



The

Criterion

Serving the Church in Central and Southern Indiana Since 1960



New shepherd

Bishop Paul D. Etienne is ordained and installed as bishop of Cheyenne, Wyo. See our special pull-out section on pages 11-14.

CriterionOnline.com

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A Christmas greeting



from
Archbishop
Daniel M. Buechlein, O.S.B.

Dear Sisters and Brothers in Christ:

The Christmas crib scenario captures our fancy. Do you ever wonder why we romanticize a barnyard scene which surely was not an ideal place for a child to be born? I think I know why. All we need to do is look at a Christmas crib scene for a little while in order to realize that Christmas belongs to everybody. We like that. For one brief moment, Christmas brings everybody together.

Look who's there! Working shepherds represent the poor of the world. That already captures all of us because in one way or another we are all poor—whether spiritually, physically, morally, emotionally or financially. The three Wise Men from the Orient represent the curious, the learned, the rich and the worldly powerful. That could be all of us, too, because we are all blessed with unique personal gifts.

Singing angels from God signal that this stable gathering is no ordinary scene. Yet it is a family scene; new parents are there and a new little baby is at the center of it all. We are all there somehow. And let's not forget the animals. After all, the setting is a barnyard stable, a cave near Bethlehem.

Dumb animals, beasts that carry people's burdens, witness to a scene that was surely both common and uncommon to them as well. Even in those days, not many children were born in a stable. Was this birth in an animal shelter simply an accident because Joseph might have forgotten to make reservations at an inn in Bethlehem? Did this happen because of poor planning? If so, isn't it like so many chance happenings in our own lives—God's mysterious workings often seem to happen "by accident"?

The Christmas crib scene lets most of our world stop for a brief moment and brings many of us together, but it does so much more. The simplicity of the animal stable masks a rich teaching, which should be no surprise. After all, the new baby at the center of it all is the Divine Word made flesh. Jesus is God's revelation of himself to us. The crib scene is a teaching scene, a classroom; it is a



The Nativity is depicted in this detail view from the "Adoration of the Magi" by Italian artist Gentile da Fabriano. The work is housed at the Uffizi Gallery in Florence, Italy. The Christmas season begins with the Dec. 24 evening vigil commemorating the birth of Christ and ends with the feast of the Baptism of the Lord on Jan. 10, 2010.

revelation. Somebody once called that stable Christ's cathedral; the manger was his first *cathedra*, his first teaching chair. No detail of that Nativity scene is an accident.

What does the birth of the Word Incarnate tell us about God? God loves the poor. God loves the curious. God loves the gifted. God loves simplicity. God loves the animals, and God understands the burdens we carry, sometimes like beasts of burden. God can and does work through the reversals, the accidents of life, like forgetting to make reservations at the inn. God understands the suffering in our lives. Like us, God's Son was born into the unfairness of life's suffering. God meets us in suffering in a special way and in any circumstance, like in an animal shelter on a cold winter night.

Maybe we romanticize the crib scene because it is too much to grasp that God could be so loving in such awkward surroundings. Don't you think God gives us the poetic flourish of singing angels on that cold winter night so that we can believe his grand drama of barnyard simplicity?

God came to Earth to tell us that he is always with all of us. We are all there in that barnyard stable. God came into our world for everybody, and the greatest message of all is that we are all equal as we kneel before the manger of Christ's first teaching chair. Indeed, let's kneel before the manger of Jesus with hearts full of grateful love.

As I kneel before the crib, I pray that you may find peace of mind and heart and soul before Christ's first teaching chair—at Christmas and for the New Year!

Sincerely yours in Christ,

Archbishop Buechlein, A

Most Rev. Daniel M. Buechlein, O.S.B.
Archbishop of Indianapolis

Anniversary, episcopal appointment top local news stories of 2009

By Brandon A. Evans

The celebration of the 175th anniversary of the archdiocese—which culminated with a Mass at Lucas Oil Stadium in Indianapolis—and the naming of Father Paul D. Etienne as the bishop of Cheyenne, Wyo., were voted the top local news stories of 2009, followed closely by the ordination of five men to the priesthood.

Working in tandem with the custom of other news agencies, including Catholic News Service (see story, page 8), *The Criterion* editorial staff votes each year for the top 10 stories that appeared in our newspaper.

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

So, amid the more than 400 locally produced news stories this year, here is our top 10 list:

1. Archdiocese of Indianapolis celebrates its 175th anniversary.

Nearly 25,000 Catholics from central and southern Indiana took part in a special 175th anniversary Mass at Lucas Oil Stadium on May 3.

During the Mass—which was celebrated by dozens of archdiocesan priests, 17 bishops and two Benedictine abbots from around the Midwest—2,800 youths and adults were confirmed.

Also, 200 couples were honored for 50 or more years of married life, and religious jubilarians were praised for their many decades of faithful ministry and commitment to the consecrated life.

The event was the high point of a year of celebration that looked back to the creation of our archdiocese in 1834. It was called at that time the Diocese of Vincennes and encompassed all of Indiana and the eastern portion of Illinois.

Archdiocesan pilgrimages to the city of Vincennes and to the Holy Land were also part of anniversary events.

2. Father Paul D. Etienne is appointed new bishop of Cheyenne, Wyo.

On Oct. 19, it was announced in Washington by Archbishop Pietro Sambi, the apostolic nuncio to the United States, that Father Paul D. Etienne had been appointed the new bishop of Cheyenne, Wyo., by Pope Benedict XVI.

Father Etienne, whose family was featured in a vocations story in *The Criterion* in January, was serving as the pastor of his childhood parish, St. Paul Parish in Tell City.

“Jesus has stepped into the boat of my soul and said, ‘Put out into the deep and lower your nets for a catch (Lk 5:4),’ ” Father Etienne said at the time of the announcement.

His episcopal ordination took place in Cheyenne on Dec. 9 (see related stories, pages 11-14), and was attended by Archbishop Daniel M. Buechlein and dozens of local priests.

Established in 1887, the Diocese of Cheyenne is home to more than 53,000 Catholics. It has 36 parishes and 36 missions.

3. Five men are ordained priests of the archdiocese.

June 6 and June 27 were days of joy for Catholics in the Archdiocese of Indianapolis as five men were ordained priests to minister in central and southern Indiana.

It was the largest priesthood ordination class for the archdiocese since 2002 when eight men were ordained priests.

Archbishop Buechlein ordained transitional deacons Jeremy Gries, John Hollowell and Peter Marshall on June 6 at SS. Peter and Paul Cathedral in Indianapolis. On June 27, he ordained transitional deacons Sean Danda and Christopher Wadelton, also at SS. Peter and Paul Cathedral.

In his homily on June 6, Archbishop Buechlein told the ordinands that they were to become “intercessors of divine mystery.”

“You will be intercessors in prayer and in blessing, intercessors of the Word of God, intercessors of the sacred, intercessors of love and mercy,” he said.

4. SHINE initiative kicks off with Lucas Oil Stadium event.

On Oct. 1, the Archdiocese of Indianapolis kicked off a yearlong ministry of social renewal, known by the acronym SHINE—which stands for “Spreading Hope in Neighborhoods Everywhere.”

In this effort, every Catholic in the archdiocese is being called to a life of service to make a difference in the lives of others.

The kickoff event at Lucas Oil Stadium in Indianapolis on Oct. 1 attracted more than 600 participants from parishes, schools, agencies and institutions throughout central and southern Indiana. A daylong series of keynote speakers and workshops was designed to further equip Catholics in the

as the dean of the Terre Haute Deanery.

The page 1 photos published with our story about the new Holy Family Shelter in Indianapolis in the Dec. 11 issue were taken by senior reporter Mary Ann Wyand. †



Bishop Paul D. Etienne



Archbishop Daniel M. Buechlein celebrates a special Mass marking the 175th anniversary of the Archdiocese of Indianapolis on May 3 at Lucas Oil Stadium in Indianapolis. At right is then-transitional Deacon John Hollowell. The special Mass drew a crowd of nearly 25,000 Catholics of all ages from central and southern Indiana.

archdiocese for the social mission of the Church.

Through SHINE, archdiocesan leaders are shaping the 12 months as a celebration and renewal of the local Church’s commitment to serve others in need. It is the archdiocese’s response to Pope Benedict XVI’s call for the Church to respond with a universal revitalization of its ministries of charity.

5. ‘Christ Our Hope: Compassion in Community’ is new focus of annual appeal.

“Christ Our Hope: Compassion in Community” is the new name for the annual archdiocesan stewardship appeal.

After several months of research and conversations with parish leaders across the archdiocese, the new approach and name for the appeal were developed and announced in September. They represent the first major change in the appeal in a decade.

Archbishop Buechlein spoke about the change in the annual stewardship appeal.

“All of us are given the opportunity to offer Christ’s compassion to other members of our community, many of whom suffer and are feeling alone. Christ is our hope because he is the ultimate source of healing and consolation,” the archbishop said.

“And so we call our new annual initiative ‘Christ our Hope: Compassion in Community.’ I invite all of you to help us be that hope for those folks who carry heavy burdens and need us.”

The goal for this year’s appeal is

\$6.75 million.

Approximately one-third of this amount, some \$2.2 million, will be dedicated to our outreach parishes that find it difficult to meet their annual ministry needs to the Catholics they serve.

6. Annette ‘Mickey’ Lentz is named chancellor.

When Annette “Mickey” Lentz was asked to be chancellor of the archdiocese by Archbishop Buechlein, she responded in the way that she always has in 48 years of



Annette “Mickey” Lentz

believing she was answering God’s call to make a difference.

As chancellor, Lentz assumed the third highest position in the archdiocese, following Archbishop

Buechlein and vicar general Msgr. Joseph F. Schaedel. She succeeds Suzanne Yakimchick, who retired last year.

At 67, Lentz also continues to serve as the interim executive director of the Office of Catholic Education and Faith Formation for the archdiocese until her replacement is scheduled to be hired in the spring of 2010.

Her appointment on June 4 as chancellor **See TOP STORIES, page 10**

Corrections

Father Joseph Kern is the dean of the Terre Haute Deanery. The National Catholic Youth Conference story written by Benedictine Father Adrian Burke in the Dec. 11 issue misidentified Father Rick Ginther, the pastor of St. Patrick and St. Margaret Mary parishes in Terre Haute,



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The Criterion and Catholic Center are closed from Dec. 24 through Jan. 3 for Christmas holiday

This week’s issue of *The Criterion*, which is our annual Christmas publication, is the last issue of 2009.

The Criterion will be published again on Jan. 8 and resume its weekly schedule.

The Archbishop O’Meara Catholic Center will be closed from Dec. 24 through Jan. 3 in observance of the holidays.

Archdiocesan agencies will reopen at 8 a.m. on Monday, Jan. 4. †

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Archdiocese working to create two charter schools in Indianapolis

By John Shaughnessy

The archdiocese has applied to the Mayor's Office in Indianapolis to create two charter schools for the 2010-11 school year.

If the applications are approved, the archdiocese will become the first Catholic diocese in the United States that has committed to overseeing a school involved in this educational approach.

In announcing the plan on Dec. 9, archdiocesan leaders noted that the effort involves changing the status of two of the six schools that form the Mother Theodore Catholic Academies—a consortium of schools dedicated to educating children in economically challenged, urban areas of Indianapolis.

In the plan, St. Anthony Catholic School and St. Andrew & St. Rita Catholic Academy would become charter schools. If approved, the two schools would still be managed by the archdiocese, but they would have to change their names and they would no longer be able to promote the Catholic faith.

The other four schools that form the Mother Theodore Catholic Academies—Central Catholic School, Holy Angels School, Holy Cross Central School and St. Philip Neri School—will continue as Catholic schools.

The plan was announced on Dec. 9 in a message to pastors of the affected parishes, and to the parents, faculty and staff members at the two schools who are the focus of the proposed change.

"After many months of research, prayer and consultation, Archbishop Daniel M. Buechlein has given his approval to submit two charter school applications to the office of the Mayor of Indianapolis," wrote Connie Zittnan, the director of the Mother Theodore Catholic Academies.

In her letter, Zittnan also stated, "It is important for you to know that we have also met with the parishioners, staffs and parents of these two schools. Overall, they were supportive in continuing our mission of serving our children in these neighborhoods in these ways."

The archdiocese also plans to continue

to offer instruction in the Catholic faith to students who attend these two schools.



Connie Zittnan

"One of the major changes we will see is we will have to develop faith formation before or after school rather than during the school day," Zittnan said. "Speaking with both parishes, the pastor and deacon of these parishes are

both committed to taking on this portion of the child's development."

In seeking to start the two charter schools, the archdiocese is responding to two major challenges to educating children in urban neighborhoods, Zittnan says.

"Through the Mother Theodore Catholic Academies, we want to continue our mission of working with our children in the urban center," Zittnan said. "We have two major concerns. As generous as our parishes, our archdiocese, corporate Indianapolis and major contributors are, we are having a difficult time funding all six schools as they are presently operated. We're operating in a deficit every year. Secondly, in these tough economic times, our families at these schools are having a tough time coming up with the tuition."

Faced with those realities, changing the two schools to charter schools allows the archdiocese to continue "educating our urban children in these two [center city] neighborhoods," Zittnan explained.

The two charter schools would be self-supporting, according to Jeffrey Stumpf, the chief financial officer of the archdiocese.

"This will allow us to shift the fundraising dollars currently used at those two schools to the other four Mother Theodore Catholic Academies schools, stabilizing the finances of those Catholic schools," Stumpf said. "We could get this financial improvement by simply closing the schools, but our strong desire is to continue serving the children in these two neighborhoods."

Economic realities forced the archdiocese to consider the charter school approach, Stumpf said.



Jeffrey Stumpf

"Because of the demographics of the families that these schools serve, only about 12 percent of the cost of running the schools comes from the school families and the local parishes," he noted.

"The archdiocese takes on the responsibility of over 50 percent of the funding. The academies currently need about \$3.8 million per year from sources outside of the school operations.

"We're able to raise \$1.1 million per year through the parishes of the archdiocese from the Christ Our Hope: Compassion in Community annual appeal, and about \$1-1.5 million per year in corporate, foundation and alumni fundraising efforts—leaving a remaining deficit of about \$1.2-1.7 million per year that we've been unable to fund."

If the charter school plan is approved, the archdiocese will receive about \$7,500 per student from the State of Indiana, Stumpf said.

Zittnan outlined the reasons why the proposed change will best serve the children at those schools—starting with the fact that tuition will be free.

"Full tuition is about \$3,800," Zittnan said. "Very few of our children in either of these schools pay very close to that, but our children will not have to pay tuition, which will take the burden off their parents. We will also be able to have additional staff to work with children who, for whatever reason, need additional assistance in the classroom. And we will have a transportation plan for families that live more than a mile from the school."

While archdiocesan leaders hope the changes can take place at the two schools, they also stress the need for continued support of the four Mother Theodore Catholic Academies that will remain as

Catholic schools.

"It's very important to understand that those four Catholic schools will need the continuous generosity of our major donors, the archdiocese and our parishes," Zittnan said.

The change has been under consideration since March. Since then, Archbishop Buechlein and other archdiocesan leaders have sought the input and opinions of different people and groups, including priests, donors, business leaders, political leaders, the archdiocesan finance council, and parents and staff members at St. Anthony Catholic School and St. Andrew & St. Rita Catholic Academy.

"Since he came here in 1992, the archbishop has been committed to educating children in our urban neighborhoods," Zittnan said. "He again is looking for ways to meet the needs of these students.

"Other dioceses have looked at the challenge of continuing their mission in urban settings, and they've come up with two options—either close schools or lease school buildings to secular companies to run charter schools. If our plan is approved, we will be the first in the United States where the archdiocese is committed to overseeing this form of education."

The archdiocese has formed a separate corporation—ADI Schools Inc.—to apply for the charter.

"This corporation will hire the Mother Theodore Catholic Academies to manage the operations of the schools," Stumpf said. "So the MTCA will now be responsible for operating four Catholic schools and two public charter schools."

Archdiocesan leaders believe this approach is the best available to continue its commitment and mission to children at the two schools.

"We believe we can still transfer the values we hold dear to us—discipline, hard work, honesty, leadership, giving to others and serving others," Zittnan said. "It's not about the buildings. It's not about the schools. It's about the children we do not want to leave behind." †

Perkins named next president of Cardinal Ritter Jr./Sr. High School

The Criterion staff report

Gregory W. Perkins has been selected to be the next president of Cardinal Ritter Jr./Sr. High School in Indianapolis.



Gregory W. Perkins

"It's an exciting opportunity," says Perkins, who has served as the director of business and finance at Cardinal Ritter and Father Thomas Scecina Memorial high

schools in Indianapolis since 2005. "I'm the business manager at the school so I'm very familiar with the roles of the president. I believe I can do a very good job."

Perkins will start his new position on Jan. 1. He hopes to build on the foundation that Paul Lockard has established in his eight years as the president of Cardinal Ritter Jr./Sr. High School. Lockard will retire on Dec. 31.

"Paul has been an excellent leader," Perkins says. "Every year he's been here, we have continued to increase enrollment. That's a tremendous reflection on the team that Paul has built. And he's positioned the school for continued advancement. That's a great way for him

to be remembered."

A father of four, the 56-year-old Perkins believes in the importance of a Catholic education. His wife, Debra Perkins, is the principal at



Paul Lockard

St. Barnabas School in Indianapolis.

"It's the teaching of the Catholic values that is so important as kids grow up," says Perkins, a member of Nativity of Our Lord Jesus Christ Parish

in Indianapolis. "It helps them make good judgments in life, and sets them up to lead good lives. I think that's what makes Catholic schools different."

The Cardinal Ritter community looks forward to the leadership of Perkins, says Phil Carson, the chairperson of the school's board of directors.

"Greg brings an extensive and proven business background to the school, as well as intimate knowledge of its operation," Carson notes in a press release about Perkins' selection. "We feel that he is uniquely qualified to continue to lead Cardinal Ritter High School ... and we look forward to working with him to continue the great tradition that has been established." †

Former death-row inmate never gave up on God despite wrongful conviction



Photo by Mary Ann Wyand

Former Illinois death row inmate Randy Steidl of Paris, Ill., talks about his wrongful conviction for two murders he did not commit and his lengthy incarceration during a Dec. 2 program at the Archbishop O'Meara Catholic Center in Indianapolis. Will McAuliffe, left, the executive director of the Indiana Coalition Acting to Suspend Executions, waits to answer a question from an audience member.

By Mary Ann Wyand

Seventeen years, three months and three weeks.

That's how long wrongfully convicted Illinois death-row inmate Randy Steidl of Paris, Ill., was incarcerated at the Danville, Ill., Correctional Facility while awaiting execution for two murders that he did not commit.

He is one of 139 former death-row inmates throughout the U.S. who have been found innocent of murder charges and released from prison since 1972.

Steidl was the keynote speaker for a Dec. 2 program at the Archbishop O'Meara Catholic Center in Indianapolis about his wrongful conviction and lengthy incarceration on death row in Illinois.

The event was sponsored by the archdiocesan Office for Pro-Life Ministry.

Steidl filed seven state appeals during his time in prison to proclaim his innocence and endured two pending execution dates, but he wasn't exonerated until Illinois State Police investigations commander Michale Callahan, who is now retired, completed an in-depth investigation of his capital case.

Callahan, a Terre Haute native and Indiana University graduate who majored in forensic studies, later wrote *Since When Is Murder Too Politically Sensitive* about the case. His book about the July 1986 murders of newlyweds Dyke and Karen Rhoads of Paris, Ill., was published by Land of Lincoln Press in May 2009.

Investigative work by the Downstate Illinois Innocence Project and the Center on Wrongful Convictions at Northwestern University in Chicago also contributed to Steidl's release from prison in May 2004.

"It's a tragic story," Steidl said of the book.

"It was hard for me to read. It took me 10 days. Most people pick it up and can't put it down. It's about corruption and politics in the Illinois State Police. ... It vindicates me and Herb Whitlock."

Before the program, Steidl talked with Sister Diane Carollo, director of the pro-life office, about the injustice of capital punishment then spent time praying before the Blessed Sacrament in the Holy Family Chapel at the Catholic Center.

"I was born and raised Catholic," he told the gathering. "I went to a parochial school and was an altar boy until I went to high school. Then it was kind of hard for Mom to drag me into church on Sunday. But I still believed in God, went to Mass and confession, took Communion and said my prayers.

"But I had my dark moments when I was

See STEIDL, page 9



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

Most Rev. Daniel M. Buechlein, O.S.B., Publisher Greg A. Otolski, Associate Publisher
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Editorial



A girl holds a figurine of baby Jesus as Pope Benedict XVI leads the Angelus prayer from the window of his apartment overlooking St. Peter's Square at the Vatican on Dec. 13. The square was packed with children and families who brought their Nativity figurines to be blessed by the pope.

A holy day has dawned that knows no sunset

"To the thirst for meaning and value so characteristic of today's world, to the search for prosperity and peace that marks the lives of all mankind, to the hopes of the poor: Christ—true God and true Man—responds with his Nativity. Neither individuals nor nations should be afraid to recognize and welcome him: with him "a shining light" brightens the horizon of humanity; in him "a holy day" dawns that knows no sunset."
(Pope Benedict XVI, *Urbi et Orbi* Message, Christmas 2007)

Christ is born again, bringing hope for all, and we rejoice.

At the time of year that is naturally darkest, he brings inextinguishable light. At a time when many are tempted to believe in the absence of God, he becomes present once again and always.

In spite of all the noise and distractions of our commercialized Christmas, he appears again—quietly, unobtrusively, and with all the remoteness and simplicity of the first Nativity. Angels sing again. (Are we listening?) Shepherds pay him homage, and the wise men and women of our day seek him still. (Are we among them?)

Christ is born again, and the weary world is renewed. He brings hope for the poor. He brings peace for warring peoples. He brings prosperity to economies ruined by greed and irresponsibility. He brings "a shining light" into all the dark corners of our world.

Christ is born again, and our heavy hearts are lightened. The burdens we carry—fear and anxiety, guilt and sin—are lifted by his coming again. "Be not afraid," he tells us, and we are reassured. "Trust in me," he says, "your sins are forgiven," and we are consoled.

The truth which makes us free has enlightened our minds and hearts once again this Christmas. "That which was from the beginning, which we have heard, which we have seen with our eyes, which we have looked upon and touched with our hands" (1 Jn 1:1-3) is

Christ born again this Christmas. Come, let us adore him.

All year long, we worry and we struggle and we argue. At Christmas time, we are invited to give it up, to "let go and let God," to trust that all our troubles are truly in God's hands.

God-is-with-us, Emmanuel, has come into our lives—as he does every day through the mystery of the Eucharist—to bring us peace. Why don't we let him?

Christmas is the time of year when we remember God's goodness to us. The gifts we receive are the faintest reminders of the Gift that Christ is to each of us. The Christmas carols we sing are merely echoes of the angels' song, "Peace on earth. Good will toward all." The bright colors and the Christmas lights pale in comparison to the shining star that has brightened the horizon of humanity for all time.

If we couldn't celebrate Christmas, we might well go mad. Our world would certainly be darker and more depressing. Where would we place our hope? In government? In Wall Street or Hollywood? Our prospects would be dim indeed.

No, we find our hope in a little child placed in a manger and wrapped in swaddling clothes. His blessed mother, Mary, and his faithful guardian, the good steward Joseph, attend to him lovingly. Poor shepherds, animals and mysterious strangers are his companions. The heavens rejoice and the Earth resounds with hope.

What a wonderful day this is. How unlike most days! Today, a holy day has dawned that knows no sunset. Let us rejoice and be glad. Let us welcome the child Jesus into our hearts and our homes—today and every day.

May the joys of the Christmas season fill your hearts with gladness. May you find holiness and hope this Christmas. And may the shining light of Christ bring prosperity and peace to you, and to our troubled world, this Christmas and throughout the New Year.

Merry Christmas!

—Daniel Conway

Reflection/Karen (Popp) Schueler

Christmas magic is evident as family shares gift of love with residents of Ronald McDonald House, Indianapolis

"Give and gifts will be given to you; a good measure, packed together, shaken down, and overflowing, will be poured into your lap. For the measure with which you measure will in return be measured out to you" (Lk 6:38).

For Bob and Betty Popp, their six grown children and spouses, it comes very naturally to invite family and friends, fix a meal and enjoy the fellowship of one another.

The Pops, who are members of St. Joseph Parish in Clark County, traditionally have an adult Christmas party which rotates from house to house every year.

When it came time for their son, Mike Popp, to host the gathering, he suggested that the family share their love of fun, fellowship and food with others. He suggested that the Popp family meet at the Ronald McDonald House in Indianapolis on a Sunday in December and prepare a home-cooked meal for the residents.

He wanted all parts of the family meal to be cooked on site. The menu was planned to be a traditional meal of chicken and dumplings, meatloaf, sour dough bread, an array of desserts and all the fixings. As with many large families, when you have 14 adults, one kitchen and a meal to fix, all the ingredients are there for magic to begin!

In six short hours, the Christmas magic truly happens. Mom Betty proudly guides her daughters and daughters-in-law through the time-tested family traditions, routines and "secret ingredients" of making a "Popp" quality family meal.

The sons and sons-in-law are quick to run the errands, place tables and stand "at the ready" for whatever orders come from the kitchen. Christmas magic happens in those few hours: the magic of family, the magic of fellowship and the magic of Betty's fantastic food!

Soon the buffet line is opened, and the real magic begins. The Popp family is upbeat, and there is always a lot of teasing going on, which helps to keep the atmosphere light. As the residents come through the line, the Pops serve the food and ask if there is anything they can do in those few minutes to help lighten their load.

"Can we get an extra plate, play with a young child to give mom a break, get an extra drink or make a plate for someone still at the hospital?"

On special occasions, we can send an extra loaf of Cheryl's famous homemade



Bob and Betty Popp, center, and their children and spouses gather one Sunday every December to prepare a meal for residents of the Ronald McDonald House in Indianapolis.

sour dough bread home with a resident.

This year, after Gary Popp played with a boy who is a resident, Karen gave him her Santa hat. The boy was thrilled and ran off thinking that he was Santa Claus.

It is certainly not difficult to understand why the Popp family chose the Ronald McDonald House to donate their time and talent. Twenty-two years ago, Mike and Joann Popp were faced with the reality of their 4-month-old daughter, Alexandra (Alex), fighting a life-threatening disease.

Mike was called away from his Air Force assignment in Korea to meet the family in Washington, D.C., where Alex was admitted to the hospital. While she was there, she was diagnosed with Werdnig-Hoffman disease. The Ronald McDonald House staff housed the family and took care of them while they cared for their daughter.

Little Alex was called home to our Father in heaven on Thanksgiving Day. Ironically, the Popp family was gathered for a meal in southern Indiana at the home of Bob and Betty Popp when the call came that their granddaughter had died.

Mike Popp has been an avid volunteer for the Ronald McDonald House for more than 10 years.

The Pops give an afternoon of their time for the residents of the Ronald McDonald House in Indianapolis, but the gifts they receive are so much greater. They receive the gifts of fellowship, family, fun and the image of God in the faces of those they serve there.

"Give and gifts will be given to you."

(Karen (Popp) Schueler is a member of Holy Family Parish in New Albany. She serves as the Learning Support Coordinator at Our Lady of Providence Jr./Sr. High School in Clarksville.) †

Letters to the Editor

Volunteers, donors continue making Thanksgiving outreach at Terre Haute parish a successful holiday tradition

For 35 years, St. Patrick Parish in Terre Haute has hosted a Thanksgiving dinner in the school cafeteria.

It was begun by a handful of parish members who recognized the need for area residents to have a place to share the holiday with others. In 2002, the dinner was named in honor of the late Ruthmarie (Bauer) Newport, the longtime organizer of the event.

Over the years, our tradition of helping others has spread to offering an opportunity for anyone, regardless of their needs or circumstances, to enjoy a Thanksgiving feast in a community setting.

Members and friends of St. Patrick Parish prepared nearly 60 turkeys and hundreds of desserts beginning on Wednesday, Nov. 25. On Thanksgiving,

starting at 5 a.m., a loyal group of volunteers prepared, hosted, served and delivered more than 800 meals to people in the Terre Haute area.

Along with the many generous donors that we rely on each year, who give of their time and help with the expenses, we wish to thank the Terre Haute Fire Fighters Union Local #758 and J. Ford's Black Angus, who made significant financial contributions this year to help offset the overall expense of the event.

Thanks to Don Sprodi of the Terre Haute Fire Department and to Jeff Ford of Black Angus for thinking of us.
Dave Grabowski
Pastoral Council President
St. Patrick Parish
Terre Haute

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



SEEKING THE FACE OF THE LORD

BUSCANDO LA CARA DEL SEÑOR

Grateful prayer for priests would be a welcome Christmas gift

One of the entrance antiphons for the Mass commemorating a holy priest reads: "I will raise up for myself a priest; he will do what is in my heart and in my mind, says the Lord" (1 Sm 2:35).

We know well that we are ordained a priest to proclaim God's Word, to celebrate the sacraments, and to serve God and the people of God humbly and generously and in the person of Jesus Christ, the High Priest.

Priestly ministry is awesome. We are able to serve because of God's unique grace, which we received in the sacrament of holy orders and accompanies us all the days of our priestly life.

We are realistic enough to know that living our priestly commitment in the real world also brings challenges. And so we count on his grace, we trust in God's Providence.

Two years ago in his Chrism Mass homily, Pope Benedict XVI said: "The theology of baptism returns in a new way and with a new insistence in priestly ordination. Just as in Baptism an 'exchange of clothing' is given, and exchanged destination, a new existential communion with Christ, so also in priesthood there is an exchange: in the administration of the sacraments, the priest now acts and speaks *in persona Christi*. In the sacred mysteries, he does not represent himself and does not speak expressing himself, but speaks for the Other, for Christ."

In baptism, we received the white

garment that symbolized our new existence in Christ. At ordination, we were clothed with liturgical vestments that symbolize yet a radically new relationship with Christ.

Priests put themselves at Christ's disposal. We offer ourselves to serve the people of our local Church generously in the person of Christ the High Priest and bridegroom of the Church. At ordination, we pray that Jesus takes us by the hand again and again, and leads us in our priestly ministry.

At ordination, we pray that we priests will serve our sisters and brothers with an unwavering and enthusiastic missionary vision—like the two missionary pioneers of our local Church, the Servant of God Bishop Simon Bruté and St. Theodora Guérin.

These saints gave themselves entirely into the hands of Divine Providence; they devoted their lives entirely to Christ, especially in the poor and the people in the shadows.

Like our pioneer founders, we pray that our ministry may be filled with a deep and heartfelt love. As it was for them, may it be for us a pure love nurtured before the tabernacles of the churches where we serve.

Through the imposition of the hands of the archbishop, the Lord himself lays his hands upon the ordinands. Each priest in his own way heard the Lord's call, "Follow me."

Perhaps, to start with, we followed him hesitantly, looking back and wondering if this really was the road for us.

Maybe like St. Peter, we may have been frightened by our inadequacy so that we were tempted to turn back. St. Peter said to Jesus, "Depart from me, for I am a sinful man" (Lk 5:8). Then, however, with kindness, Jesus took him by the hand.

So he does for us priests. He draws us to himself and tells us do not fear. I am with you. I will not abandon you. We need to keep in mind Bishop Bruté and Mother Theodore, who are courageous witnesses of Christ's companionship along our missionary journey.

At ordination, priests place their hands in the hands of the archbishop and renew their promise of obedience. I like to recall the words of Benedictine Cardinal Basil Hume. He said: "Let us link two gestures together: the kiss of peace exchanged with the bishop and the promise of obedience. The sign of peace sets the tone for the promise; your promise is an expression of your willingness to be part of the bishop's responsibility for the people of God" (*Light in the Lord*, p. 47). He also remarked: "I think obedience is very close to love, indeed it is an aspect of love" (p. 90).

There is something else about obedience: Pope John Paul II once remarked about the

gesture of the ordinand putting his hands in those of the bishop: "A priest must be able to feel, especially in moments of difficulty, of loneliness, that his hands are held tightly by the bishop's." Isn't it a mutual gesture, symbolic of safety in the hands of Christ?

I end with a final thought: St. Charles Borromeo once wisely admonished his priests: "Are you in charge of a parish? If so, do not neglect the parish of your own soul, do not give yourself so completely that you have nothing left for yourself. Be mindful of your people without becoming forgetful of yourself."

Please pray gratefully for our generous and dedicated priests. It would be a welcome Christmas gift. †

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.

La oración de agradecimiento a los sacerdotes en un excelente obsequio de Navidad

Uno de los himnos de entrada de la Misa de conmemoración de un sacerdote santo dice: "Pero levantaré para mí un sacerdote fiel que hará conforme a los deseos de mi corazón y de mi alma, dice el Señor" (1 Sm 2:35).

Sabemos muy bien que se nos ordena como sacerdotes para proclamar la Palabra de Dios, para celebrar los sacramentos y para servir a Dios y a Su Pueblo de manera humilde, generosa y en el nombre de Jesucristo, el Sumo Sacerdote.

El ministerio sacerdotal es maravilloso. Podemos servir en virtud de la gracia especial que recibimos de Dios, a través del sacramento de las órdenes sagradas, y la cual nos asiste todos los días de nuestras vidas como sacerdotes.

Somos lo suficientemente realistas como para darnos cuenta de que vivir el compromiso de ser sacerdotes en el mundo real también ofrece desafíos. Y por ello, contamos con Su gracia, confiamos en la Divina Providencia.

Hace dos años, durante la homilía de la Misa Crismal, el papa Benedicto XVI señaló: "Esta teología del bautismo se repite de modo nuevo y con nueva insistencia en la ordenación sacerdotal. De la misma manera que en el bautismo se produce un 'intercambio de vestidos,' un intercambio de destinos, una nueva comunión existencial con Cristo, así también en el sacerdocio se da un intercambio: en la administración de los sacramentos el sacerdote actúa y habla ya 'in persona Christi.' En los sagrados misterios el sacerdote no se representa a sí mismo y no habla expresándose a sí mismo, sino que habla en la persona de Otro, de Cristo."

En el bautismo recibimos un traje blanco

que simboliza nuestra nueva existencia en Cristo. En la ordenación se nos viste con túnicas litúrgicas que simbolizan una nueva relación, aún más definitiva, con Cristo

Los sacerdotes se ponen a disposición de Cristo. Nos ofrecemos para servir generosamente al pueblo de nuestra Iglesia local en la persona de Cristo, el Sumo Sacerdote y el prometido de la Iglesia. En la ordenación rezamos para que Jesús nos tome de la mano una y otra vez y nos guíe en el ministerio sacerdotal

Durante la ordenación rezamos para poder servir a nuestros hermanos y hermanas con una visión entusiasta e inquebrantable, al igual que los dos misioneros pioneros de nuestra Iglesia local, el obispo Simon Bruté y Santa Theodora Guérin.

Estos santos se entregaron por completo a las manos de la Divina Providencia; dedicaron sus vidas a Cristo, especialmente a los pobres y a los que se encuentran en las tinieblas.

Al igual que nuestros pioneros fundadores, rezamos para que nuestro ministerio esté colmado de un amor profundo y sincero. Tal como nuestros antepasados, pedimos para que el nuestro sea un amor puro que se alimenta al postrarnos ante los sagrados de las iglesias en las cuales servimos.

A través de la imposición del manos del arzobispo, el Señor coloca sus manos sobre los ordenandos. Cada sacerdote escuchó a su manera el llamado del Señor que le decía "sígueme."

Quizás al principio comenzamos a seguirlo con indecisión, mirando hacia atrás y preguntándonos si realmente este es el camino que nos corresponde.

Tal vez, al igual que le ocurrió a San Pedro, hayamos sentido temor debido a nuestras incapacidades y estuvimos tentados a regresar. San Pedro le dijo a Jesús: "¡Apártate de mí, Señor, pues soy hombre pecador!" (Lk 5:8). No obstante, Jesús lo tomó de la mano con ternura, al igual que hace con los sacerdotes. Nos acerca a él y nos dice que no temamos. Estoy contigo. No te abandonaré. Debemos recordar al obispo Bruté y a la Madre Theodore quienes son testigos valientes de la compañía de Cristo a lo largo de nuestro camino como misioneros.

En la ordenación los sacerdotes colocan sus manos sobre las del arzobispo y renuevan su promesa de obediencia. Me gusta evocar las palabras del cardenal benedictino Basil Hume, quien expresó: "Concatenemos dos gestos: el beso de paz del obispo y la promesa de obediencia. La señal de la paz marca la pauta de la promesa; su promesa es una expresión de su voluntad de tomar parte en la responsabilidad de velar por el Pueblo de Dios." (*Light in the Lord* [Luz en el Señor], p.47). También señaló: "Considero que la obediencia está muy unida al amor, de hecho, es un aspecto de éste" (p. 90).

Pero hay algo más acerca de la obediencia: el papa Juan Pablo II comentó en una ocasión acerca el gesto del ordenando de colocar sus manos sobre las

del obispo: "El sacerdote debe sentir, especialmente en momentos de dificultad y de soledad, que el obispo le tiene de la mano." ¿Acaso no es éste un gesto mutuo que simboliza la seguridad que experimentamos en las manos de Cristo?

Terminaré con una reflexión. En una oportunidad San Carlos Borromeo exhortó a sus sacerdotes: "¿Estás a cargo de una parroquia? De ser así, no descuides la parroquia de tu propia alma, no te entregues de tal modo que no quede nada para tí mismo. Ocupate de las personas sin olvidarte de tí."

Recen con agradecimiento por nuestros sacerdotes generosos y dedicados. Resultará un obsequio de Navidad muy oportuno. †

¿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 Indianapolis
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 servir en la Iglesia, sobre todo como sacerdotes o religiosos.

Events Calendar

December 18

Northside Knights of Columbus Hall, 2100 E. 71st St., Indianapolis. **Catholic Business Exchange**, Mass, breakfast and program, WISH Channel 8 anchor Deanna Dewberry, speaker, 6:30-8:30 a.m., online reservations only by Dec. 16. Reservations and information: www.catholicbusinessexchange.org.

Northside Knights of Columbus Hall, 2100 E. 71st St., Indianapolis. **Friday night buffet, Christmas performance by The Master's Chorale of Central Indiana**, 6:30 p.m.

St. Andrew Church, 235 S.

5th St., Richmond. **Simbang Gabi Mass**, 7 p.m.

December 19

Planned Parenthood, 8590 N. Georgetown Road, Indianapolis. **Right to Life of Indianapolis and 40 Days for Life, Empty Manger Christmas caroling, pro-life prayers**, 10 a.m.-noon. Information: 317-213-4778.

St. Patrick Church, 1807 Poplar St., Terre Haute. **Simbang Gabi Mass**, 4 p.m.

December 20

St. Michael the Archangel Church, 3354 W. 30th St., Indianapolis. **Christmas concert**, 6:30 p.m., free-will donation. Information: 317-926-7359.

Richmond Catholic Community, 701 N. "A" St., Richmond. **Charismatic prayer group**, 7 p.m. Information: dicksoncorp@parallax.ws.

MKVS, Divine Mercy and Glorious Cross Center, Rexville, located on 925 South .8 mile east of 421 South and 12 miles south of Versailles. Mass, noon, on **third Sunday holy hour and pitch-in**, groups of 10 pray the new Marian Way, 1 p.m., Father Elmer Burwinkel, celebrant. Information: 812-689-3551.

December 22

St. Lawrence Church, 6944 E. 46th St., Indianapolis. **Simbang Gabi Mass**, 7 p.m.

December 23

St. John the Evangelist Church, 126 W. Georgia St., Indianapolis. **Advent organ recital**, 11:30 a.m. Information: 317-635-2021.

December 27

Oldenburg Franciscan Center, Oldenburg. **Open house, tours, chime choir concert** in chapel, 6-8 p.m. Information: 812-934-2475 or www.oldenburgfranciscans.org.

December 28-29

Roncalli High School, gymnasium, 3300 Prague Road, Indianapolis. **Baseball camp**, third through eighth graders, \$55 per camper, third to fifth graders camp, 9 a.m.-noon, sixth to

eighth graders camp, 12:30-3:30 p.m. Information: hatfieldkd@yahoo.com.

December 29-30

Extra Innings, 5545 S. Meridian St., Indianapolis. **Roncalli High School, softball camp**, first through eighth graders, 1:30-4 p.m., \$30 per camper. Information: roncallisoftball@yahoo.com

January 2

Oldenburg Franciscan Center, Michaela Farm, Oldenburg. Audubon Society, **Christmas bird count**, 7:30 a.m.-1 p.m., lunch \$5 per person. Information: 812-933-6437.

January 6

St. Mary Parish, 317 N. New Jersey St., Indianapolis. **Solo Seniors**, Catholic,

educational, charitable and social singles, 50 and over, single, separated, widowed or divorced, new members welcome, 6:30 p.m. Information: 317-370-1189.

January 9

St. Roch Parish, Family Center, 3603 S. Meridian St., Indianapolis. **Single Seniors**, meeting, 1 p.m., age 50 and over. Information: 317-784-4207.

January 15

St. Francis Hospital, 8111 S. Emerson Ave., Indianapolis. **Couple to Couple League, Natural Family Planning (NFP) class**, 7 p.m. Information: 317-462-2246. †

VIP

On Dec. 8, **James Dodson**, a member of St. Pius X Parish in Indianapolis and the chief executive officer of The Dodson Group, received *The Indianapolis Business Journal's* Michael A. Carroll Award.

The award is given in memory of Michael Carroll, a civic leader and former deputy mayor of Indianapolis, and honors those who share Carroll's qualities of determination, humility and devotion to the Indianapolis community.

Dodson has supported many archdiocesan ministries and is a member of the Catholic Community Foundation board. †

Grant

The Historic Landmarks Foundation of Indiana recently awarded a \$4,000 grant to **Holy Trinity Parish**, located in the 900 block of North Holmes Avenue, in Indianapolis. The parish, which is a landmark in the historic Haughville neighborhood on the west side of Indianapolis, will receive grant funds for restoration work needed on Bockhold Hall. The building was constructed in 1927 and serves as the parish center. †

Holy Name of Jesus Parish to host 48th annual Christmas Concert

Holy Name of Jesus Parish, 89 N. 17th Ave., in Beech Grove will host its 48th annual Christmas Concert at 3 p.m. and again at 6:30 p.m. on Dec. 20.

The concerts will feature 150 vocalists from combined adult and children's choirs as well as an orchestra accompaniment highlighting both traditional and contemporary selections.

Parish music director Jerry Craney, who has directed the concert since its inception, is scheduled to lead this year's concert.

Tickets are \$5. To purchase tickets, call 317-787-1682. †

Brownsburg parish to sponsor 'Catholics Returning Home'

St. Malachy Parish in Brownsburg will host an ongoing series called "Catholics Returning Home" at 7 p.m. on six consecutive Wednesdays beginning on Jan. 6, 2010.

The program is intended for non-practicing Catholics who are seeking answers to questions about returning to the Church. There will be informal sharing and an update of the Catholic faith.

The sessions will be held at St. Malachy Church, 9833 E. County Road 750 N., in Brownsburg. For more information, call 317-650-5751. †

Our Lady of Guadalupe



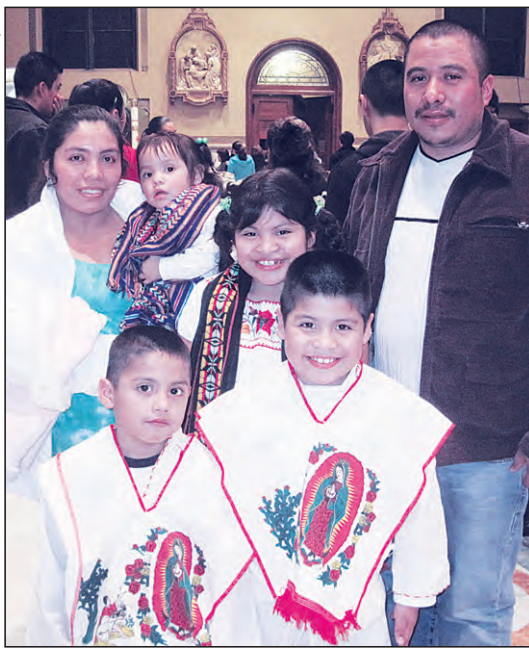
Above, flanked by members of the Knights of Columbus, Robin Garmon, left, and Vincent Turnquist, members of Our Lady of the Greenwood Parish in Greenwood, process in front of an image of Our Lady of Guadalupe on her feast day on Dec. 12 at the start of the parish's 14th annual solemn Mass in her honor. Garmon and Turnquist assist with their parish's Our Lady of Guadalupe ministry.

Left, costumed girls prepare to participate in a procession during a daytime Mass on Our Lady of Guadalupe's feast day on Dec. 12 at Our Lady of the Greenwood Church in Greenwood. Several hundred people attended the annual festive Mass in the Indianapolis South Deanery parish.



New Albany celebration

Hispanic family members who are members of St. Mary Parish in New Albany pose after an Our Lady of Guadalupe Mass on Dec. 12 at St. Mary Church. The two boys are dressed as St. Juan Diego, who received the vision of Our Lady of Guadalupe on the hill of Tepeyac in Mexico in 1531.



98th birthday celebration

Retired Msgr. Richard Kavanagh, the oldest priest of the archdiocese, celebrates his 98th birthday on Nov. 29 at St. Paul Hermitage in Beech Grove with Huser Home Care employees who assist him in his apartment. Celebrating with him are, from left, Kami McGuffey, Sarah Clark, Emily Johnson, Suzette Phillips, Sister Leocadia Bernardo and Kathy Breedlove.

Deep roots

Bohman Christmas Tree Farm creates holiday memories for many families

By Sean Gallagher

ENOCHSBURG—Family, tradition and faith make Advent and Christmas a cherished time of year for people around the world.

But in the hills of southeastern Indiana, the Bohman family works hard year-round to help make this holy season a reality for scores of other families in the region.

Mike Bohman, 68, is the owner of Bohman Christmas Tree Farm, which has supplied live Christmas trees for countless families for 33 years.

Working with him on the farm are his wife, Sondra; his daughter, Penny Eldridge; his son, Doug Bohman; and several of his eight grandchildren.

The Bohmans work hard to create Christmas memories for other families because, like the trees they sell, they are deeply rooted in the land that their ancestor, Gerhard Bohman, bought when he came to Indiana from Germany more than 170 years ago.

They do it because they are deeply rooted in their Christian faith. St. John the Evangelist Church, which stands across the road from the farm, sits on land donated by Gerhard Bohman.

“The roots are very deep,” said Mike Bohman, a member of St. John the Evangelist Parish. “Years ago, they pastured some of this land. And they harvested crops off of some of it. But I couldn’t farm this today and make a living.”

Patience

As a young man in his late 20s, that was the prospect that Mike faced 41 years ago



Jazmine Oaldon, left, and her grandfather, Dave Stirn, cut down a Christmas tree on Dec. 5 on the Bohman Christmas Tree Farm in Enochburg. Stirn has brought his family to the farm for more than two decades.

when considering what he was going to do with land that had been in the family for five generations.

After working for another nearby Christmas tree farmer, Bohman decided to start a tree farm of his own.

An ordinary farmer plants a crop and works with it patiently over several months until it is harvested.

Bohman had to wait eight years before he saw a return on his investment of time, sweat and money. Some of the Christmas trees he plants now aren’t harvested for 12 to 14 years.

Doug Bohman, 38, who grew up on the farm, knows well what that kind of patience is all about.

“The first year, you put the tree in the ground and you don’t see a lot of results,” he said. “You don’t really see it start growing a bunch until halfway through its life. Then it really shoots up. Then it really starts developing into a Christmas tree.”

Doug and his father see that happen to lots of trees. There are upwards of 70,000 trees on their farm at present. Since a sizable minority of the trees won’t survive to be harvested, three are planted for every one that is cut down.

Mike knows that some of the trees that he is planting now won’t be harvested until he is 80. But he doesn’t see himself slowing down anytime soon.

“I hope to be here to harvest them,” he said. “If I was going to quit, I wouldn’t be planting trees anymore.”

Mike did a lot of the planting and shearing of the trees as a part-time job. He worked full time at Hillenbrand Industries in Batesville until he was 61.

“I’d come out here in the evenings,” he said. “I’d get out of the hustle and bustle of the office. It’s peaceful riding around on a tractor. You wound down out here.”

Helping families

For the Bohmans, all the hard work and patience pays off when they get to see families visit the farm to cut down their own Christmas trees starting the weekend after Thanksgiving.

“Over the past 30 years, you see people year after year after year returning,” Doug said. “It makes you feel good that they want to come back to the farm. It makes the work throughout the whole year worth it.”

Dave Stirn, 51, of Batesville has brought his family to the Bohman Christmas Tree Farm for more than 20 years. Now that his children are grown and starting families of their own, he enjoys cutting down Christmas trees with his grandchildren.

“It’s great,” Stirn said. “It’s just lovely to see them enjoying it just like we did when we’re [younger].”

“It’s nice to see everybody together, doing this as a family and enjoying it. My son will be home on Dec. 27. He lives out in Montana.”

Mike gained an appreciation for what he



Mike Bohman stands next to a tree on his Christmas tree farm that he has run for 41 years adjacent to St. John the Evangelist Parish in Enochburg.

does to bring families together from Father Ambrose Schneider, who served as pastor of St. John the Evangelist Parish for 34 years, and died in 1991.

“One day, he said, ‘Michael, you know what you’re doing?’ And I said, ‘I don’t know. What, Father?’” Mike said. “And he said, ‘You’re making many a happy family. I sit here in the priest’s house, and I see these cars come up this road and turn. There are kids in it, and a tree hanging on top. They’re all smiling from ear to ear. You’re making a lot of families happy, and bringing them together.’”

“It kind of puts chills up your back. It’s a happy time of the year,” Mike said.

Helping families come together during the Christmas season is especially important to Mike’s daughter, Penny Eldridge, 39.

A member of St. John the Evangelist Parish, her first husband, Andrew Smith, died of cancer two years after they were married. Three years ago, she married Matt Eldridge, whose first wife also died of cancer.

“It’s fun watching different [families] come out here,” Penny said. “They have their babies, and then they get older and you see the different generations growing older.”

One of those babies that she has seen grow older on the farm is her daughter Abbi, 8, who sells hot dogs to visitors to the farm.

“It’s kind of fun when you have a lot of customers,” Abbi said.

In early December, she and her family go out on the farm and pick out their own tree.

“It’s hard to pick which one because you see everyone get the good ones,” Abbi said with a laugh.

“In our house, it’s Christmas year-round,”

Mike said. “The word ‘Christmas’ doesn’t come up just in November and December. It’s Christmas in July here. It’s Christmas in April.”

Rooted in faith

St. John the Evangelist Church can be seen from just about every point on the Bohman Christmas Tree Farm.

One of Gerhard Bohman’s sons died in the construction of the church in the mid-1850s. And the parish cemetery, where many Bohmans are buried, is a stone’s throw away from where their customers purchase Christmas trees.

Bells in the clock of the church steeple ring out clearly on the half hour and hour at this time of year as families walk up and down the farm’s hills looking for the perfect tree.

“I look at the church a lot to see what time of the day it is,” Mike said. “And Mom and Dad are right here [in the cemetery next to the farm]. It’s part of the farm. It’s part of the operation.”

Penny moved back to Enochburg a few years ago after living in Brownsburg. She and her family built a house at the back end of the farm with a perfect view of the church.

“It’s so neat every morning to wake up and be able to look outside and see the church,” Penny said. “It’s like God’s watching over us.”

(To learn more about the Bohman Christmas Tree Farm, log on to www.bohmanchristmastrees.com.) †

Christ’s real presence brings people closer to God, says pope

VATICAN CITY (CNS)—The Eucharist is not a symbolic representation of the Lord because Christ is wholly and entirely present under the species of bread and wine, said Pope Benedict XVI.

“Even today, there is the danger of reducing the reality of the Eucharist—considering it almost as just a rite of communion or socialization, and we too often easily forget that the resurrected Christ is really present,” he said during his general audience in the Vatican’s Paul VI hall on Dec. 9.

The pope continued a series of talks on the Christian culture of the Middle Ages by highlighting the work of Rupert of Deutz, a 12th-century Benedictine theologian and abbot.

“He forcefully defended the reality of Christ’s real presence in the Eucharist,”

and underlined “the continuity between the body of the incarnated word of Christ and [the body] present under the eucharistic species of bread and wine,” said the pope.

The real presence of Christ in the Eucharist draws people out of their own narrow concerns and interests, “incorporating us in his immortal body, and in that way guides us toward a new life,” he said.

“That the Lord is wholly and entirely present is a mystery to be adored and always loved anew,” Pope Benedict said.

The pope said Rupert also made a critical contribution to the debate going on at the time regarding the problem of how to explain the existence of evil in the world when God is fundamentally good and omnipotent. †

Final 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*.

Indianapolis South Deanery

Dec. 21, 7 p.m. at Our Lady of the Greenwood, Greenwood
Dec. 22, 7 p.m. at St. Mark the Evangelist

New Albany Deanery

Dec. 19, 9:30 a.m. at St. Mary-of-the-Knobs, Floyds Knobs
Dec. 20, 4 p.m. at Holy Family, New Albany
Dec. 20, 3 p.m. at St. Mary, New Albany (Español)

Seymour Deanery

Dec. 21, 6:30 p.m. for St. Anne, Jennings County; St. Mary, North Vernon; and St. Joseph, Jennings County, at St. Joseph, Jennings County †



Health reform, Pope Benedict named top story, newsmaker of 2009

WASHINGTON (CNS)—The debate over health care reform topped the religious news stories of 2009, and Pope Benedict XVI and President Barack Obama were again the top newsmakers, according to the annual poll conducted by Catholic News Service.

The continued effects of the recession on the U.S. and global economy took second place among the 30 news stories on the ballot. The controversy over Obama's commencement address at the University of Notre Dame in May and the decision to award the president with an honorary degree came in third.

Most first-place votes on the newsmakers list went to either Obama or Pope Benedict, although the pope was the clear winner this year. The late Sen. Ted Kennedy of Massachusetts was a distant third.

The poll was the 48th annual survey conducted by CNS. This year's ballots were distributed on Dec. 4, and the deadline for returns was Dec. 10.

When the editors' poll was first conducted in 1962, the overwhelming choice for top story was the opening of the Second Vatican Council. Last year, editors chose the election of the first African-American U.S. president and controversy surrounding the role of Catholic voters in the campaign as the top religious story of the year. Pope Benedict and Obama were the top newsmakers.

Editors were asked to vote for the top 10 news stories from a list of 30 selected by CNS staff, and the top five newsmakers from a list of 22. Votes were weighted by the rankings editors gave—10 points for a first-place vote, nine points for second, etc., and five points for top newsmaker, four for second, etc.

Eleven stories received first-place votes, including three that did not make the top 10.

With 29 editors and CNS staff members

submitting ballots, the maximum points a story could have received was 290. The most a newsmaker could receive on the five-point scale was 140 because one editor voted only for top stories and not newsmakers.

Rounding out the top five for religious news stories were the papal encyclical "Caritas in Veritate" ("Charity in Truth") and the Vatican-ordered visitation of U.S. women religious, which was to continue into 2010.

Pope Benedict took first place in the CNS poll for his travels to the Middle East and Africa, his outreach to Anglicans and traditionalist Catholics, and his proclamation of a Year for Priests. Obama, whose first year as president included the Notre Dame controversy, his reception of the Nobel Peace Prize and a fight over abortion funding in health reform legislation, was second.

The next three top newsmakers were separated by only one vote each. The late Sen. Ted Kennedy of Massachusetts was third, new Supreme Court Justice Sonia Sotomayor fourth and Archbishop Timothy M. Dolan, named to head the New York Archdiocese in February, was fifth.

Here are the choices for top 10 stories and top five newsmakers of 2009, followed by points received in the weighted ballot count and, in parentheses, the number of first-place votes received.

STORIES

1. Health reform, 211 (8).
2. Recession/economy, 192 (6).
3. Notre Dame controversy, 154 (3).
4. Encyclical "Caritas in Veritate," 109 (2).
5. Visitation of U.S. women religious, 94.
6. President Obama's first year, 86 (2).
7. Year for Priests, 82 (2).
8. H1N1 flu outbreak, 77.
9. Africa, 60 (1).

2009

YEAR IN REVIEW

TOP STORIES

1. Health Reform

The role of the U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops in the debate over health care reform drew criticism and praise, depending primarily on where the commentators stood on the abortion issue.

2. Recession/Economy

3. Notre Dame Controversy

4. Encyclical "Caritas in Veritate"

5. Visitation of U.S. Women Religious



TOP NEWSMAKERS

1. Pope Benedict XVI

In his fourth year as pope, Benedict XVI traveled to the Middle East and Africa, released an encyclical and proclaimed a Year for Priests.

2. President Barack Obama

3. Sen. Ted Kennedy

4. Justice Sonia Sotomayor

5. Archbishop Timothy M. Dolan



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10. Anglicans, 59 (2).
Also receiving first-place votes were climate change, sainthood causes, and the wars in Afghanistan and Iraq.

3. Sen. Ted Kennedy, 34 (1).
4. Supreme Court Justice Sonia Sotomayor, 33 (2).
5. Archbishop Timothy M. Dolan, 32.

NEWSMAKERS

1. Pope Benedict XVI, 102 (13).
2. President Barack Obama, 73 (9).

Also receiving first-place votes were U.S. women religious and Holy Cross Father John I. Jenkins, president of the University of Notre Dame. †

Terre Haute Deanery

Christmas Eve Masses

Parish	Time
St. Ann	6:00 pm
Annunciation, Brazil	midnight
St. Benedict	5:30, 8:00 pm & midnight
Holy Rosary, Seelyville	5:30 & 10:00 pm
St. Joseph, Rockville	6:00 pm
St. Joseph, Universal	8:00 pm
St. Joseph University Parish	5:00, 8:00, 11:30 prelude, & midnight
St. Mary-of-the-Woods Village Parish.....5:00 pm	
St. Margaret Mary	4:00 pm
St. Patrick	6:30, 11:30 vigil, & midnight
Sacred Heart, Clinton	4:00 pm & midnight
Sacred Heart, TH	4:00 pm & midnight
St. Paul, Greencastle.....	6:00 & 10:30 pm

Christmas Day Masses

Parish	Time
Annunciation, Brazil	10:30 am
St. Benedict	11:00 am
St. Joseph, Rockville	9:00 am
St. Joseph University Parish	10:00 am
St. Leonard, WTH	9:00 am
St. Margaret Mary	11:00 am
St. Patrick	9:00 am
Sacred Heart, Clinton	10:30 am
Sacred Heart, TH	10:00 am
St. Paul, Greencastle	10:00 am

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Image: Unknown artist, Mexican, end of 17th century, detail of Virgin of Guadalupe, c. 1700, oil on canvas. Indianapolis Museum of Art, Maisee Eden Power Endowment Fund.

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Death penalty opponents protest Wrinkles' execution

By Mary Ann Wyand

Several death penalty opponents stood in the darkness, braced against the bitter cold, in front of the Governor's Residence in Indianapolis late on Dec. 10 during a pro-life vigil to peacefully protest the execution of death-row inmate Matthew Eric Wrinkles early on Dec. 11 at the Indiana State Prison in Michigan City, Ind.

The 49-year-old Evansville, Ind., man—who was convicted of killing his wife, her brother and her sister-in-law on July 21, 1994, while high on methamphetamine—had not requested clemency, and Gov. Mitch Daniels did not grant a last-minute commutation of his death sentence to life in prison without parole.

Wrinkles died at 12:39 a.m. on Dec. 11 from a lethal injection administered by prison officials.

Even though they knew that Wrinkles would almost certainly be executed in a few hours, the demonstrators still stood undeterred in the frigid winter night in front of the Governor's Residence at 4600 N. Meridian St., holding pro-life signs for drivers and other passersby to read and, hopefully, remember, reflect on and be inspired to take action to help end

the state's practice of executing convicted murderers.

"He hasn't asked for clemency," acknowledged St. Susanna parishioner Karen Burkhart of Plainfield, the Indiana death penalty abolition coordinator for Amnesty International since 1978, as she stood bundled up against the freezing wind.

"Not asking for [clemency] and not wanting it are two different things," she said. "I would expect that he would accept [life in prison without parole] if it was offered."

Burkhart held a handmade sign that read "My man Mitch, stop the killing."

"I understand that his kids would like it if he wasn't executed," she said. "They are really upset about it, and they were affected horribly by this [murder of their mother, aunt and uncle]. They have already lost their mother, and now the state is going to make them orphans. Taking his life isn't going to bring back their mom. It's just going to cause more pain and suffering for the family."

The temperature was below freezing, Burkhart said, but "Jesus is right by my side. I know he's here with all the people that are here. He's coming to say, 'It's not OK to do this. We shouldn't be killing people in anyone's name.'"

Indiana University-Purdue University Indianapolis student Ashley Kincaid of Avon, who is a member of Amnesty International, held a sign that read "Don't kill for me."

She is studying psychology and criminal justice at IUPUI, and plans to complete law school then represent indigent death-row inmates as a public defender at the appellate court level.

"I want to help the people that can't help themselves, and that no one else is willing to help," Kincaid said. "I believe that all life is sacred and that justice shouldn't have a price tag. I feel that the death penalty is wrong. It re-victimizes people. ... I want people to know that tonight's killing will not be in my name."

After the one-hour evening vigil in front of the Governor's Residence, Kincaid traveled to Michigan City to join a late-night vigil outside the prison with members of the Indiana Coalition Acting to Suspend Executions (InCASE).

Jared Carter of Indianapolis, also a member of Amnesty International, held a sign that read "Execution is not the solution."



Amnesty International members Jared Carter of Indianapolis, from left, Ashley Kincaid of Avon, Michael Hartt of Indianapolis and Karen Burkhart, the Indiana death penalty abolition coordinator for Amnesty International and member of St. Susanna Parish in Plainfield, hold signs on Dec. 10 in front of the Governor's Residence in Indianapolis indicating their opposition to capital punishment and the execution of Matthew Wrinkles.

"I hope we can see through to abolishing the death penalty in Indiana," Carter said. "We're the last major Western country to conduct such executions. Almost all the civilized countries have foregone it. ... Any time you decide to take another human's life, arbitrarily or for some reason you manufacture, you're assuming God-like powers, which you

STEIDL

continued from page 3

sitting on death row," Steidl recalled. "I said, 'How could this happen? It's not just me that they're doing this to.' They did it to my 9-year-old son, 14-year-old daughter and the rest of my family. I could see the pain in their eyes when they came to visit me on death row, and when they had to leave. No 9-year-old boy should have to go through that."

Steidl said he would often become angry and question his faith while locked in his prison cell for 23 hours every day.

"There were times I asked God, when I laid down at night in my cell, 'Please, I can't do this anymore. Just let me go to sleep and not wake up,'" he admitted. "I prayed hard to God to make it easier on my family so they wouldn't have to go through this anymore. But every morning, I woke back up to the same routine—day after day after day. I got to thinking after a while that God must have a plan for me, but he was sure taking his time."

Death row is a dark and intimidating place, Steidl said, and the monotony of daily life spent in a cage is maddening.

"A couple of good priests would visit me during those 17 years," he recalled.

"They said, 'Never abandon God. Never abandon your faith.'"

His mother went to Mass and prayed novenas on his behalf, pleading with God to release her son from prison.

Her prayers were answered when Callahan began investigating Steidl's case as part of allegations of police corruption.

Steidl has unanswered questions about his wrongful conviction and incarceration.

"After I walked out [of the prison]," he said, "a reporter asked me, 'What about the last 17 years of your life?' I had no answers. ... A government or state shouldn't be in the business of taking human life. ... I think that's what God saved me for. Maybe I can change a heart or mind or the law. ... We need a moratorium in place in order to study the death penalty, to see how many Randy Steidls there are. I know there are at least 139 of us. ... I thought about how our Lord must have felt when he was wrongfully convicted and executed with a thief. He didn't do anything wrong."

"How come we have a legal system in place that put 139 of us now on this country's death rows for crimes that we didn't commit?" Steidl asked. "... We've got a capital punishment system that is broken. How can you believe in a system

like that? The death penalty is nothing more than a hate crime."

Steidl said he considers himself "one of the very, very fortunate ones" because he was finally released from prison even though he spent nearly one-third of his life in a cell for something he didn't do and should never have been punished for without any credible or physical evidence.

"You can release an innocent man from prison," he said, "but you can't

release him from his grave."

Will McAuliffe, the executive director of the Indiana Coalition Acting to Suspend Executions, said nine people were exonerated from state death rows in 2009.

"We need to ask the state to take a step back from executing people while we have these large questions looming over us," McAuliffe said, "questions of innocence, questions of if this is a worthy use of our increasingly limited resources, questions of whether this system is fair." †

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TOP STORIES

continued from page 2

reflects the archbishop's great faith in Lentz, who has excelled in leading several of the archdiocese's major initiatives in recent years.

During her 12 years of leadership as the executive director of Catholic education, 25 of the 71 Catholic schools in the archdiocese have earned recognition as a Blue Ribbon School of Excellence by the U.S. Department of Education—a distinction that no other diocese in the country can match.

7. Archbishop Buechlein responds to Notre Dame's invitation to President Obama.

Archbishop Buechlein sent a public letter to Holy Cross Father John Jenkins, president of the University of Notre Dame, to express his disappointment and concern about the school's invitation to President Barack Obama to speak at the university's commencement on May 17 and receive an honorary degree.

More than 70 bishops, including Fort Wayne-South Bend Bishop John D'Arcy, who chose not to attend the commencement ceremony, spoke out against the decision by the university.

8. Holy Family Shelter dedicates new facility.

Twenty-five years to the day after the archdiocese opened Holy Family Shelter on the near south side in Indianapolis to serve homeless families, moving crews loaded furnishings, equipment and supplies onto trucks for transport to the new emergency shelter on the near west side of the city.

It was an emotional experience for the shelter staff members, who work hard around the clock to serve Christ by keeping the facility open 24 hours a day, seven days a week, all 365 days of the year in order to provide safe lodging and social services for families in crisis situations who have no place to call home.

Shelter staff members barely noticed the chilly late autumn weather as they cheerfully pitched in to help direct the move from 30 E. Palmer St. near Sacred Heart of Jesus Church to 907 N. Holmes Ave. next to Holy Trinity Church.

The new shelter was dedicated by Archbishop Buechlein during a Mass of Thanksgiving on Dec. 6 at Holy Trinity

Church in Indianapolis

Nearly six years ago, the archdiocese began planning the construction of a larger homeless shelter for families because of the great need for emergency housing.

The facility has operated for a quarter century as a 30- to 45-day emergency shelter, with 27 days as the average length of stay for the more than 9,000 homeless families served there.

9. Bishop Simon Bruté College Seminary expands to accommodate needs.

When 23 seminarians enrolled at Bishop Simon Bruté College Seminary in Indianapolis for the 2009-10 academic year moved in on Aug. 13, they were met with the sounds of pounding hammers and roaring power tools echoing through their normally silent arched hallways.

Construction workers were busy transforming into bedrooms a series of rooms that Carmelite nuns had previously used to bake Communion hosts and work at other tasks because the seminary's enrollment now exceeds its 21 bedrooms.

When renovations were completed in October, there were 32 bedrooms.

A significant factor in the growth in enrollment at the seminary is the steady increase in the number of college seminarians in the archdiocese over the past decade.

In 2000, there were three college students affiliated with the archdiocese as seminarians. At the start of the 2009-10 academic year, there were 15 seminarians, all enrolled at Bishop Bruté. There have not been this many archdiocesan college seminarians since 1995.

10. World's oldest Benedictine monk dies at Saint Meinrad Archabbey.

Benedictine Father Theodore Heck, a monk of Saint Meinrad Archabbey in St. Meinrad, died on April 29. He was 108, and was the world's oldest Benedictine monk.

Starting in 1935, Father Theodore spent half a century teaching and serving as an administrator of Saint Meinrad's minor and major seminaries. He was rector of Saint Meinrad School of Theology from 1956-66 and served as rector of Saint Meinrad College for three years during that span.

Archabbot Justin DuVall, the leader of Saint Meinrad Archabbey, praised him for his longstanding ministry in the seminary.



Eight-year-old Kailyn Hunter of Indianapolis sweeps the sidewalk across from Holy Trinity Church in Indianapolis on Oct. 3 as part of a Parish Partners neighborhood clean-up effort by volunteers from several parishes. Kailyn is the daughter of Holy Trinity parishioners Adam and Carrie Hutt of Indianapolis. The archdiocesan SHINE (Spreading Hope in Neighborhoods Everywhere) conference on Oct. 1 encouraged Catholics in central and southern Indiana to serve their Church and community.

He also said that Father Theodore showed what it meant to be a monk by his "fidelity to prayer" and by becoming a well-rounded person through constant reading.

Archabbot Justin also noted that Father Theodore, who came to Saint Meinrad in 1918 to its seminary, was a good source of its history.

Because of his decades of ministry in

priestly formation at Saint Meinrad, he helped form a generation of priests of the Archdiocese of Indianapolis, including Archbishop Buechlein.

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

What were the top archdiocesan stories from the past decade?

Here are a few of the major headlines from our archdiocese during the first decade of this century:

- 2000—Archdiocesan celebration of the Great Jubilee Year draws 30,000 to the RCA Dome.
- 2001—Oklahoma City bomber Timothy McVeigh is executed at the U.S. Penitentiary in Terre Haute on June 11.
- 2001—Archdiocese receives \$10 million grant from Lilly Endowment, Inc. for education programs.
- 2001—Archdiocesan pilgrims en route to Switzerland witness the Sept. 11 terrorist attacks while on a layover in New York.
- 2001—Journey of Hope 2001, a spiritual blueprint, helps Catholics pass on the faith in the new millennium.
- 2001—24,000 young people attend the National Catholic Youth Conference in Indianapolis.
- 2002—Archdiocese begins implementing the "Charter for the Protection of Children and Young People" in the wake of the clergy sex-abuse crisis.
- 2002—Eight men are ordained to the priesthood, the most in a single class

since 1974.

- 2002—Archbishop Daniel M. Buechlein celebrates his 10th anniversary as the Archbishop of Indianapolis.
- 2003—Catholic Charities of South Central Indiana merges with St. Elizabeth's Regional Maternity Center in New Albany.
- 2004—National Black Catholic Convocation held in downtown Indianapolis.
- 2004—St. Elizabeth's Pregnancy and Adoption Services facilities in Indianapolis and other archdiocesan properties sustain damage during a tornado.
- 2004—First class of deacon aspirants begin four-year program to prepare for ordination.
- 2004—Archbishop Buechlein inaugurates Bishop Simon Bruté House of Formation at Marian College in Indianapolis.
- 2004—Six Catholic schools in archdiocese are named Blue Ribbon Schools.
- 2005—Archdiocese participates in the response to Hurricane Katrina and the Indian Ocean tsunami.
- 2005—The Cause of Canonization of Bishop Simon Bruté is opened.
- 2006—First class graduates from Seton

Catholic High School in Richmond.

- 2006—St. Theodora Guérin, foundress of the Sisters of Providence of Saint Mary-of-the-Woods, is canonized on Oct. 15 at St. Peter's Square in Vatican City.
- 2007—The bishops of Indiana release a pastoral letter on immigration.
- 2007—An arson fire destroys St. Anne Church in New Castle.
- 2007—Archbishop Buechlein celebrates 20 years as a bishop.
- 2007—SS. Peter and Paul Cathedral celebrates its centennial year.
- 2008—Archbishop Buechlein is diagnosed with Hodgkin's lymphoma. After completing several months of chemotherapy and radiation therapy treatments, his cancer is in remission.
- 2008—25 men are ordained permanent deacons for the first time in the history of the archdiocese.
- 2008—Local Catholics, including youth, travel to Washington, D.C., and New York to see Pope Benedict XVI.
- 2008—Archdiocese hosts National Catholic Educational Association Convention.
- 2008—The Archdiocese of Indianapolis purchases the

Carmelite Monastery of the Resurrection, the home of a community of 10 Carmelite nuns in Indianapolis, and Bishop Simon Bruté College Seminary moves into it.

- 2008—Legacy for Our Mission archdiocesan capital campaign wraps up after garnering \$104 million in pledges from 33,000 Catholics.
- 2009—May 3 Mass at Lucas Oil Stadium in Indianapolis culminates 175th anniversary of the Archdiocese of Indianapolis.
- 2009—Father Paul D. Etienne is appointed the new bishop of the Diocese of Cheyenne, Wyo. †

Some numbers from the past decade

Here are a few of the major statistics from our archdiocese from the first decade of this century:

- 11,420—Number of people welcomed into the Catholic Church.
- 12,426—Number of Catholic high school graduates.
- 29—Number of men ordained to the priesthood. †

'Take my yoke upon you'

Bishop Paul D. Etienne ordained and installed as bishop of Cheyenne

By Sean Gallagher

CHEYENNE, Wyo.—“Take my yoke upon you and learn from me, for I am meek and humble of heart; and you will find rest for yourselves. For my yoke is easy and my burden light” (Mt 11:29-30).

That yoke was placed upon Bishop Paul D. Etienne in a deeply symbolic ritual a few minutes after he heard those comforting words proclaimed during the Dec. 9 liturgy in which he was ordained and installed as the eighth bishop in the 122-year history of the Diocese of Cheyenne.

As he knelt in prayer, two deacons held over his head a book of the Gospels—symbolically the yoke mentioned in the Gospel reading earlier in the liturgy—while Archbishop Charles J. Chaput of Denver, Archbishop Daniel M. Buechlein of Indianapolis and Bishop David L. Ricken of Green Bay prayed a prayer of consecration over him.

“Church of Cheyenne, God’s holy people, brother priests and deacons, it will not take you long to discover how lucky you are,” said Bishop Robert N. Lynch of St. Petersburg, Fla., during the homily. “With the Lord, help this man shoulder the yoke of office and help it be lightened for him so that the Gospel promise of today will also be your experience.”

The 1,600 people who filled the Cheyenne Civic Center for the liturgy were made up of many Catholics from Wyoming and Indiana, several bishops, including Cardinal Roger M. Mahoney of Los Angeles, scores of priests, deacons and religious, and representatives of other Wyoming faith communities and local civic officials. It was held there to accommodate the crowd and because St. Mary’s Cathedral in Cheyenne is in the process of being restored.

Archbishop Chaput, the principal consecrator of Bishop Etienne, invited those present to consider the deep bond between episcopal leadership and the family.

“A good bishop is a father to his people, a brother to his priests and a husband to his local Church,” Archbishop Chaput said. “It is a vocation of love, which demands courage, wisdom [and] self-sacrifice.”

“Coming from the family that he does gives Bishop Paul some pretty good job training. But he will need all of our prayers and all of our support.”

Bishop Etienne’s parents, five siblings, and several nieces and nephews attended the liturgy.

Archbishop Pietro Sambi, apostolic nuncio to the United States and the representative of Pope Benedict XVI at the ordination liturgy, then spoke, quoting from a recent homily that the pope gave during an episcopal ordination in Rome in which he encouraged new bishops to continue Christ’s ministry of healing.

“Your Excellency, Bishop-elect Etienne, we are truly confident that, as you faithfully carry out your episcopal ministry, you will bring the healing rays of the Good News, which is Jesus Christ, to the clergy and to the faithful entrusted to your pastoral care, and that you will also radiate his loving face to the community at large,” Archbishop Sambi said.

After his remarks, the nuncio read the apostolic letter in which Pope Benedict appointed Bishop Etienne as the new shepherd of the Church in Wyoming.

Bishop Etienne is the 10th priest of the Archdiocese of Indianapolis to be ordained a bishop in its 175-year history. Bishop Gerald A. Gettelfinger of Evansville, who ordained



Archbishop Charles J. Chaput of Denver prays a prayer of consecration over a kneeling Bishop-designate Paul D. Etienne during a Dec. 9 episcopal ordination and installation liturgy at the Cheyenne Civic Center in Cheyenne Wyo. Deacons Tim Martinson, from left, and Doug Vlcek, both of the Cheyenne Diocese, hold a Book of the Gospels over Bishop-designate Etienne’s head, which, among other things, symbolizes the yoke that Christ invited his followers to take upon themselves.

Bishop Etienne to the priesthood in 1992, was the most recent in 1989.

Ordinarily, the principal consecrator at an episcopal ordination gives the homily at such a liturgy. In this instance, Bishop Etienne asked that Bishop Lynch give it because of their longstanding close friendship.

They worked together more than 20 years ago at the U.S. bishops’ conference when Bishop Etienne, then a layman, assisted then-Father Lynch in organizing Pope John Paul II’s 1987 coast-to-coast apostolic journey to the United States and Canada.

Bishop Lynch was also the homilist at then-Father Etienne’s Mass of Thanksgiving after he was ordained a priest in 1992.

Bishop Lynch had some words of advice for Bishop Etienne.

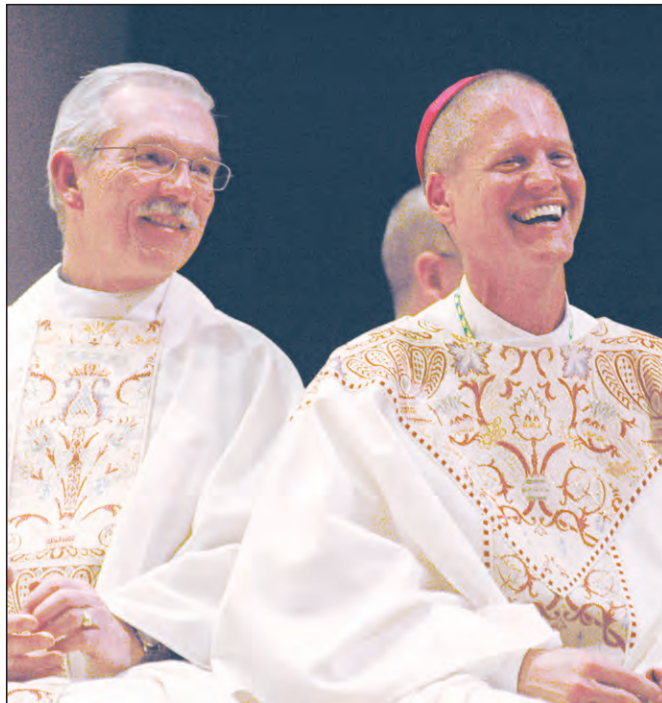
“Be humble,” Bishop Lynch said. “Be what you have been, which led so many to write in favor of your possible appointment as a bishop. Be the same pastor and brother that has led so many of your brother priests from the Archdiocese of Indianapolis to fly the long distance to hand you over to another Church. Be the pastor whom people in all the parishes which you have served, who said farewell to you in tears these last few weeks, will long remember.”

“On the darkest of days, which hopefully will be few, look at the image of the crucified Lord and always know that compared to His, your burden is indeed light.”

Following the homily, Bishop Etienne laid prostrate while those assembled prayed the litany of the saints for him.

The bishops present then ritually laid hands on Bishop Etienne’s head and the prayer of consecration was prayed.

Archbishop Chaput anointed his head with chrism and then presented Bishop Etienne with the symbols of the episcopate: a book of the Gospels, an episcopal ring, a miter and a crosier.



Bishop-designate Paul D. Etienne laughs during the homily given by his friend, Bishop Robert N. Lynch of St. Petersburg, Fla. At left is Father Carl Gallinger, a priest of the Cheyenne Diocese.

Bishop Etienne was then seated in the Cheyenne Diocese’s *cathedra*, the bishop’s chair that is ordinarily in its cathedral, for the first time.

Bishop Etienne’s ring had previously belonged to Pope Paul VI. He was given his crosier, which was made by a monk of Saint Meinrad Archabbey in St. Meinrad, by Archbishop Buechlein.

“Father Paul, now Bishop Paul, is a fantastic priest,” said Archbishop Buechlein after the ordination. “[His ordination] tells me that the Spirit is really at work in bringing people like him forward. And it’s good for the Church, and it’s hopeful for the Church.”

After Communion, all present applauded while Bishop Etienne, accompanied by Archbishops Buechlein, Chaput and Sambi and Bishop Ricken, walked up and down the aisles of the Cheyenne Civic Center to give his blessing.

In his remarks, Bishop Etienne thanked the many people who came to Cheyenne for his ordination and installation. He then spoke to the faithful in Wyoming, who he has been charged to lead.

“I embrace you with a pastor’s heart, freshly filled with the grace and love of



Archbishop Daniel M. Buechlein ritually lays hands on Bishop-designate Paul D. Etienne during the Dec. 9 episcopal ordination and installation liturgy at the Cheyenne Civic Center in Cheyenne, Wyo.

Jesus Christ,” Bishop Etienne said.

Reflecting on Jesus’ invitation to his first two disciples to “come and see” where he lived (Jn 1:35-39), Bishop Etienne invited his faithful to join him on a journey to discover anew Christ’s dwelling place.

“My desire as your bishop will also be to spend time with you, to discover Christ in your midst, as I seek to be the presence of Christ for you.

“This is God’s desire for us, and together we will seek this divine dwelling place, for we are his people, the people redeemed by Christ for such communion,” Bishop Etienne said. “Together, we will follow Jesus, all the days of our life, so as to live with Him for all eternity in the household of God, which is the Kingdom of Heaven.

“My dear family and friends, let our great journey of faith together continue, beginning today. Together, may we grow into the fullness of Christ, in truth and in love.”

(For previous articles about Bishop Paul D. Etienne, blog posts about his ordination and more photos from the liturgy, log on to www.CriterionOnline.com.) †

Online only

Photos from Bishop Paul D. Etienne’s episcopal ordination are available for purchase online. For more information, log on to www.criteriononline.com.



www.CriterionOnline.com

Indiana Catholics bid farewell to a beloved priest

By Sean Gallagher

CHEYENNE, Wyo.—Catholics from across the archdiocese made their way to Wyoming for the Dec. 9 ordination and installation of Bishop Paul D. Etienne as the eighth bishop of Cheyenne.

The trip was arguably most touching for his parents, Paul and Kay Etienne, who had welcomed their son, home in July as their new pastor at St. Paul Parish in Tell City.

In Cheyenne, they joyfully watched their son be given to the Church in Wyoming.

“If I had been any prouder, I would have popped,” said Kay. “I’m flying so high, and I haven’t even been drinking.”

“It was just an emotional time,” added Paul. “I was very proud of my son, Paul. I am very happy for him. And I think that the people of Cheyenne and the State of Wyoming will be very pleased with our son.”

According to Paul Etienne, this won’t be the last trip that he and his wife make to Wyoming.

“Kay and I will miss him dearly,” said Paul. “And we will definitely be people that will travel to Cheyenne, Wyoming. I’m looking forward to checking the state out.”

Bishop Etienne’s sister, Benedictine Sister Mary Nicolette Etienne, a member of Our Lady of Grace Monastery and a teacher at Holy Name School, both in Beech Grove, was impressed by the liturgy.

“Seeing my brother being made a bishop is beyond words for me right now,” she said. “I’m proud to be a Benedictine sister serving our awesome God in the Catholic Church today. I’m honored that my brother has been called to be a bishop, and that he is so willing to love and serve God as a bishop.”

Paul Etienne was impressed that so many other Catholics from the archdiocese made their way west for the special day in the life of their family.

Father Eric Augenstein, the pastor of Our Lady of Perpetual Help Parish in New Albany, said approximately 50 members of his parish traveled to the ordination.

That was in large part because Bishop Etienne spent nine years as the pastor of the parish, the longest time he spent in any ministry assignment since his 1992 priestly ordination.

Father Augenstein, who began his inquiries into becoming a seminarian when Bishop Etienne was the archdiocesan vocations director, succeeded him as pastor in 2007.

“When I got to Our Lady of Perpetual Help, it was a very healthy, active, vibrant community,” Father Augenstein said. “It was in good shape, and was doing great

ministries. It was all very much attributable to him.

“It was unbelievable to see him come to the fullness of the priesthood as a bishop and to be able to experience that with the parishioners who had formed him into a pastor.”

Members of the Flanagan family were some of those parishioners. Gerri Flanagan, now the parish’s business manager, was its secretary during Bishop Etienne’s last three years at the parish.

“When he came, we just had a connection with him as a family right away,” she said. “We’re very blessed to have him as a part of our life and as a friend. We’ve learned a lot in our faith journey from him.”

Aaron and Zach Flanagan, sixth and eighth graders at Our Lady of Perpetual Help School in New Albany, were altar servers during the ordination liturgy at the request of Bishop Etienne.

“I was kind of nervous, but really excited,” said Aaron about assisting at the Mass. “I was just kind of speechless.”

In talking about Bishop Etienne, Aaron was tearful.

“I can relate to him a lot,” Aaron said. “He’s a really cool guy.”

“It showed how much he cared about us,” said Zach of how he and his brother were asked to serve at the Mass. “When he was having the most exciting time of his life, he thought of me and my brother to serve for him at his ordination.”

Deacon candidate Jeff Powell, a member of Our Lady of Perpetual Help Parish, was also on hand for the liturgy.

“It was a ‘wow’ moment, without a doubt,” he said. “It was just awesome over and over. I don’t think that I’ve ever had so much emotion at a liturgy.”

Powell said it was Bishop Etienne’s spiritual leadership that, in part, led him to discern a possible calling to the diaconate.

“He loves being a priest,” Powell said. “He just shows it in so many ways. You can’t help but be inspired.”

“His [nine] years there brought all of us to a depth of spirituality that I don’t think that our parish has seen in my lifetime. He was just an amazing pastor in so many ways.”

After serving at Our Lady of Perpetual Help Parish, Bishop Etienne spent two years as the vice rector of Bishop Simon Bruté College Seminary in Indianapolis.



Bishop Paul D. Etienne poses with Father Eric Augenstein, pastor of Our Lady of Perpetual Help Parish in New Albany, and more than 40 other members of the parish during a reception following the Dec. 9 liturgy in which Bishop Etienne was ordained and installed as the eighth bishop of Cheyenne, Wyo. Bishop Etienne served as the pastor of Our Lady of Perpetual Help Parish for nine years.

During that same two-year period, he also served for a year as the pastor of St. Simon the Apostle Parish and for a year as the pastor of St. John the Evangelist Parish, both in Indianapolis.

For seminarian Benjamin Syberg, a senior at Bishop Bruté Seminary, it was hard to believe that the priest with whom he had had so many conversations about the priesthood was being ordained a bishop.

“It was just surreal,” he said. “... They’re so lucky to have him.”

Syberg also spoke about the lasting influence that Bishop Etienne will have on him if, God willing, he is ordained a priest.

“The image of the priest being someone whose heart goes to his people—that is something that he’s always shown to us and talked to us about and lived,” said Syberg. “That is what I will take the most from him.”

Father Robert Robeson, the college seminary’s rector, ministered alongside Bishop Etienne at Bishop Bruté. He was one of more than 40 priests from the archdiocese to participate in the ordination liturgy.

“It was very moving,” said Father Robeson of the Mass. “I was getting all teary-eyed at some points because I know what a great bishop he’s going to be, how good he’ll be for the people of the Diocese of Cheyenne.”



Kay and Paul Etienne, members of St. Paul Parish in Tell City and the parents of Bishop Paul D. Etienne, sing during the Dec. 9 liturgy in the Cheyenne Civic Center in Cheyenne, Wyo., during which their son was ordained and installed as the eighth bishop of Cheyenne, Wyo.

Like Bishop Etienne’s parents, Father Robeson said he was somewhat saddened to see him leave the Church in central and southern Indiana.

“It’s tough to lose him,” Father Robeson said. “But, at the same time, I think it’s good for the Church in the United States and certainly for the Church in Wyoming.”

Sister Nicolette, too, was saddened seeing her brother begin a ministry so far away from her and her family. But she was encouraged by words that he spoke to her.

“I hope Paul continues to be the person God has called him to be,” she said. “I hope he remains faithful to his prayer life. I hope he remembers his words to me when I told him I wish he wasn’t being taken so far away from us: ‘Nicolette, God’s plan is always perfect.’” †

Wyoming Catholics travel hundreds of miles to greet their new bishop

By Sean Gallagher



During the Dec. 9 episcopal ordination and installation of Bishop Paul D. Etienne in the Cheyenne Civic Center in Cheyenne, Wyo., Father Michael Carr, vicar general of the Cheyenne Diocese, holds the apostolic letter from Pope Benedict XVI in which the pontiff appointed Bishop Etienne to lead the Church in Wyoming. Standing behind Father Carr applauding are Fathers Carl Gallinger, left, James Heiser and Thomas Cronkleton, all priests of the Cheyenne Diocese and members of its college of consultors.

CHEYENNE, Wyo.—Catholics from across the 100,000 square miles that make up Wyoming were filled with joy and high hopes for their new shepherd on the day that Bishop Paul D. Etienne was ordained and installed as the eighth bishop of Cheyenne.

Some drove as far as 485 miles and for as long as seven hours to participate in the ordination and installation liturgy.

Pam Hill and Pat Vlcek drove that distance from their homes in Jackson, where they are wives of deacons of the Cheyenne Diocese. Jackson is south of Yellowstone National Park and at the opposite end of the state from Cheyenne.

Neither the long drive nor the day’s fierce winter weather—with blustery winds and

temperatures that hovered in the single digits—dampened their spirits.

“God sent him here,” Vlcek said. “He was supposed to be here because it takes a young person to be able to do what the bishop does in this state. He has to drive around [so much].”

“We have lots of gratitude in our hearts,” Hill said. “We really feel blessed.”

That gratitude extended to the many Catholics from central and southern Indiana who made their way to Wyoming for the event.

“I think it’s wonderful [that all the Hoosiers came out],” Vlcek said. “... We thank the Archdiocese of Indianapolis for what they’re giving up. We appreciate it so much. We’re so blessed to have him here.”

Bonnie Alvarez, a member of St. Laurence O’Toole Parish in the nearby town of Laramie, sat by one of the aisles that Bishop Etienne walked up and down near the end of the liturgy to give his blessing to the assembled congregation.

“This is wonderful,” she said. “I was waiting for him to give a blessing [at the

end] because I knew that would be special.”

Alvarez hopes that Bishop Etienne will help the Church in Wyoming reach out to non-practicing Catholics.

“We’ve been without a bishop for a couple of years now,” she said. “And I think a lot of people have gotten away from the Church, and we’re trying hard to bring them back. I think he’s a super-excited person, and he’ll be able to do that.”

Karen Tronstad is a member of St. Matthew Parish in Gillette, some 250 miles from Cheyenne. She traveled on a chartered bus to the state capital for the liturgy with 30 other members of her parish.

The ordination and installation had added meaning for Tronstad because she is a transplanted Hoosier, having grown up in Shelbyville as a member of St. Joseph Parish.

“It’s pretty neat to have a fellow Hoosier out here,” she said. “I hope he finds Wyoming a good experience. I’m sure he’ll find Wyoming people really nice.” †



Archbishop Charles J. Chaput of Denver rubs chrism on the head of Bishop Paul D. Etienne during the Dec. 9 episcopal ordination and installation liturgy at the Cheyenne Civic Center in Cheyenne, Wyo.



Right, Bishop Paul D. Etienne elevates the chalice during the eucharistic prayer of the Dec. 9 liturgy at the Cheyenne Civic Center in Cheyenne, Wyo.



Bishop-designate Paul D. Etienne lays prostrate during the praying of the litany of the saints on Dec. 9 at the Cheyenne Civic Center in Cheyenne, Wyo. Standing in front of him are, from left, co-consecrator Archbishop Daniel M. Buechlein, principal consecrator Archbishop Charles J. Chaput and co-consecrator Bishop David L. Ricken. Kneeling behind Bishop-designate Etienne are, from left, Fathers Carl Gallinger and Michael Carr, priests of the Cheyenne Diocese.

Wyoming welcomes its new shepherd



Bishop Paul D. Etienne acknowledges the applause of the congregation after sitting in his *cathedra*, the bishop's chair, for the first time during the Dec. 9 liturgy at the Cheyenne Civic Center in Cheyenne, Wyo., in which he was ordained and installed as the new bishop of Cheyenne. Standing beside Bishop Etienne are, from left, Deacon Edward McCarthy, Archbishop Charles J. Chaput of Denver, Deacon Russ Humphreys and Archbishop Pietro Sambi, apostolic nuncio to the United States. The deacons minister in the Cheyenne Diocese.



Above, Bishop Paul D. Etienne gives his closing remarks during his episcopal ordination and installation Mass at the Cheyenne Civic Center in Wyoming on Dec. 9. He succeeds Bishop David L. Ricken, who was named bishop of Green Bay, Wis., in July 2008.



Above, several priests of the Archdiocese of Indianapolis, including, from left in the front row, Fathers John McCaslin, Michael Fritsch and James Bonke, pray during the Dec. 9 liturgy at the Cheyenne Civic Center in Cheyenne, Wyo.



Left, a choir made up of vocalists from the Cheyenne Diocese sings prior to the Dec. 9 episcopal ordination and installation of Bishop Paul D. Etienne as the eighth bishop of the Cheyenne Diocese at the Cheyenne Civic Center in Cheyenne, Wyo.



Right, Benedictine Sister Mary Nicolette Etienne, a member of Our Lady of Grace Monastery and a teacher at Holy Name School, both in Beech Grove, proclaims the first reading during the Dec. 9 liturgy in which Bishop Paul D. Etienne, her brother, was ordained and installed as the eighth bishop of Cheyenne, Wyo.

Bishop selection process is thorough and strictly confidential

By Sean Gallagher

Then-Father Paul Etienne was shocked on Oct. 5 when Archbishop Pietro Sambi, apostolic nuncio to the United States, called to tell him that Pope Benedict XVI had selected him as the next bishop of Cheyenne, Wyo.

He had no idea that this appointment was coming because the process by which bishops are chosen is marked by strict confidentiality—and for several good reasons.

Canon 377 of the *Code of Canon Law* stipulates that, at least once every three years, the bishops of an ecclesiastical province must submit to the apostolic nuncio a list of priests who, in their opinion, are qualified to be bishops.

An ecclesiastical province is made up of the dioceses in a geographical area where an archdiocese also exists. For example, all the dioceses of Indiana make up the Metropolitan Province of Indianapolis.

This same canon also states that individual bishops can recommend potential bishops to the nuncio at any time.

Canon 378 lists the requirements for potential bishops. They must be “outstanding in solid faith, good morals, piety, zeal for souls, wisdom, prudence and human virtues.” They also must be at least 35 years of age and been ordained a priest for at least five years.

The canon recommends, but does not absolutely require, that potential bishops have a doctorate or licentiate in Sacred Scripture, theology or canon law from a university approved by the Holy See.

Since becoming a bishop in 1987, Archbishop Daniel M. Buechlein has participated in this process several times.

“I give the process a great deal of thought and prayer, and try as best I can to provide a full and accurate biography of the priest whom I recommend,” he said. “I take this responsibility seriously to help the papal nuncio in drawing up lists of potential candidates for the office of bishop.”

According to Father James Bonke, defender of the bond in the archdiocesan Metropolitan Tribunal, when a diocese no longer has a bishop—either because the bishop has died, resigned or been transferred—the nuncio begins a process of assembling a list of three recommendations, known as a “*ternus*,” to succeed that bishop.



Fr. James Bonke

“Those three names have to be ranked in order according to his preference,” Father Bonke said.

A recent Catholic News Service article explained that nuncios ordinarily gather 30 to 40 written evaluations of each of the recommended potential bishops. The *ternus*, along with the evaluations, is forwarded to the Holy See’s Congregation for Bishops in Rome.

Archbishop Buechlein discussed being asked to assess potential bishops.

“When the papal nuncio seeks

information and judgment concerning a particular candidate, the process becomes more focused. So does one’s prayer and responsibility,” Archbishop Buechlein said. “Candidates proposed for nomination to the office of bishop may or may not be from the Metropolitan Province of Indianapolis. For thorough investigation, the nuncio ‘throws the net wide’ at times.

“Those who are consulted are presumed to respond as completely and honestly as possible. Usually a good number of people, clerical, religious and lay, are consulted.”

The bishops and cardinals who are members of the various congregations at the Vatican—such as the Congregation for the Causes of the Saints or the Congregation of the Doctrine of the Faith—meet only a few times a year at most.

The CNS article explained that the Congregation of Bishops ordinarily meets every two weeks for an entire morning at a time. Members of the congregation receive “extensive documentation” on each episcopal candidate to review in advance of the meeting.

American members of the Congregation of Bishops are cardinals Bernard F. Law, Justin F. Rigali and J. Francis Stafford and Archbishop Raymond L. Burke.

Much of the paperwork on episcopal candidates that the congregation’s members receive is made up of the evaluations gathered by nuncios.

When asked to evaluate potential bishops, they are told that their answers and the name of the person they have been asked to assess is to remain strictly confidential.

“Their responses are supposed to be top secret, equal to the seal of confession,” Father Bonke said.

Why?

“It is done so in order to ensure the protection of the objectivity and integrity of the process,” said Archbishop Buechlein. “It is also kept confidential out of sensitivity for the potential candidate being considered.

“Obviously, it also obviates the possibility of politicizing the process. The Church has a long and vast experience of ensuring that competent and faithful candidates are selected to serve as bishop for the common good.”

The process of gathering evaluations of potential bishops and assembling a list of three recommendations is not specifically laid out in the *Code of Canon Law*, but is a procedure established by the Congregation for Bishops.

Although a nuncio and his staff will have done much work to assemble the *ternus*, the Congregation for Bishops or the pope himself may reject all three recommendations. Then the nuncio may have to start work on a new *ternus*.

But if one of the recommendations is accepted first by the members of the Congregation for Bishops and then by the pope, then the nuncio must pick up his phone and make that fateful call to the man chosen to become a bishop.

“The phone call to become a bishop changes one’s life immediately,” Archbishop Buechlein said. “It usually comes as a shock. One time when I visited the papal nuncio’s residence, I asked him if I could see the phone that changed my life. He laughed, but he showed it to me.” †



Archbishop Charles J. Chaput of Denver speaks to Bishop Paul D. Etienne after the newly ordained bishop of Cheyenne, Wyo., placed a miter on his head for the first time. Archbishop Chaput is assisted by, from left, altar server Zach Flanagan, a member of Our Lady of Perpetual Help Parish in New Albany, and Deacon Charles Parker of the Denver Archdiocese.

CATECHISM CORNER



What the Church teaches on bishops

The *Catechism of the Catholic Church* presents the Church’s teaching on the office of bishop in its section on the sacraments and, further, in its section on the sacrament of holy orders.

It appears under the heading, “Episcopal ordination—fullness of the sacrament of Holy Orders.”

“#1555 Amongst those various offices which have been exercised in the Church from the earliest times the chief place, according to the witness of tradition, is held by the function of those who, through their appointment to the dignity and responsibility of bishop, and in virtue consequently of the unbroken succession going back to the beginning, are regarded as transmitters of the apostolic line” (*“Lumen Gentium,”* #20).

“#1556 To fulfill their exalted mission, ‘the apostles were endowed by Christ with a special outpouring of the Holy Spirit coming upon them, and by the imposition of hands they passed on to their auxiliaries the gift of the Spirit, which is transmitted down to our day through episcopal consecration.’” (*“Lumen Gentium”* #21; cf. Acts 1:8, 24; Jn 20:22-23; 1 Tim 4:14; 2 Tim 1:6-7).

“#1557 The Second Vatican Council teaches ... that *the fullness of the sacrament of holy orders* is conferred by episcopal consecration, that fullness namely which, both in the liturgical tradition of the Church and the language of the Fathers of the Church, is called the high priesthood, the acme (summa) of the sacred ministry” (*“Lumen Gentium”* #21, § 2).

“#1558 “Episcopal consecration confers, together with the office of sanctifying, also the offices of teaching and ruling. ... In fact ... by the imposition of hands and through the words of the consecration, the grace of the Holy Spirit is given, and a sacred character is impressed in such wise that bishops, in an eminent and visible manner, take the place

of Christ himself, teacher, shepherd, and priest, and act as his representative (*“in Eius persona agant”*) (*“Lumen Gentium,”* #21).

“By virtue, therefore, of the Holy Spirit who has been given to them, bishops have been constituted true and authentic teachers of the faith and have been made pontiffs and pastors” (*“Christus Dominus,”* #2, § 2).

“#1559 “One is constituted a member of the episcopal body in virtue of the sacramental consecration and by the hierarchical communion with the head and members of the college” (*“Lumen Gentium”* #22).

“The character and collegial nature of the episcopal order are evidenced among other ways by the Church’s ancient practice which calls for several bishops to participate in the consecration of a new bishop (cf. *“Lumen Gentium”* #22).

“In our day, the lawful ordination of a bishop requires a special intervention of the Bishop of Rome, because he is the supreme visible bond of the communion of the particular Churches in the one Church and the guarantor of their freedom.

“#1560 As Christ’s vicar, each bishop has the pastoral care of the particular Church entrusted to him, but at the same time he bears collegially with all his brothers in the episcopacy the solicitude for all the Churches:

“Though each bishop is the lawful pastor only of the portion of the flock entrusted to his care, as a legitimate successor of the apostles he is, by divine institution and precept, responsible with the other bishops for the apostolic mission of the Church” (Pius XII, *“Fidei donum”*: *Acta Apostolica Sedes* 49 (1957) #237; cf. *“Lumen Gentium”* #23; *“Christus Dominus”* #4, 36, 37; *“Ad Gentes”* #5, 6, 38).

“#1561 The above considerations explain why the Eucharist celebrated by the bishop has a quite special significance as an expression of the Church gathered around the altar, with the one who represents Christ, the Good Shepherd and Head of his Church, presiding” (cf. *“Sacrosanctum Concilium”* #41; *“Lumen Gentium”* #26). †



Bishop Etienne and Archbishop Daniel M. Buechlein exchange a sign of peace during the Dec. 9 liturgy in the Cheyenne Civic Center in Cheyenne, Wyo., during which Bishop Etienne was ordained and installed as the eighth bishop of Cheyenne, Wyo.

The Incarnation and Christ's pre-existence

At Christmas, we celebrate the birthday of the God-man sent by his Father to accomplish our redemption

By John F. Fink

Since Christmas has become such an important feast in the Church calendar, it sometimes comes as a shock when people learn that the early Christians didn't celebrate the feast.

They didn't think that the day Jesus was born was particularly important. It wasn't until the year 336 that we have the first mention of special religious services on Dec. 25 in memory of Christ's birth.

Of course, we don't know that Jesus was born on Dec. 25. Since Luke's Gospel tells us that shepherds were tending their sheep at night, it seems more likely that it would have been during more temperate weather than is usually found at the beginning of winter in Bethlehem.

Dec. 25 was selected because the Romans already had a feast on that day in honor of their sun god Mithra, who had been the chief Persian god since the fifth century B.C. The Romans also had a festival in mid-December, known as the Saturnalia, in honor of Saturnus, the fertility god of agriculture.

The Christians adopted the festival after Emperor Constantine permitted freedom of religion in the Roman Empire.

But if the early Christians didn't celebrate the exact day when they thought that Jesus might have been born, they certainly maintained their belief in the reason we celebrate Christmas today—that the Son of God, the Second Person of the Trinity, became a human being and lived among us. This is the doctrine of the Incarnation.

We should be awestruck by this doctrine, but we so often just take it for granted. It's incredible that the eternal, all-powerful God should take on human nature from his mother, unite it to his divinity and then live a human existence with all the limitations of that life.

We are sometimes told by people who doubt the doctrine of the Incarnation that the early Christians didn't really believe in the pre-existence of Christ. Rather, they say, that doctrine only developed over a period of time. They claim that it's not in the Gospels of Matthew, Mark and Luke, the earliest Gospels, but only in the Gospel of John, which wasn't written until the last decade of the first century.

Well, it certainly is in the Gospel of John. That Gospel wanted to make it clear from the outset that Christ pre-existed so it

begins, "In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. All things came to be through him, and without him nothing came to be" (Jn 1:1-3).

It's believed that this was an early Christian hymn with which the first readers of this Gospel would have been familiar. It not only emphasizes the Word's pre-existence, but it's also poetic in structure, with short phrases linked by what is called "staircase parallelism," in which the last word of one phrase—in the Greek in which the Gospel was written—becomes the first word of the next.

Then, the Gospel tells us, "The Word became flesh and made his dwelling among us" (Jn 1:14). It's this Word, through whom the world came to be, who lived among us.

It's not only in the Prologue of John's Gospel that Christ's pre-existence is emphasized. That Gospel stresses Christ's divinity and his pre-existence throughout. For example, "Jesus said to them, 'Amen, amen, I say to you, before Abraham came to be, I AM'" (Jn 8:58).

What about the other Gospels? They are not as explicit as John's Gospel, but the idea of Christ's pre-existence is present in Christ's words about why he came into the world, or why he was sent. For example, Jesus said, "He who receives me receives him who sent me" (Mt 10:40 and Lk 9:48).

Matthew's Gospel also has this quotation from Jesus concerning his coming into the world: "Do not think that I have come to abolish the law or the prophets. I have come not to abolish but to fulfill" (Mt 5:17).

Luke's Gospel, too, quotes Jesus as saying, "The Son of Man has come to seek and to save what was lost" (Lk 19:10).

However, the early Christians clearly believed in the Incarnation well before any of the four Gospels were written. We know that from the letters of St. Paul, which were written before the Gospels.

Perhaps the best example is the early Christian hymn that St. Paul quotes in his letter to the Philippians when he said that Jesus, "though he was in the form of God, did not regard equality with God something to be grasped. Rather, he emptied himself, taking the form of a slave, coming in human likeness; and found human in appearance, he humbled



"Our Lady With the Holy Child" is the title of this 15th-century fresco from the Basilica of St. Mary in Trastevere in Rome. The painting is by an anonymous artist. The Christmas season begins with the Dec. 24 evening vigil commemorating the birth of Christ and ends with the feast of the Baptism of the Lord on Jan. 10, 2010.

himself, becoming obedient to death, even death on a cross" (Phil 2:6-8). St. Paul wrote that letter sometime in the mid-50s.

St. Paul taught in his other letters that God sent his Son into the world. In the Letter to the Galatians, he wrote, "When the fullness of time had fully come, God sent forth his Son, born of a woman, born under the law, so that we might receive adoption as sons" (Gal 4:4).

In his Letter to the Romans, St. Paul wrote, "[T]his God has done: by sending his own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh and for the sake of sin, he condemned sin in the flesh" (Rom 8:3).

St. Paul also wrote in his Second Letter to the Corinthians, "For you know the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, that though he was rich, yet for your sake he became poor, so that by his poverty you might become rich" (2 Cor 8:9). That Christ was "rich" indicated his divinity while the fact that "he became poor" meant that he became human.

At Christmas, we celebrate the birthday of the God-man sent by his Father to accomplish our redemption. The Incarnation actually occurred nine months earlier, at the Annunciation, when Mary agreed to be the mother of our redeemer, but we humans like to celebrate birthdays rather than conceptions. We have pretty pictures of the Holy Family as artists have painted them for centuries.

The earliest Christians might not have celebrated Christ's birthday, but they did believe in his pre-existence as the eternal Son of God who was sent into the world by his Father. John's Gospel says it best: "God so loved the world that he gave his only Son, so that everyone who believes in him might not perish but might have eternal life. For God did not send his Son into the world to condemn the world, but that the world might be saved through him" (Jn 3:16-17).

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

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On behalf of
The Criterion staff,
we wish you
and your family
a blessed and
safe holiday
season.

Readers share their favorite Christmas stories

Family traditions make lifetime of memories for 90-year-old

By Christine Pendill
Special to *The Criterion*

My favorite Christmas story happened when I was about 7 years old. My two sisters and I were always so excited at Christmas time.

We lived on a big farm. Dad would take us to find a nice cedar for our Christmas tree, and we would take turns pulling it through the snow. It was so much fun.

Mom would pop corn for us to string, and she helped us make things to hang on the tree. We didn't have electricity so we used a lot of tinsel to make our tree shine.

On Christmas morning, Mom and Dad would not let us see what Santa had brought for us until we came home from church.

We lived about two-and-a-half miles from St. Anthony Church in St. Anthony, Mo. We owned a Model T Ford, but we also had a nice hack wagon. It had two large seats and was tufted with leather. It had to be pulled with a team of horses. It was much better to take the wagon on the rough country roads, especially if there was snow on the ground.

We always went to the first Mass on Christmas morning. It was still very dark outside. If there was snow on the ground, Dad would carry us to the wagon to keep our feet dry. Mom would bring out quilts to wrap around us to keep us warm. Dad hung a lantern on the wagon, but the horses knew the way to

church and back home without the light.

We would sing Christmas carols all the way to church. "Silent Night" was my favorite carol. My heart was filled with love for everyone and for Baby Jesus.

When we got home from church, we had to change our clothes and have breakfast before we could see what Santa had brought for us.

Mom made a breakfast fit for a king. Everything was homemade—sausage, biscuits, home-churned butter and a choice of homemade jellies.

We were so excited to finally get to see what surprises Santa had given to us.

I remember the doll bed my Grandpa made for me at Christmas the year before. I found it under the tree. Santa had made a new quilt for my doll bed and a new dress for my doll. I probably got a few extra things, but I was so happy that Santa remembered my doll.

We didn't expect a lot of things for Christmas. We were told that Santa had so many little girls and boys to remember on Christmas morning. He did bring us lots of candy and fruit.

I would just love to live that Christmas morning of so many years ago again. I am 90 years old now, and I have a lifetime of wonderful memories.

(Christine Pendill is a member of St. John the Apostle Parish in Bloomington.) †

The Vatican's Christmas tree



The Vatican's Christmas tree is erected in St. Peter's Square on Dec. 4. The tree, from the Wallonia region of Belgium, is 98 feet tall and grew for 90 years.

Innocence of childhood is at the heart of Christmases' past

By Ann Wathen
Special to *The Criterion*

I am over 70 years old, and can only remember two Christmases in detail—one when I was about 8 years old and the other when my son was 6 years old.

I can't remember ever thinking much about Santa Claus. We saw Santas on street corners ringing bells, and Mother told us they were Santa's helpers. Otherwise, we did not bring up the subject.

I doubt if we ever stood in line and told Santa what we wanted for Christmas. I never knew what I wanted.

During World War II, and for a few years thereafter, there wasn't much that we could want that could be got. We never had much money anyway so wanting would not have done us any good.

The year that Dad was between jobs, we had a small Christmas tree. It was put on the piano so it would look bigger.

We were in the bathtub when we heard our parents call out, "Goodbye, Santa! Thanks for stopping!"

My sister, Rosemary, and I jumped out of the tub, wrapped ourselves in towels and rushed to the living room to see packages under the tree.

We were told, "Go put on your pajamas, and come back and see what Santa brought."

Under the tree were two doll suitcases, a dollhouse complete with furniture and packages with clothing. On the sofa were two dolls dressed in satin gowns. I quickly went to our room to get our old dolls so I could introduce them to the new dolls, but they were not there.

"What happened to Martha and Sally?" I asked my Mother.

"Oh, Santa took those dolls to give to the poor kids," she told us.

And that was the truth, only we didn't know that we were the poor kids.

Mother had taken the old dolls to the doll hospital for new wigs, and had sat up late at night at her sewing machine making clothing for them.

Dad had begged shirt boxes from the haberdashery, covered them with oil cloth, added hinges and a lock, and—presto!—they became doll suitcases.

The dollhouse was a wonder. It was huge. In the four rooms, made from cardboard boxes scrounged from the grocery store, were wallpaper (leftovers from friends' houses), curtains cut from scraps of our old clothing, rugs (felt cut from an old hat), and upholstered furniture made of clothespins, cotton from medicine bottles for stuffing and material.

We loved that dollhouse and played with it constantly. Mother relegated it to the basement, but we went down there every day after school and played dolls with our dollhouse until supper time.

The dollhouse and suitcases disappeared soon after Dad got a job. It took many years and being a mother during hard times myself to realize that Mother was ashamed of those gifts.

If she only knew how much they meant to us. The "bought" gifts were never as much fun. In fact, I don't remember what I got as gifts on any other Christmas.

Then, when my son was 6, his father was between jobs.

I was upset that I could not buy Joe very many gifts. I went to the dime store and got tiny cars, hand-held games and socks. I wrapped everything separately.

My parents had sent clothing, but I knew just how much pleasure the toys would bring to an active boy. I managed to get a dozen small things wrapped up for Joe.

On Christmas morning, Joe tore through the wrapping paper with exclamations of happiness. He played with each toy for a few minutes before going on to the next present.

After opening his gifts, Joe asked, "Can I go over to Gary's house? I want to see what he got for Christmas."

I allowed him to visit his friend, but with fear in my heart. I hoped that Joe wouldn't come home disappointed with his own presents. Was I ever surprised!

"Guess what?" Joe said later. "Gary only got four presents and one was just a stamp!"

The stamp was worth \$800, but my 6-year-old son didn't know its value. But even if he had known, Joe would not have cared.

When I hear the ads on TV and see the greed in children's eyes as they walk through shopping malls, making demands of their parents for their Christmas wishes, I am appalled by their behavior.

What happened to the innocence of childhood, where anticipation was most of the fun and it didn't matter how much you got for Christmas? The importance was that Santa had come, and there were packages under the Christmas tree waiting to be opened.

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

Cry out to God as he prepares us for the greatest message of all: Christ's birth

By Jim Welter
Special to *The Criterion*

"What do you want the most from the Advent and Christmas season?"

This question was the focus of our prayer group's meeting.

My friend's reply was almost inaudible: "I just want them to be over."

Our eyes met, our hands touched. I wanted the holidays to be over, too.

The summer was long and hot in the year that I got my first job—crawling across our neighbor's onion fields and pulling weeds with my siblings. He paid each of us the same rate as our age so I was making seven cents an hour.

Mom said it would be our Christmas money. Our neighbor said he couldn't pay us until the crop came in, but we didn't mind. The pages of our Sears catalog were smudged and worn from repeated reading as we each dreamed of getting that special toy we always wanted.

This year, Christmas would be different. It would be good. But, as summer turned into fall, his excuses began—the crop wasn't very successful, prices were down and the kids really

hadn't worked all that hard.

Finally, Mom had to say the unthinkable—our neighbor would not be paying us for our summer's work.

We would not be able to order anything from the Sears catalog. We would have to depend entirely on the charity of others for Christmas at our house again this year.

When the time came, there was always the waiting. Would anyone remember us this year? Would we have any gifts, any celebration at all?

Some years were better than others. Some years, no one came and Mom just did the best she could.

After the holidays, I dreaded going back to school. There would always be the inevitable chore of "sharing with the class what you got for Christmas."

"Pants that no one had worn before" would only bring laughter so I would lie again. There was a girl in the front row who knew that I was lying. One year, she told the whole class. I ran from the room. I just wanted it to be over.

Grief is especially difficult during the holiday season, and societal expectations of joy and happiness often exacerbate the pain.

For many people, this will be the first holiday season without a loved one.

For me, it has been 12 years since both my mother and my sister died during the Christmas season. The pain doesn't go away, but I find comfort in the Advent readings from the prophet Isaiah.

Isaiah urges us to "Cry out!" (Is 65:14). He invites us to acknowledge our hurts, while offering us hope in the One who is to come. Isaiah tells us that it's OK to cry this Advent and this Christmas. It's OK to "cry out in your desert."

It's OK to cry when that special song is sung, to cry as you hang that special ornament on the tree, to cry for a childhood denied, to cry for words never spoken and songs never sung, to cry for Christmas as it was last year, and to cry for the Christmas that will never be again.

Isaiah urges us to cry out to God in the sadness, grief, joys, hopes and yearnings of our hearts as he prepares us for the greatest message of all: "A young woman will bear a son and he shall be called Emmanuel—God is with us!" (Mt 1:23).

Come, Lord Jesus!

(Jim Welter is a member of St. Barnabas Parish in Indianapolis. His books are available at local bookstores and on the Internet at www.AscendingView.com.) †

Surprise visit is best Christmas gift ever

By Margie Walke

Special to *The Criterion*

Christmas Eve in 1985 started out with the usual flurry of activities. The cooking, cleaning and gift-wrapping were finished, and my older sisters, Lea and Sandy, would soon be arriving with their families.

Our normal festivities called for gathering around the tree to open presents then helping ourselves to a bounteous buffet of Cornish hens with all the trimmings.

Finally, we would call my brother, Ernie, and his family in Florida. They had moved there in 1977, but due to time constraints could never make it home for Christmas so we had to rely on a phone call to celebrate the holidays with them.

On this particular Christmas Eve, around 4 p.m., my sister Linda and I were upstairs changing into our Christmas finery. Our sister Sandy had arrived and was in the kitchen with Mom. Dad was down the street sharing a bit of Christmas cheer with

some friends.

I heard the front door open followed by shouts and screams. Linda rushed down to see what was going on, and immediately called up the stairs for me to “get down here!”

I flew down the steps, and there in the middle of the living room stood Ernie, Connie, Jeff, Tammy and Ben engaged in a giant hug with Linda, Mom and Sandy. The surprise and joy were overwhelming. We laughed, we cried, we hugged.

Our sister Lea soon arrived, and we laughed and cried and hugged all over again.

Ernie went to meet Dad, who got a big smile on his face and exclaimed, “What the heck are you doing here?”

Amidst all the excitement that night, Mom never did get to change into her Christmas dress, and the tater-tot casserole came to the table still mostly frozen because the oven hadn’t been turned on soon enough. But what a great time we had! Many prayers of thanks were offered

at Christmas Mass.

This wonderful surprise had been planned for some time, and everything worked exactly as it had to for that holiday. Connie and the younger kids, Tammy and Ben, left Florida on Sunday, driving in their van and stopping at motels in Georgia and Kentucky overnight. Ernie and Jeff had to work on Monday so they flew home on Tuesday morning.

Connie was waiting for them at the Cincinnati airport in the midst of a blizzard-like snowstorm. But suddenly, as if on cue, the snow stopped, the clouds parted and the plane landed on time.

Mother Nature had done her part by giving us a white Christmas, but not so white that it interfered with the Christmas surprise.

The surprise visit was the best Christmas gift that any of us received that year or any other Christmas after that!

(Margie Walke is a member of St. Louis Parish in Batesville.) †

Tree mishap leads to magic of Christmas season

By Mary C. Vinci

Special to *The Criterion*

On this particular holiday season, I found a beautiful Christmas tree—a 6-foot-tall blue spruce.

It was early morning and, with all the day’s chores, I was exhausted so I placed the tree on the back porch.

The next morning, after clearing and cleaning, I brought the tree inside and placed it in an alcove of the living room. Then I went upstairs to get the ornaments and lights.

After carrying them downstairs, I walked into the living room and could not believe my eyes. All of the needles had fallen off, and covered the floor at the base of the tree.

What a disappointment!

The thought occurred to me that it was time to buy an artificial, green Christmas tree after many years of having real trees.

I traveled to Fountain Square and selected a beautiful artificial tree.

With all the ornaments and lights, the new tree was a sight to behold.

The artificial tree did not have the aroma and smell of cedar, but at least I did not have to worry about the needles falling off of it.

That year was one of many holiday seasons I remember which brought the magic of Christmas.

(Mary C. Vinci is a member of Sacred Heart of Jesus Parish in Indianapolis.) †

Nylons bring back memories of uncomfortable Midnight Mass

By Cathy Bloom

Special to *The Criterion*

My Christmas memory is of a special Christmas Eve in the late 1950s.

I had a very special aunt, Winnie, who saw only goodness in her nieces and nephews when we were growing up. She attended all our school programs and sporting events, always saying how great we were, whatever our part.

Wonderful memories of Aunt Winnie include her perfect gift giving. She did not have much money, but she worked at the local department store as a sales clerk, and she knew fashion. The latest in purses, hats and gloves would be

purchased for us at Christmas.

One year, my request to her was for nylon stockings. I wanted to wear nylons to Midnight Mass on Christmas that year. I knew she would think it was a great idea.

Our family always stopped by her apartment before Midnight Mass. I had high hopes of wearing nylons as I sang in the choir at Mass. I thought it would be the best Christmas present ever.

Aunt Winnie did not disappoint me. With a quick, delighted “thank you,” I was off to her bedroom to change into the nylons to wear with my black pumps. I was so happy.

We all walked to Midnight Mass. The nylons seemed a little uncomfortable, but I knew they looked great and the other girls

would be so excited.

I don’t remember if the girls were impressed with my nylons. I just remember my legs itching, getting hot and feeling funny from the nylons seemingly cutting off my circulation.

I spent most of Midnight Mass hoping that it would be over soon so I could get my nylons off and go back to wearing bobby socks.

Each year at Midnight Mass, I say a little prayer and wish a Merry Christmas to my very special Aunt Winnie—especially if I am wearing nylons!

(Cathy Bloom is a member of St. Malachy Parish in Brownsburg.) †

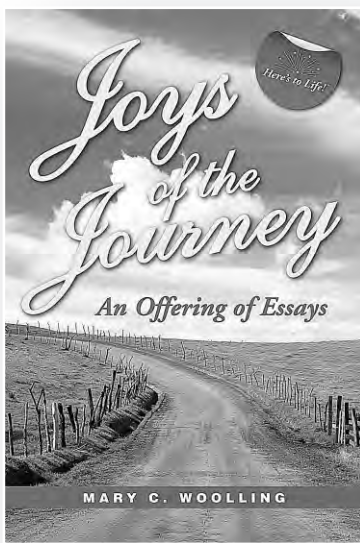
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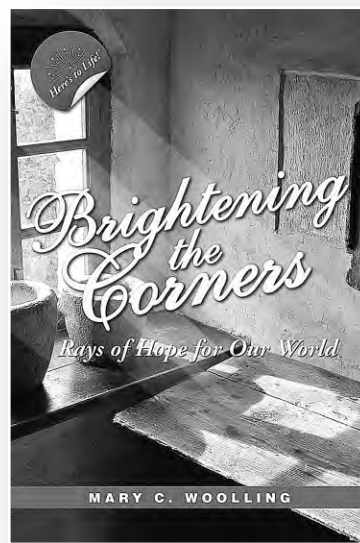
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Christmas with the cousins is a great family legacy

By Ida Lamberti
Special to The Criterion

It was getting close to Christmas, and that meant the big family gathering with all of the cousins.

Winnie loved Christmas, but the part that she liked the best was being with all of the cousins who gathered at Grandma Fitzpatrick's farm to celebrate Christmas Day.

Winnie's Grandma and Grandpa Fitzpatrick lived on a farm in northwest Iowa. Winnie's mother, Mary Fitzpatrick, and her mother's sisters and brothers all grew up on the Fitzpatrick farm near the West Branch River.

Winnie thought that it must have been wonderful growing up there because in the winter the shallow river was always frozen over by Christmas and it stayed frozen until the following spring. It was perfect for ice skating all winter long, and especially for playing "Crack the Whip" with all of the Fitzpatrick cousins on Christmas Day.

On Christmas morning, Winnie awoke with a feeling of anticipation and hurried downstairs to the warm kitchen.

Her mother was always busy putting the final touches on the food for the Christmas feast, and the kitchen smelled like cinnamon and brown sugar and raisins.

Her father was already outside feeding the horses and getting them ready for the trip to Grandma Fitzpatrick's farm. Her father hitched the horses to the bobsled, and covered the bottom of the bobsled with clean straw and heavy blankets for the family to sit on.

Inside the house, her mother had heated bricks on the kitchen stove and wrapped them in towels to put in the bottom of the bobsled to help keep them warm as they drove to Grandma Fitzpatrick's.

The air was crisp and still, the only sound coming from the sleigh bells attached to the horses' harness.

Winnie was always amazed at how Christmas Day unfolded. As soon as they arrived, carried in the food and hung up their coats, her mother and Grandma Fitzpatrick talked about "making the table big."

She never heard any of the grown-ups use that expression except at Christmastime so she guessed that it meant what had to happen to the table to hold all of the special foods that had been prepared.

After it was covered with the big white tablecloth, her older sisters, Frances and Loretta, carefully placed Grandma's best dishes and silverware evenly around the table.

Winnie didn't mind not getting to help because she could barely take her eyes away from the front windows that looked out on the lane and down the road. For Winnie, the high point of the day was the arrival of the cousins.

Finally, to her great delight, she saw their team of horses and buggy coming down the lane carrying Aunt Kate and her family.

Winnie's mother, Mary Fitzpatrick, had married Dan Doherty so Winnie and her sisters and brother were the "Doherty Cousins." Her mother's sister, Kate Fitzpatrick, had married John Linnan so all of their big family were the "Linnan Cousins."

Winnie watched with anticipation as the buggy drew closer. Finally, the horses came to a stop, and Aunt Kate and all of the "Linnan Cousins" descended on Grandma Fitzpatrick's house with great energy and excitement.

Winnie was one of the younger cousins so she watched in awe as the older girls gathered and laughed and exchanged

Christmas cheer.

Before long, they all sat down to the Christmas feast. When dinner was finished, it was Uncle Luke Fitzpatrick's time for his part of the Christmas tradition.

Uncle Luke, who was mother's bachelor brother, always had a gift for each of his nieces and nephews.

Uncle Luke was a great reader so his favorite gift for each of them was a book. Every year, Uncle Luke seemed to choose just the right book for each of her cousins. She wondered how Uncle Luke, who had no children, would know which books to choose, even for the girls.

For Winnie, a favorite was the series of books by Louisa May Alcott—the stories of *Little Women* and *Little Men*, and especially its sequel, *Eight Cousins*.

Too soon, the sun began to slide slowly down the western sky, and the ritual began of gathering everything up and preparing for the drive back home.

The men hitched up the horses while the women gathered their dishes. The cousins began the round of goodbyes before they moved out into the cold, evening air for the ride home, bidding farewell to another Christmas Day.

In later years, after Winnie—now Grandma Coleman—was grown and had a family of her own, she sometimes mused about what it was that made those holidays with the cousins so special.

She wondered whether her cousins also held those memories in such affection, or whether the books that she read during her



Madonna and Sleeping Child

Since 1978, the theme of each "traditional" Christmas stamp has been the Madonna and Child. The 2009 stamp features a painting by Italian artist Giovanni Battista Salvi (1609-85), more commonly known as Sassoferrato. The painting is currently in the collection of the Hearst Castle in California. It depicts a blonde Madonna clothed in red and cradling the sleeping Christ Child in purple cloth. From each of the two top corners, the childlike face of a cherub looks down from the clouds.

childhood enhanced those occasions and formed in her memory a deeper appreciation of those loving relationships and tender times.

However it happened, Christmas with the cousins has been a great legacy, and "waiting for the cousins" is still a time-honored tradition.

(Ida Lamberti is a member of St. Luke the Evangelist Parish in Indianapolis.) †

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Isaiah proclaimed message of hope in the midst of darkness

By Fr. Dale Launderville, O.S.B.

The prophet Isaiah proclaimed around 730 B.C. that “the people who walked in darkness have seen a great light; Upon those who dwelt in the land of gloom a light has shone” (Is 9:1).

He made this announcement to an Israelite nation whose northern half had been overrun by the imperial forces of Assyria, a nation located in what is currently the northern part of Iraq.

Isaiah’s audience in Jerusalem was spared this devastation, but in the process had become subject to Assyrian power.

But in the midst of this darkness and insecurity, the prophet Isaiah proclaimed a message of hope.

He declared that a king was about to be born in the Davidic household in Jerusalem, and so seemed to be referring to Hezekiah (715-687 B.C.).

With the birth of a child, a new agent begins to shape the lives of those around the baby.

But in the case of this royal child, Isaiah declared that he would defeat foreign foes and free the Israelite people from oppression (Is 9:2-4). This child would grow up to become a hero of divine proportions.

The power in store for this newborn ruler is celebrated in the name given to him: “For a child is born to us, a son is given us; upon his shoulder dominion rests. They name him Wonder-Counselor [remarkable for his wisdom and prudence], God-Hero [a warrior and defender of his people like God himself], Father-Forever [ever devoted to his people], Prince of

Peace [his reign will be characterized by peace]” (Is 9:5).

In other words, the God of Israel, the parent of his people, will appoint a ruler as his viceroy who will bring wholeness and harmony to the land.

The lengthy name in the form of a sentence—Wonder-Counselor, God-Hero, Father-Forever, Prince of Peace—would have been shortened in day-to-day use, as was the case with a name like Jonathan, which means “the Lord has given [us a child].” This was a name the parents would have given a child at the joyous time of his birth.

Usually, this name for the newborn Davidic king is translated: “Wonderful Counselor, God-Hero, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace.”

But such a translation creates four epithets rather than one name and overlooks the fact that Hebrew names are usually in the form of a sentence.

The epithet “Everlasting Father” or “Father-Forever” makes little sense when applied to the newborn son.

The name given as a sentence solves this problem by rightly placing the emphasis on the God of Israel as a Father who is blessing Israel with a new royal son, who will transform their darkness into light.

As a prophet, Isaiah was speaking to the people and circumstances of the late eighth century B.C. In his own mind, he

We celebrate God’s love at Christmas

By Carole Norris Greene

How does one respond to the unfathomable love of God that we celebrate at Christmas?

By feasting on the word of God with humility, gratitude and joy!

In the first reading for the Mass at dawn on Christmas Day, we hear Isaiah proclaim, “Your savior comes!” (Is 62:11).

Our responsorial for that Mass is, “A light will shine on us this day: The Lord is born for us.”

In the second reading from the Book of Titus, wretched mankind is called “beloved” then is told, “Not because of any righteous deeds we had done but because of his mercy, he saved us” (Ti 3:5).

Joy fills our hearts as we hear again

Luke’s wondrous Gospel:

“When the angels went away from them to heaven, the shepherds said to one another, ‘Let us go, then, to Bethlehem to see this thing that has taken place, which the Lord has made known to us.’

“So they went in haste and found Mary and Joseph, and the infant lying in the manger. ... They made known the message ... told them about this child. All who heard it were amazed by what had been told them by the shepherds.

“And Mary kept all these things, reflecting on them in her heart” (Lk 2:15-19).

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



The prophet Isaiah proclaimed a message of hope to God’s people when he spoke of a newborn king who would be born in the Davidic family and would grow up to become a hero of divine proportions. Isaiah called this ruler “Wonder-Counselor, God-Hero, Father-Forever, Prince of Peace,” and said he would bring wholeness and harmony to the land.

probably thought that this newborn royal child would be Hezekiah.

In the Book of Isaiah, Hezekiah is celebrated as an upright king who trusted in the God of Israel. This faithful commitment to the Lord set the good king Hezekiah apart from his predecessor, Ahaz.

So Hezekiah was honored in the Israelite tradition as an exemplary king who knew the importance of waiting on God, and not trying to manufacture peace by his own plans and schemes.

By opening his heart to God so that God might act through him, Hezekiah promoted justice and righteousness in his kingdom.

But although Hezekiah was a good king, he was not perfect. Thus, the promised newborn child is not fully captured by the historical king Hezekiah.

The idealized royal king praised in this song of thanksgiving at his birth goes far beyond the capabilities of a human ruler. The poetry of the song may simply have been a way of expressing strong confidence in a newborn king.

However, early Christians recognized in Isaiah 9:1-6 a messianic king who would usher in the reign of God.

This messianic king was not an ordinary dynastic ruler for he would come forth from God and rule not simply with extraordinary power, but more importantly with justice and righteousness.

The inspired prophet Isaiah gave voice to hopeful words that still bring light to our darkness.

In a world scarred by violence and insecurity, we need the vision and the encouragement that Isaiah proclaims to the people of God.

Trust in God alone is the message that Isaiah impresses upon his audience.

Just as each new child comes forth as a gift of God to bring new life into a family, so also God was born among us and went through the full range of human experience from birth to death so that we might be brought into God’s realm, and be transformed by the divine love shared by the Father and the Son.

It is this abundance of God’s love that we celebrate at Christmas.

(Benedictine Father Dale Launderville is a Scripture scholar at St. John’s University in Collegeville, Minn.) †

Discussion Point

Take time to recognize God’s presence

This Week’s Question

Mankind was created to worship and reverence God. To what extent do you offer God worship and reverence in your daily life?

“It’s just a matter of acknowledging that he’s always present to us, ... taking small moments ... to acknowledge it. At least once each day, I look at my calendar and appointments, and ask God to bless the day, the people [I will talk to] and the work I’m doing that day.” (Amy Auzenne, Katy, Texas)

“As a family, we have night prayers and say what we’re thankful for in a structured way. ... In an unstructured way, I take a lot of walks. I love nature and just appreciating what [God] made is also a way to worship.” (Ali McAdams, Hull, Ga.)

“I try to follow Jesus and do his work as best I can.

I’m a daily communicant and say daily prayers. I also do volunteer work, which is following his footsteps through reverent hospitality and care for others.” (Marjorie Mangan, Binghamton, N.Y.)

“The obvious way is in prayer, but also a lot of it is in dealing with other people because that’s where you find God. Being respectful and treating them well is another way of worshipping God.” (Sheila Whalen, Northbrook, Ill.)

Lend Us Your Voice

An upcoming edition asks: What is your favorite work of religious-themed art? How does it affect you?

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. †

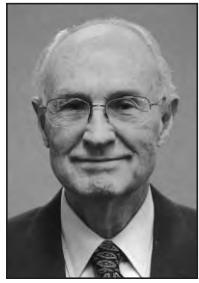


From the Editor Emeritus/John F. Fink

'Charity in Truth': We must feed the hungry

(Fourth in a series of columns)

Quite naturally, Pope Benedict XVI devotes space in his encyclical "*Caritas in Veritate*" ("Charity in Truth") to the problem of hunger in many poor countries.



It is a problem, of course, that has always been with us, and we can't help but feel sorry for all those, especially children, who continue in our modern age to die from starvation.

The pope lays down some principles that we must keep in mind as we strive for the elimination of world hunger, a problem that, in our global era, has become a requirement for safeguarding the peace and stability of the planet.

He says that we must cultivate a public conscience that considers food and access to water as universal rights of all human beings, without distinction or discrimination. These rights, he says, have an important place within the pursuit of other rights, beginning with the fundamental right to life.

He references the 25th chapter of Matthew's Gospel, in which Christ tells us that feeding the hungry and giving drink to the thirsty are requirements for those who will be saved at the end of the world.

Feeding the hungry is an ethical imperative for the universal Church, he says, as she responds to the teachings of her founder. We must share our goods with those less fortunate.

There is enough food in the world. What is missing, the pope says, is a network of economic institutions capable of guaranteeing regular access to sufficient food and water. In times of real food crises, whether due to natural causes like droughts or storms, or due to political irresponsibility, these institutions must be able to address people's needs and see that they're taken care of.

He calls for promotion of agricultural development in poor countries, addressed within a long-range perspective. That includes investing in rural infrastructures, such as irrigation systems, transportation, the organization of markets for farmers and the latest forms of agricultural technology.

Pope Benedict emphasizes that

everything done to combat hunger must be done with the involvement of local communities. They must be involved in choices and decisions that affect the use of their agricultural land.

The local people should also be taught innovative farming techniques, assuming that the techniques have been tested sufficiently, and been judged to be respectful of people's culture and the environment, and attentive to the needs of the most deprived people.

All this, of course, is the approach that the Catholic Church's aid organizations, such as Catholic Relief Services, have always done. So, too, do other charities such as Food for the Poor, Catholic missionaries around the world and various other Christian relief agencies that work in the world's poorest countries.

None of what the pope says about hunger is new, but he considered it important to point out that those of us in wealthy countries have a grave obligation to help feed the world's hungry and starving people. Perhaps most of us can't do it personally, but we can support the organizations that are trying to do what the pope says. †

The Joyful Catholic/Rick Hermann

The greatest gift is ours to share with God and others

A pastor looked at the crèche one day after Christmas and noticed Baby Jesus was missing from his cradle.



He went outside and saw a little boy pulling a new red wagon. In the wagon was the missing Jesus.

He walked up to the boy and said, "Hi there. Where did you get the Baby Jesus?"

The little boy

replied, "In the church."

"Why did you take him?" the pastor asked.

"Well," said the boy, "I prayed to Jesus and promised him that if he gave me a wagon for Christmas, I'd take him for a ride in it."

Does this story evoke fond memories in you of a favorite gift you gave or received?

Perhaps it was a doll, a bike, a red wagon or a puppy. Maybe it was a ring, a spouse, a child or a house.

We are blessed with many gifts, material and spiritual, and we are wise to remember where all gifts come from, especially the gift of life itself: "Every good and perfect gift is from above, coming down from the Father" (Jas 1:17).

Thus, we thank God for all our gifts, and

we marvel at the diversity of our unique gifts.

"Each man has his own gift from God; one has this gift, another has that" (1 Cor 7:7).

What is your favorite gift, your red wagon? Is it rusty or do you appreciate it?

Maybe it is being a friendly person, good parent, inspiring teacher or loving caregiver.

Perhaps you are gifted with patience, encouragement or the ability to sing or pray.

Even the smallest gifts can have great consequences. We need to see all our gifts and talents as priceless presents from God.

We did not create them, we do not deserve them and we certainly cannot repay them except by using them wisely and well.

How does God want us to respond? With joy and gratitude. "Rejoice in all the good things the Lord your God has given to you" (Dt 26:11).

Now suppose we ask God to name his favorite gift to us, the one we should cherish above all the others. What do you think he would say?

"For God so loved the world that he gave his one and only Son, that whoever believes in him shall not perish but have eternal life" (Jn 3:16).

God's greatest gift is his Son, Jesus Christ, who offers to forgive our sins and reconcile us with our Father.

Since our self-love often disconnects us from God, we delight in this reconciliation

with gratitude.

"We also rejoice through our Lord Jesus Christ, through whom we have now received reconciliation" (Rom 5:11).

Thus, Jesus reconciles us with our Father, the Great Gift Giver. He opens the doors of heaven to us, right now, this very day, this very moment.

Now suppose we ask God what is the best gift we can give him in return?

It is the gift of ourselves. Just as Jesus gave himself to us, he wants us to give ourselves wholeheartedly to him and rejoice in his love.

He also wants us to use our gifts to help others and thus show them his love. "Each one should use whatever gift he has received to serve others" (1 Pt 4:10).

Like the little boy in the story who pulls Jesus in his wagon, let us use our gifts to show other people the real Jesus more clearly. After all, our Savior is truly the greatest gift to the whole world so let's show him to everyone.

Wherever you go, enjoy your gifts and take Jesus along for the ride.

(Rick Hermann is a popular columnist, speaker and author of *Finding God Everywhere and The Spirit Set Me Free. He welcomes e-mail at RH222@sbcglobal.net.*) †

Faithful Lines/Shirley Vogler Meister

Should animals be part of the Nativity scene?

A soothing time for me during the hectic Advent season is preparing the family Nativity scene, also known as a crèche.



Christian churches do the same thing in more splendid ways—or more lively ways when a Nativity scene includes actual people in the roles of our Blessed Mother Mary

and Joseph with the infant Jesus, surrounded by either the Wise Men or a variety of animals or both.

Years ago, I took my youngest daughter, Lisa, to see the large crèche at St. Peter's Cathedral in my hometown of Belleville, Ill.

As we walked down a long aisle in the cathedral to enjoy this holy scene, she said loudly, "Happy birthday, Jesus."

Such an expression was not usually used at that time, but it warmed my heart and the hearts of others around us.

However, one time long after that—while viewing another Nativity scene

elsewhere—I heard an adult express distress in seeing more than the usual animals commonly depicted at the holy site.

I wish I could have shared with him my belief that when I get to heaven my loved ones who preceded me in death, as well as all of the animals I have cared for through the years, will be with God and pre-deceased friends and family to welcome me there.

Someone else years ago told me that my idea is ludicrous, perhaps even sacrilegious.

So I was especially happy when I recently read a feature story in *The Criterion* about a book that proves my point. It is titled *Will I See My Dog in Heaven?* The author is Franciscan Father Jack Wintz of Cincinnati, who has been writing and editing for *St. Anthony Messenger* magazine since 1972. He is also the author of an e-mail newsletter called "Friar Jack's E-aspirations" (www.friarjack.org).

Friar Jack doesn't just acknowledge the presence of dogs in heaven. He also speaks for all animal life and uses the

Holy Bible for a reference source. His book is profound. Naturally, he taps into writings attributed to St. Francis, who always glorified Our Creator's work. He also closes his book with "Three Prayers of Blessing for Any Animal, Fish, Bird or Other Creature." He encourages gathering family and friends for these blessings.

The subtitle for his book is *God's Saving Love for the Whole Family of Creation*. Each chapter brought me closer to the understanding of God's love for all his creatures. One chapter, the "Blessing of Pets," brought happy tears to my eyes—and a renewed feeling of oneness with God's love and with nature as he created it.

Yes, I do believe that the Christmas crèche may include all manner of God's creatures.

Will I See My Dog in Heaven? is published by Paraclete Press in Brewster, Mass. Log on to www.paracletepress.com for more information.

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

Catholic Education Outreach/

Ken Ogorek

Evangelization efforts in parishes are making a difference

"Dear Ken,

"I am writing to update you on the progress of our parish evangelization committee's



efforts. Father asked me to chair an evangelization team. He said that when something is everyone's job it soon becomes no one's job, and that evangelization is too important not to have a focused effort in our parish.

"Father and I

identified a few people who we knew we wanted to invite to be team members. We then publicized throughout the parish in various ways that a team was forming and invited folks to join this ministry.

"Part of this publicity involved explaining briefly what evangelization is and that Catholics have a major role to play in evangelizing their neighborhoods and communities. Peg McEvoy's suggestions were very helpful in explaining why we're forming a team.

"Our first few meetings were spent getting to know each other and discussing the key passages that Peg suggested—the readings from specific Church documents that articulate clearly what evangelization is all about.

"We know that Rome wasn't built in a day, and that we must be patient as we start this process. But hoping to move the ball forward, we have modest yet significant goals for the next six months in the three key areas that are the new evangelization:

- 1) reaching the unchurched,
- 2) reinvigorating the alienated,
- 3) refreshing those currently practicing our Catholic faith.

"As our Church says, each of us needs ongoing evangelization.

"You're a great guy, Ken—charming, handsome, witty..."

This letter is fictional—especially the last part. But it typifies the sort of feedback we are starting to hear based on our efforts to help our 151 parishes and missions see to it that evangelization is a high visibility ministry in their local Church.

Does your parish have an evangelization team, committee or other group that focuses by name on this important part of Catholic life? If so, could the team benefit from your efforts given your enthusiasm for our Catholic faith? If no team is present, might God be calling you to approach Father and offer to head up such an effort?

Several myths and misperceptions about evangelization are alive and well.

For example: "In our diverse society, it's not really appropriate to get in another person's business by discussing faith, God, religion, etc.," or "So long as I live like a good person, there's never a need to discuss and share my faith and the difference it makes in my life."

Certainly we must be prudent about when we raise the topic of faith and how we approach religion-related topics in various conversational settings. But thinking that being Catholic and focusing on evangelization don't go together is simply inaccurate.

When parishes pay suitable attention to how evangelization fits in with various ministries and efforts, the faith community truly grows by God's grace. A parish evangelization team is an essential part of each local Church.

Peg McEvoy, associate director for Evangelization and Family Catechesis in the archdiocese, and I stand ready to assist you in your quest to make evangelization a lively and visible presence at your parish.

We're already hearing good results from these efforts in several places. What news can you bring us about evangelization ministry in your parish?

(Ken Ogorek is director of catechesis for the Office of Catholic Education in the archdiocese. He can be reached at 800-382-9836, ext. 1446, or by e-mail at kogorek@archindy.org.) †

Fourth Sunday of Advent/Msgr. Owen F. Campion

The Sunday Readings

Sunday, Dec. 20, 2009

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

This weekend observes the last Sunday in Advent.

The first reading is from the Book of Micah, who is regarded as one of the Minor Prophets, in large part because of the book's brevity.



It contains only seven chapters. By contrast, the Book of Isaiah has 66 chapters. The author was a contemporary of Isaiah, the author of the first section of the Book of

Isaiah.

Very few biographical facts are known about the author of Micah. He came from a small village some 25 miles southwest of Jerusalem. However, nothing is known of his background.

As did so many prophets of ancient Israel, Micah was determined to call his people, the Chosen People, back to God and away from sin. He argued for piety and for loyalty to the Covenant with God.

Furthermore, he warned that indifference to God only led to disaster, personal as well as national.

In his day, piety was in short supply. Greed and exploitation overwhelmed the economy, merely indications of rampant personal greed. Religious practices were sparse, and often insincere and poorly presented when they did occur.

Amid all this, Micah promised that a Savior will come. This Savior will lead the people away from sin and to God. The Savior will come from Bethlehem.

Here, Micah refers to David, who was born in Bethlehem. David was very important. As king of Israel, his royal role was not primarily political, it was religious. His task was to see that the people obeyed God.

Micah forecasted that when this Savior becomes king, all will be well. All will be at peace.

For its second reading, the Church this weekend gives us a lesson from the Letter to the Hebrews.

Heavy with its Hebrew symbolism, this epistle also is renowned for brilliantly extolling Jesus as Lord and as the Lamb of God.

In Hebrews, Jesus appears as the perfect victim and priest. His sacrifice on Calvary was sublime, perfect and utterly unique. Most important, his sacrifice was eternal. Its

effects of reconciling humanity with God will never cease. Thus, no other sacrifices are necessary. All has been accomplished.

St. Luke's Gospel furnishes the last reading.

It is the story of the Visitation. Mary travels from her own home to a place in the hills of Judah. Traditionally, it has been thought that this place is the site now called Ein Karem. Once a few miles from Jerusalem, it has been absorbed by the growth of the city and for all practical purposes is today a part of Jerusalem.

Mary goes to meet her cousin, Elizabeth, the wife of Zachariah.

Elizabeth is also pregnant. Since Elizabeth was past the childbearing age for a woman, her conception was regarded as miraculous. Her child had a special destiny. He was holy. Elizabeth's unborn child will be John the Baptist.

Elizabeth realizes that Mary is expecting a child, and Mary's child will be the Messiah. Elizabeth's unborn child understands the profound character of all that is transpiring, and senses God in the presence of Mary and her own unborn infant. Both Elizabeth and her unborn child testify to the Messiah.

Reflection

It is the last weekend of Advent. Christmas will be celebrated within the week. For almost everyone, it will be a busy, hurried day as well as a time of excitement, anticipation and joy.

Nevertheless, there is time to make Christmas a personal spiritual event. So, in these readings during Advent's last weekend, the Church calls us to Jesus. He is everything, the Church emphatically and joyfully declares. In the words of Hebrews, in the words of Luke, Jesus is the answer to every human need.

The writings of Micah remind us that when we allow Jesus to come to us, all peace and happiness will abide with us. †

Readers may submit prose or poetry for faith column

The Criterion invites readers to submit original prose or poetry relating to faith or experiences of prayer for possible publication in the "My Journey to God" column.

Seasonal reflections also are appreciated. Please include name, address, parish and telephone number with submissions.

Send material for consideration to "My Journey to God," *The Criterion*, P.O. Box 1717, Indianapolis, IN 46206 or e-mail to criterion@archindy.org. †

Daily Readings

Monday, Dec. 21

Peter Canisius, priest and doctor of the Church

Song of Songs 2:8-14

or *Zephaniah* 3:14-18a

Psalms 33:2-3, 11-12, 20-21

Luke 1:39-45

Tuesday, Dec. 22

1 Samuel 1:24-28

(Response) *1 Samuel* 2:1, 4-8

Luke 1:46-56

Wednesday, Dec. 23

John of Kanty, priest

Malachi 3:1-4, 23-24

Psalms 25:4-5, 8-10, 14

Luke 1:57-66

Thursday, Dec. 24

2 Samuel 7:1-5, 8b-12, 14a, 16

Psalms 89:2-5, 27, 29

Luke 1:67-79

Vigil of Christmas

Isaiah 62:1-5

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

Acts 13:16-17, 22-25

Matthew 1:1-25

or *Matthew* 1:18-25

Friday, Dec. 26

The Nativity of the Lord

(Christmas)

Midnight

Isaiah 9:1-6

Psalms 96:1-3, 11-13

Titus 2:11-14

Luke 2:1-14

Dawn

Isaiah 62:11-12

Psalms 97:1, 6, 11-12

Titus 3:4-7

Luke 2:15-20

Day

Isaiah 52:7-10

Psalms 98:1-6

Hebrews 1:1-6

John 1:1-18

or *John* 1:1-5, 9-14

Saturday, Dec. 26

Stephen, first martyr

Acts 6:8-10; 7:54-59

Psalms 31:3cd-4, 6, 8ab, 16bc-17

Matthew 10:17-22

Sunday, Dec. 27

The Holy Family of Jesus, Mary and Joseph

Sirach 3:2-7, 12-14

Psalms 128:1-5

Colossians 3:12-21

or *Colossians* 3:12-17

Luke 2:41-52

Monday, Dec. 28

The Holy Innocents, martyrs

1 John 1:5-2:2

Psalms 124:2-5, 7c-8

Matthew 2:13-18

Tuesday, Dec. 29

1 John 2:3-11

Psalms 96:1-3, 5b-6

Luke 2:22-35

continued on page 23

Question Corner/Fr. John Dietzen

The sacraments of the Church are meant for the living, not the dead

QThe father of a friend of mine died recently. She found him two days after he died.



Her family says she should have called a priest to give him the sacrament of penance and anoint him.

She didn't do so because she felt there was no point.

What is the proper procedure in these

situations? Should she have had a priest come to give him these sacraments? (Oklahoma)

AI believe your friend acted wisely. Sacraments are for the living, not the dead.

Either or both of these sacraments should be administered, at least conditionally, only as long as there is any doubt that the person still has bodily life. (See "Pastoral Care of the Sick," #15. References cited in this column are to this ritual.)

The Church has two complementary concerns in the sacrament of the anointing.

"It supports the sick in their struggle against illness and continues Christ's messianic work of healing" (#96).

These obviously affect not only the sick person himself or herself, but also family members and friends who need this message of hope and comfort.

This is why every effort is required to prepare for and celebrate the sacraments of anointing, penance and Eucharist while the dying person is still able to participate in them with loved ones.

As the ritual points out and Catholic theology indicates: "Because of its very nature as a sign [as a sacramental action], the sacrament of anointing of the sick should be celebrated with members of the family and other representatives of the Christian community whenever this is possible. Then the sacrament is seen for

what it is, a part of the prayer of the Church and an encounter with the Lord" (#99).

When this has not been possible for whatever reason, anointing of the sick may be conferred after the person has lost consciousness. However, it should never be ministered if it is clear without doubt that the individual is already dead.

In this case, the priest might pray for the person, asking God's forgiveness and for all the other gifts the Church begs from God in its petitions for the dead.

Canon law echoes these teachings. The sacrament of anointing is to be ministered to those who have attained the use of reason when there is any doubt whatsoever that the sick person is in fact dead, or even whether he or she is in fact seriously ill.

While the above deals more directly with the sacrament of anointing of the sick, practice relating to the dying is substantially the same for the sacrament of penance.

QMy wife and I are lifelong Catholics and don't know much about other faiths.

We were confused recently when we went to a Lutheran funeral and heard them recite the Apostles' Creed, including that they believe in the Catholic Church.

How do we explain that? (Iowa)

AWithin a few decades after Jesus' death, the Christian community was already called "catholic." The Greek word "*katholikos*" simply means universal, indicating, among other things, that the Christian faith is for all people, not only for certain classes or places.

The Apostles' Creed reached its present form around the year 200 so it is not strange that it includes the phrase "catholic church."

When Protestants recite the Apostles' Creed, they intend that original meaning, not as a reference to the Roman Catholic Church. †

My Journey to God

A Different Christmas

It is the Advent season and great joy erupts,
Welling up to become praise and glory,
Manifested in the voices of believers,
Carols and hymns toll out the great story.

A child is born of humble mortal lineage,
A birth that fulfills the ancient prophecies,
The coming of a Savior for all humankind,
Prophecies predicted over many centuries.

Have we really felt the greatness of Christmas?
Christmas that is a true gift from God alone,

The gift of His only beloved Son to all of us,
The seed from the root of Jessie's stem is sown.

Be done with the ordinary Christmas season.
Enjoy a different Christmas, where we give ourselves away,
And have a joyous Christ-like Christmas,
And pray that we share Christ's love each day.

By Thomas J. Rillo

(Thomas J. Rillo is a member of St. Charles Borromeo Parish in Bloomington, and is a Benedictine oblate of Saint Meinrad Archabbey. This poem was inspired by a visit to a shopping mall during the Christmas season replete with advertisements of consumerism.)

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.

BAILEY, Frances Elinor, 93, St. Augustine, Jeffersonville, Nov. 18. Mother of Barbara Williams. Sister of Mary Elizabeth Langhorst and John Wiegman. Grandmother of two. Great-grandmother of four.

BASSO, John Victor, 85, St. Barnabas, Indianapolis, Nov. 29. Husband of Anne Basso. Father of John, Robert and Thomas Basso. Grandfather of six. Great-grandfather of three.

BENTON, Michael, 57, St. Joseph, Rockville, Nov. 30. Son of Anna Margaret Fravel. Brother of Teresa Baker, Celia Grossheim, Michele Lincoln, Kelley Lewis, Dorothy, Jayanne and John Benton.

BERHEIDE, Charles, 83, Holy Family, Richmond, Nov. 23. Husband of Virginia Berheide. Father of Bob Berheide. Stepbrother of Joan Brandenburg and Betty Strzelecki.

BIANCHETTA, Mary, 93, St. Joseph, Universal, Nov. 19. Mother of Sharon Wilson. Sister of Virginia Dagley. Grandmother

of two. Great-grandmother of two.

BUTLER, Virginia (Vize), 85, Sacred Heart of Jesus, Indianapolis, Nov. 27. Mother of Ray Krebs. Grandmother of three. Great-grandmother of 10. Great-great-grandmother of two.

CARTER, Katrine E., 92, St. Christopher, Indianapolis, Nov. 28. Wife of Alvin Carter. Mother of Kenneth Carter. Grandmother of eight. Great-grandmother of one.

CLOUSE, Mary, 77, St. Andrew, Richmond, Dec. 4. Mother of Phil Defibaugh. Grandmother of five. Great-grandmother of two.

DUNSMORE, Honore M., 90, St. Paul Hermitage, Beech Grove, Dec. 2. Mother of Linda Augenstein and Sharon Gartrell. Grandmother of one. Step-grandmother of seven. Step-great-grandmother of 11.

FINNEGAN, John, 71, St. Mary-of-the-Knobs, Floyds Knobs, Dec. 2. Husband of Janice Finnegan. Father of Laura Brenzel, Ann Lucas, Karen Watt, Natalie Wenzel, John and Patrick Finnegan. Son of Dorothy (Casper) Finnegan. Brother of Mary Walker. Grandfather of 12.

GILLESPIE, June K., 81, St. Matthew, Indianapolis, Nov. 20. Wife of Dale Gillespie. Mother of Susan Albert, Jackie Mitchell, James and Thomas Gillespie. Grandmother of eight. Great-grandmother of seven.

GOODRICH, Marie E., 87, St. Matthew, Indianapolis, Nov. 18. Wife of James

Goodrich. Mother of Michele, James and Joseph Goodrich. Sister of John Nichol.

HILBERT, Arthur H., 95, St. Gabriel, Connersville, Nov. 19. Husband of Marie Hilbert. Father of Cathy Marcum, Ann Miller, Susan Hilbert and Jeanie Robinson. Brother of Robert Hilbert. Grandfather of seven. Great-grandfather of 10.

KNOX, Jean M., 90, St. Matthew, Indianapolis, Nov. 13. Wife of George Butzin. Mother of Christine Baron and Thomas Butzin. Grandmother of two.

KOEBELER, Paul, 91, St. Jude, Indianapolis, Dec. 3. Father of Cynthia Koebeler and Barbara

Thornton. Grandfather of seven. Great-grandfather of 12.

LITKENHOUS, Louis E., 86, Our Lady of Perpetual Help, New Albany, Nov. 27. Father of Julie Fowler and Robert Litkenhaus. Grandfather of six. Great-grandfather of three.

LONG, Hazel E., 89, St. Pius X, Indianapolis, Dec. 1. Mother of Ramona Rummans, Margaret Schaller, Michael and Terry Long. Sister of Ramona Brown and Mickey Pund. Grandmother of 13. Great-grandmother of 10.

MARTIN, Teresa, 46, St. Gabriel, Connersville, Nov. 13. Daughter of Robert Martin and Marlene Martin. Half-sister of Joshua Martin.

McKEE, Mary Virginia, 98, St. Gabriel, Connersville, Nov. 3. Cousin of several.

MOSCATO, Luella, 69, St. Mary, Greensburg, Nov. 22. Wife of James Moscato. Mother of Micki Baker, Marti Garwood and Michael Moscato. Sister of Alan and Gene Merx. Grandmother of three.

OGLE, Deborah Maynard, 60, St. Roch, Indianapolis, Nov. 26.

PASTORE, Eda, 85, Sacred Heart, Clinton, Nov. 19. Wife of Americo Pastore. Mother of Maria Lang, Lisa Smith and

Thomas Pastore. Grandmother of four.

RETTIG, Paul D., 49, St. Malachy, Brownsburg, Nov. 30. Husband of Corie Rettig. Father of Abbi, Alexis, Annee and Ashley Rettig. Son of Carole (Keller) Rettig. Brother of Chris, Dan, Gary, Jim, Mike and Steve Rettig.

WILSON, Joseph F., 87, St. Augustine Home for the Aged, Indianapolis, Dec. 11. Father of Violet Engel, Sheila Katko, Paula Moore, Fagan O'Reilly and Joseph Wilson. Grandfather of five. Great-grandfather of four. †

Providence Sister Marie Benson served as a teacher or principal for 41 years

Providence Sister Marie Benson died on Dec. 6 at Mother Theodore Hall at Saint Mary-of-the-Woods. She was 88.

The Mass of Christian Burial was celebrated on Dec. 10 at the Church of the Immaculate Conception at the motherhouse. Burial followed at the sisters' cemetery.

The former Winifred Mary Benson was born on July 8, 1921, in Chicago.

She entered the congregation of the Sisters of Providence on Jan. 5, 1939, and received the name Sister Marie Ralph. She professed first vows on Aug. 15, 1941, and final vows on Aug. 15, 1947.

Sister Marie earned a bachelor of science in education at Saint Mary-of-the-Woods College and a master of science in education at Indiana State University in Terre Haute.

During 70 years as a Sister of Providence, she ministered as a teacher and principal for 41 years. She taught music and elementary education at Catholic schools in Indiana, North Carolina, Maryland and Illinois.

In the archdiocese, Sister Marie served as the principal of the former Holy Trinity School in New Albany from 1943-48 and taught at St. Matthew School in Indianapolis from 1983-86.

In 1982, Sister Marie retired from teaching. She served as the register at Cathedral High School in Indianapolis from 1986-94.

In 1994, she retired and volunteered in Indianapolis. In 2004, she returned to the motherhouse and began her prayer ministry.

Memorial gifts may be sent to the Sisters of Providence, Saint Mary-of-the-Woods, 1 Sisters of Providence Road, St. Mary-of-the-Woods, IN 47876. †

Conventual Franciscan Father Mark Mindrup was a vicar provincial

Conventual Franciscan Father Mark F. Mindrup, a native of Terre Haute, died on Dec. 8 at St. Gertrude Health Center in Shakopee, Minn. He was 96.

The Mass of Christian Burial was celebrated on Dec. 14 at the chapel at Mount St. Francis in southern Indiana. Burial followed in the friars' cemetery.

He was born on March 11, 1913, in Terre Haute. He professed his solemn vows in 1936, and was ordained to the priesthood on June 3, 1939, at Holy Rosary Cathedral in Toledo, Ohio.

In 1942, Father Mark earned a License in Sacred Theology at The Catholic University of America in Washington, D.C.

Prior to 1970, Father Mark served as a pastor, preacher of parish missions, and professor of ethics and moral theology.

From 1966-70, Father Mark served as vicar provincial for the Province of Our Lady of Consolation based at Mount St. Francis.

From 1972 to 2001, he resided at Franciscan Retreats in Prior Lake, Minn., where he ministered to those battling alcohol and chemical dependency.

Known as a gifted and dynamic speaker, Father Mark often gave retreats throughout the United States and Canada for people in recovery.

Father Mark served as an adviser to many bishops and religious superiors on issues of chemical dependency and the clergy or religious. He developed a series of protocols to assist bishops and religious superiors in intervention, treatment and after care.

He also served as the international chaplain of the Calix Society from 1986-94.

Surviving are a niece and several nephews.


Memorial gifts may be sent to the Conventual Franciscans, Mount St. Francis Friary, 101 St. Anthony Drive, Mount St. Francis, IN 47146. †

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Book captures spirit of the Irish

By Mike Krokos

There is the story about losing his parents on a family trip to Ireland—within a few hours of arriving on the Emerald Isle.

And the one about the priest whose deep Irish roots and upbringing led him to befriend and become the primary caregiver for an 80-year-old widower who had just lost his wife of 40 years.

But we can't forget reading about the tradition of Notre Dame football between a father and son that started years ago and has been carried on from generation to generation.

In *The Irish Way of Life: Stories of Family, Faith and Friendship*, author John Shaughnessy's second book is filled with the kind of stories that the Irish are known for, stories that make you laugh and bring a tear to your eyes, the author said.

Though many of the stories draw upon his own experiences, Shaughnessy also interviewed people of Irish descent, including several with ties to the Indianapolis area.

"I wanted to write a book that would be a tribute to Irish immigrants, like my grandparents, who came to America with their most important possessions: their dreams," said Shaughnessy, who is the assistant editor of *The Criterion*.

"I also wanted the book to be a tribute to their sons and daughters, who made the United States their home and shared their Irish-American heritage with their children."

But the 195-page nonfiction book, published by Corby Books in Notre Dame, Ind., is not only meant for people of Irish descent.

"These stories would connect with most people because most of the stories in the books are about fathers and sons, mothers and daughters, brothers and sisters, husbands and wives—all relationships that touch our lives," Shaughnessy said.

"One of the threads throughout the book is how people left everything behind in one country to come to the United States for

a better life for themselves and their families. That's a story that is still a great part of our country today."

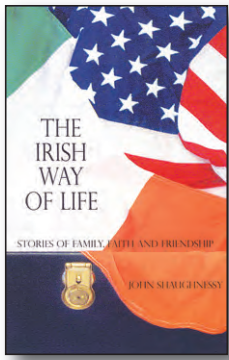
Shaughnessy spent a recent November evening recounting some of his book's Irish stories with members of the Ladies Ancient Order of Hibernians at the Northside Knights of Columbus Hall in Indianapolis.

The group erupted in laughter several times, including when listening as the author reminisced about a story from his early days working for *The Indianapolis Star*. The St. Patrick's Day feature was about the now-late Joe Wilson, an Irish immigrant musician in Indianapolis.

"I visit him in his house and right after we sit down, he leans toward me and says, 'I have a fine bottle of Irish whiskey that can't be bought in the States. And it's the last bottle I have. Would you like a drink?' Before I could answer, Wilson winks and whispers, 'Of course, once we take off the cork, we throw it away.'"

Though the young reporter declined the offer, Wilson went on to tell him the story of his life, Shaughnessy said, "and certain qualities came through in his story that I associated with the Irish way of life: the desire to make a better life for your family, the gift of storytelling, a spirit of generosity, a strength to overcome life's challenges, more than a touch of irreverence, a core of faith and the pride of being Irish."

(*The Irish Way of Life: Stories of Family, Faith and Friendship* is available at www.corbypublishing.com and at Borders bookstores in Indianapolis, Killybegs Irish Shop in Indianapolis and Holy Family Books in Carmel.) †



Daily Readings

Matthew 4:12-17, 23-25

continued from page 21

Wednesday, Dec. 30

1 John 2:12-17

Psalm 96:7-10

Luke 2:36-40

Thursday, Dec. 31

Sylvester I, pope

1 John 2:18-21

Psalm 96:1-2, 11-13

John 1:1-18

Friday, Jan. 1

The Blessed Virgin Mary,

Mother of God

Numbers 6:22-27

Psalm 67:2-3, 5-6, 8

Galatians 4:4-7

Luke 2:16-21

Saturday, Jan. 2

Basil the Great, bishop and doctor of the Church

Gregory Nazianzen, bishop and doctor of the Church

1 John 2:22-28

Psalm 98:1-4

John 1:19-28

Sunday, Jan. 3

The Epiphany of the Lord

Isaiah 60:1-6

Psalm 72:1-2, 7-8, 10-13

Ephesians 3:2-3a, 5-6

Matthew 2:1-12

Monday, Jan. 4

Elizabeth Ann Seton, religious

1 John 3:22-4:6

Psalm 2:7-8, 10-12a

Tuesday, Jan. 5

John Neumann, bishop

1 John 4:7-10

Psalm 72:1-4, 7-8

Mark 6:34-44

Wednesday, Jan. 6

Blessed André Bessette, religious

1 John 4:11-18

Psalm 72:1-2, 10-13

Mark 6:45-52

Thursday, Jan. 7

Raymond of Peñafort, priest

1 John 4:19:5:4

Psalm 72:1-2, 14, 15bc, 17

Luke 4:14-22

Friday, Jan. 8

1 John 5:5-13

Psalm 147:12-15, 19-20

Luke 5:12-16

Saturday, Jan. 9

1 John 5:14-21

Psalm 149:1-6a, 9b

John 3:22-30

Sunday, Jan. 10

The Baptism of the Lord

Isaiah 42:1-4, 6-7

Psalm 29:1-4, 9-10

Acts of the Apostles 10:34-38

Luke 3:15-16, 21-22

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