and the countless friends they made at the restaurant before they retired and moved to Monticello, Ind.

After her husband died of cancer, Shevlin moved to the hermitage in 2006. She is happy living near her sisters in an apartment at the beautifully maintained retirement home, which is a ministry of the Sisters of St. Benedict of Our Lady of Grace Monastery in Beech Grove.

"I enjoy being around people," she said. "I've met a lot of nice friends here and we do a lot of things together. We

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Photo by John Shaughnessy

Sharing smiles and stories of joy, six students from St. Gabriel School in Indianapolis offer their thoughts about happiness. From left are Michael Bir, Amanda Ward, Taylor Minnis, Allen Dininger, Nicole Loza and Elizabeth Bir.

Critics debate merits of *The Golden Compass* movie

WASHINGTON (CNS)—The movie *The Golden Compass* has prompted a blizzard of words assailing the movie and the books on which it is based as well as defenses of the film.

"Today, I saw the movie. And I'm not going to change a word of what I've written as a result," said a Nov. 20 online posting by Jeffrey Overstreet, author of the book *Through a Screen Darkly*, a memoir and travelogue of "dangerous moviegoing" on his blog, the *Looking Closer Journal*.

"If the filmmakers tried to 'tone down' the anti-religious content, they pretty much failed. 'The Magisterium' is not a term invented by [book author] Philip Pullman. It's a reference to the Catholic Church, or at least to the truth that shines through Scripture and the history of the Church. And it isn't hard to see that in the film."

The movie starring Nicole Kidman and

Daniel Craig, which opened in theaters on Dec. 7, is based on the first book of British author Pullman's trilogy titled *His Dark Materials*. The other two volumes are *The Subtle Knife* and *The Amber Spyglass*.

His Dark Materials recounts the adventures of Lyra Belacqua, a 12-year-old girl in an alternate universe that resembles our own. With the assistance of several other characters, she sets out to overthrow the Authority, which is God in Pullman's work. The novels depict him as a weak, false god and, in the final book in the trilogy, he actually dies.

Australian Sacred Heart Father Peter Malone, a film critic, author and former head of Signis, the worldwide association of Catholic communicators, said in a Nov. 25 statement on the movie: "*The Golden Compass* is well-made, with a lot of intelligent dialogue, including the word 'metaphysics' a couple of times. Much of the

film requires attention as well as some developed vocabulary."

Father Malone acknowledged, "There are some aspects of the film that may raise a religious eyebrow." One is how *The Golden Compass* treats its parallel world.

"In our world, our souls are within us. In the parallel world, the soul is outside us, in the form of a symbolic animal called a daemon—not a devil but a 'spirit' according to the origins of the word," he said. Another aspect is its use of "Magisterium" to describe "the all-powerful ruling body which is authoritarian and intent on eradicating free will," he said. The Catholic Church uses the term magisterium to describe its teaching authority.

He added, "As with all controversies and campaigns, attack without the benefit of

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YOUTHS

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How do you describe or define happiness in your life; what makes you happy?

Amanda Ward, 12, a seventh-grade student at St. Gabriel School in Indianapolis: "Just knowing I have family and friends who love and care about me very much. And they're willing to do anything to help me."

Amber Morrison, 8, a third-grade student at Pope John XXIII School in Madison: "Happiness is the love you get and how mothers cuddle you in their arms."

Alex Feltner, 13, an eighth-grade student at Father Michael Shawe Memorial Jr./Sr. High School in Madison: "I am happy when I see a comedian tell a funny joke, get an A on a paper, get a paycheck from my paper route, get something new or when I hold a door for someone who needs help."

Christopher Grote, 8, a third-grade student at Pope John XXIII: "Some things that make me happy are my pets. When I am sad, they cheer me up by making funny faces."

Jackson Wendell, 6, a first-grade student at Pope John XXIII: "Newborn babies make people happy. I am getting twin babies. They are going to make people twice as happy!"

What are some of the moments when you have been most happy in your life?

Elizabeth Bir, 8, a third-grade student at St. Gabriel: "Christmas. Because it's when Jesus was born."

Allen Dininger, 12, a sixth-grade student at St. Gabriel: "My first touchdown in football. As soon as I scored, my dad looked at me [and gave him a thumbs-up]. My teammates gave me high-fives. I felt pretty good about that."

Angela Goley, 12, a seventh-grade student at Shawe Memorial: "One thing I like to do is cheer with my friends at my school's basketball games. I also like to play basketball. I think everyone needs a little bit of happiness in their life so do your best to spread happiness to others."

Amanda Ward, 12: "My happiest moment is the day my mom got married. We were just at home eating a really nice dinner when my stepfather proposed to her. He took the whole family to the living room, got down on one knee and proposed to her."

Michael Bir, 10, a fourth-grade student at St. Gabriel: "When I hit an inside-the-park home run in baseball. That was last year when I was 9. My sister was on the team. So that was a good way to remember that moment."

What advice would you give to people in search of happiness?

Elizabeth Stucker, 13, a seventh-grade student at Shawe Memorial: "To be truly happy, the first step is to be happy with yourself."

Taylor Minnis, 7, a first-grade student at St. Gabriel: "I might give people advice to not be mean or anything."

Allison Mruzek, 12, a seventh-grade student at Shawe Memorial: "Some people think you get happiness from material possessions, such as money, toys and things like that. If you are in the search of happiness, search for love and comfort first. Oh! Do not forget to pray to God about your problems."

Nicole Loza, 6, a kindergarten student at St. Gabriel: "If someone was sad, I would draw a card to them and say, 'I like to be your friend.'"

Laura Hesse, 12, a seventh-grade student at Shawe Memorial: "God wants each of us to be truly happy so he invites each and every one of us to be with him. Only when our soul is resting in God can we be truly happy."

Sidney Thevenow, 9, a third-grade student at Pope John XXIII: "The way to find happiness is to make others happy." †

SENIORS

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play cards, especially euchre, ... and bingo. ... We go to plays and go shopping and have fun."

Her friend, Katherine Svarczkopf, a member of St. Lawrence Parish in Indianapolis for 11 years, was widowed 12 years ago and moved to the St. Paul Hermitage in 2005.



Katherine Svarczkopf

We're all a family here."

Before retiring, Katherine Svarczkopf worked in retail sales then as volunteer coordinator and a costumed docent conducting tours at the historic President Benjamin Harrison Home in Indianapolis from 1974 until 1986.

Now she enjoys helping hermitage residents as a "Visiting Angel" volunteer and an extraordinary minister of holy Communion.

She said her son's call from God to the priesthood made her very happy.

"We were always glad for him," she said, mentioning her late husband, Frank. "Mark had talked about it since about the eighth-grade."

To find happiness in life, she recommends that people "join in things and keep busy."

Nativity of Our Lord Jesus Christ parishioner Lucious Newsom of Indianapolis founded the Lord's Pantry 19 years ago to help poor people living in Marion County as a volunteer during his retirement years.



Lucious Newsom

Now 91 and battling cancer, Newsom sang "Amazing Grace" during a Catholic Business Exchange meeting that featured Gov. Mitch Daniels as the keynote speaker on Nov. 16 at the St. Pius X Council's Northside Knights of Columbus Hall in Indianapolis.

After the program, Newsom collected donations for the Lord's Pantry and Anna's House, a newer ministry to the poor, and smiled as he reflected on his definition of happiness.

"Loving Jesus," he said. "That says it all. What brings happiness to me is to know God."

He joined the Catholic Church after moving from Tennessee to Indianapolis 20 years ago, and said he lives by his faith every moment of every day. "I always say, 'Praise God,'" he explained. "Faith is hopeful. I have cancer, but my faith is going to make me whole. ... Pray and your worries are all gone. ... The Lord keeps me going every day—every step, every move—with his love."

She likes spending time with her friends at the hermitage and said her three sons—Frank Jr., Chris and Msgr. Mark Svarczkopf—are happy because she is happy there.

"I found happiness coming here," she explained. "It's a place of leisure and retreat, but I've found that I can help my family by prayer.



Bill and Louise Ryan

St. Augustine Home for the Aged residents Bill and Louise Ryan moved from Fishers, Ind., to the Little Sisters of the Poor home in Indianapolis in 2006 after volunteering there for 12 years.

"Happiness means different things to different people," he said. "Some people will tell you that happiness to them means winning the lottery or getting a good job."

They were married in Union, N.J., on Oct. 22, 1949, and celebrated their 58th wedding anniversary at the St. Augustine Home. They still enjoy holding hands.

"Happiness means to me having a lovely wife, three sons—Timothy, William Jr. and John—and six grandchildren," he said. "Life is just very happy for me. I really have been very blessed. The day we got married, I was thrilled to death."

Louise Ryan said her definition of happiness is "mostly family and, of course, Bill. He's a great guy. Don't tell everybody, but he's a great husband. I love the little notes he leaves for me. We've been very lucky, and I think we're very blessed to be living here in this wonderful home. We're very blessed to be with the Little Sisters. We still volunteer here. We enjoy it."

She said they love to visit family members in New Jersey and spend time with their grandchildren.

"I enjoy doing things for our grandchildren," she said. "We just got some great news. Our granddaughter is getting married next year. This is the first grandchild getting married, and we're just hoping we live long enough to have a great-grandchild."

To find happiness in life, she said, rely on your faith and try to solve your problems by asking God and people that you trust for advice or help.

"I always pray," she said. "When I have problems, I pray and I feel that that's what's helping me."

Their friend, St. Augustine resident Rose Tobias, a longtime member of



Rose Tobias

St. Gabriel the Archangel Parish in Indianapolis, has lived at the Little Sisters' home for eight years. She and her late husband, Armando, raised six children.

"Happiness is a virtue and you cannot buy it," Tobias said. "When you make people happy, it makes you feel happy. When you can spread happiness, it

makes the world a joyful and peaceful place."

(For more advice from senior citizens about how to find happiness in life, log on to www.criteriononline.com.) †

The Criterion

12/14/07

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Building bridges

Education and culture cross paths during principal's visit to Finland

By Mike Krokos

Walk in each morning, pull off your shoes and slip into something more comfortable—like slippers.

Take time for a daylong hike to study and discuss nature's beauty right outside your classroom window.

And if you're a preschool student, don't forget the special chewing gum provided after lunch.

Welcome to a few of the unique elements at the heart of Finland's education system.

Thanks to the Fulbright Teacher Exchange Program sponsored by the U.S. Department of State's Bureau of Educational and Cultural Affairs, Annette Jones recently had the opportunity to travel to northern Europe and see a Finnish school operate firsthand. She also spent a few days visiting a school in Ireland.

"It was a once-in-a-lifetime opportunity," said Jones, the principal at Immaculate Heart of Mary School in Indianapolis. "It's hard to capture it [the experience]."

"The purpose of the visit was to look at education in another culture," added Jones, who is in her eighth year as principal of the Indianapolis North Deanery school. "I hope to incorporate some of their strengths into our school."

"In the future, I want more international exchanges for our students, and a greater international focus in our schools."

Established by an act of Congress in 1946, the Fulbright program provides opportunities for teachers, administrators and other faculty to participate in a direct exchange of positions with colleagues from other countries.

As was the case for Jones, Fulbright's Senior Specialist Program offers three to six weeks of "work shadowing" and observational study opportunities for U.S. and international administrators.

Jones is one of approximately 170 U.S. citizens traveling abroad during the 2007-08 academic year thanks to the Fulbright program.

Her Finnish counterpart, principal Kaija-Leena Salovaara of Central School of Viiala in Akaa, Finland, will visit Indiana for a month next spring.

Immaculate Heart of Mary School teaches students from first- to eighth-grade. Central School of Viiala has students from preschool to sixth-grade.

The Fulbright scholarship includes a stipend for housing and pays for recipients' travel expenses.

Since the program's inception, more than 98,400 U.S. Fulbright scholars have studied, taught or conducted research in 140 countries around the world. More than 162,000 foreign citizens have come to the U.S. through the program.

Education in another culture

Comparable to the state of Montana in size, Finland is home to approximately 5 million people.

The Finnish education system is unique because school is free, including through college, said Salovaara.

"We get a free, warm lunch every day, and even all the books in primary and secondary level [are paid for]," Salovaara said in an e-mail from Finland.

"Only in high school do you have to buy your books, but training is free."

As soon as they arrive each day, students pull off their shoes and put on more comfortable footwear provided by the school.

Not only does this custom create a more relaxed learning environment, it also helps keep the schools cleaner, Jones said.

The elementary school curriculum includes woodworking, sewing and knitting. The classes cross genders so it isn't unusual to see a boy at a sewing machine or a girl crafting something with wood.

What about the gum provided to preschool children after lunch? It helps promote good dental hygiene.

The daylong hike that the Immaculate Heart of Mary principal made with students and teachers is part of the country's national curriculum, which



Despite the language barrier, Immaculate Heart of Mary School principal Annette Jones of Indianapolis and Annikka, a 6-year-old student at Central School of Viiala in Akaa, Finland, play a color game.

incorporates nature.

The pine and birch trees that are staples of the country's beautiful scenery have become integral elements in the classroom. On the hike, lunch was included and information stations were set up throughout the forest as part of the learning activity. Since the country is 70 percent forest and 20 percent water, it only makes sense for nature to be a part of the education process, Jones said.

And it helps to bring physical fitness

into the curriculum.

"Finland offers lots of exercise for students," she said. "There is a lot of walking."

Absorbing a school's strengths

From the shorter 9 a.m. to 2 p.m. school day to the daylong field trip held in the forest adjacent to the school, Jones spent the better part of a month absorbing as much as possible about education at

See FINLAND, page 11



Above, students at Central School of Viiala in Akaa, Finland, explore the Finnish forest during their daylong hike to study nature.

Right, while in the classroom, Finnish students wear indoor shoes provided by the school.



Christmas

TV MASS for Shut-Ins

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Editorial

Sports and faith intersect—again

Another chapter was recently written in the book where sports and faith intersect through everyday life, this time with the awarding of the Heisman Trophy in college football.

We've shared stories in the past year about how faith helps shape members of the national organization Catholic Athletes for Christ, Indianapolis Colts head coach Tony Dungy and several of his players, and Indiana University football coach Bill Lynch.

But the latest chapter is about a mother who chose life for her yet-to-be born son.

It seems quite appropriate during Advent—a time of waiting for people of faith—to share the story of Tim Tebow, the University of Florida Gators sophomore quarterback who on Dec. 8 won the Heisman Trophy, the prestigious award given annually to college football's best player.

If you are a college football fan, you have seen or read about how Tebow stands out on the football field. At 6 foot, 3 inches and 235 pounds, he is not extremely large by football standards, but his statistics—including a National Collegiate Athletic Association record 29 passing touchdowns and 22 rushing touchdowns in 2007—show why he commands respect from his coaches, teammates and opposition.

For his outstanding season, Tebow become the first-ever underclassman (freshman or sophomore) to win the Heisman Trophy.

"I am fortunate, fortunate for a lot of things," Tebow said upon accepting the award in New York. "God truly blessed me and this just adds on. It's an honor. I'm so happy to be here."

But that is only part of Tim Tebow's story.

As we learned in an interview with ESPN college football analyst Chris Fowler after winning the award, Tebow is breaking records, and making his parents and family proud because of his mother's courage and faith.

In 1985, Tim's parents, Bob and Pam Tebow, moved to the Philippines to serve as Christian missionaries.

It was during their three-year stay there that they prayed to conceive another child.

Unfortunately, as *The Gainesville Sun* reported, Pam fell into a coma after she contracted amoebic dysentery, an infection of the intestine caused by a parasite found in contaminated food or drink.

Her treatment required a series of strong medications and, as a result of those medications, doctors told Pam that the fetus had been irreversibly damaged. They strongly advised her to have an abortion.

But Pam refused because of her faith.

She spent the last two months of her pregnancy on bed rest, and gave birth on Aug. 14, 1987, to a healthy baby boy that the family named Timothy.

Twenty years later, the youngest of the five Tebow children beamed after being



Heisman Trophy winner Tim Tebow of the University of Florida Gators looks downfield for an open receiver during a 2007 game.

awarded the Heisman. And he openly talked about the faith passed on by his parents, who moved the family back to Florida in 1990 but continue to run a family-based ministry program in the Philippines.

"I'm just thankful for my mom because doctors were telling her—when I was in the womb—that she might not make it with me, and to have an abortion, and she stuck it out and was strong," Tebow told Fowler. "Hopefully, I think that's where I get a little bit of my strength—from her."

"I'm so thankful for her and all my family."

On arguably one of the biggest stages of the college football season, Tim Tebow's life story brought to light—again—how many athletes are not afraid to bring their faith to the forefront.

And we learned how, despite various medical opinions offered, Tebow's mom, Pam, chose life.

As Catholics and people of faith, we thank the Tebows for sharing their affirming story of faith. We again see an example where pro-life convictions cross faith traditions.

We have seen the bumper stickers and billboards: "Abortion stops a beating heart." "It's a child, not a choice."

Those messages should cause us to pause and think about the more than 47 million unborn children who have died as a result of the 1973 *Roe v. Wade* Supreme Court decision that legalized abortion in the U.S.

Which of those children was destined to become a doctor who would help find a much-needed medical cure? Or an advocate meant to fight poverty and homelessness from a global perspective? Or a great athlete who would inspire millions?

What we have learned is that through God all things are possible.

Tim Tebow, 2007 Heisman Trophy winner, is living proof of that.

—Mike Krokos

Parish Diary/Fr. Peter J. Daly

The breakfast with Santa phenomenon at my parish

Breakfast with Santa. What is it with having breakfast with Santa?



This year, our parish will sponsor three or four breakfasts with that merry giver of gifts and promoter of sales, Santa Claus.

We used to have Communion breakfasts—breakfast with Jesus.

Now we have breakfast with Santa.

Don't get me wrong. I am 100 percent in favor of helping needy children, especially at Christmas. I want their celebration of Christmas to be joyful. Our parish always participates in the community "giving tree." We buy gifts for more than 200 needy children in our community, more than any other church in our county.

But, like many parishes, we have had an increasing emphasis on "breakfast with Santa" around Christmas.

We sponsor one for the children born through the local crisis pregnancy center. We have another one for Girl Scouts. This year, we even hosted a breakfast with Santa for the local motorcycle clubs. There were 150 motorcycles in the parking lot. Santa arrived on a red motorcycle. Cool.

Even the Knights of Columbus sponsor a breakfast with Santa. They give gifts to children of Knights.

So what is my problem with all of this breakfasting with Santa? Three things bother me.

First, we are promoting Santa and forgetting Jesus in all of this. Our children come away thinking that Christmas is about Santa Claus and getting stuff.

We cannot lament the fact that Christ is not in Christmas if the churches don't even keep him there.

Above all, it seems to me the Knights of Columbus chapter at my parish should be sensitive to this. After all, they are the ones who have the "Keep Christ in Christmas" campaign. How can we expect Wal-Mart to keep

Christ in Christmas if we don't?

Second, we are promoting materialism as the spirit of Christmas.

Young people are taught that Christmas is about getting stuff. The high point of these breakfasts is a merry romp through piles of gifts. While most of them who come to these events are needy, some are just middle class children who already receive too much stuff for Christmas.

Third, all this breakfasting with Santa stretches out the Christmas season. Our celebrations begin earlier every year. The bikers' breakfast with Santa was on Nov. 17 this year. Since when does the Christmas season begin before Thanksgiving?

I've wondered what to do about this phenomenon of breakfast with Santa. I raised it with our pastoral council. Some people thought I was the "Grinch" who stole Christmas. Others agreed with me.

In reflecting, I've come up with three guidelines for children's Christmas gift-giving celebrations in our parish:

First, Christmas celebrations must be in the Christmas season. By that, I mean between the feast of St. Nicholas on Dec. 6 and Epiphany on Jan. 6. One month is plenty. I want no dragging Christmas into November just because the stores already have their decorations up.

Second, gift-giving events must be focused on the needy, not the greedy. We should be inviting children who otherwise would not be receiving gifts. We have to be delicate in how we do this. I prefer anonymous giving.

Third, every Christmas event for children must have some reference to the birth of Jesus. A manger scene should be set up. There must be a religious Christmas carol sung (not "Jingle Bells"). There must be a prayer said by everyone there.

Maybe we should even require that St. Nick come dressed as a bishop!

(Father Peter Daly writes for *Catholic News Service*.) †

Letters to the Editor

Spending time in perpetual adoration chapels will make us more Christ-like

Within the city of Indianapolis and the surrounding area, we have several churches with perpetual adoration chapels.

No matter where a person lives, there is one within a few miles of his or her residence. Why then, with thousands of Catholics living within this area, is it so hard to have at least one person in these chapels every hour of the day and night?

Do we, as Catholics, no longer believe that we receive many blessings and graces for spending prayerful time before the Most Blessed Sacrament, the very Body and Blood of Our Lord and Savior?

Pope John Paul II said, "The worship given to the Trinity of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit ... must fill our churches also outside the timetable of Masses. ... This worship must be prominent in all our encounters with the Blessed Sacrament. ... Adoration of Christ in this sacrament of love must also find expression in various forms of eucharistic devotion: personal prayer before the Blessed Sacrament, hours of adoration, periods

of exposition—short, prolonged and annual [40 hours]—eucharistic Benediction, eucharistic processions, Eucharistic Congresses. ... Let us be generous with our time in going to meet him in adoration and in contemplation that is full of faith and ready to make reparation for the great faults and crimes of the world. May our adoration never cease."

In his article to the people of the archdiocese a few weeks ago in *The Criterion*, Archbishop Daniel M. Buechlein spoke on the same subject. He urged his priests to encourage their parishioners to take advantage of these opportunities to go to these chapels.

If the priests fully recognized the benefits to the parish if many of the congregation spent at least one hour in the adoration chapel, I don't think they would need to be urged by the archbishop.

One hour spent weekly in the chapel by the parishioners, I believe, would make them more generous with their time, talent and possessions, and make them more Christ-like.

Winferd E. (Bud) Moody
Indianapolis

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



SEEKING THE FACE OF THE LORD

BUSCANDO LA CARA DEL SEÑOR

God is waiting for us to find him this Advent

We prepare to celebrate the mystery of the Incarnation. Once more, we will celebrate the birthday of Jesus.

The birth of a child is a joyous occasion in any circumstance. The birthday of the Son of God brings us to our knees. We are awed by the fact that God would become one of us and do so in a most humbling manner.

The fact that Jesus, God and man, would become dependent as a child is a cause for wonder and admiration at the humility of God. His infant birth is truly a prophecy of the manner in which his life among us would unfold.

As revealing as God becoming man is for us, for the most part it is also a mystery of hidden divinity. Advent, therefore, is a time of preparation once more for our reflection about the revelation of the Son of God as a baby boy who is at once powerless as a dependent infant and almighty as the Savior of our human family.

This paradox of God becoming one of us is both a call to faith and a celebration of God, who is willing to become lowly for the sake of our salvation. The mystery moves us to our knees to reflect on the awesome gift that has been romanticized over the centuries.

Yet the hidden Godhead is also a stumbling block for some. Advent is given

to us as a gift by the Church to reflect on this beautiful mystery of the son of God becoming like us in every way but sin. It is therefore also a gifted time for us to reflect and pray in order to strengthen our faith in the child who became our Savior.

In an earlier book, *Co-workers of the Truth*, published in 1992, the future Pope Benedict XVI wrote about the wonder of the birth of the God-man born as a boy child.

He narrates a story. "God has become man. He has become a child. Thus he fulfills the great and mysterious promise to be Emmanuel. By becoming a child, he offers us the possibility of being on familiar terms with him. I am reminded here of a rabbinical tale recorded by Elie Wiesel. He tells of Jehel, a little boy, who comes running into the room of his grandfather, the famous Baruch.

"Big tears are rolling down his cheeks. And he cries, 'My friend has totally given up on me. He is very unfair and very mean to me.' 'Well, could you explain this a little more?' asks the master. 'Okay,' responds the little boy. 'We were playing hide and seek. I was hiding so well that he could not find me. But then he simply gave up and went home. Isn't that mean?'"

"The most exciting hiding place has lost its excitement because the other stops playing. The master caresses the boy's face. He himself now has tears in his eyes. And he says, 'Yes, this is not nice. But look, it is the

same with God. He is in hiding, and we do not seek him.

"Just imagine! God is hiding and we people do not even look for him.' In this little story, a Christian is able to find the key to the ancient mystery of Christmas. God is in hiding. He waits for his creation to set out toward him, he waits for a new and willing Yes to come about, for love to arise as a new reality out of his creation. He waits for man."

In one of his weekly audiences (May 17, 2006), Pope Benedict reminded us that, "The school of faith is not a triumphal march, but a journey marked daily by suffering and love, trials and faithfulness."

The pope was reflecting on the faith of Peter. "Peter, who promised absolute fidelity, knew the bitterness and humiliation of denial: the arrogant man learns the costly lesson of humility. Peter, too, must learn that he is weak and in need of forgiveness."

Peter had wanted a "divine man" who would fulfill the expectations of the people by imposing his power on them all.

The pope reminds us: "We would also like the Lord to impose his power and

transform the world instantly. Jesus presented himself as a 'human God,' the servant of God, who turned the crowd's expectations upside down by taking a path of humility and suffering."

And it all began with the birth of a baby. The grace of Advent gives us the opportunity to embrace this lesson of the school of faith.

We also have the opportunity to acknowledge the weakness of our faith and to seek forgiveness in the gift of God's mercy, sacramental reconciliation. God waits for us. †

Do you have an intention for Archbishop Buechlein's prayer list? You may mail it to him at:

Archbishop Buechlein's
Prayer List
Archdiocese of Indianapolis
1400 N. Meridian St.
P.O. Box 1410
Indianapolis, IN 46202-1410

Archbishop Buechlein's intention for vocations for December

Catholic Grade Schools: that they may teach our children the Catholic faith and assist them in hearing and answering God's call to service in the Church, especially as priests or religious.

Dios espera que lo encontremos durante el Adviento

Nos preparamos para celebrar el misterio de la Encarnación. Una vez más celebraremos el nacimiento de Jesús.

El nacimiento de un niño es una ocasión de júbilo en cualquier circunstancia. El nacimiento del hijo de Dios nos hace caer de rodillas. Nos asombra el hecho de que Dios se convirtiera en uno de nosotros y que lo hiciera de forma tan humilde.

El hecho de que Jesús, Dios y hombre, pudiera tomarse en un ser vulnerable, como un niño, es motivo de admiración y maravilla ante la humildad de Dios. Su llegada al mundo como un bebé constituye ciertamente una profecía del modo cómo se desarrollaría su vida entre nosotros.

Con todo y lo revelador que es para nosotros que Dios se convirtiera en hombre, también representa en buena medida un misterio de divinidad oculta. Por lo tanto, el Adviento es la época para preparamos una vez más para reflexionar sobre la revelación del Hijo de Dios como un niño que es al mismo tiempo indefenso por ser un bebé vulnerable y es también poderoso como el Salvador de nuestra familia humana.

Esta paradoja de Dios que se transforma en uno de nosotros es un llamado a la fe y a la celebración de Dios quien está dispuesto a convertirse en un ser humilde por el bien de nuestra salvación. El misterio nos hace caer de rodillas para reflexionar sobre el increíble don que ha sido idealizado con el pasar de los siglos.

Pese a ello, la divinidad oculta representa un obstáculo para algunos. La Iglesia nos presenta el Adviento como un

obsequio para que reflexionemos sobre el hermoso misterio del hijo de Dios que se convierte en uno de nosotros en todos los sentidos, menos en el pecado. Por lo tanto, constituye una época especial para la reflexión y la oración a fin de fortalecer nuestra fe en el niño que se convirtió en nuestro Salvador.

En un libro publicado en 1992 titulado *Co-workers of the Truth (Compañeros de trabajo de la verdad)*, el entonces futuro Papa Benedicto XVI escribió sobre la maravilla del nacimiento del Dios hecho hombre adoptando la forma de un niño.

Narra la historia. "Dios se ha hecho hombre. Dios se ha convertido en un niño. Por lo tanto, cumple la grandiosa y misteriosa promesa de ser Emmanuel. Al convertirse en un niño nos ofrece la posibilidad de encontrarnos con él en un terreno familiar. Esto me recuerda un relato rabínico documentado por Elie Wiesel. Nos cuenta sobre Jehel, un pequeño niño que llega corriendo a la habitación de su abuelo, el famoso Baruch.

"Gruesas lágrimas corren por sus mejillas. Y grita: 'Mi amigo me ha abandonado por completo. Es muy injusto y muy malo conmigo.' 'Veamos, ¿podrías explicarme esto un poco mejor?', le pregunta el maestro. 'Está bien,' responde el pequeño niño. 'Estábamos jugando al escondite. Yo estaba muy bien escondido y él no podía encontrarme. Entonces simplemente se dio por vencido y se fue a casa. ¿No te parece cruel?'"

"El escondite más emocionante ha perdido su emoción porque el otro deja de jugar. El maestro acaricia el rostro del niño.

Él mismo tiene también lágrimas en los ojos. Y dice: 'Sí, no está bien. Pero fíjate, sucede lo mismo con Dios. Él está escondido y nosotros no lo buscamos.

"¡Imagínate! Dios está escondido y la gente ni siquiera lo busca.' En esta pequeña historia el cristiano puede hallar la clave para el antiguo misterio de la Navidad. Dios está escondido. Él espera que su creación salga en pos de Él, espera que aparezca un renovado y ardiente "Sí", que el amor surja de su creación como una nueva realidad. Él espera a los hombres."

En una de sus audiencias semanales (17 de mayo de 2006), el Papa Benedicto nos recordó que "La escuela de la fe no representa una marcha triunfal, sino una travesía marcada diariamente por el sufrimiento y el amor, las vicisitudes y la lealtad."

El Papa reflexionaba sobre la fe de Pedro. "Pedro, quien prometió lealtad absoluta, conoció la amargura y la humillación de la negación: el hombre arrogante aprende la costosa lección de la humildad. Pedro también debe aprender que es débil y necesita del perdón.

Pedro deseaba un "hombre divino" que llenara las expectativas del pueblo imponiendo su poder sobre ellos.

El Papa nos recuerda: "también quería que el Señor impusiera su poder y

transformara instantáneamente el mundo. Jesús se presentaba como un 'Dios humano,' el siervo de Dios, que desmoronó las expectativas de las masas al elegir un camino de humildad y sufrimiento."

Y todo comenzó con el nacimiento de un bebé. La gracia del Adviento nos brinda la oportunidad de tomar esta lección de la escuela de la fe.

Asimismo, tenemos la oportunidad de reconocer la debilidad de nuestra fe y procurar el perdón a través del don de la misericordia de Dios, la reconciliación sacramental.

Dios nos espera. †

¿Tiene una intención que desee incluir en la lista de oración del Arzobispo Buechlein? Puede enviar su correspondencia a:

Lista de oración del Arzobispo
Buechlein
Arquidiócesis de Indianápolis
1400 N. Meridian St.
P.O. Box 1410
Indianapolis, IN 46202-1410

Traducido por: Daniela Guanipa,
Language Training Center, Indianapolis.

La intención del Arzobispo Buechlein para vocaciones en diciembre

Escuelas primarias católicas: que ellos puedan enseñar la fe católica a nuestros niños y puedan ayudarles a oír y contestar la llamada de Dios para ser vir en la Iglesia, sobre todo como sacerdotes o religiosos.

Events Calendar

December 14

St. Paul Catholic Center, 1413 E. 17th St., Bloomington. **Simbang Gabi Mass**, 7 p.m. Information: 812-339-5561.

December 14-January 7

Saint Meinrad Archabbey and School of Theology, Library, 200 Hill Drive, St. Meinrad. **"Crèches" exhibit**, free, library closed Dec. 22-25 and Dec. 29-Jan. 1. Information: 800-682-0988 or e-mail news@saindmeinrad.edu.

December 15

St. Michael the Archangel Church, 3354 W. 30th St., Indianapolis. **Helpers of God's Precious Infants Pro-Life Mass**, Father Robert Robeson, celebrant, 8:30 a.m., followed by rosary outside abortion clinic and Benediction at church. Information: Archdiocesan Office for Pro-Life Ministry, 317-236-1569 or 800-382-9836, ext. 1569.

St. Patrick Church, 1807 Poplar St., Terre Haute.

Simbang Gabi Mass, 4 p.m. Information: 812-232-8518.

December 16

Holy Name of Jesus Church, 89 N. 17th Ave., Beech Grove. **"Christmas Concert XLVI,"** 3 p.m. and 6:30 p.m., \$5 per person. Information: 317-787-1682.

MKVS and Divine Mercy Center, Rexville, located on 925 South, .8 mile east of 421 South and 12 miles south of Versailles. **Covenant Sunday, Confession, 1 p.m., followed by holy hour,**

Mass, 2 p.m., groups of 10 pray the new Marian Way, 1 p.m., Father Elmer Burwinkel, celebrant. Information: 812-689-3551.

December 18

St. Monica Church, 6131 N. Michigan Road, Indianapolis. **Simbang Gabi Mass**, 7 p.m. Information: 317-253-2193.

St. Athanasius the Great Byzantine Church, St. Mary Hall, 1117 Blaine Ave., Indianapolis. **Catholic Charismatic**

Renewal of Central Indiana, prayer meeting, 7:15 p.m. Information: 317-592-1992, www.inholyspirit.org or ccrci@inholyspirit.org.

December 21

St. Andrew Church, 235 S. 5th St., Richmond. **Simbang Gabi Mass**, 7 p.m. Information: 317-962-3902.

December 28

Sisters of St. Francis Motherhouse, Oldenburg. **"Christmas Tours,"** 6-8 p.m. Information: 812-933-6491.

December 31

SS. Peter and Paul Cathedral, 1347 N. Meridian St., Indianapolis. **Catholic Charismatic Renewal of Central Indiana and Cursillo, renewal Mass of Thanksgiving**, Father Glenn O'Connor, celebrant, 11 p.m. Information: 317-592-1992 or ccrci@holyspirit.org.

Michaela Farm, Oldenburg. **"Winter Bird Count,"** 7:30 a.m.-lunch, pre-registration required. Information: 812-933-0661. †

Retreats and Programs

December 14-16

Saint Meinrad Archabbey, 100 Hill Drive, St. Meinrad. Christmas retreat, **"Light of the World,"** Benedictine Father Noel Mueller, presenter. Information: 800-682-0988 or e-mail www.saintmeinrad.edu.

December 31-January 1

Our Lady of Fatima Retreat House, 5353 E. 56th St., Indianapolis. **"New Year's Eve Retreat,"** Father James Farrell, presenter, \$250 per couple. Information: 317-545-7681 or www.archindy.org/fatima.

January 4-6

Our Lady of Fatima Retreat House, 5353 E. 56th St., Indianapolis. **"Theology of the Body for Married Couples,"** Father Jonathan Meyer, presenter, \$280 per couple. Information: 317-545-7681 or www.archindy.org/fatima.

January 12

Oldenburg Franciscan Center, 22143 Main St., Oldenburg. **"Fully Alive! Fully Franciscan!"** 9-11:30 a.m., Franciscan Sister Diane Jamison, presenter, \$20 per person. Information: 812-933-6437 or e-mail center@oldenburgosf.com.

January 13

Our Lady of Fatima Retreat House, 5353 E. 56th St., Indianapolis. **"Liturgy 301,"** Father Rick Ginther, presenter, 7-9 p.m. Information: 317-545-7681 or www.archindy.org/fatima.

Benedict Inn Retreat and Conference Center, 1402 Southern Ave., Beech Grove. **"Woman Prayer: A Morning of Grace,"** 8:45 a.m.-1 p.m., \$25 per person, reservation deadline Jan. 5. Information: 317-788-7581 or e-mail benedictinn@benedictinn.org.

January 14

Our Lady of Fatima Retreat House, 5353 E. 56th St., Indianapolis. **"The Spirituality of Aging,"** Dominican Sister Romona Nowak, presenter, 8:30 a.m.-2:30 p.m. Information: 317-545-7681 or www.archindy.org/fatima.

January 27

Our Lady of Fatima Retreat House, 5353 E. 56th St., Indianapolis. **"Pre-Cana Program,"** Information: 317-236-1596 or 800-382-9836, ext. 1596.

February 1-3

Our Lady of Fatima Retreat House, 5353 E. 56th St., Indianapolis. **"Tobit Weekend,"** Information: 317-545-7681 or www.archindy.org/fatima.

February 8-10

Oldenburg Franciscan Center, 22143 Main St., Oldenburg. **"Weekend Retreat on John's Gospel,"** Franciscan Sister Barbara Leonhard, presenter. Information: 812-933-6437 or e-mail center@oldenburgosf.com.

February 14

Oldenburg Franciscan Center, 22143 Main St., Oldenburg. **Lenten Lecture Series, "Bread Blessed,"** Franciscan Sister Olga Wittekind, presenter, 2-3:30 p.m. and

7-8:30 p.m., \$10 per session. Information: 812-933-6437 or e-mail center@oldenburgosf.com.

February 19-21

Saint Meinrad Archabbey, 100 Hill Drive, St. Meinrad. Midweek retreat, **"A Personal Preparation for the Paschal Mystery,"** Benedictine Father Jeremy King, presenter. Information: 800-581-6905 or e-mail MZoeller@saintmeinrad.edu.

February 29-March 2

Saint Meinrad Archabbey, 100 Hill Drive, St. Meinrad. Retreat, **"Reflections on the Life and Message of Jeremiah the Prophet,"** Benedictine Father Eugene Hensell, presenter. Information: 800-581-6905 or e-mail MZoeller@saintmeinrad.edu.

March 14-16

Saint Meinrad Archabbey, 100 Hill Drive, St. Meinrad. Midweek retreat, **"Marvelous Mozart,"** Benedictine Father Noel Mueller, presenter. Information: 800-581-6905 or e-mail MZoeller@saintmeinrad.edu.

March 18-23

Oldenburg Franciscan Center, 22143 Main St., Oldenburg. **Holy Week Retreat**, Franciscan Sisters Janet Born and Barbara Leonhard, presenters. Information: 812-933-6437 or e-mail center@oldenburgosf.com.

March 19-23

Saint Meinrad Archabbey, 100 Hill Drive, St. Meinrad. Holy Week retreat, **"Reflections on The Triduum,"** Benedictine Father Denis Robinson, presenter. Information: 800-581-6905 or e-mail MZoeller@saintmeinrad.edu.

March 19-23

Saint Meinrad Archabbey, 100 Hill Drive, St. Meinrad. Retreat, **"Monastic Practices: Drawing Everyday Wisdom from the Monastic Life,"** Benedictine Brother John Mark Falkenhain, presenter. Information: 800-581-6905 or e-mail MZoeller@saintmeinrad.edu. †

Cathedral and Saint Meinrad announce Christmas liturgies

The Christmas liturgical schedules for SS. Peter and Paul Cathedral, 1347 N. Meridian St., in Indianapolis and Saint Meinrad Archabbey Church in St. Meinrad are as follows:



SS. Peter and Paul Cathedral
Dec. 24—
4:25 p.m. carols,
5 p.m. Mass,
11:15 p.m. vigil service of lessons and

carols, midnight Mass.
Dec. 25—10:30 a.m. Mass.
All times for liturgies in the cathedral are Eastern Standard Time.

Saint Meinrad Archabbey Church

Dec. 24—7 p.m. vigil, midnight Mass.
Dec. 25—11 a.m. Mass.
All times for liturgies at Saint Meinrad Archabbey Church are Central Standard Time.
For the Christmas liturgical schedules of other religious communities or parishes in the archdiocese, contact their offices. †

World Day of Consecrated Life Mass to be celebrated on Feb. 2

A Mass in observance of the annual World Day of Consecrated Life will begin at 11 a.m. on Feb. 2 at SS. Peter and Paul Cathedral, 1347 N. Meridian St., in Indianapolis.

Archbishop Daniel M. Buechlein is scheduled to be the primary celebrant for the Mass.

The Mass will be celebrated on the feast of the Presentation of the Lord, which has traditionally been a feast where people enter religious communities or profess vows.

All men and women religious serving in the archdiocese are invited to participate in the liturgy. Those celebrating jubilees of entrance into religious life or of profession of religious vows during 2008 will be honored at the Mass.

A reception in the assembly hall of the Archbishop O'Meara Catholic Center, across the street from the cathedral, will follow the Mass.

Those religious planning on attending

File photo by Sean Gallagher



Archbishop Daniel M. Buechlein receives offertory gifts from members of the Daughters of Mary Mother of Mercy who minister in the archdiocese during the 2007 World Day of Consecrated Life Mass celebrated on Feb. 4 at SS. Peter and Paul Cathedral in Indianapolis.

the Mass are asked to contact Carolyn Noone, associate director for special events for the archdiocese, at 317-236-1428 or 800-382-9836, ext. 1428, or by e-mail at cnoone@archindy.org. †



African Mass

Father Eusebius Mbidoaka, administrator of St. Rita Parish in Indianapolis, right, prays during an African Mass celebrated at St. Rita Church on Dec. 2. Christine Essett, left, holds the sacramentary for Father Mbidoaka. Father Emmanuel Nyong, a chaplain at Methodist Hospital in Indianapolis, second from left, was a concelebrant at the Mass. The archdiocesan African Catholic Ministry program sponsors the quarterly African Mass. Languages spoken in Liberia, the Ivory Coast, Uganda and Nigeria, in addition to English and Latin, were featured at the Mass.



St. Nicholas

Jayden Weeden, a preschool student at St. Andrew & St. Rita Catholic Academy in Indianapolis, dresses as St. Nicholas just prior to the saint's feast day on Dec. 6. Jayden portrayed the saint during a special feast day school Mass on Dec. 6. St. Andrew & St. Rita Catholic Academy is one of six archdiocesan Mother Theodore Catholic Academies in Indianapolis. The other five are Central Catholic School, Holy Angels School, Holy Cross Central School, St. Anthony School and St. Philip Neri School.

Serra Club announces 2008 Vocations Essay Contest theme

By Sean Gallagher

The Serra Club of Indianapolis has announced the theme for its 2008 Vocations Essay Contest.

It is inspired by the story of Jesus calling the fishermen Simon, Andrew, James and John to cast their nets in a different way and become fishers of men by leaving their boats behind and following him (Mt 4:18-22).

Students throughout the archdiocese in grades 7 through 12 enrolled in religious education programs or interparochial and private schools—as well as those who are homeschooled—will be asked to reflect upon this question:

“How do deacons, priests and religious

brothers and sisters respond to God’s call to cast their nets in leading others to Christ?”

Contest rules and procedures will be sent to all parishes and schools in the next few weeks. The deadline for entries is Feb. 15, 2008.

Teachers and catechists for each grade may choose one or two essays from each grade to be submitted to the contest. A committee will read and judge the entries.

One winner from each grade will be chosen and receive a cash prize, be invited to read his or her essay at a recognition luncheon and have the essay published in *The Criterion*.

The Serra Club of Indianapolis is a chapter of Serra International, a Catholic organization dedicated to promoting

vocations to the diaconate, priesthood and religious life.

Immaculate Heart of Mary parishioner John Kelley of Indianapolis is a member of the club that helps oversee the contest.

Over the many years that he has been involved, Kelley has seen scores of strong essays written by students from across central and southern Indiana.

“We truly do have years where we agonize over having to pick a winner because we get several that are very, very good,” he said.

Benedictine Sister Nicolette Etienne is a member of Our Lady of Grace Monastery in Beech Grove and her community’s vocations director. She also teaches religion to middle school students at nearby Holy Name School.

Last year, Sister Nicolette brought a dozen

members of her community to the school to be interviewed by her students as they prepared to write their essays.

Sister Nicolette thinks the Serra Club Vocations Essay Contest can be an effective way to get young people to start thinking about religious vocations.

“I think it’s a great opportunity,” Sister Nicolette said. “Any time you can get a person to think about what it is that God is calling them to do, it’s just another step in their discernment.

“They’re at that age where they’re thinking, ‘Well, what do I want to do with my life?’ When the contest comes along, hopefully teachers will have talked about the whole idea of what your vocation in life is.” †

MOVIE

continued from page 1

viewing a film undermines the credibility of a crusade whether it is justified or not.”

“Nothing says ‘dark irony’ like a movie focused on blasting a ‘Magisterium’ using a group of, er, bishops, to sell itself,” said Amy Welborn, a former Catholic News Service columnist, in a Dec. 4 posting on her blog, *Charlotte Was Both*. Last year, she wrote the booklet *The Da Vinci Code Mysteries: What the Movie Doesn’t Tell You*, which was published a month before the film premiered in theaters.

Welborn mocked the reaction of some critics that *The Golden Compass* “is so, so valuable because it will give parents and young people a great opportunity to discuss the important issues raised by Pullman about religious authority, human freedom and so on. ... After we finish with *The Golden Compass*, shall we break out *The Protocols of the Elders of Zion* to open up discussion on Judaism? Probably not. Why? Because we recognize that the *Protocols* are lies. ... So it is with *The Golden Compass*.”

In a joint review by Harry Forbes, director of the U.S. bishops’ Office for Film and Broadcasting, and John Mulderig, a staff critic for the office, *The Golden Compass* was classified A-II—adults and adolescents—for “intense but bloodless fantasy violence, anti-clerical subtext, standard genre occult elements, a character born out of wedlock and a whiskey-guzzling bear.”

The review, its more positive than negative tone rankling some in the blogosphere, said: “This film—altered, as it is, from its source material—rates as intelligent and well-crafted entertainment. ... Taken purely on its own cinematic terms,

[*The Golden Compass*] can be viewed as an exciting adventure story with, at its core, a traditional struggle between good and evil, and a generalized rejection of authoritarianism.”

On Dec. 10, the U.S. bishops withdrew the review of the film. The USCCB gave no reason for its action.

The Catholic League for Religious and Civil Rights, headed by Bill Donohue, had earlier called for a boycott of the movie, and it maintained its position in a Dec. 3 statement.

“The Catholic League wants Christians to stay away from this movie precisely because it knows that the film is bait for the books: Unsuspecting parents who take their children to see the movie may be impelled to buy the three books as a Christmas present,” it said. “And no parent who wants to bring their children up in the faith will want any part of these books.”

Jesuit Father James Martin, associate editor of Jesuit-run *America* magazine, quoted an article by religion journalist and author Hanna Rosin saying that Christians were offended by the portrayal of religion in the books.

“In this case, I agree with Donohue,” Father Martin said in a posting on the magazine’s blog. “Rosin’s article seems to warn that when parents buy their kids something they expect to mirror *The Chronicles of Narnia*, they might be surprised—or appalled—when they learn that it’s less like [*Narnia* author] C.S. Lewis than Christopher Hitchens,” a high-profile anti-religionist who made the best-seller list this year with the book *God Is Not Great: How Religion Poisons Everything*.

In the Nov. 24 issue of the *Clarion Herald*, newspaper of the Archdiocese of New Orleans, Archbishop Alfred C. Hughes alluded to *The Golden Compass* in his column, “The Lure of Atheism.”

“I do understand that the film is less blatant than the books but may serve as an inducement to the purchase of the books.

Atheism is alive and well!” he said.

Archbishop Hughes added, “There is a spiritual war going on. The kingdom of Satan is at war with the kingdom of God. Rebellion, from the beginning, has been Satan’s goal. His weapons are violence and deceit. In some ways, violence is easier to fight against.”

The Pullman trilogy is an “ode to the joy of living in a physical world, a hymn to flesh, to exuberance, to the here and now, to free thought, imagination and feeling, to nobility of spirit,” according to a review by *Washington Post* book critic Michael Dirda.

“I happen to think that these positive traits are entirely compatible with organized religion and so I choose to focus on the positive rather than on any anti-religious themes in these books,” said Paul Lauritzen, director of the Program in Applied Ethics at Jesuit-run John Carroll University in Cleveland, commenting on Dirda’s review. Lauritzen is a contributor to dotCommonweal, a blog run by the Catholic magazine *Commonweal*.

“Movies are cultural moments, and those who resist this movie are doing so to build up a culture of respect for the Catholic Church and in so doing militantly oppose those artists who insult and denigrate it. Correctly, I would argue,” said a posting on the American Papist blog, run by Thomas Peters, who describes himself as “a young lay Catholic with a master’s degree in theology who is studying and working in Washington.” †

Report sexual misconduct now

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

Suzanne L. Yakimchick, Chancellor, Archdiocese of Indianapolis, P.O. Box 1410, Indianapolis, Indiana 46206-1410

317-236-7325 or 800-382-9836, ext. 7325

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Director of catechesis goes on the road to listen and learn

By Sean Gallagher

ENOCHSBURG—On a recent crisp fall morning, the sun rose brightly into a clear blue sky as Kenneth Ogorek, driving along in his compact car, wound his way around the hills and valleys of southeastern Indiana that were bedecked with a broad panorama of autumn colors.

Ogorek was on his way to visit the administrators of religious education (ARE) at St. Anne Parish in Hamburg, St. John the Evangelist Parish in Enochsburg and St. Maurice Parish in St. Maurice as well as the priest who is the administrator of the three faith communities.

"Every time you make a new turn down a country road, it's just beautiful," said Ogorek, archdiocesan director of catechesis.

"I wouldn't go so far as to say it's selfish of me to do this. But it's a blessing." Although a native of South Bend, Ind.,



Kenneth Ogorek, archdiocesan director of catechesis, kneels in prayer during a Mass celebrated by Father George Joseph Nangachiveettil on Nov. 16 at St. John the Evangelist Church in Enochsburg.

Ogorek is a newcomer to central and southern Indiana. Since last July when he began his ministry as archdiocesan director of catechesis, he has frequently set out on the road to visit as many parishes as he can.

"When I first started catechetical administrative work in the Church, I was told that if you're at your desk more than half the time, you're not doing your job," Ogorek said.

Thus far, he has paid visits to 35 archdiocesan parishes, including at least one parish in each of the 11 deaneries.

When he delved into the heart of the Batesville Deanery on Nov. 16, Ogorek's day started early because he wanted to make it to Enochsburg for the parish's 8 a.m. Mass.

"Whenever I visit anywhere, I always try to be at Mass," he said. "That's very important. We are the mystical body of Christ."

"These connections that we make by worshipping together and spending time with each other can't help but make God's work of teaching the faith a little better."

Father George Joseph Nangachiveettil, the administrator of the three rural parishes, celebrated the liturgy.

Afterward, Ogorek sat down with Father Nangachiveettil and staff members who collaborate with him in religious education in his parishes: Bertha Patterson, ARE at St. Anne Parish; Rita Bohman, ARE at St. John the Evangelist Parish; and Stacey Weisenbach, ARE at St. Maurice Parish.

Weisenbach looked forward to the meeting with Ogorek after the Mass.

"He gets a perspective from a lot of different parishes," Weisenbach said. "So,



Rita Bohman, left, administrator of religious education (ARE) at St. John the Evangelist Parish in Enochsburg, speaks with archdiocesan director of catechesis Kenneth Ogorek, right, during a meeting on Nov. 16 at the Batesville Deanery parish's rectory. Also attending the meeting were, from left, Stacey Weisenbach, ARE at St. Maurice Parish in St. Maurice, Bertha Patterson, ARE at St. Anne Parish in Hamburg, and Father George Joseph Nangachiveettil, administrator of the three parishes.

hopefully, he can give us ideas of things [that] maybe we haven't thought of or just kind of keep us connected with everyone as a whole."

Patterson came to the meeting with 25 years of experience in catechetical ministry in her parish and talked about what makes St. Anne a strong faith home.

"They're close-knit. We're like one big family. Everybody knows everybody—and their business, too," Patterson said with a laugh.

"That keeps you on the straight and narrow sometimes," Ogorek said with a smile in reply.

The new archdiocesan director of

catechesis said visits like these help him become a better leader by giving him the chance to get to know the faithful of the archdiocese where they live and where they worship.

"I often say that common sense and empathy will get you far," Ogorek said. "I think we're all able to empathize with people at a much deeper level when we spend time with them, when all of our senses get involved."

"The beautiful sites, the sounds, the smells—those are things that stay with you. And that's what you draw from when you're doing your administrative work, when you are in your office." †

Trips give Ogorek impressions of faith formation in parishes

By Sean Gallagher

Kenneth Ogorek's visit to Enochsburg came on the heels of the completion of some trips to what he called the "four corners" of the archdiocese.

"I wanted to get out there and get a sense from various folks of how the catechetical effort was going," said Ogorek, the archdiocese's director of catechesis. "So I got a map out and I basically picked what seemed like the

four corners."

To experience the width and breadth of the archdiocese, Ogorek visited St. Paul Parish in Tell City, St. Lawrence Parish in Lawrenceburg, St. Elizabeth of Hungary Parish in Cambridge City and St. Joseph Parish in Rockville.

He came away from these and the other parish visits he has made thus far with some definite impressions.

First, he clearly noticed the dedication of the archdiocese's priests to the ministry

of catechesis.

"These guys are certainly busy," Ogorek said. "Yet amidst all their activity, they are making catechesis a priority in their own work."

Second, he was impressed by the willingness of the lay faithful to help priests in handing on the faith in parish programs.

"That didn't surprise me," Ogorek said. "When an adult deepens his or her faith, oftentimes there is a desire to share that faith. And people do that in various aspects of their lives."

Finally, Ogorek said that he has seen in parishes across the archdiocese how busy adults are and how sometimes their life of faith gets lost in the shuffle.

"Our catechetical leaders sense that

adults need to treat themselves better spiritually," he said. "They see families that are so busy. And oftentimes, parents think they don't have time to make growth in faith a priority in their lives. And that's a concern, a pastoral concern."

As a result, Ogorek said that many adults who volunteer in parish faith formation programs are finding it hard to dedicate time to ongoing catechetical formation.

"They're giving of themselves to teach the faith," he said. "They know they need ongoing catechetical formation. Many of them, though, struggle to put that all together and fit it all in."

"That tells me that we have to continue to seek ways to make catechetical formation as accessible to as many folks as we can." †

✠

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Threats to traditional family threaten peace, pope says in message

VATICAN CITY (CNS)—Anything that threatens the traditional family threatens peace because the family “is the first and indispensable teacher of peace,” Pope Benedict XVI said.

In his annual message for the Jan. 1 celebration of the World Day of Peace, the pope also said the responsibilities learned and the joys and struggles shared within individual families must be mirrored on a global level because everyone is part of one human family.

The pope chose “The Human Family, A Community of Peace” as the theme for 2008, the 40th anniversary of the Catholic Church’s celebration of World Peace Day.

“The first form of communion between persons is that born of the love of a man and a woman who decide to enter a stable union in order to build together a new family,” the pope wrote.

“But the peoples of the Earth, too, are called to build relationships of solidarity and cooperation among themselves, as befits members of the one human family,” he said.

War and violence, exploitation of the weak, rampant poverty and underdevelopment, destruction of the environment and the arms race are all threatening signs that individuals and nations have not learned to live together in harmony and mutual responsibility, the pope said.

“Humanity today is unfortunately experiencing great division and sharp conflicts which cast dark shadows on its future,” he said.

Cardinal Renato Martino, president of the Pontifical Council for Justice and Peace, presented the message to the press on Dec. 11.

He said Pope Benedict’s concerns about the arms race, both nuclear and conventional, reflects the fact that global military spending reached an all-time high in 2006 and that, in many cases, countries have tried to justify their increased military spending by claiming it was necessary in order to combat terrorism.

“After the terrorist attacks against the

United States of Sept. 11, 2001, the international community adopted severe measures against the risk of terrorism,” Cardinal Martino said. “At the same time, nations—especially the nuclear powers—began a renewal of their military apparatus and their weapons.

“On this basis,” he said, “it seems correct to affirm that the current policy of state security threatens the very peace and security of the people it intends to defend.”

In his message, Pope Benedict wrote, “In difficult times such as these, it is necessary for all persons of good will to come together to reach concrete agreements aimed at an effective demilitarization, especially in the area of nuclear arms.”

In explaining the theme he chose for the message, the pope said the fact that a strong, healthy family is the basis of a healthy society is not simply a slogan.

“In a healthy family life, we experience some of the fundamental elements of peace: justice and love between brothers and sisters; the role of authority expressed by parents; loving concern for the members who are weaker because of youth, sickness or old age; mutual help in the necessities of life; readiness to accept others and, if necessary, to forgive them,” Pope Benedict said.

The pope said that anyone who weakens the institution of the family weakens “what is in effect the primary agency of peace” in society.

“Everything that serves to weaken the family based on the marriage of a man and a woman, everything that directly or indirectly stands in the way of its openness to the responsible acceptance of a new life, everything that obstructs its right to be primarily responsible for the education of its children, constitutes an obstacle on the road to peace,” he said.

The family needs and has a right to a home, employment, education for the children and health care, the pope said.



An ethnic Albanian man walks past graffiti that reads “Mitrovica Peace” in the ethnically divided town of Mitrovica, Kosovo, on Dec. 9. Anything that threatens the traditional family threatens peace because the family “is the first and indispensable teacher of peace,” Pope Benedict XVI said in his message for the Jan. 1 World Day of Peace.

But the whole human family has parallel needs and rights, he said, including the need for an environment that is used with care and preserved for future generations.

“Human beings, obviously, are of supreme worth vis-a-vis creation as a whole,” the pope said. “Respecting the environment does not mean considering material or animal nature more important than man.”

However, he said, the Earth belongs to all people and to all generations and, therefore, must be used with care.

Pope Benedict said the costs and sacrifices required to protect the environment and to halt its degradation must be shared globally, but—as in a family—with an awareness of the limited resources of the poorer nations and the greater responsibility of the industrialized countries.

The pope said it might be necessary to establish a new international agency to coordinate efforts to ensure “the stewardship

of this ‘home’ of ours.”

Within the topic of ecology, he said, special attention must be paid to “the stewardship of the Earth’s energy resources,” to exaggerated levels of consumption in some countries, to the need to expand use of renewable sources of energy and to ensure that poorer countries that possess natural energy resources are exploited.

Pope Benedict also dedicated a chapter of his message to the need for people around the world, like members of one family, to hold certain values in common.

“For the sake of peace,” he wrote, “a common law is needed, one which would foster true freedom rather than blind caprice and protect the weak from oppression by the strong.”

In too many situations, the pope said, “the weak must bow not to the demands of justice, but to the naked power of those stronger than themselves.” †

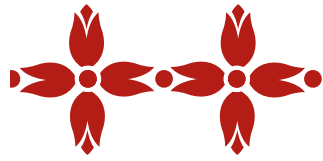
DENZEL WASHINGTON

INSPIRED BY A TRUE STORY

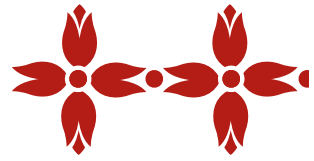
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IN THEATERS EVERYWHERE THIS CHRISTMAS



LEGACY FOR OUR MISSION: *For Our Children and the Future*



St. Mary parishioners create a new legacy in Greensburg

By Monty Shields
Special to *The Criterion*

GREENSBURG—Eighty families in a small farming and railroading community in south central Indiana gathered together as one to leave behind a legacy.

Families of Irish and German descent, bound together by their Catholic faith, sacrificed their time, talent and treasure to build what would become St. Mary Parish in Greensburg, the largest church and congregation in Decatur County. That was the late 1870s and early 1880s.

Today, history is repeating itself. Exciting times are coming to Greensburg, and St. Mary Parish is no exception. A new major auto manufacturing plant is moving to town, new construction and growth are everywhere, and change is in the air—in many ways the same kind of excitement and growth that was being experienced in the late 1800s.

St. Mary's families are joining together yet again to leave their footprints, their



John Fox, a member of St. Mary Parish in Greensburg, holds up the original of his hand impression. Ceramic tiles with each parishioners' handprint will be used to decorate St. Mary's new parish campus and leave a "lasting impression" for generations to follow.

legacy for generations to come.

The church building is nearly 125 years old, and discussions have been held for several years about whether to make expensive repairs, major renovations to update the campus or build a new campus with a church, office and school.

A feasibility study was conducted over the last few years followed by several parish "town hall meetings." The final decision was to build a new parish campus.

But where? God provided the answer when a generous parish family donated 25 acres of land one mile from the current site. Their gracious gift creates a footprint to be left behind for those who come after this generation.

The new St. Mary campus will include a church with a larger sanctuary and a separate gathering area. The modern school will be fully accessible to children and include many features not currently possible.

There will be adequate office space for both the church and school as well as increased gathering space and meeting rooms to serve the parish family. The 25-acre tract will give St. Mary Parish flexibility with parking, outdoor activities and ample space for generations to come, church officials said.

In conjunction with the Legacy for Our Mission: For Our Children and the Future campaign, the parish began its capital campaign in earnest in the spring of 2007 with the formation of several leadership committees.

The first step was the process of awakening the spirit of excitement within the parish. Since that time, more than 300 volunteers have been involved in everything from architectural drawings to youth programs and educational functions to a video production.

This fall, several "Pace Setter" and "Advance Commitment" gatherings were held in advance of the "Commitment Weekends."

Jay Hatton, one of the campaign co-leaders, is excited by "the overwhelming

support and warm acceptance of the parish family.

"I was getting nervous preparing for the fall activities," he said, "but [was] so happy to see the parish joining together as a family, accepting the project with open arms."

Steve Adam, the other campaign co-leader, said, "The campaign continues to gain momentum. I was so thrilled last weekend [on Nov. 10-11] to experience the fun and joy the parish family had with the 'Lasting Impressions' event."

"Lasting Impressions" coincided with the first commitment weekend. Each member of the parish, young and old, dipped their hand in paint and made an impression on a ceramic tile.

These tiles, with each person's name added, will be "fired" and sealed then used on the walls of the new parish home.

Msgr. Harold Knueven, St. Mary administrator and the parish's campaign chairman, said that "the enthusiasm of the parishioners was overwhelming."

"After each Mass, I led them out of the side door to the gym and they all happily followed. The elderly who couldn't follow had their handprints made right in church. It was wonderful to see and be a part of."

The campaign continues this month and in January with volunteers getting hand impressions of the elderly and homebound.

Following Thanksgiving, volunteers were making telephone calls and personal visits to parish families who were unable to make it to church or who have not completed their intention card. At the completion of this phase of the campaign, a parish-wide celebration will be held in thanksgiving for everyone's hard work and commitment to the Legacy campaign.

The unofficial theme for the campaign is "not equal gifts, equal sacrifice." A DVD was produced and distributed to each parish



Anthony Treash, a third-grade student at St. Mary School in Greensburg, leaves his "lasting impression" while his mother, Gina, and sister, Sara, wait their turn.

family. The video presentation included pictures from the parish's past, the parish today and the architectural site plan for the future.

Behind the pictures, a song challenges parishioners to leave a legacy:

"... may all who come behind us find us faithful,

"May the fire of our devotion light their way,

"May the footprints that we leave

"Lead them to believe

"And the lives we live inspire them to obey ..."

(From the song "Find Us Faithful," written by Steve Green)
(Monty Shields is a member of St. Mary Parish in Greensburg.) †

What other parishes are planning to do with Legacy for Our Mission funds

Criterion staff report

Following is a snapshot of how a few other parishes hope to use money raised through the Legacy for Our Mission: For Our Children and the Future campaign:

- St. Mary-of-the-Rock Parish in Franklin County has embarked on its capital stewardship campaign and plans to use its proceeds for repairing the steeple and gutters in addition to expanding and sealing the parking lot for the church and school.

- St. Thomas More Parish in Mooresville has undertaken its Legacy for Our Mission campaign. Proceeds will be used to provide community outreach by addressing the physical needs of the parish. A new facility will be built to house preschool classrooms and parish administrative offices.

- St. Barnabas Parish in Indianapolis has four stewardship campaign goals that will enhance its ability to deliver spiritual service and community enrichment.

Parishioners hope to use the campaign proceeds to deepen the ministries of hospitality by increasing gathering space in the narthex and sanctuary as well as adding an elevator to the school building; enhancing prayer by improving the sound system and natural lighting; strengthening faith formation by adding a youth/young adult staff assistant and stewardship/volunteer coordinator; and improving service by enlarging the kitchen/concession stand that serves McNally Hall and the Sciarra Center.

- St. Paul the Apostle Parish in Greencastle hopes to develop a master plan to respond to its growing numbers of parishioners and ministries, and enlarge the building fund for future growth.

- St. Bernard Parish in Frenchtown has established several campaign goals, including repair of the church steeple, preservation of the stained-glass windows, upgrades to the church and basement sound systems, renovation to the old St. Bernard Cemetery and the development of programs for youth. †

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Immaculée Ilibagiza shares her miraculous story of how she survived during the Rwandan genocide in 1994 when she and seven other women huddled silently together in the cramped bathroom of a local pastors house for 91 days! Immaculée shows us how to embrace the power of prayer, forge a profound and lasting relationship with God, and discover the importance of forgiveness and the meaning of truly unconditional love and understanding through our darkest hours.

Copies of *Left to Tell* will be available to purchase.

Join Immaculée Ilibagiza in the Narthex after the presentation for a book-signing.

FINLAND

continued from page 3

Central School of Viiala.

But learning, in this instance, was a two-way street, said Salovaara.

"Annette gave me good ideas of leadership and for teacher observation," said the Finnish principal.

Jones, who admits she has "a strong interest in international education," is no stranger to the concept of learning from a global perspective.

In the summer of 2006, she spent 10 days in Beijing, China, attending an international education conference.

One thing that the principal hopes to do in the future is add French classes to Immaculate Heart of Mary's curriculum. Currently, Spanish is the only foreign language taught at the school.

"In Finland, they start learning English in third- or fourth-grade, and in high school, they start learning another [third] language," said Jones, who has been an educator in the archdiocese for 19 years.

The principal's goal of adding another language should come as no surprise.

Immaculate Heart of Mary School was named a 2005 Blue Ribbon School of Excellence by the U.S. Department of Education, and Jones is always looking for ways to improve the school's curriculum, noted Annette "Mickey" Lentz, executive director for Catholic education and faith formation for the archdiocese.

"Annette is one of our best administrators because she is so innovative and creative," Lentz said.

Questions about Indiana

As Jones "shadowed" Salovaara, the Immaculate Heart of Mary principal was more than happy to share Indiana's culture with students in the classroom.

The Indianapolis Motor Speedway and the Super Bowl



A third-grade student works diligently with his teacher in sewing class at Central School of Viiala in Akaa, Finland.

champion Indianapolis Colts were part of the conversation. So were American currency, the U.S. flag and the length of the school day here.

"They were amazed at how long our school day was [from 8 a.m. to 3 p.m.]," Jones said.

Of course, food was a topic, too. For her part, Jones sampled reindeer meat during a day trip to the nearby Arctic Circle.

"It's dark and salty," she said.

And the trip to the Arctic Circle included the rare opportunity for Jones and Salovaara to get "The Official Photo with Santa Claus."

The Comenius Project

While Jones admits shadowing a Finnish principal was extremely worthwhile, she said learning about the Comenius Project was invaluable as well.

An educational partnership begun three years ago between Finland, Slovakia, Norway and Ireland, the unique program offers school teachers and administrators the chance "to make trips and do exchanges" with the other countries, Jones said.

The five-day trip to Ireland—four days at a Catholic elementary school in Galway and one day in Dublin—was an extension of the Comenius Project, Jones noted.

At *Scoil Chaitriona*, the visiting educators were treated to Irish dancing and spent time in classrooms learning and sharing.

"They already had relationships established," Jones said. "Educational ideas and teaching methods are exchanged."

"There are 400 projects going on where Finnish schools are involved," Salovaara said.

That experience, and the lessons she brought home from Finland, will last a lifetime, Jones added.

The shoe on the other foot

As part of the Fulbright "shadowing" experience, Salovaara will visit Indiana in early 2008.

Besides spending several weeks with Jones at Immaculate Heart of Mary School, the Finnish principal is also scheduled to attend the National Catholic Educational Association convention in Indianapolis in late March.

There, she will be able to interact with the estimated 10,000 educators who are expected to attend.

"I'm looking forward to showing her Immaculate Heart of Mary and having her be a part of the NCEA," Jones said. Lentz agreed.

"I hope she [Salovaara] gains much knowledge of our educational culture in the exchange," Lentz said.

For her part, Salovaara plans to come to the U.S. with an open mind.

"I think these kinds of visits are the best way to create friendships, share knowledge and remove doubts between



Irish students perform during a welcoming ceremony for the visiting educators at *Scoil Chaitriona*, a Catholic elementary school, in Galway, Ireland.



Kaija-Leena Salovaara and Annette Jones share Christmas wishes with Santa in "The Official Photo with Santa Claus" at the Arctic Circle.

people and cultures around the world," she said. "This is a great opportunity for me and my school to get to know the culture in your country."

Jones' trip helped to build a bridge across those cultures.

"It was such an incredible experience," she said. "I really liked the openness of the teachers and administrators and how much they shared information, their openness and communication and willingness to learn."

If Jones has her way, the bridge building will continue beyond the principals' experiences.

"I hope to get pen pal relationships started between our students," she said. †

Advent penance services are scheduled at archdiocesan parishes

Parishes throughout the archdiocese have scheduled communal penance services for Advent. The following is a list of services that have been reported to *The Criterion*.

Batesville Deanery

Dec. 14, 7 p.m. at St. Mary, Greensburg
Dec. 16, 2 p.m. at St. Joseph, St. Leon
Dec. 17, 7 p.m. at St. Louis, Batesville
Dec. 18, 7 p.m. at St. Lawrence, Lawrenceburg
Dec. 19, 7 p.m. at St. John the Baptist, Osgood
Dec. 20, 7 p.m. at St. Anthony of Padua, Morris

Bloomington Deanery

Dec. 18, 7 p.m. at St. Agnes, Nashville
Dec. 19, 7 p.m. for St. Mary, Mitchell, and St. Vincent de Paul, Bedford, at St. Vincent de Paul, Bedford

Connersville Deanery

Dec. 17, 7 p.m. at St. Anne, New Castle
Dec. 18, 7 p.m. at Holy Family, Richmond

Indianapolis East Deanery

Dec. 18, 7 p.m. for SS. Peter and Paul Cathedral, Holy Cross and St. Mary at St. Mary
Dec. 20, 6:30 p.m. at St. Rita

Indianapolis North Deanery

Dec. 16, 3 p.m. deanery service at St. Pius X
Dec. 18, 7 p.m. deanery service at St. Pius X

Dec. 19, 7 p.m. deanery service at St. Pius X

Indianapolis South Deanery

Dec. 14, 9-11 a.m. at Roncalli High School
Dec. 15, 9:30 a.m. at St. Barnabas
Dec. 17, 6:30 p.m. at Nativity of Our Lord Jesus Christ
Dec. 17, 7 p.m. at Our Lady of the Greenwood, Greenwood
Dec. 18, 7 p.m. at Holy Name, Beech Grove

Indianapolis West Deanery

Dec. 15, 9:30 a.m. for St. Anthony and Holy Trinity at Holy Trinity
Dec. 18, 6:30 p.m. at St. Susanna, Plainfield
Dec. 18, 7 p.m. at St. Joseph

New Albany Deanery

Dec. 15, 9:30 a.m. at St. Mary-of-the-Knobs, Floyds Knobs
Dec. 16, 7 p.m. at St. Mary, Lanesville
Dec. 19, 7 p.m. at St. Mary-of-the-Knobs, Floyds Knobs
Dec. 19, 7 p.m. at St. Michael, Charlestown
Dec. 20, 7 p.m. at St. Joseph, Sellersburg
Dec. 23, 4 p.m. at Holy Family, New Albany

Seymour Deanery

Dec. 16, 2 p.m. for Holy Trinity, Edinburgh, and St. Rose of Lima, Franklin, at St. Rose of Lima, Franklin

Photo by Mary Ann Wiyand



St. John the Evangelist Parish sacristan and secretary Sally Ann Welch of Indianapolis lights the candle on the wreath for the second week of Advent on Dec. 8 at the historic downtown church.

Tell City Deanery

Dec. 16, 2 p.m. deanery service at St. Paul, Tell City
Dec. 19, 6:30 p.m. deanery service at St. Meinrad, St. Meinrad

Terre Haute Deanery

Dec. 16, 7 p.m. at St. Joseph, Rockville
Dec. 18, 7 p.m. at Annunciation, Brazil
Dec. 20, 7 p.m. at Holy Rosary, Seelyville †

Children's books suitable for Christmas gift-giving

Reviewed by Barb Frazee

WASHINGTON (CNS)—The following children's books are suitable for Christmas giving:

• *The Aurora County All-Stars* by Deborah Wiles, Harcourt (Orlando, Fla., 2007), 242 pp., \$16, ages 8-13.

This book has it all: baseball, friendship, boys vs. girls issues, humor. In short chapters with occasional updates from *The Aurora County News*, Wiles weaves the tale of 12-year-old House Jackson, who tries to work out reasons for the death of a family friend and what that means for him, his friends and the children of Mabel, Miss. The characters are well-developed, the story line is a "hoot" and the final product is guaranteed to be a home run with readers.

• *The Twelve Days of Christmas* by Betty Ann Schwartz, illustrated by Judith Moffatt, HarperFestival (New York, 2007), 28 pp., \$12.99, ages 3-5.

Preschoolers and young readers will be delighted with this colorful, sturdy book that illustrates the Christmas carol of the same name. The illustrations are multicultural and include collage-type paper-doll ladies dancing, cornhusk-doll maids-a milking, etc. In the middle of each double-page illustration is a large Christmas tree, with a ribbon imprinted with pears, golden rings, geese, etc.—for each of the 12 days.

However, the ribbons make the book unsuitable for smaller children.

• *Annie's War* by Jacqueline Levering Sullivan, Eerdmans Books for Young Readers (Grand Rapids, Mich., 2007), 191 pp., \$15, ages 8-12.

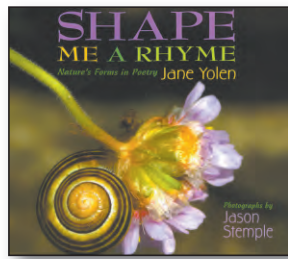
World War II is over, but young Annie Leigh is still fighting her own internal war, hoping her father can be found alive and wondering what caused her uncle to turn mean. When Annie's mother sends her to Washington state to live with her grandmother, Annie meets a young African-American woman who helps her learn firsthand about love, bigotry and courage.

• *Bunker 10* by J.A. Henderson, Harcourt (Orlando, Fla., 2007), 253 pp., \$17, ages 12-up.

This futuristic novel is a real action tale that might initially leave older readers asking, "What happened?" It combines suspense, intrigue and science fiction with biotechnological issues that a group of teen geniuses on a military

installation—or at least, it seems like that is where they are—are facing.

• *Shape Me a Rhyme: Nature's Forms in Poetry* by Jane Yolen, photographs by Jason Stemple, Wordsong (Honesdale, Pa., 2007), 32 pp., \$17.95, all ages.



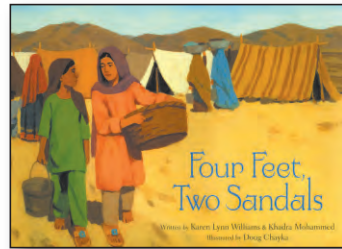
Stemple's beautiful double-page photographs capture shapes in nature while Yolen's poems—full of action verbs, metaphors and adjectives—look at the shape from a different point of view. Yolen includes other

nouns, verbs and adjectives—superimposed on the photos—so that readers might write their own poems on the shape. The result is a visual and aesthetic delight.

• *Peek in My Pocket* by David A. Carter, Red Wagon Books (San Diego, 2007), 14 pp., \$10.95, ages 1-3.

Carter's animals pop right up out of this large square book so toddlers will want to keep turning pages. Each animal has a pocket, behind which lies a surprise associated with a shape: a square jack-in-a-box, a diamond-shaped kite, etc. Carter's colorful illustrations and clever designs will give toddlers hours of fun.

• *Four Feet, Two Sandals* by Karen Lynn Williams and Khadra Mohammed, illustrated by Doug Chayka, Eerdmans Books for Young Readers (Grand Rapids, Mich., 2007), 32 pp., \$17, ages 8-14.



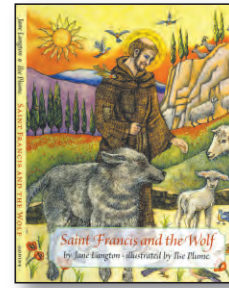
Two young refugee girls work out a solution when they each end up with one new sandal from the bag of clothes delivered by a relief

agency, and friendship grows out of their new arrangement. Williams and Mohammed's story—based on Mohammed's experience with Afghan refugees in Pakistan—approaches the situation in a refugee camp from a very human point of view, touching on some of the routines, problems and sad stories. Chayka's warm acrylic illustrations help reinforce the tale.

• *St. Francis and the Wolf* by Jane Langton, illustrated by Ilse Plume, David R. Godine (Boston, 2007), 32 pp.,

\$16.95, ages 5-up.

Langton retells in a very readable fashion the fable of St. Francis of Assisi taming the wolf that was terrorizing the people of Gubbio, Italy. The typeface, which resembles calligraphy, adds to the historical tone of the story. But what makes this book extra special are Plume's colored-pencil illustrations, with extraordinary detail, down to the texture of the cobblestones or a wooden door on a house. Nonreaders will especially enjoy the illustrations, but young readers will also enjoy the recounting of this tale.



• *Great Joy* by Kate DiCamillo, illustrated by Bagram Ibatoulline, Candlewick Press (Cambridge, Mass., 2007), 28 pp., \$16.99, ages 7-12.

This magnificently illustrated, heartwarming book is a different kind of holiday tale, one that addresses the true meaning of Christmas. When an organ grinder and monkey appear on a nearby corner a week before Christmas, young Frances is full of curiosity about them—she even wonders where they sleep and what they eat. As Frances' mother prepares the child's angel costume for the church Christmas pageant, Frances discovers the man and monkey sleep on the street. Ibatoulline's large, detailed illustrations are softened around the edges to help give the feeling of older times when the story occurs. At the end of the book, when Frances announces tidings of great joy in the pageant, her face and eyes shine in the illustration.

• *Regarding the Bees* by Kate Klise, illustrated by M. Sarah Klise, Harcourt (Orlando, Fla., 2007), 122 pp., \$15, ages 9-12.

Klise's latest book in her *Regarding the ...* series is a pun-filled honey of a tale—and a little easier to follow than some of the previous titles. Seventh-graders at Geysers Creek Middle School in Missouri are abuzz because they must prepare for their Basic Education Evaluations (BEEs). Their story is told in correspondence among classmates, their very special substitute teacher, students at another school and occasional pages from the local newspaper. The story just flies by as students learn to trust their instincts and ask questions.

(Barb Frazee, CNS international editor, is the mother of three.) †

Last-Minute Gift Ideas Section



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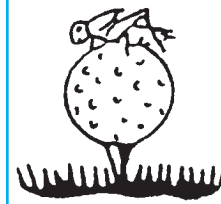
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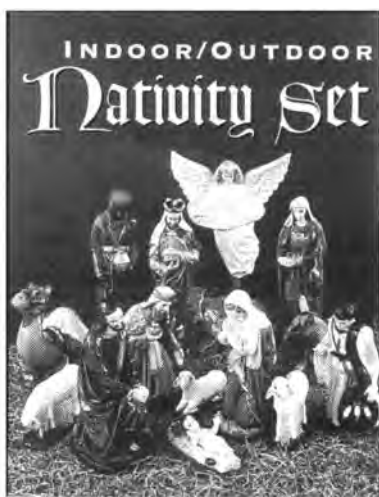
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'Just Do What We Do'

Colts Fitness Camp at St. Anthony of Padua School energizes students

By Patricia Happel Cornwell
Special to The Criterion

CLARKSVILLE—Students at St. Anthony of Padua School in Clarksville appeared energized, rather than exhausted, after an intense 45-minute workout on Nov. 27 with personnel from the Indianapolis Colts organization.

"It was really hard," Kim Hollkamp said, "but it was really fun. They were always making us laugh."

Her brother, Alex, added, "It was nice that they came and pushed us to be a little competitive with each other."

The Colts Fitness Camp, which is not usually offered outside central Indiana, was conducted for sixth-, seventh- and eighth-graders at the school after physical education teacher Denise Kempf applied for the program online. Kempf heard about the free program while attending a workshop in Indianapolis.

In honor of the event, Nov. 27 was declared "Colts Day" at the school, and students could pay a dollar to wear a Colts shirt instead of their uniform shirt. The money raised will be used for fitness-related projects at the school.

The students were drilled in exercises using hand weights and jump ropes. They also did bent-knee "lunges" and distance jumps. Throughout the strenuous workout, they kept their sense of humor, laughing

with instructors and one another—even though they struggled at times.

Mike Prior, Indianapolis Colts youth football commissioner, was the program's leader. A former Colts player, he also played for the Green Bay Packers, whom he helped win a National Football League championship. Prior was assisted by Colts marketing assistant Joe Fonderoli and youth football assistant Brandon Schlarb.

At the end of the workout, the students received a brief pep talk. Prior showed the eighth-graders his Super Bowl ring and noted the nearly full-time exercise regimen of professional athletes.

"You have to take care of yourselves. You have to eat right. You have to exercise. Start working on it now, and it will be fun to do," he told the students. "You'll have more energy. You'll be able to focus on your school work. You'll feel good."

"I thought it was fun," eighth-grader Jamie Elsner said afterward.

"Everybody was cheering everybody else on. The instructors did a good job. They gave us more information so we can exercise better."

Each student received a Colts poster and an exercise journal. Pennants were given to a few students in each grade who were recognized for their "extra effort."

The words on the posters the students received summed up the message of the Colts Fitness Camp: "Just Do What We Do." †

'You have to take care of yourselves. You have to eat right. You have to exercise. Start working on it now, and it will be fun to do.'

—Mike Prior,
Indianapolis Colts youth
football commissioner



Above, Mike Prior, Indianapolis Colts youth football commissioner, right, demonstrates an exercise to St. Anthony of Padua School eighth-grade students during the Colts Fitness Camp session on Nov. 27.

Left, Boone DeMuth, an eighth-grade student at St. Anthony of Padua School in Clarksville, gets tips from Colts marketing assistant Joe Fonderoli during the Nov. 27 exercise session.

Last-Minute Gift Ideas Section



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Sisters of St. Benedict honor four jubilarians

Four Sisters of St. Benedict of Our Lady of Grace Monastery in Beech Grove celebrated their jubilees earlier this year.

Benedictine Sisters Mary Henry Schiff, Mary Cecile Deken, Amelia Banet and Mary Lois Hohl were honored by their religious community during prayer services at the monastery chapel.

Sister Mary Henry Schiff, formerly Gertrude Madeline Schiff, reached a milestone achieved by few people. On Aug. 12 at evening prayer with her community, she celebrated 75 years of vowed life.

Sister Mary Henry was born in Johnson City, Ill. She entered Monastery Immaculate Conception in Ferdinand, Ind., in 1930 and made her perpetual monastic profession in 1937.

She graduated from Immaculate Conception Academy in Ferdinand then earned a bachelor's degree in education at the former

St. Benedict College and a master's degree in education at St. Francis College in Fort Wayne, Ind.

Sister Mary Henry taught for 38 years, beginning her ministry in 1934.

In the archdiocese, she taught at St. Anthony of Padua School in Clarksville, St. Bartholomew School in Columbus, St. Pius X School in Indianapolis, St. Ambrose School in Seymour, St. Mary-of-the-Knobs School in Floyds Knobs, Christ the King School in Indianapolis, the former St. John School in Starlight, the former St. Joseph School in St. Joseph Hill and the former St. Paul School in Tell City.

She also taught at Catholic schools in Evansville, Ind., and Huntingburg, Ind.

Sister Mary Henry also served as principal at the former St. Joseph School in St. Joseph Hill as well as in Huntingburg and Mount Vernon, Ind.

In 1981, she served as a receptionist and secretary at St. Anthony of Padua Parish in Clarksville.

Prior to her retirement in 1994, she ministered as the receptionist at St. Paul Hermitage in Beech Grove.

Sister Mary Henry lives at Our Lady of Grace Monastery.

Sixty years ago, Sisters Mary Cecile Deken and Amelia Banet promised stability, fidelity and obedience to the monastic lifestyle with the Sisters of St. Benedict. On July 1, in the presence of family members, friends and their religious community, they renewed the same promises made so many years ago.

Sisters Mary Cecile and Amelia, who entered Monastery Immaculate Conception in Ferdinand in 1945 and made their first monastic profession in 1947, celebrated their 60th jubilee at Our Lady of Grace Monastery, where they are founding members.

Sister Mary Cecile Deken, formerly Dorothy Ann Deken, was born in Evansville, Ind.

She attended Immaculate Conception Academy in Ferdinand and St. Benedict College in Ferdinand, where she earned a bachelor's degree in music. She earned a master's degree in English at St. Louis University in Missouri as she continued her teaching career then received her master's degree in religious education at Saint Meinrad School of Theology in St. Meinrad.

Sister Mary Cecile also took courses at the University of Notre Dame, Cardinal Stritch College, Saint Mary-of-the-Woods College as well as Butler University, the University of Indianapolis and the Christian Theological Seminary, all in Indianapolis.

She finished all the required classes for the spiritual direction course at the Benedict Inn Retreat and Conference Center in

Sr. Mary Henry Schiff, O.S.B.



Sr. Mary Cecile Deken, O.S.B.



Sr. Amelia Banet, O.S.B.



Beech Grove in 2005.

In the archdiocese, Sister Mary Cecile taught music at Christ the King School in Indianapolis, St. Mary-of-the-Knobs School in Floyds Knobs and Bishop Chatard High School in Indianapolis.

In 1967, Sister Mary Cecile served her religious community as sub-prioress while continuing to teach religion at the former Our Lady of Grace Academy in Beech Grove.

After 10 years as sub-prioress, she ministered as the pastoral associate and director of religious education at St. Maurice

Parish in Napoleon then served as director of religious education at Immaculate Conception Parish in Milhousen.

Since 1989, Sister Mary Cecile has served the people of St. Lawrence Parish in Lawrenceburg as their pastoral associate and director of faith formation. She also ministered as director of religious education at St. Maurice Parish in Decatur County.

Sister Amelia Banet, formerly Mary Jane Banet, was born in Floyds Knobs.

She attended Immaculate Conception Academy in Ferdinand and earned a bachelor's degree in education at the former St. Benedict College in Ferdinand and a master's degree in education at St. Francis College in Fort Wayne.

Sister Amelia taught for 50 years.

In the archdiocese, she taught at the former St. Paul School in Tell City, the former St. Michael School in Cannelton, St. Pius X School in Indianapolis, and St. Anthony of Padua School in Clarksville.

Upon her retirement to the monastery in 1999, Sister Amelia has served as assistant to the bookkeeper at St. Paul Hermitage. She also assists her community in a variety of ways.

Sister Amelia is an elected member of the monastic council and performs many duties in the monastery chapel as sacristan.

A third classmate, Sister Mary Lois Hohl, formerly Arlene Hohl, was unable to participate in the jubilee ceremony due to health reasons. (Her photo was not available.)

Sister Mary Lois was born in St. Henry, Ind.

She entered the Monastery Immaculate Conception in Ferdinand in 1945.

Sister Mary Lois taught for more than 40 years at Catholic schools in the archdiocese and Diocese of Evansville.

After leaving the classroom, Sister Mary Lois changed her ministry to parish work.

She is currently a resident of the healthcare area of St. Paul Hermitage, a retirement ministry of the Sisters of St. Benedict of Our Lady of Grace Monastery. †



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St. Paul's letters explain the meaning of Jesus

By Father W. Thomas Faucher

If we could mix time up a little bit, we could turn the TV to one of those news analysis programs and there discover a new "talking head." This gentleman would be everyone's favorite because of his deep understanding of one of the most important personages of the age. The interviewer would be able to ask tough, searching questions and never get spin or evasion.

The subject of all this talk would be Jesus of Nazareth, and the great guest commentator would be Paul of Tarsus.

Using some of the language of modern media communication, Jesus is the great "event." Jesus is what happened. Jesus is the news.

But an event needs to be explained, the news has to be analyzed.

We can be at an event, we can witness an event, we can know the details of an event. But then we need to know what this event means. What are the consequences of the event? How is this news going to affect us?

That is when Paul arrives to explain it all to us.

The Gospels are the story of the event, the story of Jesus. The letters of Paul are the explanation of that event, the first great attempt to take the story of Jesus and analyze its meaning.

In doing this, Paul had a strange advantage. He never met Jesus prior to Jesus' crucifixion. He never saw the miracles. He never heard the parables preached. He never just sat down and talked to Jesus face to face.

Year in honor of St. Paul to begin next June

By Carole Norris Greene

Pope Benedict XVI has called for a special year honoring St. Paul that will run from June 28, 2008, to June 29, 2009, and will mark the 2,000th anniversary of St. Paul's birth.

When the pope called for the jubilee, he said, as in the Church's beginning, today "Christ needs apostles ready to sacrifice themselves. He needs witnesses and martyrs like St. Paul," modern Christians willing to demonstrate the Apostle's missionary zeal for the Gospel of Christ.

There is a tinge of sadness in Paul about this, and almost a palpable envy when Paul speaks with Peter and the others who knew Jesus so well.

But with the only personal encounter between Jesus and Paul being the vision on the road to Damascus, Paul had to turn his disadvantage into an advantage. And he did so with amazing insight and dedication.

Paul was a Pharisee, a scholar of the Bible, a student of the law and the prophets. He was sometimes obsessed with details, loved lists and filled his mind with deep thoughts. He had a perfectionist streak which he applied both to himself and others. The tents he made to support himself were probably perfect; that is just the type of person he was.

So when Paul focused on who Jesus was, where he came from, how he fit into the Scriptures, and what his life, death and resurrection did to the traditional Jewish religion, he had to get all the pieces right.

The Jesus event had shattered Judaism into a million pieces. Paul had to find these pieces and begin the task of putting them all together again in a whole new picture.

We sometimes think of all the letters of Paul as coming from the same period of time, but in reality there is a progression in Paul's writings.

The early letters, the first and second letters to the Thessalonians and the first and second letters to the Corinthians, show a different Paul from the captivity letters or the pastoral letters written some years later. This is our television analyst moving from

Archbishop Thomas Collins of Toronto recently said that "like Paul, we are engaged in the grand adventure of winning the world for Christ." He said that for people today, apostolic action that follows the saint's lead must arise from "a deep personal encounter with the Master."

St. Paul was born between A.D. 7 and 10. After having an encounter with the risen Lord on the road to Damascus, he became one of the Church's foremost evangelizers.

(Carole Norris Green is associate editor of Faith Alive!) †

the excited journalist covering the event to the wise elder statesman.

I wonder if Peter or John or any of the other Apostles ever read Paul's letters. It would be fascinating to know what those who lived the event thought of the explanation of the event from Paul.

The various forms of Christianity view the Gospels and the letters of Paul differently.

Over the centuries as Christianity split apart, the Roman Catholic and Orthodox have kept a very important central focus on the Gospels—symbolized by our standing for the Gospel reading, elaborate Gospel book covers and candles held when the Gospels are proclaimed. Other Christian traditions have found it easier to read and preach much more from St. Paul.

As a minister once told me, "When you preach from Paul, it's like he has already written the first draft of the sermon for you."

I find the best way to use St. Paul to understand Jesus, especially as we approach Advent and Christmas, is to read the Gospels and St. Paul's letters side by side. For added richness, we can add the first chapters of Isaiah. This way we have the prophecies of the event, the event itself and the explanation of the event. We can see the total picture and see how well Paul was able to take all of those pieces and put them together.



A stained-glass window portrays the blinding of St. Paul while on the road to Damascus. Although this was the first and perhaps only encounter of St. Paul with Jesus, Father W. Thomas Faucher writes that the saint was able to explain the meaning of Jesus "with amazing insight and dedication."

In the next year, we all are going to see hundreds of television shots of men and women explaining the ups and downs of modern news. Just for fun, turn off the sound and imagine that one of the experts is Paul of Tarsus on the topic of Jesus of Nazareth. It really does help put things into perspective.

(Father W. Thomas Faucher is pastor of St. Mary Parish in Boise, Idaho.) †

Discussion Point

Parishes share Christmas spirit through charity, fellowship

This Week's Question

What does your parish do to share the spirit of Christmas?

"Boxes for the needy families. We start to take collections in the parish in October, but we spread out, bringing other people into what we do. For instance, through business events some of us might have people bring non-perishable foods for the boxes. (Bernice Hall, Alburt, Vt.)

"Usually, we have ecumenical services with other Churches in the area. We also do Christmas baskets. We get names [of the needy] from the town, and put baskets together for them." (Winona Malbon, Skowhegan, Maine)

"About a week before Christmas, we have a potluck dinner for the whole parish. The [parish] provides the meat and drinks, and we bring the side dishes. We do something different each year for entertainment—the

kids might have a play or sometimes people volunteer to share their talents to entertain. It's more well-attended than anything at the parish." (Dottie Climer, Lebanon, Tenn.)

"This year, we're doing something we haven't done before—putting on a big Christmas play. It's being organized by our music director, and a lot of parishioners will be involved. ... I think it will spread the Christmas spirit through the parish." (Judy Lepeak, Clearwater, Fla.)

Lend Us Your Voice

An upcoming edition asks: How will this Lent be for you a time to put faith into action?

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

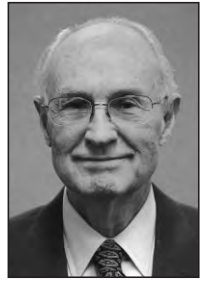


From the Editor Emeritus/John F. Fink

Biblical women: The rape of Tamar

(Twentieth in a series of columns)

When I wrote about Judah and Tamar in the sixth column in this series, I said that there are three Tamars in the Old Testament.



This week, I'll tell you about the Tamar who was King David's daughter. It's not a pretty story, but it demonstrates just how dysfunctional David's family was.

Tamar was the daughter of Maacah, David's fourth wife after Michal, Ahinoam and Abigail. She was the full sister of Absalom and, of course, had numerous half brothers and half sisters.

One of them was Amnon, the eldest of David's children. He fell in love with Tamar, so stricken that he became ill since he didn't think it possible to consummate his love. One of his friends, a cousin named Jonadab (son of David's brother, Shimeah), asked what was wrong and Amnon confessed his love for Tamar.

Jonadab advised Amnon to pretend to be sick and, when his father came to visit him, to suggest that it would help if Tamar would prepare some food for him. Amnon did as Jonadab suggested. He pretended to be sick, and when David came to visit him, he asked him to send Tamar to prepare some fried cakes for him. Suspecting nothing, David asked Tamar to prepare some nourishment for Amnon (2 Sm 13:1-7).

When Tamar went to Amnon's house, she found him in bed. While he watched, she kneaded some dough, twisted it into cakes, and fried them. Amnon ordered all his servants out and then asked Tamar to bring the cakes into his bedroom. When she did so, he seized her and commanded, "Come! Lie with me, my sister!" (2 Sm 13:8-11).

Tamar resisted. "No, my brother!" she said. "Do not shame me! That is an intolerable crime in Israel. Do not commit this insensate deed. Where would I take my shame? And you would be a discredited man in Israel" (2 Sm 13:12-13).

Ignoring her plea, Amnon raped her. Then, once his lust was satiated, he felt a hatred for

her that surpassed the love he had had. He commanded her to leave.

Tamar tore the long tunic in which she had been clothed, put ashes on her head, and went away crying loudly. Absalom heard her and quickly realized what had happened.

"Has your brother Amnon been with you?" he asked. "Be still now, my sister; he is your brother. Do not take this affair to heart."

King David learned what had happened and was angry, but did nothing since Amnon, his first-born, was his favorite. Absalom, though, hated Amnon for what he had done to Tamar (2 Sm 13:14-22).

Nothing more happened for two years.

Then one day, at the time of year when the sheep were sheared, Absalom prepared a banquet for his brothers. He instructed his servants, "When Amnon is merry with wine and I say to you, 'Kill Amnon,' put him to death." The servants did as Absalom ordered and Absalom had revenge for what Amnon had done to Tamar (2 Sm 13:23-38).

Absalom, afraid of what David might do, fled for three years. †

Cornucopia/Cynthia Dewes

St. Theodora Guérin, a providential gift to us

Providence is kind of an old-fashioned concept, up there with chastity and prudence and humility on the list of Quaint-Words-Used-By-No-One-Under-Age-50.



But Providence is exactly what we are about to celebrate with the birth of Christ. It's providential that God gives us a Savior solely out of love to free us

from our sins just when we are the least lovable.

That's why I feel we're especially favored in Indiana to have had the Sisters of Providence living and working among us for the past 150-some years. And it's providential that their order was founded by St. Theodora Guérin, the first Hoosier to be canonized as a saint.

Mother Theodore didn't start out as a Hoosier. She was a Frenchwoman sent in the early 19th century with five other nuns by Jean-Baptiste Bouvier, the bishop of LeMans, France, to establish a community in the Diocese of Vincennes. Their chief mission was the education of children, although they were not above feeding, clothing and housing anyone in need as well.

Mother Theodore was particularly interested in the education of girls, which was

innovative at a time when women were generally not educated at all—except at home in housekeeping and childrearing skills. Nor were they generally given the same authority as men. Thus, while Mother Theodore was the superior of her community, she was also under the direct authority of the bishop of Vincennes, a man impressively named Célestin René Laurent Guynemer de la Hailandière.

This man proved to be an incompetent and unstable person who hampered Mother Theodore's plans in many cruel ways. As a result, because of his erratic demands, her nuns were often hungry and poorly housed. She herself at one time or another was accused of duplicity, forbidden to serve as superior and even ejected from her order entirely.

Bishop Hailandière believed the sisters' community was his personal possession, and he intended to run it accordingly. He gave little money to their efforts, established schools without the knowledge of Mother Theodore and otherwise interfered with their mission.

Fortunately, Bishop Hailandière's machinations did not go unnoticed by Bishop Bouvier and other prelates and bishops. Mother Theodore was eventually vindicated and allowed to establish her community and its various locales as she had originally envisioned. Through her wise leadership, the Sisters of Providence ministry came to include several schools and many

students, some of them non-Catholic.

Then, as now, Indiana was not heavily populated with Catholics, and there was much prejudice against them. Mother Theodore was gratified to see that through their children's acquaintance with the Church in her schools, many parents of non-Catholic students became friends and supporters of Catholicism. Some became converts to the faith.

The more I read about Mother Theodore in Penny Blaker Mitchell's book, *Mother Theodore Guérin: A Woman for All Time*, the more I liked her. Not only was she smart, kind, spiritual and authoritative, but also she was downright funny at times.

Writing of her journey with the sisters to their assignment in America, she good-humoredly described weathering a terrible storm at sea: "Our dear, plump Sister Liguori fell against me with all her weight. I thought I was killed." Mother Theodore's diary includes many such amusing entries.

Saints are saints because they try to stick to doing God's will—no matter what. St. Theodora is a wonderful person to take as a model during Advent.

I would say "God bless her" but, then, God already has.

(Cynthia Dewes, a member of St. Paul the Apostle Parish in Greencastle, is a regular columnist for The Criterion.) †

Faithful Lines/Shirley Vogler Meister

Fighting stress with sensible changes and prayer

One morning not very long ago, I had a "meltdown."

Most readers know how it feels when nearly everything that can go wrong actually does. Then back spasms suffered nearly a year, despite normally healing therapy, continued with a vengeance.



I was at the limits of endurance, especially because I was getting very little rest. My

"inner clock" changed drastically, allowing only five hours of sleep at night—and I need much more than that. I was at my wit's end!

Many readers surely remember the Catholic writer, Erma Bombeck, who died in 1996 after a kidney transplant. Erma wrote an internationally recognized column called "At Wit's End," also the name of one of her books.

If I were a humor columnist like Erma, I could entertain my readers with silly details of my problems—and readers would laugh. However, I am not a humorist, although I usually can find something funny in most

situations—but not when I'm so tired that I am "dragging my bones."

Instead, I will share with readers something that my sister, Beverley, sent to me on the very day that I felt so thoroughly at "wit's end."

It is called "36 Christian Ways to Reduce Stress" and is attributed to Pastor Paul Ciniraj of Salem Voice Ministries in Kottayam, Kerala, India. It is prefaced by this advice: "Never borrow from the future. If you worry about what may happen tomorrow and it doesn't happen, you have worried in vain. Even if it does happen, you have to worry twice."

Right! However, here is some of the advice that I now try to remember to help the body and soul:

"Pray. Go to bed on time. Get up on time so you can start the day unrushed. Say 'no' to projects that won't fit into your time schedule or that will compromise your mental health. Delegate tasks to capable others. Simplify and unclutter your life. Less is more. ... Allow extra time to do things and to get to places. Pace yourself ... and difficult projects over time. ... Take one day at a time.

"Separate worries from concerns ... and let go of the anxiety. Live within your budget. ...

Do something for the kid in you every day. Carry a Bible with you to read while waiting. ... Eat right. Get organized so everything has its place.

"Listen to an [inspirational audio recording] while driving. Write [down] thoughts and inspirations. ... Every day, find time to be alone with God. Meditate. Make friends with godly people. Keep a folder of favorite Scriptures on hand. Remember that the shortest bridge between despair and hope is often ... "Thank you, Jesus." Laugh. Laugh some more. Take your work seriously, but yourself not at all. Sing.

"Develop a forgiving attitude. ... Be kind to unkind people. ... Sit on your ego. Talk less, listen more. Slow down. Remind yourself that you are not the general manager of the universe. ... Every night before bed, think of one thing you're grateful for. ... God has a way of turning things around for you. 'If God is for us, who can be against us?' (Rm 8:31)"—even during the often stressful preparations for the Christmas season.

(Shirley Vogler Meister, a member of Christ the King Parish in Indianapolis, is a regular columnist for The Criterion.) †

Twenty Something

Christina Capecchi

The lesson buried in a boastful Christmas letter

Chestnuts roasting on an open fire, raw pride nipping on your prose. Stunning feats being sung in a card and kids dressed up like dynamos.



The "Christmas Song" we compose in the annual family letter can sound awfully sour compared with the lyrics that Nat King Cole crooned.

In our modern rendition, the "eyes all aglow" belong to proud parents, not tiny tots. And those reindeer *really* know how to fly; they made the Honor Roll.

I'm as guilty as you. We roll our eyes at the boastful letters, then roll up our sleeves, racking our brains for the year's most impressive accomplishments. We wrap them in muscular language, trying to recall the active verbs of resume rhetoric like "execute" and "implement."

Whenever possible, we reference ranks: Captain, Senior Consultant, Most Valuable, Best in Class.

To back it up, we quote from a panel of experts: the teacher, the coach, the priest, the principal, the boss.

Then we quantify our success: winning first place in soccer, scoring a 33 on the ACT, shaving two minutes off a run, taking a 10-day trip to seven countries, overseeing 20 employees.

In the end, our attempt to update friends reads more like a request for a job promotion. Of course, it's hard to avoid some of these techniques. They help us fill a blank page in comprehensible terms.

But on a deeper level, this holiday custom provides us with a unique opportunity for self-inventory. How we sum up a year can be incredibly telling—if you read between the lines.

When my mom asked me to write my portion of our family Christmas letter, I made note of the notables. Easy enough. Then I read through it, surprised to discover that the entire paragraph pertained to my education and career. The lingering questions being: Do I have friends? Hobbies? A life outside work?

It was a reality check. I'm reworking the paragraph—and the lifestyle.

Our achievement-centric society takes hold at a young age. By the time you finish your schooling, there's pressure to not just begin a career, but to excel at it, to quickly earn the kind of accolades for which Christmas letters are notorious.

But the measurements we find handy and acceptable are often faulty. And the feats we deem admirable and important are often meaningless. In the scheme of things, that is.

Because the scheme is incredibly broad, spanning back to a baby born two millennia ago. His arrival did not involve a new Lexus or an upscale bed and breakfast. Just a bumpy donkey ride and a dusty manger. He did not go on to be voted Most Popular. Truth is, he was kind of a loner, befriending lepers and defending an adulteress.

Jesus didn't see the Pharisees for their status and power; he saw their hypocrisy. He never paraded virtue; he prayed in private. He took no stock in society's arbitrary metrics and he made that known.

St. Peter wrote, "With the Lord, one day is like a thousand years and a thousand years like one day" (2 Pt 3:8).

Our only true judge couldn't care less about our rung on the corporate ladder. Rather, he asks us to be good and faithful servants, to feed the hungry and welcome the stranger in our midst.

This December, as bonuses are awarded and progress is chronicled on holly berry stationery, remember this: What really counts cannot be counted.

(Christina Capecchi is a freelance writer from Inver Grove Heights, Minn. E-mail her at christinacap@gmail.com.) †

Third Sunday of Advent/Msgr. Owen F. Campion

The Sunday Readings

Sunday, Dec. 16, 2007

- Isaiah 35:1-6a, 10
- James 5:7-10
- Matthew 11:2-11

The Book of Isaiah is the source of this weekend's first reading for the third Sunday of Advent.



Isaiah was between a rock and a hard place, so to speak. He realized that unwise alliances, and behavior that forgot God, put the Hebrews' kingdom of Judah at great risk.

The prophet was convinced that if the nation did not return to God in genuine obedience and piety, then the whirlwind eventually would sweep away life as he and his contemporaries knew it.

Despite the angry reaction to what he said on the part of many of his contemporaries, Isaiah unflinchingly continued to call the people back to God.

It was not as if God would bring a terrible punishment upon the kingdom. Rather, the people, by their impiety, would create a nightmare for themselves.

The Epistle to James supplies the second reading.

This epistle rarely appears in the liturgy. The identity of the author is unclear. The New Testament mentions four men with this name. Which, if any, wrote this epistle? Some insist that James, the foster brother of the Lord, was the author.

Ancient Christian writers surmised that James, in this reference, was a son from a previous marriage of Joseph, the eventual spouse of Mary. They reasoned that this must have been the case, as they believed, with the Church today, that Mary had only one child, namely Jesus.

Nothing in the text itself, or elsewhere in the Bible, affirms the view that James was the foster brother of Jesus. This is a supposition.

Regardless, this reading solidly establishes the author's faith that Jesus will be victorious. No power can exceed the power of the Lord. After all, the Lord is the Son of God.

However, while final victory

undoubtedly will come, it will not necessarily come at a time that humans predict. Certainly, it will not come at their bidding, but it will come.

So the epistle urges strong faith, but also forbearance.

The third reading, from St. Matthew's Gospel, centers on John the Baptist, whose denunciations of sin in high places led to his arrest. In time, they would lead to his death.

Despising the Roman occupation of the land, pious Jews at this time yearned for a Messiah who would rid the Holy Land of the pagan intruders.

However, John gives another description of the Redeemer. He will not be a warrior, commanding armies to slaughter the enemies of the One God of Israel. Rather, the Savior will be known for compassion.

Jesus is compassionate, healing the sick, giving hope and restoring life, all lovingly as the true representative of God on Earth.

In the last verses, Jesus affirms that John is a prophet. In fact, the Lord says, there is no greater prophet.

Reflection

Advent is approaching its close. Since Christmas is near, the Church looks ahead to the wonder of the Lord's birth.

It is "Gaudete Sunday," using a title taken from the first word of the Introit in Latin. "Gaudete" means "Rejoice!"

Priests may wear rose vestments this weekend, using them instead of violet vestments, as if the rays of dawn already are brightening the somberness of Advent.

The readings make several points. Isaiah warned us, as he warned his contemporaries, that by sin we bring heartache on ourselves. God never brings death. He brings life, just as Jesus brought life.

Advent penance and prayer hopefully lead us to imitate Christ. The liturgy presumes that we are using Advent to our advantage. If we are, and if we center our lives on Christ, then our love for God and for others will brighten the darkness and terror of our times. It is that simple. This imitation of the Lord brings life.

So it is up to us and, as James counsels, it will take time. †

Daily Readings

Monday, Dec. 17
Genesis 49:2, 8-10
Psalm 72:1-4, 7-8, 17
Matthew 1:1-17

Tuesday, Dec. 18
Jeremiah 23:5-8
Psalm 72:1-2, 12-13, 18-19
Matthew 1:18-25

Wednesday, Dec. 19
Judges 13:2-7, 24-25a
Psalm 71:3-6, 16-17
Luke 1:5-25

Thursday, Dec. 20
Isaiah 7:10-14
Psalm 24:1-6
Luke 1:26-38

Friday, Dec. 21
Peter Canisius, priest and doctor
Song of Songs 2:8-14
or Zephaniah 3:14-18a
Psalm 33:2-3, 11-12, 20-21
Luke 1:39-45

Saturday, Dec. 22
1 Samuel 1:24-28
(Response) 1 Samuel 2:1, 4-7, 8abcd
Luke 1:46-56

Sunday, Dec. 23
Fourth Sunday of Advent
Isaiah 7:10-14
Psalm 24:1-6
Romans 1:1-7
Matthew 1:18-24

Question Corner/Fr. John Dietzen

Knights of Columbus members must be practicing Catholics

Q Can a man belong to the Knights of Columbus if he is divorced? Does it matter any more if he is living with someone else? (New York)



A Knights of Columbus regulations state that only practicing Catholics are eligible for membership.

There was a time when those known not to have fulfilled their Easter sacramental obligations, or those who were divorced and remarried, were expelled from the Knights of Columbus, generally with the consent of the local pastor or chaplain.

That attitude has changed considerably, especially since the Church no longer excommunicates those who divorce and remarry out of the Church. In fact, the Church encourages them to continue practicing their faith as much as possible.

One spokesman for the Supreme Council of the Knights told me that, unless it is a case of serious scandal, "There is more concern about bringing an individual back to Church and to the sacraments so he will indeed be a practicing Catholic rather than rejecting him from our society."

National Knights of Columbus officials have concluded that it is nearly impossible to establish a rule which would govern every case and still be fair to everyone. Consequently, they ordinarily leave such decisions to the local grand knights and chaplains.

Q In connection with a polygamy trial recently reported in the news, I was told that the Catholic Church formerly allowed a man to have more than one wife until the Middle Ages.

That's hard to believe, but is it true? (Florida)

A There's no evidence that the Catholic Church, either in its various theologies or in official teachings, ever approved a husband having more than one wife at the same time.

The confusion you encountered could have several explanations.

In the Old Testament, the Hebrew people clearly believed that God approved of polygamous marriages, at least in some instances, and particularly among higher social classes and political leaders.

God himself, in fact, is once portrayed as having two wives in Ezekiel 23, presumably evidence that polygamy was commonly accepted at the time.

Even among the Jews, however, polygamy seems to have pretty much disappeared after the Babylonian exile in the sixth century B.C.

Christian theologians have speculated on why having more than one wife should enjoy divine approval in one age and not in another. Some said polygamy is only illicit today because of a command from God.

A more common explanation is that having several wives is against the natural law, but was once permitted by God for special reasons.

In either case, none have defended polygamy as a morally lawful option since the time of Christ.

Several hundred years ago, the Church made some strong declarations against polygamy that could seem to imply that the teaching was something new. These statements were made, however, to repudiate a stand taken by some Protestant reformers that leaned heavily toward occasional permission to have more than one wife.

Philip, Landgrave [prince] of Hesse in Germany, for example, who had made his court a Lutheran center, consulted Martin Luther and Philip Melancthon about his desire to take a second wife. They gave their approval since "what was permitted in marriage in the law of Moses, the Gospel does not take away."

The Council of Trent in 1563 opposed that position.

Even into the 20th century, some writers who were unfriendly toward the Catholic Church claimed that Pope Clement VII (died 1534) declared himself prepared to grant a dispensation to England's King Henry VIII for bigamy.

While Pope Clement's procrastination in the matter of Henry's divorce from Catherine of Aragon contributed to the spread of Protestant teaching during his pontificate, to my knowledge no historian today seriously suggests that he contemplated authorizing polygamy for anyone.

(A free brochure answering questions that Catholics ask about the sacrament of penance is available by sending a stamped, self-addressed envelope to Father John Dietzen, Box 3315, Peoria, IL 61612. Questions may be sent to Father Dietzen at the same address or by e-mail in care of jjdietzen@aol.com.) †

My Journey to God

Christmas Tea

Evergreens, holly, mistletoe berries,
All things making Christmas merry;

Poinsettias, carols, cards to send
Far and near to family and friends.

But wait! But wait!

In the midst of the rush, the clamor, the din,
We must remember to let Him in.

To keep the spirit of the season,
We must recall the reason.
Why?

The Child of Bethlehem is come among us
To shine His light in gloom and darkness.

The Lamb of God is here.
Alleluia!

The consolation of Israel has come.
Alleluia!

The Root of Jesse now dwells with us.
Alleluia!

Christ, our Passover, now frees us.
Alleluia!



True Bread from Heaven, The True Vine
now feeds us.
Alleluia! Alleluia!

The Savior of the World, Emmanuel,
and Our Redeemer now indwells us.
Alleluia! Alleluia! Alleluia!

Let us contemplate His birth, shall we,
Over a cup of Christmas tea?

By Kathleen Barlow, Ph.D., D. Min.

(Kathleen Barlow is a member of St. Luke the Evangelist Parish in Indianapolis.)

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.

BERRISFORD, Margaret, 85, Sacred Heart, Clinton, Dec. 4. Mother of Richard Berrisford. Grandmother of two. Great-grandmother of six.

BERTSCH, Joann, 78, Holy Family, Richmond, Nov. 18. Wife of Joseph Bertsch. Mother of Monica Antrim, Joy Cocks, Elizabeth Green, Mary and Marilyn Rathbun, Carolyn Yelland, Bill, David and Joseph Bertsch. Sister of several. Grandmother of 14. Great-grandmother of three.

BRANDES, Robert H., 80, St. Michael, Brookville, Nov. 20. Father of Diana Duvall, Pamela Hinderberger, Mary, Eric, Gary, Mark, Michael and Robert Brandes. Brother of Rosemary Johnson. Grandfather of 16. Great-grandfather of 11.

BRAY, Marcus C., 84, St. Michael, Brookville, Nov. 20. Father of Sheryl Davis and Fairy Geiling. Grandfather of one.

DECK, Rosella M., 84, St. Lawrence, Lawrenceburg, Nov. 17.

DONELSON, Frances, 92, St. Monica, Indianapolis, Nov. 28. Mother of Cecilia Geist, Sara Ross and Alan Donelson. Sister of Madelon Hyman. Grandmother of eight. Great-grandmother of 11.

HESS, Anna Marie, 85, St. Paul, Tell City, Nov. 9. Mother of Carol, Gary, Jim, Mark, Paul, Randy and Steve Hess. Grandmother of 13. Great-grandmother of six.

JOHNSON, Elinor C., 90, St. Therese of the Infant Jesus (Little Flower), Indianapolis, Nov. 20. Mother of Jane Cheshire, David, Jerry, J. Kevin, Phillip and Ray Johnson. Grandmother of 27. Great-grandmother of 48. Great-great-grandmother of three.

KAUFMAN, Martha A., 85, St. Paul, Tell City, Oct. 31. Mother of Donna Mayes and John Kaufman. Sister of James and Justin Baysinger. Grandmother of three.

KEBE, Marian A., 76, St. Therese of the Infant Jesus (Little Flower), Indianapolis, Nov. 24. Mother of Diane and Frank Kebe. Sister of Chris Stanton. Grandmother of three.

KUNKEL, Betty F., 83, St. Michael, Brookville, Nov. 21. Mother of Diann Motz and Donna Parrett. Sister of Martha Pelsor. Grandmother of six. Great-grandmother of 11. Great-great-grandmother of two.

LARK, James, 67, Holy Spirit, Indianapolis, Nov. 25. Husband of Dorothy Lark. Father of Mary VanDemark and Wade Harp.

Stepson of Mildred Lark. Brother of Margaret Schmalz, Richard and Thomas Lark. Stepbrother of Susan Cook and James Boehm. Grandfather of four.

LAWSON, Earl William, 56, St. Mark the Evangelist, Indianapolis, Nov. 7. Husband of Jill Eileen (Hearlihy) Lawson. Son of Nancy (Brown) Lawson. Father of Katie and Ryan Lawson. Brother of Jerry, John, Richard and Terry Lawson.

LEE, Florence I., 95, St. Monica, Indianapolis, Oct. 11. Mother of Lynda Nash, Jan Willis and Alan Lee. Grandmother of six. Great-grandmother of eight.

LYNN, Earl Joseph, 91, St. Mark the Evangelist, Indianapolis, Nov. 11. Husband of Kathryn (Mayer) Lynn. Father of Gregory and Mark Lynn. Grandfather of one.

McKNIGHT, Ronald Andrew, 69, St. Mary, New Albany, Dec. 1. Husband of Julia McKnight. Father of Jason McKnight. Grandfather of two.

MEYER, Letha E., 99, St. Mary, Greensburg, Nov. 30.

PAUL, Leroy, 45, St. Malachy, Brownsburg, Nov. 27. Husband of Christine Paul. Father of Jordan Paul. Son of Mary (Miller) Paul. Brother of Benita and Phil Paul.

PHILLIPS, Harvey E., 67, Christ the King, Indianapolis, Nov. 26. Husband of Sally Phillips. Stepson of Mildred Phillips. Brother of Stephanie Mackey.

WRIGHT, Gene F., 83, St. Gabriel, Connersville, Nov. 23. Husband of Marcia (Griffin) Wright. Father of Barb, David and Jim Wright. †



Sacred Heart of Jesus

This bronze statue of Christ is flanked by snow-covered flowers on Dec. 8 at Our Lady of Peace Cemetery in Indianapolis. The Sacred Heart of Jesus statue adorns a gravesite.



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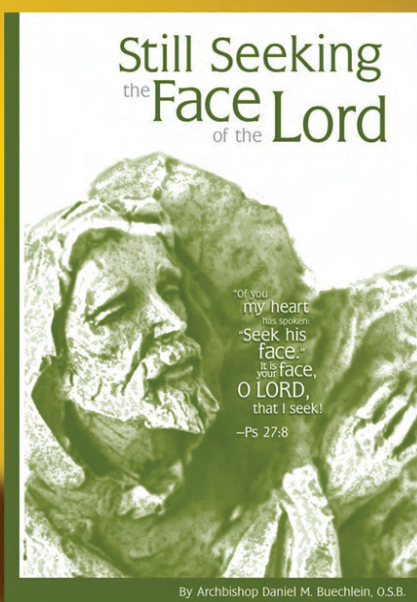


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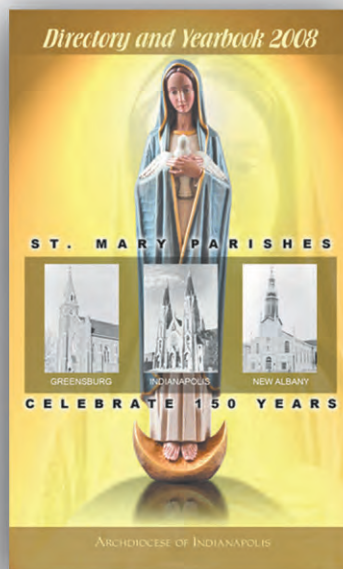
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