



Members of the Mapuche Indian Community in Chile listen to their Chief, Melillan Painemal, following an outdoor meal. Painemal said the Church has been siding with the Indians in efforts to keep their communal land and gain skills needed to improve their lot.



News At A Glance

Catholics invited to pray for troubled Ireland

WASHINGTON (NC) — The National Conference of Catholic Bishops (NCCB) has invited Catholics in the United States to join the Catholic bishops in Northern Ireland and others there in praying for peace in that troubled area. The NCCB has also sent out for use at Mass suggested prayers concerning the victims of the earthquake in Italy and the conflict in Northern Ireland.

Episcopal and Catholic bishops hope to renew talks

NEWARK, N.J. (NC) — The Episcopal bishop of Newark and the Catholic dioceses of Newark and Paterson, N.J., are exploring the possibility of resuming discussions which were broken off in the wake of the U.S. Catholic bishop's decision regarding dissident Episcopal clergyment.

Stop playing political games -- Italian Salons told

ROME (NC) — "This is not the time for recriminations or political games," a Jesuit magazine warned warring Italian politicians following the earthquake in southern Italy. The latest edition of *Civiltà Cattolica* called for peace in the battle of words between the Christian Democratic Party and the Italian communists over the handling of earthquake rescue and aid efforts.

Pope Tells Methodists to "continue quest for unity"

VATICAN CITY (NC) — Pope John Paul II told Methodists to ignore "the cries of the impatient and the skeptical" and to continue their quest for Christian unity.

Students protest Justice Rehnquist's stand on capital punishment

NASHVILLE, Tenn. (NC) — Supreme Court Justice William H. Rehnquist addressed a standing-room crowd at Vanderbilt University in late November, but not before being greeted by pickets protesting Rehnquist's position favoring capital punishment.

Catholics may not be Klansmen -- Louisville Archdiocese

No Catholic may be a member of the Ku Klux Klan, a Louisville archdiocesan commission stated, and Archbishop Thomas Donnellan of Atlanta said membership in the Klan "is inconsistent with the teachings of our religious heritage." The Louisville Commission on Peace and Justice adopted a statement calling on Catholics in the archdiocese to reject the Klan.

Unionization friction "apt to get worse" - Msgr. Higgins

OAKLAND, Calif. (NC) — Friction between Catholic institutions such as schools and hospitals and employees who seek unionization "will probably get worse before it gets better," predicted a widely recognized U.S. labor expert. Msgr. George Higgins said the unionization issue "is more of a hospital problem than one for the (Catholic) schools."

Is earthquake relief getting to the needy?

(UNDATED) — Freezing temperatures and bureaucratic squabbles hampered efforts to aid victims of southern Italy's Nov. 23 earthquake, which killed as many as 4,000 people and left more than 300,000 homeless. Catholic agencies and governments throughout the world responded to the crisis but it was unclear nearly two weeks after the quake whether supplies were reaching the most needy.

Apostolic Delegate Named to U.S.

WASHINGTON (NC) — Pope John Paul II has named Archbishop Pio Laghi, now apostolic nuncio in Argentina, to be the new apostolic delegate in the United States and permanent observer of the Holy See at the Washington-based Organization of American States (OAS).

Archbishop Laghi, 58, papal representative in Argentina for the past six years, succeeds Archbishop Jean Jadot, who was apostolic delegate in the United States from 1973 until his appointment this year as president of the Vatican Secretariat for Non-Christians. Archbishop Jadot, a Belgian, is the only non-Italian to have served as apostolic delegate in the United States.

This past March Pope John Paul sent Archbishop Laghi as the Vatican's special envoy to Bogota, Colombia, after Marxist guerrillas there seized about 60 diplomats, including the papal nuncio to Colombia, and Colombian officials and held them hostage in the embassy of the Dominican Republic. They were released April 27.

ARCHBISHOP LAGHI has held posts in the diplomatic service of the Holy See in the United States, Nicaragua, India, Jerusalem and Palestine, and has served at the Vatican in the Council for the Public Affairs of the Church.

In a statement thanking Pope John Paul for the appointment and welcoming Archbishop Laghi to his new post, Archbishop John R. Roach of St. Paul and Minneapolis, president of the National Conference of Catholic Bishops, said:

"Archbishop Laghi's background makes him an especially welcome choice for this position. He has served with distinction in the Holy See's diplomatic service, holding posts of high responsibility in several nations, and is extremely familiar with the United States because of the seven fruitful and effective years which he spent here."

Archbishop Laghi was born on May 21, 1922, in Catiglione, a mountain town of about

2,200 people in the Emilia-Romagna region of north central Italy.

ORDAINED A PRIEST April 20, 1946, he holds doctorates in theology and canon law.

He entered the diplomatic service of the Holy See in March 1952. He served in Nicaragua before coming to

the United States in 1954, where he was stationed until 1961.

In 1969, Archbishop Laghi was appointed apostolic delegate in Jerusalem and Palestine and made titular archbishop of Mauriana. On April 25, 1974, he was named apostolic nuncio in Argentina.

School Prayer Challenged in Louisiana

NEW ORLEANS (NC) — The American Civil Liberties Union has filed suit in U.S. District Court in New Orleans challenging the constitutionality of a new school prayer policy adopted by the school board of Jefferson Parish (County), L.A.

The suit was filed Dec. 5, two days after the board decided to start daily prayer sessions on a pilot basis in three schools Dec. 18 and in all public schools in the parish in January.

U.S. District Judge Adrian Duplantier, who will hear the suit, set trial for Dec. 17.

THE LOUISIANA Legislature last summer passed a law empowering local school boards to institute periods of voluntary prayer. The Jefferson Parish Board adopted the policy on Aug. 13 and set up a committee to establish guidelines in an effort to deal with the alleged unconstitutionality of a daily period of prayer. The committee's recommendations formed the policy adopted by the board.

The ACLU attorney, Carole Shaffer, who filed the suit, said that any religious observance in a public school is a violation of the principle of separation of church and state.

The Jefferson Parish plan allows students who do not wish to participate in prayer sessions to remain outside the classrooms or to sit quietly at their desks while their classmates pray.

BUT THE ACLU says that those provisions do not change the basic situation of religious observances being held by order of a public body. In addition the ACLU argues that children who do not wish to participate in the prayer sessions would be put in "embarrassing" positions.

"School-age children are anxious to conform and keeping those children apart that do not want to pray is not going to get around the problem," said the ACLU's Louisiana director, Jay Pultz.

Five Jefferson Parish school students, three parents and a rabbi from the parish are plaintiffs in the suit.

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Salvadoran firms, leaders criticized

ALBANY, N.Y. (NC) - A priest working in El Salvador said in a telephone interview that in the wake of recent killings paranoia swept the small Central American nation so that "most people are afraid to say anything in any way negative about the government."

More than 10,000 people have been killed, many allegedly by government forces, since the beginning of the year. Foreign newspaper reporters whose articles have been critical of the government have received death threats and fled the country for their safety. The actions have helped to stifle the flow of accurate news from the country.

The priest spoke to The Evangelist, Albany diocesan newspaper, by telephone, with the understanding that his name would not be used.

"I REALIZE I'm putting myself in a compromising position just talking on the phone," said the priest, hinting at the tapping of telephone lines by the government and rightist groups.

"For the government to continue denouncing the killings and harassment of people is meaningless. Some think that what it's trying to do is provoke the international sympathy it would need to

slaughter all opposition in this country," said the priest.

The priest said the crux of the problem in El Salvador is the "starving of the people by the international corporations." He said that anyone involved in labor unions or any kind of self-help programs for the poor is automatically labeled a communist by the government.

"There are some communist here, it's true who are getting moral support from Russia and Cuba. But they're not getting arms, they're not getting men, and that support is nothing compared to the amount of money the United States is giving to back up the junta," he said.

(The Carter administration has suspended aid to El Salvador pending a U.S. investigation of the recent killings of four North American missionary women.)

THE PRIEST indicated that despite the Carter administration's touting of human rights in Latin America and around the world, most Salvadorans feel the United States has taken an aggressive stance in support of its own interests, the corporations which are the worst violators of those rights. In El Salvador the belief is that the incoming Reagan administration will "probably be a continuation of what Carter already started," he said.

Within El Salvador, he said, the church is "full of ambiguities." He said that within the Salvadoran hierarchy only Bishop Arturo Rivera, apostolic administrator of San Salvador, has denounced the actions of security forces and rightists. He said one bishop is a colonel and a chaplain in the military and another has denounced parish priests whom he says follow the "communist line."



A MESSAGE to the community from Catholics is displayed by Archbishop McCarthy Wednesday on the bumper of his car. The red and white stickers, available in English and Spanish, are being distributed in Catholic parishes and schools.

Notice: No Voice next week

Offices of The Voice are closed Christmas Week and there will be no paper Dec. 26. The next edition will be Friday, Jan. 2.

Tax credit law seen more likely

ST. LOUIS (NC) - The election of Ronald Reagan has given new hope to leaders of Citizens for Educational Freedom that a school tuition tax credit bill will be approved by the 97th Congress.

Robert E. Baldwin, CEF executive director who was in St. Louis in early December for the annual meeting of the national organization said that President-elect Reagan's task force on education and his Department of Education transition team are pushing the tax credit bill. The measure would allow parents to deduct part of the cost of private schools for their children from their federal income tax.

BALDWIN SAID he sees "a whole new complexion in Washington" and predicted smooth sailing for the tax credit bill in the Senate, where Republicans are taking over key com-

mittee positions.

A 1978 tuition tax credit measure never got out of a House-Senate conference committee because President Carter, despite 1976 campaign promises, threatened to veto it, according to Baldwin.

That bill, which would have allowed a tax credit of up to \$250 for each private school student, will be introduced in the new Congress, Baldwin said.

CEF distributed nearly a million fact sheets reporting Carter's and Reagan's records on the question of aid for private school student, will be in November election and the organization feels "this had some bearing" on the outcome, Baldwin added.

CEF leaders believe a federal tax credit could be used to supplement a

school tuition voucher system that would provide "freedom of choice" for parents in the education of their children.

"PARENTS WHO are paying taxes for education should be able to educate their children according to the dictates of their conscience and according to their children's individual needs," Baldwin said.

Under the voucher system parents would receive a tuition allotment, financed by state and local taxes, to be spent at the school of their choice, either public or private.

Marilyn Lundy of Grosse Pointe Shores, Mich., national president of CEF, emphasized that CEF does not oppose public school education, but rather advocates the right of all parents to choose the education they prefer for their children, a right that she said is denied in practice to poor parents.

Abp. McCarthy to bless statues

Archbishop McCarthy will bless a new sculpture of the Risen Christ built in memorium to priests buried at Our Lady of Mercy Cemetery, 11411 NW 25th St., Miami, at 10 a.m. Saturday Dec. 20.

He will also bless a statue of Our Lady of Mercy of Cobre, Patroness of Cuba. Public is invited.

New Vicar General of Missionary Oblates

ROME (NC) - Father Francis George, 43, former chairman of the philosophy department at Creighton University in Omaha, Neb., was re-elected vicar general of the Missionary Oblates of Mary Immaculate during the congregation's general meeting in Rome.

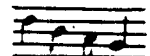
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Santa (State Sen. Dick Renick) still delights people of all ages.



Dancing was part of the festivities.



Mary Ann Buffone, driving force behind the party, and Marie Palmer talk with friend.

More than 800 senior citizens from nursing homes, extended care facilities, retirement complexes, all over the Archdiocese were transported to St. Mary's Cathedral for the 10th annual Mass and Christmas Party there last Friday.

THE AFFAIR, which has been held for the past 10 years is an annual event, sponsored by Mr. and Mrs. Peter Buffone, who receive help, aid and assistance from many people.

For instance, Senator Richard Rennick played Santa Claus. His mother, Mrs. Rosalie Speidel presented an original reading.

PETER AND Veronica Mc Cormick Fuchs, local entertainers, again appeared as they have each year. The band, procured through special cooperation of P.A.C.E., the "Dave Lewis Trio" also provided dance music, as they have for 10 years.

Over 900 box lunches were prepared. Students from Archbishop Curley High School and Notre Dame Academy assisted in the serving and cleaning up.

THE PARTY provides an excursion out from facilities which the residents do not ordinarily leave. While there are usually parties for them in their respective residences, this is an opportunity to "get away" for a day - and Mary Anne Buffone sees to this, along with her husband and children who also have their jobs at the party.

Fr. Thomas J. Rynne, of St. John the Apostle, Hialeah, celebrated the Mass as he has for the past 10 years. Honored guests were Bishop Robert F. Joyce, Retired Bishop of Burlington, Vt., Bishop John Nevins and Bishop Agustin Roman of the Archdiocese.

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John Lennon aided Catholic Institutions

NEW YORK (NC) - Two Catholic institutions, the New York Foundling Hospital and Covenant House, are among those that have been assisted by John Lennon, the singer-songwriter and former member of the Beatles who was shot to death in New York City Dec. 8.

Sister Miriam Duggan, a spokeswoman for the New York Foundling Hospital, a hospital for children run by the Sisters of Charity of St. Vincent de Paul, said Lennon "has been consistently wonderful to our children." Lennon was "marvelous to our hospital, a great friend," she said.

Sister Duggan said she did not have

figures available on the assistance given to the hospital by Lennon.

CELINE GALLO, a spokeswoman for Covenant House, an agency in New York City founded and directed by Conventual Franciscan Father Bruce Ritter to assist homeless and runaway youth, said Lennon and his wife, Yoko Ono, sent two checks for \$10,000 each, one the week before he was shot and the other a year ago, to Covenant House. They had also sent gift-wrapped packages this past Thanksgiving to the youngsters at Covenant House, which is caring for about 200 youngsters at present, Ms. Gallo said.

Covenant House provides social, psychological, educational, legal and medical assistance to about 15,000 youngsters a year, she said.

She said Father Ritter had invited Lennon and his wife to visit Covenant House. They had not come and Father Ritter had no personal contact with the couple, she said.

BOTH INSTITUTIONS were among those listed by a spokesman for Miss Ono as among those assisted by the Spirit Foundation, which Lennon established a year ago with a grant of \$100,000.

Other beneficiaries listed include the Salvation Army and St. Barnabas House, an agency of the Episcopal Mission Society, which provides emergency shelter and foster care to

runaway, abandoned, abused and neglected teen-agers.

A spokesman for St. Barnabas House, Richard Pease, confirmed that Lennon had sent gifts at Thanksgiving and Christmas to the youngsters.

Midnight Mass at Cathedral

Midnight Mass celebrated by Auxiliary Bishop John J. Nevins in St. Mary Cathedral on Christmas Eve will mark the beginning of the Christmas season in the Catholic Archdiocese of Miami.

Traditional Carols will be sung during the half-hour before the Mass at 11:30 p.m.

Archbishop Edward A. McCarthy will preside at the 11 a.m. Mass on Christmas Day.

Mother Seton story on Tv

WASHINGTON (NC) - Bishop Thomas C. Kelly, general secretary of the National Conference of Catholic Bishops - U.S. Catholic Conference, has praised the ABC-Television program "A Time for Miracles: The Story of Mother Seton."

The show is to be presented at 9 p.m. (EST) Dec. 21.

"In portraying the life of St. Elizabeth Ann Seton, the American Broadcasting Co. is not only offering well-deserved tribute to a significant figure in the history of America and of U.S. Catholicism, but it is also presenting a moving demonstration of the courage and commitment that are the fiber of sainthood," he said.

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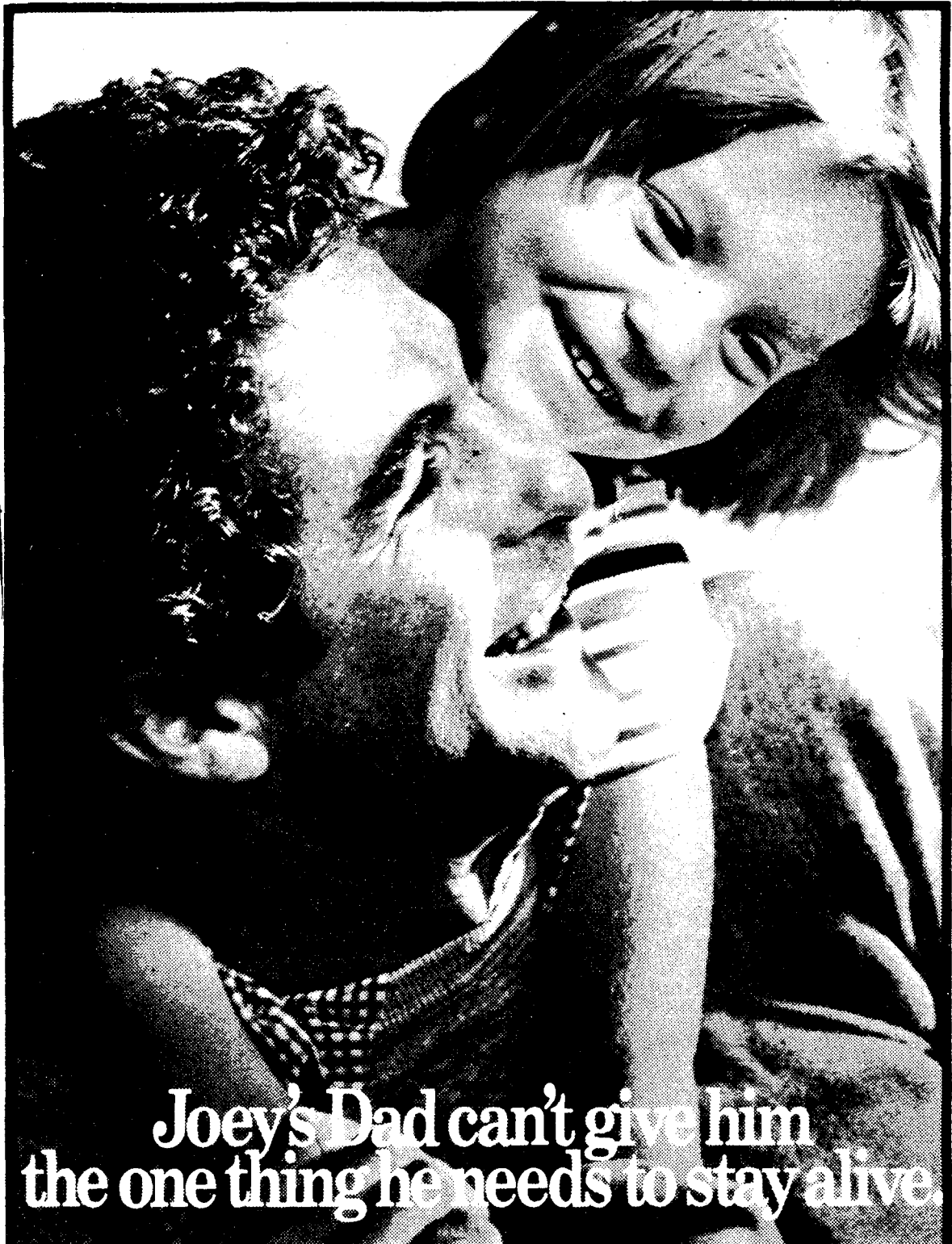
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How to word abortion amendment?

By Jim Lackey

WASHINGTON (NC) — Confident that its goal of a constitutional amendment on abortion is now within reach, the right to life movement is trying again to reach consensus on the exact wording for such an amendment.

Pro-lifers have found their greatest unity in their overriding goal to pass an abortion amendment. But for some time there has been disagreement

over whether a "no exceptions" abortion amendment should be pushed, or whether an amendment should expressly permit abortions in cases where the life of the mother is threatened.

THE LACK of a united front, according to some pro-lifers, presents a potentially serious stumbling block since Congress will have to settle on one version of an amendment before submitting it to the

states for ratification.

Since 1974 The National Right to Life Committee has endorsed an abortion amendment which would allow "medical procedures to prevent the death of the mother." That approach or others similar to it, seems to be the most popular among the various proposed amendments which have been introduced in Congress over the past several years.

But others in the movement, most notably Nelli Gray, who leads the annual March for Life in Washington, want a "no exceptions" amendment like the one proposed by Rep. Robert Dornan (R-Calif.) and Sen. Jesse Helms (R-N.C.)

That split could be resolved soon, though. The Right of Life Committee recently announced that a panel of lawyers and doctors is studying the issue and that it is expected to report its findings to the full committee shortly.

THE COMMITTEE then will decide, possibly as early as this January, whether to continue its support for the life-of-the-mother exception or whether to embrace the no-exceptions approach.

Both approaches have their supporters and their detractors.

While the no-exceptions approach may seem overly radical, its proponents say an exception clause is unnecessary for two reasons: the rarity in which abortion is necessary today to save the life of the mother and the fact that criminal law already recognizes the legal principles of self-defense, duress and choice of evils.

No-exceptions proponents also are concerned that opening the amendment to a life-of-the-mother exception would lead to other exceptions — such as the more ambiguous "health-of-the-mother" — being tacked on during the legislative process.

But those who favor writing in an exception to permit medical procedures preventing the death of the mother say their approach is more realistic and more practical.

They say the ambiguity of the no-exceptions approach would raise more questions than it would answer for doctors facing life and death situations with pregnant women. They also note that Congress, which always has supported at least a life-of-the-mother exception in limiting federal funding of abortion, is not likely to back off from the same exception in a Constitutional amendment.

THERE ALSO has been disagreement over whether a "states' rights" approach on the abortion issue should be accepted as a last resort as well as some debate over the wisdom of allowing a constitutional convention to decide the issue.

In an amendment granting "states' rights" on abortion, the various states would be freed to re-enact the abortion laws most had on their books before the Supreme Court wiped out most abortion restrictions in 1973. Many if not most pro-lifers oppose that approach, though, saying states still could choose to be abortion havens as a handful were before 1973.

WHILE THE idea of bypassing the Congress and enacting an abortion amendment in a constitutional convention also has been growing more attractive, it too has been opposed on the grounds that elected representatives to Congress can be better trusted to approve an effective anti-abortion amendment than can the people chosen to draw up an amendment at a unwieldy constitutional convention.

The U.S. bishops, meanwhile, have stayed out of the debate over which abortion amendment should be passed or how it should be enacted.



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MATTER OF OPINION

Somehow, the dream never dies...

This is a time of the year when all things are magnified.

We buy more television sets, hair spray, bangles and Barbie dolls.

Also we give more food, money and clothing to people who don't have as much as we do. Our materialism is magnified, as is our magnanimity.

But our materialism seemingly is more than mere greed. It is becoming a cultural imperative. We make a living, such as it is, directly or indirectly through the manufacture and supply of material goods. Much of our lives is involved with the consumption of things, the constant flow of products, natural or artificial, essential or non-essential, through our lives. We are surrounded by goods, so what are we to do but use them?

But we are also surrounded by the poor, the sick and the elderly, and what are we to do with them?

Now is the birthday of the Prince of Peace.

Yet, there is no peace. In Northern Ireland terrorism waits for its next victim. In Afghanistan Soviet soldiers crush an innocent people. In Poland the threat of

Editorial

massive killings lurks just beyond its borders. In America's cities muggings are routine.

And in the Mideast where the whole story of Christmas began, centuries of hatred and hostility continue on the very ground He touched.

And yet...

Through the centuries of man's failures, the foolish and painful groping down agonizing path of history, He has somehow, miraculously, kept the candle

lit. The cross, the symbol of suffering and love, has always emerged above the ashes, and the dream burns on.

A child looks up at the glitter of a tree and visions of red, green and silver dance in his eyes. A father pushes impatiently through shopping crowds, but the sound of a carol floats in the air and he smiles to himself.

Children's tiny voices, slightly off key, hark to the herald angels in thousands of churches throughout the world and parents' eyes fill with tears of pride and love. The Holy Family huddles under rain and snow in countless miniature mangers throughout the world, proclaiming the same message to all passerby that here is what we are all about: life and love.

And it is this each year, the rebirth of the dream, Christ's message of hope, that makes all the foolishness worth living through.



By Fr. John Dietzen

Is this couple married?

Q. A Catholic friend of mine married a non-Catholic unbaptized divorced woman. They now have three children. After their marriage the lady converted to the Catholic faith and was baptized. Her first marriage was annulled by the Catholic Church.

Up to now the couple have not remarried in the Catholic Church yet they both regularly receive the sacraments. My understanding of the church's teaching is that in the eyes of the church he was not really married to this woman. Even though he has the annulment, they are not yet married according to the church since there has been no Catholic ceremony. This is all confusing to me as a Catholic. Can you explain. (Florida)

A. After the first marriage was annulled, this couple certainly should have had their marriage validated in the Catholic Church. I suspect there may be some facts here you are not aware of. Perhaps they have indeed declared their marriage vows before a catholic priest.

This validation ceremony can be very private and simple. Sometimes couples do not wish to make a big ceremony of this validation, though they should have some way of making known to their close friends that their marriage has been validated in the Catholic Church.

Are you certain the annulment process is complete? I find it difficult to believe that a couple who would persevere in the tedious, lengthy annulment process would not take the final simple step of declaring their vows before a priest. If they have not yet been married before a priest they should not, of course, be receiving the sacraments.

If your friendship is intimate enough, ask them. If not I suggest you give them the benefit of the doubt and assume they have fulfilled all of the requirements making a full Catholic life right for them.

Q. I'm a Catholic who stopped attending the sacraments about five years ago. Two years ago, shortly after the birth of my daughter, I had a vasectomy, not as a protest against the church, but due more to my lack of faith in God's giving me the patience and understanding to raise more than the two children I have.

I've had many sleepless nights since then. I've been attending Mass for the past two years but have not received the sacraments. My children have both been baptized. What can I do now? My wife and I both want to be on good terms with the church and raise our children as Catholics. (Missouri)

A. Please go and talk to a priest as quickly as possible. Whatever wrong you may have done, there seems to be no reason that you cannot now receive the sacraments of penance and the Eucharist. The priest will help you work things out and get back where you want to be.

Q. As you said in one of your Question Box columns it sure is hard to remember all your sins when you go to confession, when you can't remember them all, how do you tell them to your priest?

I am nine years old and in fourth grade, but I don't go to a catholic school. (La.)

A. First of all, I congratulate you very much on your interest in the sacrament of penance, and your desire to receive that wonderful sacrament in the right way.

It is always important to remember something I am sure you already know. This sacrament is not only intended to forgive sins, but to strengthen us and help us to live good Christian and Catholic lives. The grace which Jesus gives us when we go to confession therefore helps us to remember and to want to direct our lives along the lines that Jesus tells us.

One of the consequences of this is that we should not bother ourselves too much in trying to remember in detail all the sinful or partially sinful actions that we have done. I am sure with your attitude there are no serious sins in your life. It's more important that you aim at trying to grow in your trust in God, and your love in a practical way for God and for those around you — your family, your friends, and, of course, yourself.

I mention these few items only to emphasize that the first thing Our Lord wants from us is to be comfortable

Moral Majority

To The Editor;

It was like a "breath of fresh air" to read Dick Conklin's article "In Defense of the moral Majority."

It seems to me that it is about time that the clergy take concern over the state of this country. I see nothing wrong in furnishing their guidance to us who are less educated and possibly not in a position to understand the issues. If Catholic Auxillary Bishop Thomas Gumbleton of Detroit can make such dumb statements which are an affront to every veteran and every American to the effect, "Catholic tradition" to call upon Americans to "lay down their arms before the Soviets." "Martyrdom is

and happy in our meetings with his forgiving love in the sacrament of penance. Beyond that you need to read up on this and other elements of your faith. Your knowledge in these subjects should grow along with your knowledge of other things as you move toward adulthood.

If your public library has no books that will help you at your level of faith and understanding, I suggest you go to a nearby Catholic bookstore (I know there are some not too far from where you live) or go to your parish priest and ask him for one or two catalogs from Catholic publishers. For not too much money, I am sure you will find two or three publications that will assist you greatly in your understanding and use of this and the other sacraments.

(Questions for this column should be sent to Father Dietzen, 1113 W. Bradley, Peoria, Ill., 61606.

When statements such as these are made by a Bishop of our church for publication, then thank God for men like Rev. Jerry Falwell.

Had the clergy of our church spoke out many years ago in New York State their abortion law would have not passed. It passed by one vote which was cast by a member of our church.

Surely, the Rev. Martin Luther King, would not have accomplished all that he did by having a passive position on candidates. I, also, noticed the Rev. Jesse Jackson at the President's side on election night after continuously supporting him.

**Thomas J. Walsh
Plantation**



By
**Dolores
Curran**

A Christmas Miracle

(Dear readers, the following in its entirety was sent me by a Los Angeles reader. I am happy to share S.S.A.'s miracle with you this Christmas.)

Two years after the birth of our first child, I discovered that, because of physical problems, my child-bearing days were over. After the initial shock wore off, I became reconciled to the fact and thanked God for the child I did have. Why feel sorry for myself? I had a beautiful baby and a wonderful husband. We decided to look into adoption but to our dismay we found out the waiting period was about two years, so we put it off for a while.

'I was panic stricken. Christmas was but a month away. I couldn't very well tell her Jesus had made a mistake.'

During this time I happened to meet a nun who was visiting L.A. She was here to raise funds for a home for unwed mothers and an orphanage in Mexico. I told her of our desire to adopt and she asked me to come and see her home on our next visit to Mexico.

In the early part of 1972, I had the opportunity to visit her and again we spoke of adoption. She promised to let us know whenever a baby became available.

DURING THE NEXT few months, our daughter, then 3 1/2 was questioning the fact that she had no brothers or sisters. We urged her to pray for a baby, never explaining to her why she was an only child.

In November of 1973, as we were having breakfast one day, she mentioned she had had a nice dream. She went on to tell us that in her dream she told Baby Jesus she wanted a baby sister for Christmas. She said Baby Jesus said okay. She was thrilled beyond words. After all, who could question such a reliable source?

I was panic stricken. Christmas was but a month away. I couldn't very well tell her Jesus had made a mistake. My

husband and I were terrified at the thought of disappointing her. We even toyed with the idea of not celebrating Christmas that year and hoping she wouldn't notice. To make matters worse, she was telling anyone who would listen that we were expecting a baby sister for Christmas because Baby Jesus had promised her one.

IT WAS SOON the middle of December and we hadn't even bought our tree. Nothing in our home had the slightest hint of the holiday season. I

guess we figured if we wished hard enough, Christmas would somehow pass us by.

On December 16th the phone rang very early in the morning. It was our friend, the nun. She had a baby girl available, and wanted to know if we could come and pick her up. We were speechless. This had to be a miracle. We had no other explanation for it. We told our daughter the happy news. She was excited but not at all surprised. After all, Baby Jesus had promised.

On December 17th, we arrived home with our frail five pound baby girl and had the merriest Christmas of them all.

OUR BABY IS now 7 years old. Seven years that have been filled with legal red tape because of her national origin. They have also been years filled with the joy of watching the devotion that exists between our girls.

This year again is of special significance to us. She is, at last, legally our own. All is well. The happiness she has brought to our family can only be measured by the love we have for each other. How could we go wrong? After all, Baby Jesus promised. Didn't he?

Santa Who?

By Antoinette Bosco

Time is getting close now for Santa Claus to come to town. At least that's the tradition in song. I haven't been able to whip up much enthusiasm for the old boy with the belly and the beard for a long, long time. Not since I was 8 years old, in fact.

It isn't Santa's fault that early on I rejected the public relations stories that every December point out what a good guy he is and how he gets high on reindeer. It's my mother's fault, actually.

Until I was 8, everything I heard and read about the benevolent gift giver, I believed. I also believed in fairy god-mothers, wicked witches, beautiful princesses and enchanted frogs. To top off my innocence, I had figured out that babies were delivered by angels to women chosen to be mothers.

The pre-Christmas days the year I turned 8 were exciting because mother had told me God was sending her a baby. I had begun to notice that my mother was getting larger, mainly around the stomach, but never thought twice about it until one day about three weeks before Christmas. Mother was standing with her arms around her stomach. I said spontaneously, "Mommy, you look like you're already holding the baby in your arms," followed by a giggle.

She looked at me, surprised, and said simply, "I am." Mother then told me that angels didn't bring babies. The babies grew in mothers' stomachs.

That jolted me, but not as much as her next revelations. "If I told you that, I might as well tell you more," she said. "Santa Claus isn't real. He doesn't come at Christmas. Parents leave the gifts under the tree after the children fall asleep." For good measure, she added, "Fairy tales aren't true, either."

I was numb. Reality is better swallowed in small doses. Mother had, in about 60 seconds, shattered my innocence, and I was tumbling from fantasy — an essential for all children and most grownups. My joy was displaced by anger and disillusionment. I had one question left. I blurted out: "I suppose you're going to tell me next that the baby Jesus isn't real, either!"

She hugged me and smiled, "No, he's real."

The relief I felt was overwhelming, and I was saved.

In the truth of Baby Jesus, I could retain my innocence, wonder, dreams and hopes; my quest for goodness, gratitude for gifts.

My mother, who plunged me into reality, had inadvertently opened my eyes to where Christmas really starts and why it renews the earth.

I want to tell you, it wasn't easy knowing about Santa. That was a burden for an 8-year-old, particularly in school.

The worst, however, was yet to come. Do you know what an oddball mother you are when you raise six kids who tell their little peers that Christmas is one big birthday party and that celebrating the birth of baby Jesus is so tremendous it has to be experienced by giving and receiving gifts?

Adults thought I was weird. My kids adored baby Jesus and loved the gift-getting part.

But always the question of Santa would come up. I eased my conscience, telling myself that the Bosco kids grew up without having to go through the trauma I had at age 8. They have never forgiven me for that deprivation!



By **Msgr. George Higgins**

What's ahead for labor?

The polling booths hadn't closed when reporters asked me to comment on the Reagan landslide. I declined, explaining I had never endorsed or opposed a particular political party or candidate in my 40 years in Washington and saw no reason to start now.

I don't think it's proper for clergymen to be involved in partisan politics. But this doesn't mean I forfeit the right every American citizen has to speak out on important public-policy matters which may be up for grabs in the new administration.

A case in point is labor legislation. It's much too early to predict the labor policy of the new administration but I

"Major credit for blocking the labor law reform act should go to the National Right to Work Committee. In six months the Committee spent \$1.5 million galvanizing opposition to the scheme."

have my fingers crossed.

PROBABLY THE greatest shaper of that policy, next to President-elect Reagan, will be the new chairman of the Senate Labor Committee, Sen. Orrin Hatch, R-Utah. To his credit, Hatch has already said he hopes to develop a constructive working relationship with organized labor.

This will take some doing because Hatch's labor philosophy is diametrically opposed to that of even the most conservative labor spokesmen.

Shortly before the election, in a book of essays by seven conservative senators, Hatch was preaching a sim-

plistic version of laissez-faire economic theory which, carried to its logical conclusion, could only mean the abolition of organized labor. Workers have the right to form unions voluntarily, he wrote, but they don't really need to do so.

"Labor," he said, "is a commodity and wages are the price of the commodity." Consequently "if wages are low, and employers are making high profits, other employers will move in, increasing the demand for labor. Employers will bid against each other for workers, and wages will move up."

The labor movement disagrees and so do I.

THE SENATOR may believe unions

are unnecessary, but my own tradition says free and autonomous unions, in the words of Pope John XXIII, are "the indispensable means to safeguard the dignity of the human person and his freedom while leaving intact a sense of responsibility."

This is old hat, of course, but it bears repeating when so many powerful forces are trying to move us in the opposite direction.

Witness the National Right to Work Committee, which says its sole concern is so-called compulsory unionism. But the record shows the committee has been deeply involved in legislative battles touching all aspects of the labor

problem.

THE NATIONAL Right to Work Committee's "ostensible purpose of fighting compulsory unionism is, in fact, subordinate to its larger interest in furthering right-wing political causes that go beyond the strict issue of right to work," concludes Alan Crawford, a former reporter and staff member for New Right publications and organizations, in his recent book, "Thunder on the Right: The 'New Right' and the Politics of Resentment." He regards the committee as a pro-business lobby.

Crawford quotes the following from the influential conservative publication, Human Events:

"Major credit for blocking the Labor Law Reform Act should go to the National Right to Work Committee. In six months the committee spent \$1.5 million galvanizing opposition to the scheme. The committee placed more than 500 newspaper ads and mailed more than 12 million letters generating heavy mail to wavering senators."

IN THE PAST, Sen. Hatch has generally been thought to be a staunch ally of the National Right to Work Committee. But then he was a political outsider. Now he and his party are inside; they need to make the system work.

Will he distance himself from the committee and play a more neutral role in labor legislation? I hope he does for the good of all concerned.



By Msgr. James J. Walsh

Why Christmas lives on

A few years ago in one of the innumerable polls we find ourselves blessed with, the question was asked, "What has kept Christmas alive all these centuries?"

As usually happens in off-the-head answers, most of them were frothy and meaningless. Others had more substance.

Some said the spirit of gift giving answered the need in human nature and was responsible for the perennial celebration. Another felt that the beauty and charm of the Gospel story as penned by St. Luke had to live on and create interest, as all true classics do. And a third said Christmas had endured because in sending a great Teacher to us God had proved his interest in the human race, and this could not be forgotten.

Finally one person said, "Christmas will never end, because the child born was God himself." And indeed this is the only answer profound enough to explain why Christmas is fully alive in 1980.

Gift Giving indeed is one of the good side effects of Christmas, (if we can look beyond the bizarre commercial efforts to give us the "real spirit" of the day). Gift giving, however, is only a minor, albeit pleasant, aspect of Christmas.

Even the gift concept has a deep meaning when put in the proper context, namely, when it reminds us that God, too, wants a gift from us, namely, ourselves. "I want not your gift, but yourself."

A classic in literature is a treasured possession worthy of careful preservation, but even the most beloved and brilliant of classics impress only a comparatively few. And if Jesus were only an unusually gifted teacher, which unfortunately is the weak, watered down belief of many Christians today, his birthday would probably be as popular as Buddha's around the world.

Just one fact makes all the difference. Everyone has a birthday but this birthday, Christmas, is unlike any other. Like any birth, this one has a mother present, but after the delivery of her child she remained a virgin. This child could have no human father, because he had come from heaven as the second person of the Blessed Trinity.

His mother gave him a human nature which God does not have. He came to the home of miserable, wretched people on planet earth in a most unlikely place and under most unlikely circumstances.

THIS TRUTH was so deeply rooted in the first centuries of Christianity and propagated in later generations so enthusiastically that our sophisticated

age cannot ignore it, even while misinterpreting its meaning.

Because of this, Christmas can never become a bore or go out of existence.

How full of contradictions all this is in our depressing, frenzied world. God, the creator of the universe, was actually on earth and was born in a hole in the wall in a hamlet few had then heard of.

What is all this? Remember we have been to the moon and brought part of it back to earth. Part of earth is now on Mars. We are presently trying to count the rings around Saturn. So we are just flexing our scientific muscles. Our power potential is so enormous and untapped that we are frightened.

In the light of all this are we still expected to believe in the Christmas message?

A baby is God? A baby is the most helpless of beings. The calf when free of its mother wobbles to its feet. The colt at once assumes some independence. A kitten quickly recovers from its sleepiness and slowly roams.

"Remember we have been to the moon and brought part of it back to earth. Part of earth is now on Mars. We are presently trying to count the rings around Saturn. So we are just flexing our scientific muscles. Our power potential is so enormous and untapped that we are frightened. In the light of all this, are we still expected to believe in the Christmas message?"

By contrast, an infant seems the least intelligent, the weakest, the most dependent of all creatures.

With this in mind we can grasp some of the magnitude of the act of faith made by the Magi after their long journey led them not to the palace of a king, but to a makeshift shelter just off the road.

When he reached adulthood, we would guess that accepting his divinity would become easier. People saw him do things no other person had done. He opened the eyes of the blind and the ears of the deaf and breathed life into the dead, all in his own name. But was it really easier to see God in the man than in the Infant?

On the cross he was bound by the nails of prejudice, ignorance and blindness, a prisoner of reparation, but even though he looked like a criminal, the power of grace broke through the hard shell of some close enough to hear his hoarse

breathing and impelled them to confess, "Indeed, this is the Son of God."

Robert Southwell expressed this truth so beautifully:

O dying souls, behold your living spring.

O dazzled eyes! Behold your Son of grace.

Dull ears attend what words this Word doth bring.

Up, heavy hearts, with joy your joy embrace.

From death, from dark, from deafness, from despair.

This Life, this Light, this Word, this joy repairs.

Christmas will endure even in the next world when the wondrous truth that God came to earth as a child will never be exhausted.



By Tom Lennon

How do bread and wine become body and blood?

Q. I don't understand what happens at Mass when the bread and wine are changed into the body and blood of Jesus. Can you explain this? (Ala.)

A. Not long ago, a friend talked to me about her son, Phil, 18. Phil had stayed away from Sunday Mass for five months. Then when his favorite brother-in-law, Dave, unexpectedly had heart surgery, Phil began to attend Mass to pray for him.

Phil kept on attending Mass but then one day said to his mother: "In some ways I like Mass and think it's good. But I really can't buy the bread and wine being changed into the body and blood of Jesus Christ. I just don't believe it."

Phil's mother asked me to write about this. Well, I can't. Neither can anyone else, completely. The Eucharistic presence is a mystery, something Catholics believe, though no scientific proof, as science is generally understood, can be given.

But it may be possible to remove some obstacles to belief.

DON'T TRY to imagine some mysterious change in the molecular structure that we could discover with a powerful enough microscope.

Well, then, what are we to think?

First, that in this question we are in the realm of faith and must trust Jesus. At the final meal of his life on earth, was also the first Mass, Jesus said of the bread, "This is my body." He said of the wine, "This is my blood." (The Gospel of Matthew, Chapter 26).

Earlier Jesus said: "The bread I will give is my flesh for the life of the world . . . He who feeds on my flesh

"The Eucharistic presence is a mystery, something Catholics believe, though no scientific proof, as science is generally understood, can be given."

and drinks my blood has life eternal, and I will raise him up on the last day." (John).

When some disciples could not believe what Jesus was saying and walked away, he did not back down and say he was speaking only symbolically or in metaphors.

The church gives a partial explanation of Christ's teaching through the technical, "transubstan-

tiation." This means that all the appearances or bread and wine remain — the color, the taste, the smell, the "substance" of bread and wine changes into the reality, the "substance," of the body and blood of Jesus. Pope Paul VI taught that this process of transubstantiation "surpasses the laws of nature and constitutes the greatest miracle of its kind."

POPE PAUL said that at Mass this takes place "when by the words of consecration he (Jesus) begins to be sacramentally present as the spiritual food of the faithful under the appearances of bread and wine."

The Second Vatican Council, an assembly in Rome of the world's bishops during the 1960's, said that in the Eucharist Christ is present. That is why we speak of the "real presence."

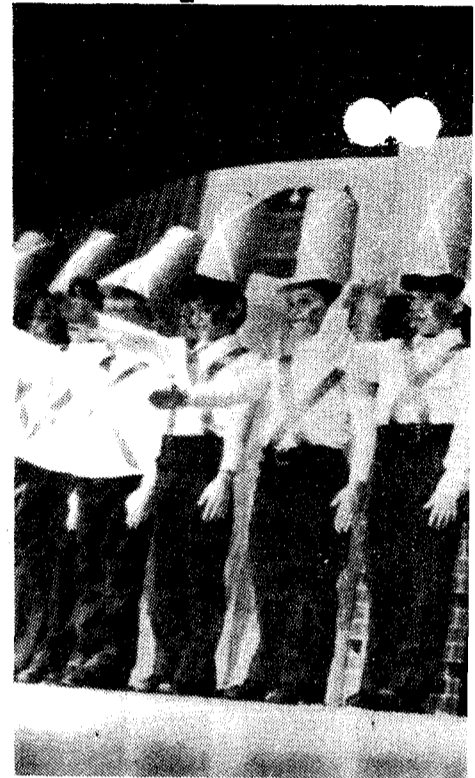
But perhaps rather than trying to explain this mystery, we should relax and enjoy it. For Christ's presence is a pledge of warm and lasting friendship — and friends always enjoy one another's presence.

(Questions on moral or social issues of interest to young people may be sent to Tom Lennon, 1312 Mass., Av. N.W. Washington, D.C. 2005.)

'Christmas aro Immaculate Conception s



An Irish-jig-style Christmas



Third graders make toy sola

**Story and
photos
by Ana M.
Rodriguez**



Aztec Indians praise the sun during the play while...



Later, Maxican dancers do their thing

Christmas is a time for celebration, and last week at Immaculate Conception school in Hialeah, no one wasted any time in getting down to it.

Many other parishes put on Nativity plays and concerts this time of year, and Immaculate's festivities were an outstanding example. For six nights, a different variety show performed by students from each different grade preceded the main attraction, a play re-enacting the apparition of Our Lady of Guadalupe to the Indian Juan Diego in colonial Mexico.

Kindergarteners put on "Christmas Customs for Little People;" first graders had "A Hello in My Heart;" second graders performed "Mary Poppins Pops;" third graders showed "Christmas Around the World;" sixth graders sang and danced "Happy Birthday Chuck, Country Western

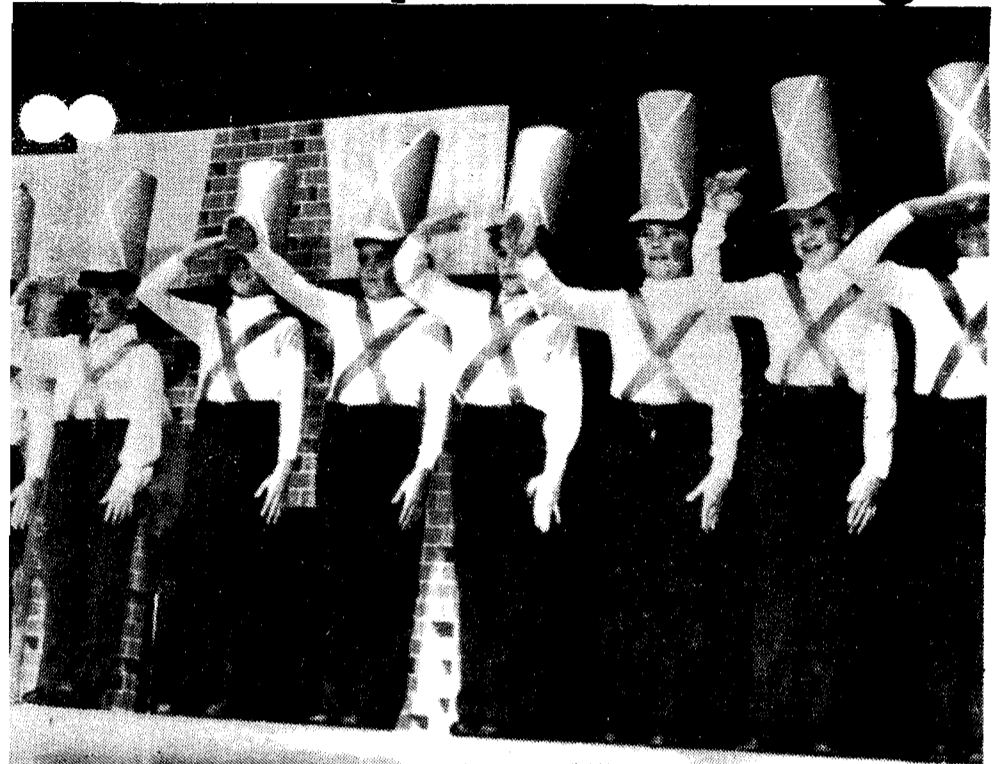
Our Lady of Gu



Bishop (Andy Perez) sees image of Our Lady Diego's (Nelson Paganacci) cloak

'round the world'

n school puts on a big act...



toy soldiers come to life

Style;" seventh graders snapped to attention in a "Salute to the American Forces;" and eighth graders cheered, "Up With People All Over the World." Meanwhile, the fourth graders played singers and dancers from Mexico in the play, and the fifth graders their counterparts, the Aztec Indians.

According to Sister Regina, music director at the school who worked with the children for two months in getting the whole show together, the reason for the celebration was two-fold: to inaugurate the school's newly-built cafeteria/auditorium, Mercy Hall, and to honor Our Lady of Guadalupe, whose feast day was December 12.

Besides, said Sister, who expected to make good use of the theatrical facilities at Mercy Hall in the future, as well as of the talent present in the school, "I really wanted to do this."



Re-enacting the nativity

Guadalupe



Our Lady on Juan



Barbara Lagoa as Our Lady of Guadalupe



Christmas 'a la cubana'

By Dr. James
and
Mary Kenny



Adults Can Make Giving Meaningful

Most parents want their children to understand that Christmas is a time of personal and meaningful giving. But personal giving is not just for kids. The best way to communicate the spirit of giving is to practice it ourselves and now is the time to think of personal and loving gifts we adults might give this Christmas.

1. Give away a treasure. Perhaps you have a picture, a piece of jewelry, a vase, some china you value and plan to leave to your son or daughter when you die. Why not share that treasure this Christmas while you are alive to enjoy their happiness? A "used" gift, treasured by the giver and the receiver, can be far more meaningful than something from the most elegant store.

2. Give away services. Almost every parent has received a coupon book from a child, bulging with promises to perform such helpful tasks as dishwashing and room cleaning. This is not just for kids. Here are some "coupons"

or services adult children might give their older parents:

Many elderly people dislike driving long distances. Give your elderly parents a weekend of time. Arrange a sitter for your children and take your parents to visit a relative or to relax and sightsee at an interesting nearby attraction.

Almost everyone likes to eat. Give your parents a dinner-of-the-month-club membership. Each month you take them out to dinner, perhaps at 12 different restaurants, if both you and they enjoy variety. Taking them to the theater or to music events are other good gifts.

What services might older parents give their young married offspring? Young mothers almost never catch up on clothing repairs. Grandma could offer her services one or more days per month to mend or sew.

Cooking and baking specialties make welcome gifts. Give homemade pickles or jam. Offer to bake bread on

a regular basis throughout the year.

Baby-sitting is not a right of young parents nor a duty of grandparents. It does make a wonderful gift. Offer to baby-sit so the parents can enjoy a "getaway" weekend together.

3. Share your heritage. Buy your parents a tape recorder and some blank tapes. Explain that the tape recorder is theirs, but the tapes are to be returned to you, filled with memories of their childhood and youth which they are to record at their leisure.

Collect favorite family recipes not found in any cookbook. Write them on index cards as a gift for grown children and children-in-law.

Give our grown children photo albums of the "good old days." Collect pictures of yourself and your family, going back as far as your pictures and memory allow. Arrange them in an album (include captions, please) for a special gift.

4. Restore, re-use and recycle.

Remodel old clothes into dress-up outfits for little girls, ages 3 to 10. Clean and decorate old hats and purses or the little glamour girls.

A piece of old furniture, restored and refinished, makes a gift which becomes a collector's item. If you do latch hook needlepoint, replace someone's worn item with a new piece of your handiwork.

5. Compose your own message of peace and love for your spouse or other special loved ones. Use whatever talent you have — writing, drawing, making a collage — to create a personal message. Your work may never be published or hang in a museum, but it will be the most meaningful and personal gift you can give.

(Reader questions on family living and child care to be answered in print are invited. Address questions to: The Kennys, Box 67, Rensselaer, Ind. 47978)



By Carol
Farrell

Fantasy vs. reality at Christmas

"Christmas and family are "go-togethers". The one doesn't seem to make a lot of sense without the other. But more than any other time of year, Christmas is the space and the family is the place where our fantasies and our reality are on a collision course.

A dozen years ago we experienced a storybook Christmas. We were visiting my parents in Ohio. Snow began falling early Christmas morning and it was hard to know whether Santa or the snow was a bigger thrill for the children. Dinner that day was around the biggest, most bountiful table I have ever sat at and our entire family was there to share it with us. In the next room was a roaring fire, and from the picture window we could see how the wind was whipping up Lake Erie. We savoured every exquisite detail of that day.

I have spent every Christmas since comparing our celebration with that one magic Christmas when everything fell together with perfection. There has

never been another like it. And there probably never will be.

Childhood memories also support our fantasies. We remember only the good parts — the fun, the excitement, the sparkle of the holiday season. Then we knew only the joy of homemade cookies, of Santa, and gifts that were exactly what we hoped for.

At that time we did not appreciate that we were the beneficiaries of a lot of sacrifice and planning. We didn't realize how our parents must have fought exhaustion to come home and bake cookies and shop for special gifts after an already long day of work. Only now do we see how love combines with hard work to make magic for others.

Tree-trimming is another of those fantasy events of the holidays. I had always envisioned the children happily trimming the tree with us, Christmas carols playing in the background, all of us standing back admiring both the God and man-made beauty and hugging each other.

In our house, setting up the tree is not just an event, it is usually a catastrophe. We have never quite mastered whatever skill is required to put the tree in the stand in such a way as to be sure it would stay there. One year the tree fell three times! I have always tried to keep the little children out from underfoot and beyond earshot while this part of our fantasy/nightmare was being enacted. By the time we get the tree securely supported by some hopefully-no-too-noticeable twigs, Pat wants nothing more to do with it and leaves to us the fun of deciding who will put the most and prettiest ornaments in place. No one has ever felt that he was the one to have this privilege, while all six children have felt that they had both the least and the yukkiest. But, allowing for just a bit of exaggeration, I'll bet that's what most family tree trimming nights are like.

When I stand back and look at the whole picture, I realize that when I can let go of my fantasies about how

Christmas SHOULD be, when I stop trying to FORCE Christmas into some old mold that never really did exist anyway, only then can I appreciate the beauty that is present NOW.

Each Christmas has been beautiful. The reality is good. Trimming the tree isn't all sweetness and light but it does prove that we and the children are normal, imperfect human beings learning to compromise and work together. We have sun instead of snow, but many people would gladly exchange places with us. We do not have the whole family with us, but we have never been alone. Others have always shared our table. It is true I have to do most of the cooking, but that has always been a source of pride and pleasure as well as a privilege. And finally, while it is very hard to see children grow beyond Santa (I suffer more than they do it seems), it is beautiful to realize that they are growing into a true joy and delight in giving to others.

May you have a REAL and merry Christmas!

Family Night

OPENING PRAYER

Christ, Light of the World,
Shine above me,
Shine below me,
Shine around me.

Christ, Light of the World,
Sparkle within me,
Dance within me,
Speak within me,
Command within me.

Christ, Light of the World,
Take me, hold me,
Use me, Hold me,

For I love you, Lord Jesus. Amen.

SOMETHING TO THINK ABOUT:

Something marvelous and

magnificent is in the bluster of the north winds and is dancing in the sparkling stars these chilly evenings.

Advent is beckoning us, holding within the "Promise of Love" that is waiting to flower forth on Christmas Eve. Let us pause and be still so the whisper of Advent can reach our ears and touch our hearts with its message — PREPARE.

ACTIVITY IDEAS:

Young Families

Plan a birthday party for the baby Jesus. Have a birthday cake, napkins, balloons, and be sure to sing "Happy

Birthday to Jesus."

Middle Years Families

Turn off all the lights. Each family member carries a small lit candle. Choose someone to carry the baby Jesus. Have a procession through the house singing "Silent Night, Holy Night" and then place Jesus in the manger under the tree.

Adult Families

Darken the house and light one candle and read aloud the scripture of the Christmas story from Luke 2:1-20.

SNACK TIME:

Cranberry punch and homemade

Christmas cookies.

ENTERTAINMENT:

Sing Christmas carols. Take turns letting each family member lead a carol. You might go caroling at the home of a shut-in.

SHARING:

• Share a memory of a favorite Christmas tree from the past.

CLOSING PRAYER:

Oh, God, thank you for this Family Night and the warmth and joy we feel this Christmas season. How grateful we are at Jesus' birthday. Be with us, Lord, in our celebration of this great day. Amen.

Kids Sing (to pray twice) at Festival

By Jose Alonso
Voice Spanish Editor

The Little Havana Community Center was the setting for a first ever Festival of Christian Music recently organized by the Jose Marti Youth Center. The purpose of this festival was to unite Christian youth so that they will "pray singing."

The 15 songs presented at the festival were originals and were judged by a five person panel. The Youth center plans to hold a similar festival every year, but this year its purpose was to raise funds for a space where members of the group can meet.

THE THEME of the festival was derived from the writings of St. Augustin: "To pray singing is to pray twice"

Cecilia London

Mrs. Cecilia London, sister of Fr. A. J. Victor, associate pastor of St. Mark Parish, Pompano Beach, died following a long illness on Dec. 6, 1980.

Fr. Victor was the principal celebrant of a concelebrated Mass of the Resurrection held at Immaculate Conception Church, Clinton, New Jersey.

The Center also plans to offer karate courses and philosophy classes taught by German Munoz, who teaches "Philosophy and the Natural Sciences" at Miami-Dade Community College. The course tries to dispute the materialistic theories present in today's society and propose the spirit as the essence of man. Professor Munoz is one of the organizers of the group.

The group composed of youths of many different cultural backgrounds, including three anglos, hopes young people will come together at the center.

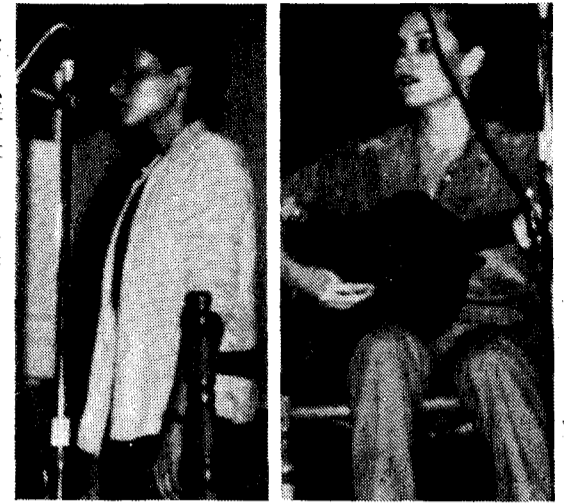
For the festival, MC's were Leticia Callava and Rne Giraldo of Channel 23. About 400 people attended. The songs were judged according to their lyrical, literary, musical and spiritual

qualities. Among the judges were: Ariel Remos, of Diario Las Americas, Carlos Oliva of Common Cause Records, Frank J. Marcos, director of the musical group Clouds, and poet Roxana Maria.

THE WINNING song, "Reflections," written by Jorge de Rivero and sung by Iris Salazar, will become the theme of the Center until a new song is chosen at next year's festival.

Participants decided to also form a musical association. Called "Antorcha," (The Torch), it will offer concerts and recitals, based on the ideal of the center: to bring to the public music that is both artistic and spiritual.

A live recording of the songs presented at the festival will be available soon.



Iris Salazar (left) interprets the festival's 1st place song, and Lucia Keli sings her own composition which gained 4th place.

Barry Graduation Ceremony

The past executive director of the Association of Catholic Colleges and Universities, Monsignor John F. Murphy, S.T.D., will be the commencement speaker at Barry College, Saturday, Dec. 20.

Barry will grant baccalaureate degrees to 98 men and women and

master's degrees to 19. Another 14 who graduated in August will participate in the ceremony.

The December commencement is the first during Barry's 40th anniversary school year. Another will be held for students graduating in May 1981.

St. John Neumann

The Christmas Masses of St. John Neumann, will be celebrated at St. John Vianney Chapel at 2900 SW 87th Ave. A special Christmas Concert featuring a thirteen piece orchestra will be held on Christmas Eve at 9:30 p.m. in the Chapel. Following the concert a Vigil Mass and blessing the Crib will be held at 10:00 p.m. Masses on Christmas Day in the Chapel will be 8:00 a.m., 9:30 a.m. and 11:00 a.m.

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THEME CAKE, shows theme of St. Francis' Youth Praise, with Jamie Walters, Eddie Davis and Connie O'Hara, one of many such area youth programs.

Youth 'retreat' toward Christmas

By Karen Dorsey

The Christmas season is here. While most people flock to shopping centers to prepare for the celebration, youth all over the Archdiocese have been preparing in another way. Nearly 1,000 youths and young adults have spiritually prepared for the birth of Jesus by attending one of the many retreat programs sponsored or supported by the Archdiocesan Office of Youth Ministry. These programs include Search, Kerygma, Fieri, Encuentro, Encuentro Misional and Lock-ins.

While it is encouraging to see our Youth respond to the many spiritual programs being offered, it is even more gratifying to see so many parishes willing to respond to the needs of their youth. What makes this especially exciting is the effort being made to minister to the youth of the many cultures that make up our Archdiocese.

There have been 12 Searches, Fieri's

Kerygma's, and Encuentro Juvenil's put on successfully in various parts of the Archdiocese. Beyond these programs there have been two Encuentro's Misionales, where the youth of our Migrant Mission Parishes themselves, have prepared and sponsored retreat experiences for their peers.

St. Francis of Assisi parish has begun a Youth Praise Night in which the youth of the parish are invite to reflect on various themes once a month through song, discussion and prayer.

Holy Cross parish in Indiantown, with the help of Sr. Joan and their Men's Cursillo Group sponsored a Lock-In that provided an opportunity for the youth of Indiantown to become more aware of the activity of God in their lives and their role in the parish church community.

As a part of a Parish Renewal Week, St. Ignatius sponsored a Youth Serendipity Night in which youth reflected on the meaning of the birth of the Lord in their own lives. The night encom-

passed separate sessions for junior and senior high students.

Deacon Ray Ortega has taken the Amanecer One Day Hispanic retreat program to eight different parishes helping to form a basis for a Parish Youth ministry program for our young hispanic teenagers.

The Hispanic Advent Retreat held at St. John Vianney Seminary attracted more than 150 young people who spent their day in prayer, meditation and reconciliation for th Lord's meeting.

These are just a few of the many efforts being made by our youth to prepare spiritually for Christmas. As has been tradition for the past five years, most parishes are also participating in Operation Santa Claus, an effort to collect toys for underprivileged children.

As we celebrate the birth of Jesus as a baby, we must remember that before he became a man He was a teenager.

St. John Vianney gets college status

St. John Vianney College Seminary passed yet another milestone in its history Dec. 12, when it was voted full accreditation as a Level II, Four Year Liberal Arts College by the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools.

Beginning with its May graduates St. John Vianney will now be able to award the degree of Bachelor of Arts in its own name and its diploma and credits will be universally accepted throughout the nation.

Began in 1959, first as a high school and later as a high school and junior college, St. John Vianney College Seminary has been seeking full accreditation as a four-year degree granting college for several years. An institutional self-study was completed in late 1979 and a six person evaluation team from the Southern Association of

Colleges and Schools visited the seminary in April of 1980 to study the educational program underway there.

Since becoming a four-year residence program in 1977, the degree of Bachelor of Arts has been awarded by St. Vincent de Paul Seminary using the St. John Vianney campus as an extension of the Boynton Beach program. The campus is at 2900 S.W. 87 Ave.

At the present time there are 51 students enrolled at the college and studying for the priesthood. Approximately half are studying for the Archdiocese of Miami and the rest are studying for six other dioceses in the United States and Puerto Rico.

A building program is already underway at the College which will see a new library building ready for occupancy in the Fall of 1981. Extensive

remodeling of the present college residence building will be undertaken this summer so that the college can gradually and steadily grow to an enrollment of 94 students (its present enrollment limit is 58 students).

Father Robert N. Lynch, Rector and President of St. John Vianney said, on the occasion of the Accreditation:

"Our accreditation as a four-year liberal arts college by the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools is an exciting moment for all of us at the college. It is a welcome recognition by a highly respected regional accrediting association that the program of the college seminary is both unique and of high quality.

"Combined with our expansion program and the great interest being shown in our seminary by many dioceses throughout the South and in the Caribbean, this is just another

milestone in the seminary's service to the Church.

"I am grateful to the faculty and staff, to students past and present and to the many benefactors of this seminary who always have and who always will believe in what is being done here."

St. John Vianney will award the new degree of Bachelor of Arts upon twenty-two students at the May 1981, commencement.

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Lynda and John DiPrima, new-codirectors

Marriage Encounter couple join Broward lay ministry

By Sue Blum

Mr. and Mrs. John DiPrima of St. Maurice Parish were recently named Co-Directors of Broward County Office of Lay Ministry, according to Dr. Mercedes A. Scopetta, director of the Archdiocesan Office of Lay Ministry.

Lynda and John DiPrima, well-known in the Archdiocese as the past Executive Couple for Marriage Encounter of South Florida, have a rich background in ministry as they enter their new assignment.

LYNDA, a graduate of the University of Georgia, has served as a CCD teacher, coordinator for the Marriage Preparation Program (P.M.I. and Engaged Encounter) at St. Maurice Church and served on the Archdiocesan Family Enrichment Board and Advisory Council of Laity.

She is presently enrolled in the Graduate School of Barry College, working toward her Master's degree in Religious Studies.

John, employed by Eastern Airlines in Miami, holds an M.B.A. from New York Institute of Technology, and shares much of the same ministerial activities of his wife. In addition to their intensive service with Marriage Encounter, which includes serving as a team couple on the weekend retreats for the past six years, John also serves on the Archdiocesan Evangelization Committee and is a member of the Advisory Board for **The Voice**.

As Co-Directors of the Broward

county Lay Ministry Program, the DiPrimas will be facilitating the two year training program for ecclesial lay ministers as well as working on various outreach programs to parishes and specifically will be assisting with the Training Program from Home Visitations in all parishes.

"We both feel called to grow deeper in our spiritual life as well as a strong commitment to share our gift of faith with others," the couple states. "We want to help other lay people become aware of their gifts and their call to ministry."



ST. IGNATIUS youth perform a Christmas play, "Star of Wonder" Saturday Dec. 20, at 7:30 p.m. All are invited, free. Refreshments after; 9999 Military Trail, P.B. Gardens.

Director named for P. Beach lay ministry

By Sue Blum

Holding a B.A. in Religious Studies from Barry College and nearly halfway through the course work for her Master's Degree in the same area of study, Mrs. Juan F. Montalvo has recently been named Regional Director for the Office of Lay Ministry from Palm Beach, Martin, Glades and Hendry County.

A member of St. Edward's Parish, Hilda Montalvo says that she "has done all the usual parish work, having served as a CCD teacher, President of St. Edward's Women's Guild and established the Library in her parish.

IN HER NEW assignment, Hilda will be kept busy coordinating the activities of the Office of Lay Ministry in the northern end of the Archdiocese. This will involve recruiting and processing the new candidates for the Ecclesial Lay Ministry Program, keeping in close personal contact with the Commissioned Lay Ministers and Second Year Candidates, helping them with their ministries, pointing out the resources of the Archdiocese and giving them support and encouragement.

With another couple, Eleanor and Mike Robel, she plans to visit every Parish in the Territory to explain to the pastors the Lay Ministry Program, to recruit new candidates, and to aid them in informing and forming their



Hilda Montalvo

laity for service to their parish communities.

This can be accomplished by offering them various seminars or workshops in Leadership Training, Evangelization or any area that the pastor feels his parish really needs. All of these programs are available through the Archdiocesan Office of Lay Ministry.

"Although I was born a Catholic, I never went to Catholic schools," Hilda replied when asked about her motivation to serve in the Lay Ministry Program. "When I had my 'true conversion' experience, I decided to find out what catholicism is all about. I feel that the greatest need among Catholics today is to interiorize their faith so that they may truly become the Church. My ministry, then, is to proclaim the GOOD NEWS."



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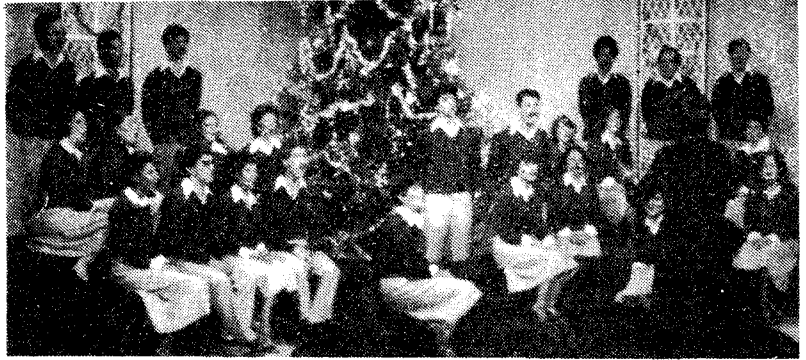
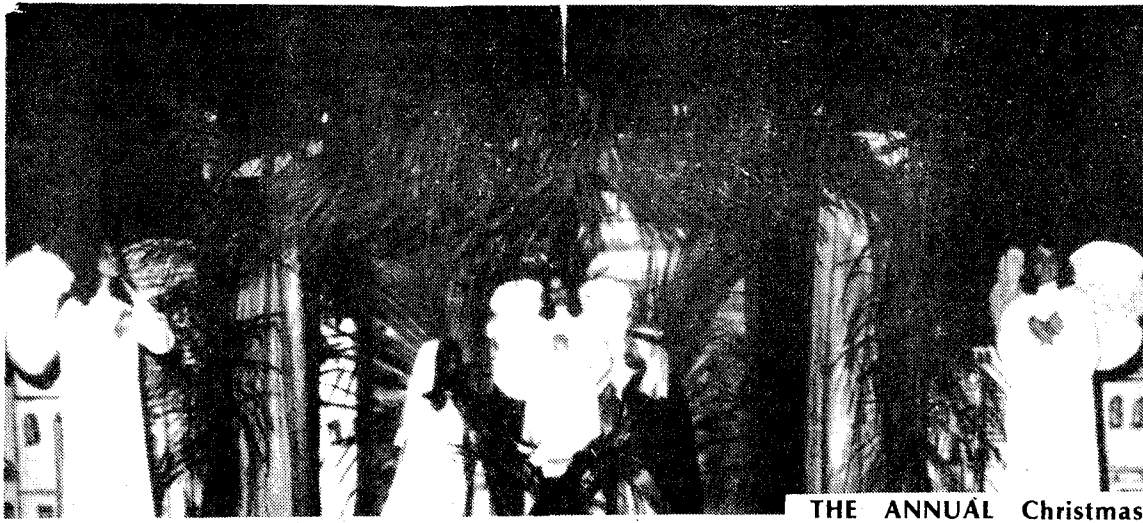
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CUBAN CHORALE - The Church and the World Today, weekly telecast of the Archdiocese on WCKT Channel 7, will feature the Cuban Chorale under the direction of Mrs. Carmen Riera. This is a special Christmas program to be aired on Sunday, Dec. 21, at 9 AM. The Cuban Chorale will also visit Archbishop McCarthy at his residence on Dec. 23 for a special program of Christmas music.

THE ANNUAL Christmas pageant of Our Lady of the Lakes Church, "It Came to Pass," will have a one night performance on Sunday, Dec. 21 at 8:30 with a cast of over 50 people and a 40-voice choir. The pageant will be presented on the church grounds of the parish at 15801 N.W. 67 Ave., Miami Lakes. The public is invited and for further information, call George Dyer, Director of Music at 558-2202 any weekday.

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★★★★

The Women's Guild of Christ the King, 16000 SW 112th Ave., is sponsoring a New Year's Eve party with live band and buffet supper. \$7.50 per person. Time 9:00 p.m. to 1:00 a.m. Call Pres Irene Pope for reservations, 235-2089.

★★★★

Epiphany Woman's Club will again sponsor a New Year's Eve Party, from 9:00 p.m. to 2:00 a.m., at the parish center. Dancing to the "Tony Martin" Band - midnight buffet of steamship round and all the trimmings as well as hors d'oeuvres and champagne toast at midnight. BYOB. Setups and ice provided. TICKETS available on first come - first served basis. Tickets \$17.50 each. Reserved tables for eight available. For tickets and information please call Vicki Watkins, 665-0091 or Linda Smith, 661-8878.

★★★★

Holy Family Women's Club is sponsoring a New Year's Eve Dance in their Parish Hall, 14500 NE 11th Ave., N. Miami. From 9:00 p.m. to 1:00 a.m., Music by the Clansmen, Price is \$17.50 which includes snacks, party favors, catered buffet supper. Set-ups available. BYOB. The general public is invited and tables can be reserved. Please call 947-5043. Deadline is Dec. 29, for tickets.

Cathedral Women

On Dec. 21, following the 9:30 a.m. Mass and Communion, the Cathedral Women's Guild will hold their meeting in the lower sacristy of the Cathedral. It is at this meeting that gifts for the Christ child are brought - baby clothes for a layette for Birth Right.

Secular Franciscans

St. Francis Fraternity of the Secular Franciscan Order will meet on Sunday, Dec. 21, at 1:20 p.m., at St. Francis de Sales Church, 600 Lenx Ave., Miami Beach. You are invited to join the Franciscan family.

Correction

The times given in last week's issue for the Christmas Show to be held at Little Flower Church and sponsored by Amor en Accion should have read **two** shows: 1:00 p.m. and 7:00 p.m., only. Additional information can be obtained from Kathy or Marzo Artime, 261-3201.

Christmas Pageant

The Second Annual Christmas Pageant will be presented by the Family Enrichment Program at St. Vincent's Parish, 6400 NW 18 St., Margate on Friday and Saturday evenings, Dec. 19 and 20, at 8:00 p.m. Members of all faiths are invited.

In addition to a full cast of parish members a liturgical dance will be rendered as an integral part of the performance.

Southern Trust Band

The Southern Trust Band will appear at Queen of Peace Hall, St. Timothy Church, Miller Road and 102nd Ave., on Dec. 20, from 8:00 p.m. to 12:00 p.m. Donation, \$3.00 each. Proceeds go to South Dade Youth Federation Charities. For more information call Ronald Brenner, 274-5749.



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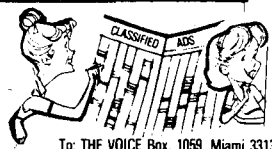
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The Parish and Its People

The Church is for sinners

By Father Philip Murnion

In a letter she once wrote, Flannery O'Connor told of her impatience with someone who lamented the fact that there are sinners in the church. With characteristic insight, the short-story writer insisted: The church is for sinners.

Jesus faced the same problem and answered similarly. He was attacked for consorting with sinners. But he insisted he had come for those who needed salvation.

A great many people have difficulty with this notion. Remember the older brother in the biblical story about the prodigal son? The older brother complained about the generous treatment given by his father to the repentant younger brother who had finally come home. The story is a reminder: God has the most needy in mind.

All parishes and their people face a common danger. They could become complacent, all ready to complain about the presence of someone they feel is not measuring up.

Priests have often been criticized for spending too much time with the troublesome youth in the parish or with families suffering many problems or with the young woman or man whose life has gone into a human and moral tailspin.

Again, in a time of church renewal such as the present there is a danger that zeal will turn inside out, that people who do not give evidence of really profound commitment to the church will be regarded, somehow, as not real members of the church. This danger can even appear among some people who have participated in very good movements in the church.

Marriage Encounter, Cursilio, the charismatic renewal and other old and new movements, have contributed greatly to the church's life. They have helped people to make deeper, more lasting commitments to the Lord and to others. The church would be much poorer without these activities. But a danger arises if people who have benefited from these and other movements suggest, however unintentionally, that those who have not participated in them are lesser members of the church.

The church challenges people and the challenge needs to be felt keenly. At the same time, the church is a community of reconciliation, a place where people can always experience the patience and love of Christ.

A difficult balance is sought by the whole church in this area. The difficulty can be seen when current efforts to prepare people to receive a sacrament for the first time — Communion, confirmation, preparation of parents for their child's baptism — are considered.

The celebration of all these sacraments has benefited because of the care given to preparing people and helping them understand how the reception of a sacrament is related to their own commitment and faith.

A PROBLEM CAN develop, however, if it is suggested that reception of a sacrament expresses something already achieved, in such a way that it is forgotten how sacraments are acts of Christ and of the church community that help people achieve new levels of faith and commitment.

The extremes in these matters are far apart: not challenging people at all, on the one end; excluding large numbers because of their inadequate commitment, on the other end. These extremes are rare.

In the center, the line been urging people on to Christian commitment and making the church an elite church is more difficult to draw. Efforts in these matters require considerable wisdom.



By Father John J. Castelot

In First Corinthians, Chapter 5, St. Paul had to deal with a messy case of incest in the Christian community. Having disposed of the matter in no uncertain terms, he now turns to something which disturbs him even more than the affair itself: the attitude of the community toward the incident.

Early in the chapter he alluded to this: "Still you continue to be self-satisfied, instead of grieving and getting rid of the offender!" Now he returns in deadly earnest: "This boasting of yours is an ugly thing. Do you not know that a little yeast has its effect all through the dough?"

FOR PAUL there is no such thing as a "private" sin. Every action of a Christian affects the whole community for good or for ill. The community is an organic body; one cannot have "just" a toothache or "just" an upset stomach. In either case the whole body is miserable.

He had written an earlier letter (now lost) telling them not to

associate with immoral people. They had very conveniently concluded that this was an impossible exaggeration. They would have to resign from the human race, drop out of society.

Paul agrees, but insists that he was not referring to such people in general, but only to immoral members of the Christian community. What outsiders do is not the business of the Christians; God will take care of them. But the conduct of fellow Christians is very much their business.

THE COMMUNITY is supposed to be a haven from the immoral pressures of a twisted value system. The mutual support of the people is designed to provide an atmosphere where they can breathe the air of freedom and grow in true humanity as true images of God.

Such a community, in its turn, will be a beacon inviting a distraught society to come and find peace. The Christian community cannot fulfill this vocation if it is itself distraught, imprisoned in the same value system as society.

**No
private
sin**

Changing perspectives

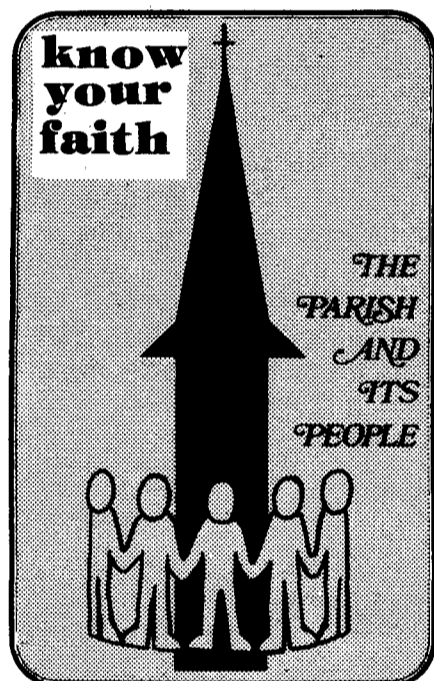
The boy rather awkwardly took a seat near the back of the church. He and his father were late for Mass. This was the church where the boy was baptized, received his first Communion. Now he was 17 and right at the moment he was in a turmoil.

He wore rumpled jeans and yesterday's shirt. Feelings of confusion, anger and regret kept rushing through him as he remembered his father's anger and their argument.

His father sat down next to him. They hadn't spoken on the way to church. The father too was confused at the moment. The boy had badly broken his curfew last night. But the father knew his own strong reaction was caused by more than that. The incident brought some hidden anger to the surface.

The boy realized his lifestyle was a bit afield from his father's wishes right now. But like many teen-agers, he felt his father didn't understand him. He wondered how much his father would like him if he really did understand.

THE FATHER knew his son wanted to be understood. As a matter of fact, the father wanted to be understood too,



by his son. The pressures of work, the problems of family finances, the demands placed on his time — the father wanted his son to comprehend these things.

The boy was getting older. His father wanted the best for him. What's more, the father remembered his own mistakes and lived in some fear his son would make similar mistakes. He wanted his own experience in life to help his son.

Soon this boy would leave home, for college or for work. The father was concerned about that approaching moment, wondering if he had done enough for the boy, hoping he had.

"Hoping," that was the word. The father was hoping that his own sometimes clumsy efforts to reach out to his son would be understood. At this moment, this father's relationship with his son seemed less than successful.

Neither father nor son heard much said at the altar that Sunday. This wasn't a regular Sunday for them. For them, this Mass was a needed moment to sit down quietly, to think.

The father remembered an argument he'd had as a teen-ager with his own father. The son remembered an earlier argument he'd had with his

father and recalled that they did, after all, get over it.

Both, in entirely different ways, thought about their profound involvement in each other's lives. Both realized that they would not want that involvement to simply become something of the past.

The son reflected on some of his own aspirations in life, knowing that his father had hopes for him too. There were times, both knew, when the two sets of aspirations conflicted. Expectations brushed up against expectations, one perspective on the world crossed paths with another perspective on the world.

THE BOY and his father knew they weren't alone with such occurrences. Other families, friends, even whole communities could experience conflicts for similar reasons.

There was a sense in which the boy and his father seemed to push and pull at each other's lives, posing future ideals for one another, on the one hand; lacking patience, lacking enough time for one another, on the other hand.

During the prayers of the faithful that day, someone prayed aloud for a special intention. The father and his son did, at least, hear that person's voice. They each had their own special intentions. In their own ways, each hoped for a not-too-difficult way out of their present difficulty and into a better relationship.

The Mass ended. They rose to leave. Some friends came over to the boy and his father in the back of the church.



One friend told of a funny item in the morning newspaper. The father and his son managed to laugh — a little.

On the way home in the car, father and son exchanged a few words. Each could feel that time was doing what time often does in families. It was putting their big problem into a different

context.

The difficulty they had with each other from time to time wasn't being erased. But bit by bit it was beginning to seem different, less all-encompassing. They were beginning to remember some of the other important things that bound them together.

A cathedral parish

By Dan Morris

When we told good friends of ours in the Northwest that we had accepted a job in Oakland, Calif., the first thing they said was, "have you been to the cathedral yet?"

Little did we know then that we would shortly become something like adopted members of that parish.

ST. FRANCIS de Sales Cathedral in the Oakland diocese has become something of a center for liturgy students. A recent conference of pastoral musicians, for example, concluded a three-day convention in San Francisco by traveling across the bay to celebrate its closing liturgy at St. Francis de Sales.

Liturgy students from Berkeley's theology schools are often seen at the cathedral. Visiting priests from all over the country show up incognito and borrow ideas for their own parishes.

"But the story that doesn't get told about St. Francis de Sales Cathedral is that its parish life is more than Sunday-deep. A kind of liturgy of ministry and concern and support ties the parish into a unique Christian community."

For the past half-dozen years the parish has been led by Father Donald Osuna, justly acclaimed an expert in liturgical affairs. When he arrived, the parish community was said to be somewhat in disarray. The cathedral administrator, Father Michael Galvin, is blunt. "When Father Osuna started here, there was no community."

Led by Father Osuna, the parish staff poured its energies into the Sunday liturgies. The choir is superb. The music selection is appropriate. The liturgy, from beginning to end, possesses a tangible unity. Readings are clear and understandable. Homilies are bright, addressed to people's lives and remarkably brief.

But the story that doesn't get told about St. Francis de Sales Cathedral is that its parish life is more than

Sunday-deep. A kind of liturgy of ministry and concern and support ties the parish into a unique Christian community.

FATHER OSUNA, Father Galvin, and other members of the cathedral staff agree that the community that now exists was drawn together through the Mass. The enthusiastic and prayerful celebration of the Eucharist was the catalyst. Now, however, the Sunday celebration is a reflection of the life of the Cathedral's community as well.

St. Francis de Sales is located in a low-income, multiracial part of downtown Oakland. Father Galvin describes the parish as "a primarily adult community and a cross section of every segment of American society."

He's accurate. Affluent, not-so-affluent, black, white, brown, married, single, older and young — all are found in the parish. People come to this cathedral from suburbs as far as 40 or 50 miles away.

The parish community reaches out to its own members as well as the wider community in a number of ways. The parish operates a complex ministry to the aging program, a prison ministry, prayer groups, adult education classes and an active St. Vincent de Paul group among other programs.

Parishioners recently joined with a neighboring Baptist community to sponsor refugees from Argentina.

This parish also has days of recollection "for ushers, for lectors, for ministers of Communion, or acolytes," notes Father Galvin, adding that the choir has made weekend retreats as a group.

The young priest says: "The people here know that their ministry is important. They respond to challenges. And yet it's not a stagnant community; it's still exploring, reflecting and is very open to challenge."

"My own experience is that there is a special atmosphere here," he adds. "People are accepted as they are."



CHRISTMAS IS...

By Hilda Young

Christmas is leaving for Midnight Mass at 11:30 and finding out everybody else left at 11:15.

Christmas is substituting a plastic tyrannosaurus for one of the camels in the crib scene because the last time anyone saw the camel, Michael had it in his mouth.

Christmas is unsnarling tinsel from the vacuum cleaner rolls.

Christmas is racing checks to the bank on pay day.

Christmas is staring at that monument of color and light known as a Christmas tree through the eyes of a 4-year-old.

Christmas is borrowing candles from the camping gear for the Advent wreath.

Christmas is the kiss of a snowflake.

Christmas is Scotch tape, scissors, smashed bows, reusing ribbons, wrinkled wrapping paper -- and packaging that last gift in birthday paper because you're all out of the other, but it's Jesus' birthday so that's OK.

Christmas is a good excuse to make new friends, patch up old friendships, give thanks for the ones of the past, and look for the ones that lurk in some of the most unlikely faces.

Christmas is the smile that comes to your face when you look into the plastic eyes of the infant Jesus and feel the flesh and blood touch of the living Christ in your soul.

Advent

A quiet evening before Christmas

By Katharine Bird
NC News Service

Celebrating the last week of Advent. How can Christians follow John's example and prepare for the coming celebration on Christmas day? What can be done to heighten family unity and friendship?

Plan to set aside one evening, perhaps Sunday, to spend with your favorite people -- your own family and relatives, friends, neighbors -- those people with whom you celebrate life's joys and sorrows.

Plan an evening of work and fun. Perhaps begin with a prayer at the Advent wreath. Then plan to work together baking special goodies for Christmas. Some can only be made shortly before Christmas.

1. One year my children and I baked and assembled a gingerbread house. This takes a great deal of time and patient effort. But my children loved it and we all enjoyed seeing the sparkling house on the dining room table all through the season. Now, long after our creation has crumbled,

its memory reminds us of a happy evening together.

Directions for gingerbread houses can be found in popular magazines. Or, look for a recipe book for Christmas celebrations at your public library or in a bookstore.

2. Some families may prefer to bake cookies. Children often want to make

"Plan to set aside one evening, perhaps a Sunday, to spend with your favorite people - your own family and relatives, friends, neighbors - those people with whom you celebrate life's joys and sorrows."

the same cookies every year, perhaps instinctively seeing this as a way of building family holiday traditions. Sometimes families make ethnic and national specialties such as the Belgina waffle cookies my mother-in-law used to make.

3. Other families may decide to bake cookies to hang on the Christmas tree. Cutting out dough in the shape of trees, stars, bells and reindeers, baking and decorating them according to per-

sonal fancy, can provide hours of pleasure.

4. Other ornaments easy to construct include strings of popcorn or cranberries to hang on a Christmas tree. One note of caution: In some families, cranberries work better; the popcorn seems to disappear before it gets to the tree.

5. Spend an evening together making various items to give away to friends and neighbors. One neighbor gives busy friends a selection of cookies on a Christmas plate. Another makes a decorative tree from rows of gumdrops, toothpicks and a styrofoam tree form.

During the last days before Christmas, the hectic pace of life can easily crowd out the time for friends and families to be together in ways that

they genuinely enjoy. Advent is the time to prepare, to make things ready for Christ.

One way to prepare for the one who is to come is by making room in our lives for each other.



Condena el Papa La Violencia Otra Vez

Vaticano.- En un largo discurso a los participantes del Congreso Nacional de Juristas Católicos celebrado en Roma, bajo el título "Violencia y Derecho", cuyo tema discutieron, el Santo Padre reafirmó que "no se puede construir una sociedad sólo sobre el principio negativo de la no-violencia (no oponer violencia a la violencia) ni tampoco podrá edificarse una sociedad sin derecho y sin estado".

El Pontífice, refiriéndose a la "eterna dialéctica entre posiciones conservadoras y movimientos innovadores" dijo que, en las sociedades actuales,

que se dice están en curso de transformación, ese tipo de dialéctica con frecuencia es presentado por cuantos creen que se puede y debe reformarse las estructuras por medios pacíficos y por cuantos creen que se puede edificar una sociedad más justa y humana después del aniquilamiento total, violento, de dichas estructuras.

"La ideología de la violencia

es un fruto muy amargo de la confusión de ideas..." y definió la violencia como la "violación" de la dignidad humana. Refiriéndose a la no-violencia señaló que no basta su visión negativa, sino que el pensamiento cristiano le da un alcance positivo, "vencer el mal con el bien", a fin de contribuir a la edificación de "la civilización del amor" propuesta por pablo VI.

Lennon y la Música Litúrgica

Nueva York (NC)- El asesinato el 8 de diciembre del compositor de los "Beatles" John Lennon puso de relieve la con-

tribución que este célebre grupo hizo a la música contemporánea, la religiosa incluida. Sor Jane Marie Perrot, de la Asociación Nacional de Músicos Religiosos, dijo que la música de los Beatles "influyó mucho en los cantos folklóricos introducidos en la liturgia después del Segundo Concilio Vaticano." Charlie Martin, compositor y comentarista, dijo que de 1965 a 1971 la música de los Beatles maduró en contenido, y agregó que John Lennon "planteó en la letra de sus canciones muchas cuestiones válidas y fue un crítico de la sociedad." También se ha hecho público que el joven compositor ayudaba generosamente en obras de caridad religiosas, entre ellas un refugio para jóvenes sin hogar de los Franciscanos y un hospital infantil de las hermanas de la Caridad. La viuda Yoko Ono confirmó que su Fundación del Espíritu (capital \$100,000) daba fondos a ambas, lo mismo que al Ejército de Salvación, la Casa San Barnabás, y obras protestantes de asistencia social. El refugio atiende a unos 15,000 muchachos y muchachas; el hospital tiene 200 pacientes.

PIDE MONS. WYSZYNSKY DEJEN EN PAZ A POLONIA

Paris (NC)- En una entrevista con Le Figaro, el arzobispo de Varsovia Y Gniezno; cardenal Stefan Wyszyński, ha pedido a los gobiernos extranjeros que no intervengan en los asuntos internos de Polonia. Hay temores de una intervención militar soviética contra los polacos, que lograron recientemente cristalizar el derecho a sindicatos libres. El cardenal, que apoyó al movimiento, agregó que un pronto reconocimiento de esos sindicatos ayudará a "restablecer el equilibrio social y a normalizar la economía del país."

UN MENSAJE DE AMOR



El regalo de Navidad de los Católicos del Sur de la Florida a su comunidad, es un mensaje de amor que llegará a ellos a través de cintillos adhesivos en las defensas de los autos: "¡Dios Te Ama! Tu Iglesia Católica", impreso en rojo y blanco sobre vinil. Serán distribuidos en las parroquias y escuelas católicas de los ocho condados de la Arquidiócesis de Miami.

¡Aleluya! Ha Nacido el Salvador



(Prologo del Evangelio de San Juan)

¹ En el principio existía el Verbo y el Verbo estaba en Dios y el Verbo era Dios... ⁴ en El estaba la vida y la vida era la Luz de los hombres, luz que brilla en las tinieblas...

⁹ El Verbo era la verdadera luz que alumbra a todo hombre que viene a este mundo; ¹⁰ y el Verbo vino al mundo... ¹¹ Vino a los suyos... ¹² a los que le recibieron les dió potestad de llegar a ser hijos de Dios.

¹⁴ El Verbo se hizo carne y habitó entre nosotros; y nosotros vimos su gloria, gloria del Unigénito del Padre. lleno de gracia y de verdad.

¹⁶ De su plenitud recibimos todos gracia sobre gracia... ¹⁷ la gracia y la verdad vienen por Jesucristo.

¡Aleluya! ¡Gloria a Dios en las Alturas y paz en la tierra a los hombres de buena voluntad! ¡Aleluya!

AVISO IMPORTANTE

La semana próxima, con motivo de las fiestas navideñas, no será editado The Voice/La Voz. The Voice/La Voz desea a todos las bendiciones de Dios Padre y de Nuestro Señor Jesús.

Arzobispo Bendecirá Estatuas en Cementerio

El día 20 de Diciembre, a las 10 a.m., el Arzobispo de Miami, Mons. Edward McCarthy bendecirá, en el cementerio Our Lady of Mercy, la estatua en granito de Cristo Resucitado, recientemente esculpida, en memoria de los obispos y sacerdotes enterrados en dicho cementerio.

También allí bendecirá una estatua de Nuestra Sra. de la Caridad del Cobre, Patrona de Cuba.

Todos los fieles de la Arquidiócesis están invitados a estas bendiciones. El cementerio Our Lady of Mercy está situado en 11411 NW Calle 25, Miami.

Carta a Santa Claus

Querido Santa:

Desde mi niñez aprendí que el dador de todos los bienes no eres tú ni los Reyes Magos sino el Señor Dios, Padre Todomisericordioso (del total de su misericordias brota su omnipotencia). Antes le pedía a los Reyes según nuestras tradiciones, ahora a tí en el destierro.

Sin embargo, aquí o allá, les hemos pedido porque gozan de gran influencia ante El por haber sido vuestras vidas terrenas imagen de Su misericordia. Por éso te escribo esta carta; lo que pido es bien simple, confiando interpongamos tu influencia para que me sea concedido.

Siempre me abrumó el pensar que mientras yo tenía cumplidos toda clase de caprichos, había otros de mi misma edad que carecieran de lo más elemental para subsistir. Los años han pasado y hoy no estoy en edad para carticas a Santa ni a los Reyes pero aún creo en vuestra influencia con el Creador y Dador de todo. Y aquí mi petición.

Pide al Señor que "la Luz que vino al mundo para iluminar a los hombres", Cristo Mesías, ilumine a cuantos necesitan de Su luz para hacer de este mundo un lugar para disfrute y gozo de todos los seres humanos y no de unos pocos, en paz y cristiana hermandad. Un lugar donde el amor rija la conducta y la misericordia guíe la justicia.

Sé que son muchos los que reconociendo que la miseria, la injusticia y el dolor existen dedican parte de su tiempo a llevar alivio a los necesitados. Sé también que Dios permite miseria en un punto para probar a los que tienen de todo en otro sitio; el dolor y las penas para que el que goza de alegría y salud muestre su compasión y así en todo lo demás. He puesto de mi parte lo que he podido, como tantos otros de Sus hijos, pero la miseria sigue, la orfandad continúa, la soledad de los viejos es más patente ahora que nunca antes. Jamás pedí a Dios riquezas ni fama ni gloria, sino humildad, fe, paz y salud y que multiplicara sus bienes para que los lleváramos a los que nada tienen.

Porque el Reino de Dios hemos de construirlo "todos nosotros" en la Tierra, dándole oportunidad de aprender al ignorante, en África o en América, para que se ayude a sí mismo. Mostrando justicia misericordiosa en nuestro trato con los demás, en la ciudad o en el campo. Que el que posee una fábrica o negocio comprenda que el dinero lo hace socio del negocio pero que si el "otro socio", la mano de obra, la fuerza que produce no trabaja poco puede producir un montón de billetes y él solo poco podría hacer; que comprenda que capital y trabajo son socios en la empresa y por lo tanto el beneficio deber ser repartido con equidad.

Y sobre todo, que comprendamos que la meta de nuestros esfuerzos, de nuestra inteligencia, debe ser el bien común de todo el género humano sin distinción de razas ni banderas. Que cuando nos sentemos a la mesa repleta de alimentos recordemos a los que pasan hambre y pensemos qué hemos hecho para cambiar esta realidad. Que ante nuestra mesa de trabajo recordemos con orgullo sano que "un hermano nuestro" va a disfrutar de lo que producimos, dándole a la tuerca las vueltas que requiere y no dos menos. Que al valorar el producto de nuestra fábrica tengamos presente el bienestar y el justo precio al consumidor y no cuánto más extra podamos amontonar en el banco.

Dile al Señor, querido Santa, que El sabe todos los anhelos de sus buenos hijos, que "necesitamos más obreros en su campo" y que se lo pidan confiando en la promesa de Jesús: "cuando dos o más reunidos pidan en mi nombre, les será concedido."

Una petición mas, una sola, una vez más. Que me ayude a vivir como vivió Jesús, desde el pesebre hasta el calvario; porque también he aprendido que Su vida es la vida de todo hombre y que quien huye de su cruz encuentra otra mayor.

¡Que Dios te Bendiga, Santa, por tantas ilusiones satisfechas! ¡Que los bendiga Dios, Hombres Sabios del Oriente, porque adoraron al Niño pobre y desnudo y lo colmaron de regalos!

Te admira,
José P. Alonso

Liga Católica Descubre a Farsante

Milwaukee (NC) - Al cabo de una investigación, la Liga Católica de Derechos Civiles y Religiosos informa que el autor de una campaña anti-católica que incluye la difusión de historietas cómicas, "Alberto," no fue nunca sacerdote jesuita como alega. Documentos de superiores jesuitas en España dicen que Alberto Rivera no fue ordenado ni declarado miembro de esta órden en la década de los 1960, fechas que dió Rivera. La Liga envió copias a la editorial Jack T. Chick, que se niega a retirar las historietas de la circulación entre grupos protestantes. Rivera, quien llama a la iglesia católica el anticristo y a los superiores jesuitas "comunistas" es un farsante que trata de explotar a los protestantes.

Nuevo Librito del P. F. Santana

Un folleto titulado "La Familia y el Sacramento de los Enfermos" acaba de ver la luz. Este es el segundo librito del Rev. P. Francisco Santana, párroco asociado de St. Kevin, editado por Publicaciones Claretianas en su colección Guadalupe. El primero trató sobre el Bautismo.

Recomendamos la lectura del librito por cuanto explica claramente el mal comprendido sacramento de enfermos, calificado por muchos como un sacramento para moribundos en su último minuto, en muchos casos se hallan ya inconscientes.

P. Santana habla de las tradiciones católicas de la familia hispana, de su unión y la reverencia que siempre hemos tenido por nuestros "viejecitos" de la actitud ante la enfermedad y la muerte y del papel importantísimo de estas penas humanas en el proceso de salvación.

El librito es una pequeña joya de instrucción católica. Se vende al módico precio de 50 centavos en las librerías religiosas o puede pedirse a Publicaciones Claretianas, 221 Madison Street, Chicago, Ill. 60606.

Cable al Papa de Cubanos Unidos

Wilfredo Navarro, secretario general de Cubanos Unidos, a envió el siguiente cablegrama al Santo Padre rogando vuelva a interponer su influencia en favor de los rehenes en Irán.

"Santo Padre, deseáramos tener una audiencia con Su Santidad con el deseo de conseguir su ayuda para la liberación de los rehenes americanos retenidos en Irán. Estos rehenes son también nuestros hermanos en Cristo.

Por Sus obedientes sirvientes, Wilfredo Navarro, secretario general Cubanos Unidos, W. Flagler 2381, Miami, Fl. 33135, USA.

Grabaciones Católicas "Jesús Te Ama"

La Srta. Connie Nodarse, creadora de Grabaciones Católicas "Jesús Te Ama", un servicio de propagación de la Palabra y de experiencias de Directores Espirituales y Teólogos al cual ella llama "mi ministerio de tapes", tiene a la disposición de sacerdotes y ministros laicos el Curso Bíblico en 18 'cassettes' por el Rev. Padre Salvador Carrillo Alday,

M. Sp. S. (D.S.E.) del Instituto de Sagrada Escritura de México.

También tiene para entrega inmediata los tapes "Seminario de Vida en el Espíritu Santo", por Mons. Alfonso Uribe Jaramillo, obispo de Sonson-Rio Negro, Colombia. Del P. Carrillo Alday "Retiro para Servidores" (Santo domingo, Sept., 1980), y del Rvdo. Padre Thomas Forrest, C.S.S.R., direc-

tor internacional de Renovación en el Espíritu Santo, "Retiro para Servidores y Laicos" (Sto. Domingo, Sept. 1980), en español. La Srta. Nodarse tiene muchos mas tapes de conocidos teólogos y oradores sagrados.

Los interesados pueden pedir más información escribiendo a Grabaciones Católicas "Jesús Te Ama", P.O. Box 350206, Miami, Florida 33135.

BAILE DE FIN DE AÑO Del Movimiento Impacto

El Movimiento Impacto anuncia su gran Baile de Fin de Año el 31 de Diciembre en el auditorio de la Parroquia Little Flower, Anastasia 1270, Coral Gables. La donación para este baile es de \$40 por pareja e incluye cena, sidra, uvas, gorros y matracas. Más informes pueden obtenerse por los teléfonos 595-6684 y 264-8850.

Paz y Amor

Les deseamos que en estas Pascuas sientan paz y que el próximo año, den mucho amor a su prójimo para que continuen sintiendo paz.

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Para Decidir Hace Falta Conocer...

Por Ana Rodriguez

Hay una Oficina que Ayuda a las mujeres embarazadas

Tienes 15 años, o 30; eres soltera o estás casada; viven en Miami o estas pasando unos días en la ciudad. Estás embarazada y no quieres estarlo. Necesitas ayuda y ¿a dónde puedes dirigirte? Quizás sólo desees alguna información sobre los diferentes métodos de control de natalidad. ¿A dónde ir?

Sobre dos anuncios muy grandes y atractivos en las páginas amarillas para "terminación de la preñez", hay un pequeño anuncio que dice simplemente "We Care" (A nosotros nos importa). Es de la Oficina de Respeto a la Vida de la Arquidiócesis Católica de Miami cuyo personal entrenado y voluntario dice que a ellos sí les importas tú y tu niño por nacer las 24 horas del día, los siete días de la semana.

"Hemos comprobado que si nosotros ofrecemos un sistema de apoyo moral y material a las mujeres que creen tener problemas debido a su embarazo, ellas harán una elección positiva", dice Libby Johnson, enfermera registrada quien ofrece sus horas libres voluntariamente para hacer pruebas de embarazo en la mencionada oficina.

Las pruebas, confirmadas por un médico, son sólo una parte de los Servicios de Emergencia de Embarazos establecidos por

la Oficina de Respeto a la Vida. Estos servicios proveen hogar para la mujer embarazada que no tiene a donde ir, educación sobre cuidado del bebé, salud y nutrición, cuna y ropitas, transporte al hospital y a la consulta del médico. También son referidas a otras agencias, si lo requiere el caso, que pueden brindarle ayuda adicional.

"Cualquier cosa que ellas puedan necesitar, nosotros lo proveeremos", dice Carolyn Israel, una de las voluntarias. "Las tratamos como adultos", añade Delia Ros, BSW, trabajadora social de la oficina. La señora Johnson añade, "Queremos ayudarlas a ayudarse a sí mismas. Las ayudamos a hacer la decisión, pero no hacemos la decisión por ellas".

Los empleados de la oficina no saben exactamente a cuántas mujeres han ayudado desde que abrieron la oficina hace un año, pero estiman que alcanza los cientos. El Padre Daniel Kubala, su director, dice que el último conteo, en Julio, promediaba ochenta llamadas mensuales.

No todas las que vienen a la oficina se quedan, una vez que saben que no es una clínica de abortos. Algunas siguen adelante en busca del aborto,

pero van informadas de las complicaciones de tal propósito, según la Sra. Johnson. Ella da énfasis a la importancia de esta información porque "si eligen sin saberlo todo no han hecho una real elección". La mayoría de las que dan a luz dan los bebés en adopción pero hay otras que deciden quedarse con ellos.

"Llegan aquí perdidas, inseguras", dice la Sra. Ros, "y después de tener al niño algo se abre en ellas". Deciden terminar sus estudios y conseguir un trabajo. "Sienten una nueva responsabilidad hacia la criatura y es tremendo el cambio que se opera en ellas".

Servicios de Emergencias se verá pronto suplementado por un Fondo de Emergencia para Embarazadas llamado "Fondo Guadalupe" porque Ntra. Sra. de Guadalupe es la Patrona de los niños por nacer. El fondo ayudará a sufragar los gastos del cuidado pre-natal y del parto a aquellas que no tienen recursos.

La Oficina cuenta con 25 voluntarios que atienden los teléfonos las 24 horas del día y 50 más que brindan sus hogares para albergar a las embarazadas inmediatamente.

"Estas personas son unos cristianos muy especiales", agrega la enfermera Johnson.

ayudar de alguna manera.

Christopher Gomez, seminarista voluntario en la Oficina dice que "aún los ancianos pueden ayudar bastante tejiendo ropitas y organizando los artículos donados y orando. Otros dos seminaristas trabajan también en la Oficina.

Los trabajadores voluntarios de Respeto a la Vida se sienten optimistas en la batalla que están librando contra el aborto. La Srta. Israel dice que "ellos (los aborticionistas) son los que están preocupados".

Las Oficinas de Respeto a la Vida están situadas en 18340 NW 12 Avenida y el teléfono es 653-2921. Toda donación, especialmente de bebé o cunas, es bienvenida y agradecida.

Noche Familiar en Navidad ¡VEN SEÑOR JESUS!

Cantar un Villancico y hablar de lo que significa para nosotros.

Debe tenerse un "Belén" (nacimiento) expuesto con todas las figuras tradicionales

TEMA

El Adviento culmina en Navidad, la celebración de la bondad y generosidad de Dios hacia nosotros.

ACTIVIDADES

Familia Joven

Mientras leen en la Biblia el nacimiento del niño Jesús (Lucas 2:1-20) hagan una pantomima moviendo las figuras del nacimiento como si caminaran hacia el establo.

Familia de Edad Mediana y Adulta

Reúnanse alrededor del Árbol de Navidad. Que cada persona traiga un ornamento hecho a mano, un símbolo de algo que para ellos quiere decir la Navidad, Jesús o la familia.

Director o Líder: "Señor Nuestro, creemos que tú estás aquí presente, que tú eres parte de nuestra familia. Vamos a celebrar tu cumpleaños de una manera muy especial. Te alabamos y te damos gracias por el regalo de la vida, simbolizado por este árbol. Reconocemos que Tú eres nuestra Luz en medio de la oscuridad (encender aquí el árbol teniendo en cuenta que la

luz más brillante debe ser la punta, representando a Cristo). Ayúdanos a reconocer tus regalos, especialmente los regalos de vida y amor con los cuales hemos sido bendecidos. Amén."

MERIENDA

Háganle una torta de cumpleaños a Jesús, decórenla y disfruten de su fiesta de cumpleaños.

ENTRETENIMIENTO

1.- Envuelvan un regalo de la familia para Jesús. Cada uno le puede escribir una nota deseándole un feliz cumpleaños. Dénle el regalo a la Sociedad de St. Vicente de Paul para alguna familia necesitada.

2.- Escojan un cuento de Navidad para contarle o leerlo en voz alta.

3.- Tomen las postales Navideñas que hayan recibido y hagan un adorno atractivo con ellas.

COMPARTAN

Compartan el aspecto de la Navidad que más llena sus corazones explicando por qué.

Compartan la Navidad más feliz que hayan tenido. Cuenten cual es el regalo con mas

significado que han recibido en sus vidas.

ORACION FINAL

"Gracias Señor, por el regalo de tu Hijo Jesús. Que nuestra familia, ahora mas que nunca, sienta la vida y el amor que tú traes. Ayúdanos a vivir nuestras vidas en el ejemplo de tu Hijo, desde su pobreza en Belén, pasando por las riquezas de sus enseñanzas, hasta su sufrimiento en la cruz, sabiendo que nos lleva a la gloria de la Resurrección. Amén."

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Noches, 8:00 p.m.: domingos - \$18.50, \$16.50. Matines, 2:00 p.m. sabados, domingos: \$11.50, \$9.50, \$8.50.	
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Ordenes por correo: Envien sobre pre-dirigido con sellos de correo a: Spanish Theater, Inc. Dade County Auditorium, 2901 West Flagler Street, Miami, Florida 33125

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Rezar Cantando es Rezar Dos Veces

El pasado Domingo 30 de Noviembre se celebró en el Centro Comunitario de la Pequeña Habana un festival de Música Cristiana, organizado por el Centro de Juventudes José Martí. El propósito de este festival es unir a la juventud de todas las denominaciones cristianas para "orar cantando". Las canciones presentadas en el festival son inéditas y fueron seleccionadas por un jurado compuesto de cinco personas.

Este festival es el primero de su clase y el Centro de Juventudes planea ofrecerlo anualmente. Además, este año conlleva otro propósito: recaudar fondos para abrir un local que albergue al Centro y donde puedan reunirse sus miembros.

El lema del festival fue inspirado en San Agustín: "Rezar cantando es rezar dos veces."

El Centro tiene planes ambiciosos como son ofrecer clases de karate y también clases de filosofía por el profesor Germán Muñoz siguiendo el mismo curso que el citado profesor tiene en el Miami Dade Community College titulado "Filosofía y Ciencias Sociales", cuyo enfoque es rebatir las teorías materialistas de la sociedad de hoy proponiendo el espíritu como esencia del hombre.

El grupo, que cuenta ya con un buen número de miembros de todo origen nacional, aspira a que la juventud toda se una al Centro, del cual el profesor

Muñoz es uno de los organizadores. Aunque en el grupo colaboran tres norteamericanos enamorados de los ideales del proyecto, el anhelo es atraer a la juventud hispana.

Jorge Marcos, uno de los fundadores, abrió el acto explicando los propósitos del Centro de Juventudes así como del festival, e hizo la presentación del Sr. Juan Muñoz, quien dirigió la plegaria de Invocación. Acto seguido el Sr. Muñoz introdujo a los Maestros de Ceremonia, Leticia Callava y René Giraldo, ambos de Reporter 23.

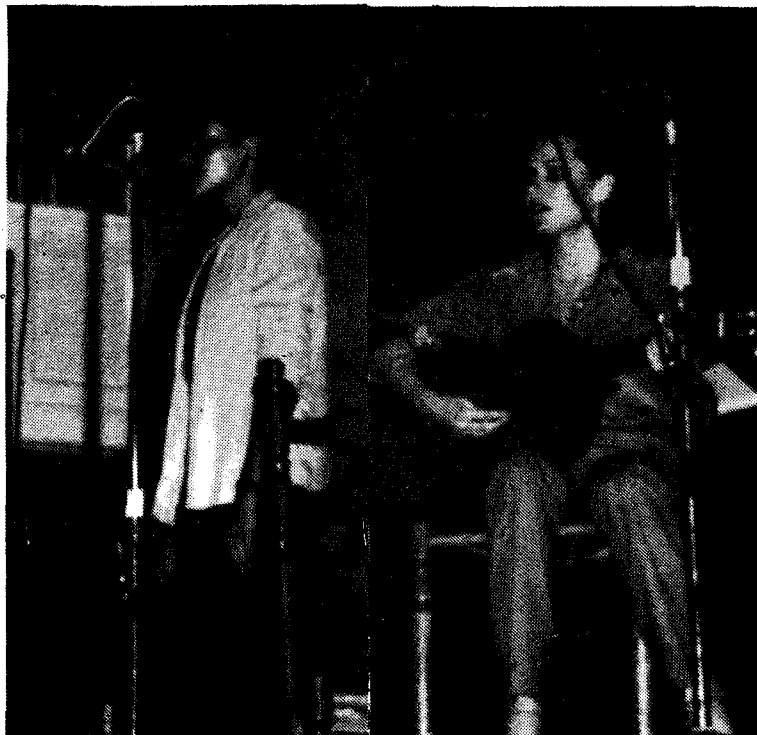
A este primer festival asistieron unas 400 personas y se presentaron 15 canciones seleccionadas por sus calidades poético-literaria, musical y espiritual. El jurado, formado por los señores Ariel Remos, del Diario "Las Americas"; Carlos Oliva, de "Common Cause Records"; Frank J. Marcos, director del grupo musical "Clouds" y la poetisa Roxana María Alvarez, otorgó los premios en el siguiente orden:

1er. Lugar: "Reflejos", canción de Jorge de Rivero e interpretada por la Srta. Iris Salazar.

2do. Lugar: "Yo Merecí Ese Lugar", de Ezequías Valladares e interpretada por el grupo "Renacer".

3er. Lugar: "Amistad", de Elizabeth Marrero, quien cantó sus propia pieza.

4to. Lugar: "El Atajo", autora e intérprete la Srta. Lucía Kelly.



Iris Salazar interpretó la canción de Jorge del Rivero "Reflejos", ganadora del primer lugar.

Lucía Kelly interpretó su canción "Atajos", que obtuvo el cuarto lugar.

Todos recibieron un certificado - testimonio que los acredita ganadores en el concurso. La canción ganadora del 1er. lugar será la representativa del Centro de Juventudes José Martí por todo el año, hasta que se celebre el próximo festival cuya canción ganadora pasará a ostentar este honor.

La celebración de este festival ya comenzó a dar frutos

positivos, pues al finalizar el acto la mayoría de los autores y artistas concursantes acordaron formar una agrupación musical que tentativamente se llamará "Antorcha" y que contará con el respaldo del Centro de Juventudes para ofrecer recitales y conciertos con los mismos ideales del festival; es decir, llevar al pueblo música de calidad tanto artística como

espiritual.

Un disco de larga duración, grabado en "vivo" durante el acto y conteniendo las canciones presentadas en el festival, estará pronto en el mercado.

Esta es la canción ganadora del primer lugar en el Festival de la Canción Cristiana del compositor Jorge del Rivero.

REFLEJOS

Cuántas veces te has mirado reflejado en un cristal y aunque crees que has cambiado ves que todo sigue igual.

No es que tú no hayas cambiado, es que no has cambiado en tí esa imagen desconfiada que no te deja vivir.

Ten la fe que mueve a las montañas, mira al sol, no deja de brillar.

No busques más allá del corazón, ten la fe tan alta que casi llegue a Dios.

Al mirarte en el espejo ves aquella que ya fue, pero más que lo que ha sido es saber qué puede ser.

Hay caminos no trazados. Hay alturas por subir.

Y si crees que estás cansada descansa el alma en Mí.

Un paso atrás es igual que ver la misma cara reflejada en el cristal.

Un paso adelante deja huellas por seguir y así, a cada instante, hallarás tu porvenir.

Noticias de la Semana

NO ENCUENTRAN EVIDENCIAS

El Salvador.- La comisión investigadora enviada por el gobierno americano a El Salvador para investigar lo relacionado con el asesinato de tres monjas

y una misionera laica, todas americanas, ha declarado que no han encontrado evidencias de que miembros de las fuerzas armadas o del gobierno hayan en el crimen.

Las Griterías de Nicaragua



Cerca de 1500 Nicaraguenses se reunieron la víspera de la fiesta de la Inmaculada Concepción, Patrona de Nicaragua, en la Iglesia de la Divina Providencia para celebrar una tradición de años: las Griterías Nicaraguenses. Arriba, un voluntario reparte flautas acarameladas a los niños allí presentes, mientras el pueblo se congrega alrededor de la imagen de la Virgen, cantando himnos.

CONTRA JUGUETES GUERREROS

Ottawa, Can., (NC) - Mons. Remi de Roo, obispo de Victoria, pidió que los católicos rehusen comprar juguetes de guerra a los niños, "pues en un mundo que gasta millones de dólares por minuto en armamentos, no podemos pedir que los niños acepten tal mundo en plan de guerra." Como jefe del departamento de acción social de los obispos canadienses, pidió a los católicos que fomenten mejor la ayuda al desarrollo y la libertad de los pueblos oprimidos.

SUGIEREN NUEVAS MEDIDAS DE INMIGRACION

Washington (NC)-- La Comisión sobre Políticas de Inmigración y Refugiados, que preside el Padre Theodoro Hesburgh, rector de la Universidad de Notre Dame, recomienda que se dé amnistía a los extranjeros indocumentados que vivan en el país, pero a la vez que se tomen medidas estrictas para detener la inmigración ilegal y se castigue a quienes den trabajo a los indocumentados. La comisión recomienda también que se eleve la cuota anual de admisiones de 270,000 a 300,000, y se tramiten otras 100,000 cada año en los próximos cinco, para salir de los casos pendientes.

Judío Sustituye Cristianos en Navidad

Milwaukee (NC) - Albert Rosen, un judío, se ha ofrecido por la oncenava navidad consecutiva a ocupar el lugar de un cristiano, esta vez, en el restaurant Denny's de Milwaukee, de 4 de la tarde a 12 de la noche a fin de que una cristiana pueda celebrar la festividad navideña con su familia.

Rosen reemplazará a Linda Kibinski voluntariamente, sin recibir pago alguno. Dice que él lo hace "para servir a la causa de la hermandad entre judíos y

cristianos cerrando un poco la brecha que nos separa."

En años anteriores Rosen ha sustituido a un bartender, a un locutor de radio, a un empleado de información en un hospital, a un guardia de seguridad privado, a un empleado civil del buró de policía y a un empleado de correos.

El ejemplo de Rosen ha hecho que otros judíos en todo el país estén haciendo actos similares en hospitales y casas de convalecencia.

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'Peace
on
earth'



But a shoot shall sprout from the stump of Jesse, and from his roots a bud shall blossom.

Isaiah 11:1

Memories of Christmas past

By Marianne Strawn
NC News Service

Christmas in Chile. Rosita Kline sits beside her daughter and cuts ribbons of colored cellophane to decorate the Christmas tree. Homemade ornaments were a major part of Christmas in Chile where Rosita was born.

"Actually, Dec. 24 was the important day for us," she recalls. "In my memory I can still feel the excitement of that time."

The nativity was the focus for her family with its five children.

"Everyone was involved in settling up the manger scene, adding bits of straw and cotton, arranging the figures," Mrs. Kline reminisced.

As her mother baked in the kitchen, the children made ornaments for the pine tree. "But that was second in importance," she explains.

MRS. KLINE remembers her father saying throughout the day, "Maybe at this time Mary and Joseph were walking to Bethlehem." Or he would ask, "What do you suppose they were doing at this time?"

Dec. 24 — and no one left the house. It was a time for preparations, for fashioning ornaments of colored paper and silver foil.

It was also summer for this family in the Southern Hemisphere. The trees were full of peaches and apricots. The mild weather made it possible for Christmas dinner to be served outside.

Dinner began around 8 p.m. "We had to be finished in time for midnight Mass," says Mrs. Kline. "Then when we came home, the children all searched the house for Santa. We would look under the beds and in the closets, but he was nowhere to be found — ever," she remembers.

Then, finally, and with a surprise, the presents would be found, she recalls.



Memories of past Christmases are filled with traditions, laughter, special moments, a favorite gift and a tree that looked pretty good on the shivery YMCA lot but left a bit to be desired in the warmth of the living room.

A PHILIPPINE Nativity. Dec. 25 was a day of visiting for Sister Mary Nino's family in the Philippines. Sister Nino, of the Sisters of Notre Dame, recalls the ritual of visiting God, parents and grandparents every Christmas.

"Christmas was such a wonderful occasion for our family, that I chose it as my feast day," she says.

Nine days before the holiday, the family began making novenas, going before dawn to church. It was important for them to be in church at the time the Christ child was born.

Sister Nino explains: "Since Christmas celebrates the birth of the child Jesus, Christmas in my homeland is focused on children."

Clothes were an important part of the holiday too, and children often wore new outfits — from bows in the girls' hair to new shoes.

Sister Nino's most vivid memory is of the 11 girls in her family, standing in line wearing identical dresses made by her mother.

"**OURS WAS** a homemade holiday," she continued. "Trees in our country were much too expensive. So we cut dry branches and covered them with crepe paper and stuck on bits of cotton to look like snow."

"We would all help, making stars from bamboo and tissue paper, pasting sequins on lids. Everyone helped with the cooking too."

The highlight of the family feast would be a whole roasted pig cooked over coals and basted with barbecue sauce.

Santa always came to visit, says Sister Nino. "We would hang our stockings by the window or door. One Christmas I put up two stockings thinking Santa would never know the difference!"

CHRISTMAS IN FRANCE. Children in France set their shoes by the chimney or under the Christmas tree, according to Josette Fergusson. "On one occasion, my father put his shoes out too — but got no presents!" Mrs. Fergusson remembers.

Her six brothers would go into the woods surrounding their village and bring home a freshly cut tree.

"Then we made our decorations."

Christmas in the French provinces was a family day starting with midnight Mass. Dinner might include turkey stuffed with chestnut dressing.

Other visiting was postponed until the holiday on Jan. 1.

Glad Tidings

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Prescription for Christmas



Christmas can be a tiring time for some of us.

By Theodore Hengesbach

Christmas celebrates God's unlimited love for humans.

But, for my friend Al, the season is not always a time of contentment. Rather, he complains, it is a time of frantic activity, added responsibility and even dread. The end result for him often is exhaustion and disappointment.

IN THE COURSE of several talks, Al and I explored possible reasons for his annual unhappiness with Christmas.

It seems to me that Al and many other Christians feel immense internal and external pressures to copy God's love for us. God's love is unlimited. Somehow we feel that our expressions of affection for others should be unlimited as well at Christmas.

So in the Christmas season we spend beyond our means, overschedule our calendars, make excessive demands on our reservoirs of physical and emotional energy.

Yet, in fact, only God has the capacity for unlimited love. We humans have limited capacities. Christmas does call us to generosity. But Christmas contentment, I feel, depends on recognizing, defining and remaining within reasonable limits.

With my friend Al, I worked out a remedy for Christmas frenzy, a prescription for Christmas contentment: a careful, thorough budgeting of money, time and energy.

1. Budgeting financial resources. The limit here should be set at what a person or family can comfortably spend without having to endure "easy payments" which begin in February. The budget should include all Christmas expenses for gifts, decorations, special foods, contributions, postage and the cost of traveling "over the meadow and through the woods."

2. Budgeting time. Obviously there is no more time available to us over the Christmas season than at any other time. Nevertheless, people routinely cram their schedules with extra parties, lengthy projects like baking, building gifts and making crafts, shopping and cutting down the Christmas tree. No wonder Christmas is a frantic time! A time budget should be as thorough as a financial budget in order to promote a peaceful Christmas.

3. Budgeting energy. The Christmas season somehow demands a high energy level. Many demands are made on us. We often want to do more. Furthermore, Christmas calls us to be in a good mood, to smile, to be outgoing, understanding and responsive. Scrooge at Christmas invariably strikes a repellent note.

At the same time we may not be in our best form. Many people are tempted to eat many rich foods and inordinate

continued on p. 4 B

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Greetings

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Tips on surviving this Christmas



NATIVITY — This is a classic Nativity scene painted by Rama (NC Photo by G. Eric Matson)



May your Holidays be filled with joyous celebration. May the Spirit of this Season bring happiness to all people on earth.

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continued from p. 3 B

amounts of sugar, even to drink too much Christmas cheer. Often people also cut down on their regular exercise programs and lose sleep.

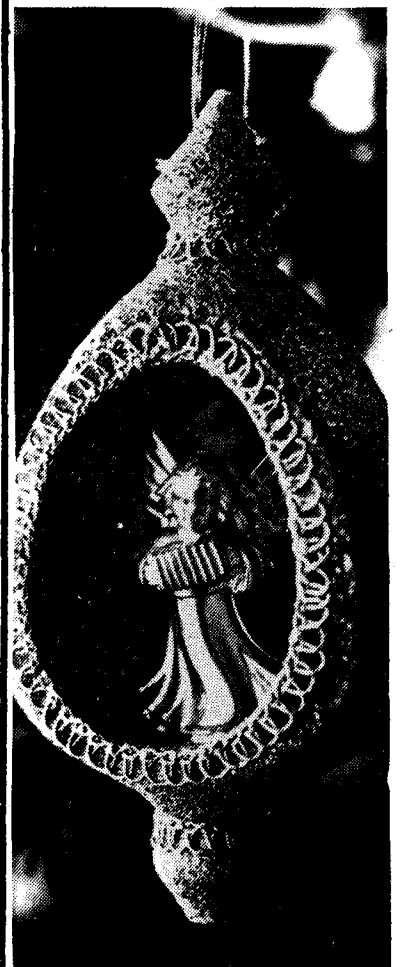
IS IT ANY wonder people become ill-tempered? The antidote is to develop a plan to conserve energy and even to replenish it.

Al followed this prescription for budgeting money, time and energy last year. He reports he felt more in control of Christmas for the first time in several years. Furthermore, he explained that his Christmas with limits was anything but ho-hum.

By changing the way he approached the Christmas holiday, he and his family were able to really celebrate Christmas rather than be overwhelmed by it.

Finally, being considerate of our limits also means looking ahead and planning for gift giving, parties and affectionate relationships throughout the year. It makes us realize that displays of affection need not be limited to a single period in the year. Love is not something to be confined. It should pervade all of life and all seasons of the year.

Then suddenly, perhaps we will find we are like God after all — loving in our limited ways through unlimited seasons.



THE KING IS COMING— The angel in the sparking Christmas tree ornament symbolizes the feast of Christ's coming. Russell Shaw writes, "The manner of His (Christ's) coming—in the utmost simplicity and poverty—reminds us that our final and lasting fulfillment will be infinitely beyond the limited capacities of this world."

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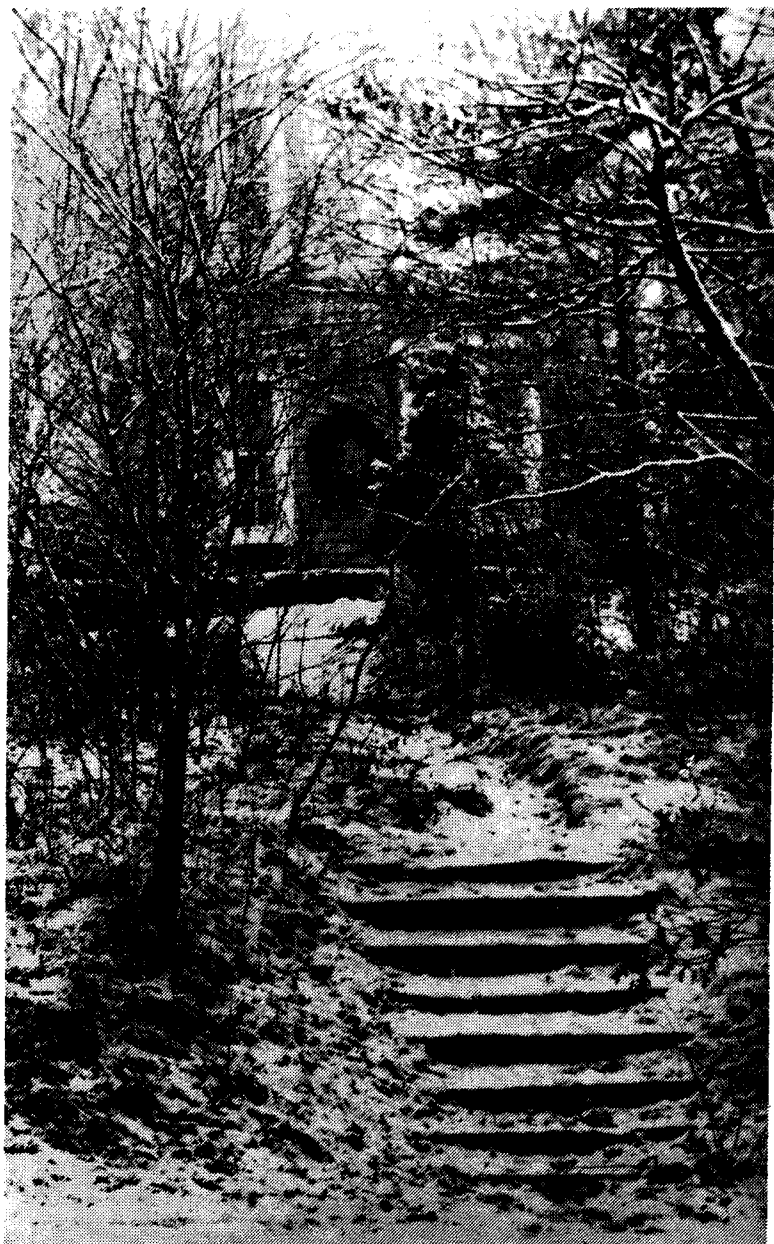
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Grandma's gift: a short story

By Ann M. Murphy



"It is Christmas Eve, and it seems only yesterday was the Fourth of July," she thought, as she opened the mail and taped 10 more Christmas cards on the den doorway. Nancy Murray had laughed and cried through 42 Christmas Eves. She declared each year, "Someday I'll write a book about them all!"

The pies were cooked, the gifts wrapped, the fresh spruce was dressed for the holidays and the manger was in place. Mrs. Murray sat down in the living room with a cup of coffee to relax and think about tomorrow.

SHE GAZED at the Christmas tree, admiring each ornament. Her eyes fixed upon a tiny, gold ball. Susan had made it in third grade. Mrs. Murray's eyes began to water as she thought about Susan, now 18, and 3,000 miles away. Susan would not be home for Christmas this year.

It was Christmas Eve in the Murray home. Everything was as it always was at Christmas except for one thing: Susan, now 18, was 3,000 miles away and would not be home this year.

She had written home to say she would spend the holidays with friends. The Murrays were not wealthy. Susan, their oldest child, was going to college on a full tuition scholarship. There was no money to bring her home for Christmas.

"Hey, Mom, where's the wrapping paper?" The twins thundered into the living room. These teen-age boys loved Christmas and all the family spirit which surrounds this blessed holiday.

Mrs. Murray quickly sniffed the tears away, hoping the twins hadn't noticed. "The wrapping paper is upstairs, boys. Don't use too much of it. Nana hasn't wrapped her gifts yet."

Bill and Andy raced upstairs, each trying to beat the other to the paper. As they fumbled with the ribbons and bows and tape, Mrs. Murray listened to their conversation about their grandmother. "When is she going to wrap her presents? It's already 3 o'clock."

Nana Murray lived 50 miles away from her son and his family. She always spent Christmas week with this lively crew. It was her favorite time of year. And the boys were right: She was quite mysterious this Christmas Eve. No signs of the bulging bags of gifts she usually brought along.

THE FRONT door slammed shut as a bit of drifting snow blew into the hallway, and Mrs. Murray heard, "Nana, will you play cards with me?" It was Nana and her youngest granddaughter, Jane. These two were inseparable at Christmas time, a perfect pair.

The two walked into the living room where Janet's father

was building a warm, inviting fire. Jane raced over and jumped up on his knees. "I can hardly wait for Christmas Daddy!" she exclaimed.

Jack Murray gave his daughter a kiss and glanced up at his mother. "Why don't you help Nana wrap her gifts, Jane?"

The grandmother winked and spoke not a word. She gently placed her hand in Jane's and as they walked toward the den to play Old Maids, the father heard their duet of "Silent Night." It was a bit off tune, but he thought it was quite beautiful.

He looked out the window. His eyes grew misty, as he realized it would be a different Christmas this year. Susan would not be home.

"Time for Dinner" Mrs. Murray called. "Is anybody hungry around here?" She smiled as the three generations of Murrays collected around the table.

NANA BEGAN the conversation. "You've noticed I have no gifts this Christmas Eve. I decided to save my pennies all year long to give you all a special gift."

The family looked puzzled. "In fact," she said, looking at her watch and appearing a bit nervous, "my gift should arrive any minute now."

Nana was usually right and within 10 minutes the doorbell rang. They all ran toward the front hallway. Mrs. Murray opened the door and almost lost her breath.

"Susan's home!" she cried. "Nana, thank you. This is the best Christmas Eve we've ever had."

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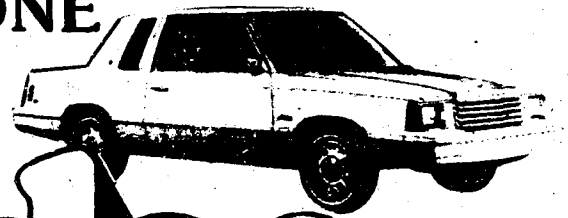
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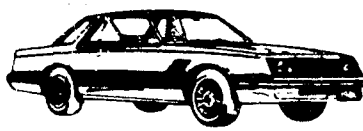





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The mysterious Magi

By Sean Freyne
NC News Service

The Magi are the most obscure, most mysterious characters appearing on stage for the drama surrounding the birth of the Savior. They also are among the most celebrated actors in the Gospel narratives. Their name, Magi or Wise Men, and their homeland in the East, only add to their mystique.

Since we know so little about them, it is little wonder that popular thinking has tended to fill in the details which Matthew left so tantalizingly vague in the second chapter of his Gospel.

- Thus Christmas cards and cribs assume there were three; even though the Evangelist says simply "Wise Men."
- Popular tradition has given them names, differing in Eastern and Western Christendom, even though nothing in the Gospel account supports either version.
- Relics are on display in the famous Gothic cathedral at Cologne, West Germany, even though we are in the dark about their return to the homeland of their subsequent lives.

It is as though the popular mind could not allow such advantaged witnesses to walk away from the pages of this most momentous event in history leaving behind only the merest suggestion of their having passed this way.

PERHAPS, HOWEVER, the very absence of details in Matthew can serve as a challenge to a further search for the story's significance. For instance, one approach of contemporary biblical scholars is highly enlightening. This approach compares Matthew's story of the birth of Jesus with certain events in the Old Testament.

FIRST, the story in many ways resembles popular stories about the birth of Moses. In both stories, a hostile leader rules the land: Herod at the time of Jesus; Pharaoh when Moses was born.

In both stories, wise men report the unusual baby's birth to the ruler. Furthermore, both Jesus and Moses were threatened, even in their infancy.

SECOND, the Slaughter of the Innocents, which the visit of the Wise Men prompted, led to the precipitous flight of Jesus and his family to Egypt. This jogs Jewish memories of Israel's exile in the land of Egypt, as well. For Matthew, Jesus and his church of Jews and Gentiles are the new Israel responsive to God's call. Matthew seems to subtly foreshadow this in his infancy accounts.

FINALLY, like the Queen of Sheba who visited Solomon to hear his wisdom, the visit of the Wise Men to Jesus introduces him to us as the Wise One par excellence. To him all human wisdom must submit.

In addition, much has been written about the star in the East which the Magi follow. Some have identified this star with Haley's Comet or with a very rare configuration of the planets Jupiter and Saturn. All such speculation, however, may be of greater interest to the antiquarian and astrologer than to Matthew.

Of greater interest to Matthew, many of his readers would have believed the stars guided the affairs of people's lives. Hearing that Jesus' star was seen and recognized by people in countries where astrology was an important science, but who had no ties to Judaism, was significant to them. This gave the birth of Jesus a universal dimension.

It was this universal aspect of the event that the Christian liturgy, with its very sure touch, fastened onto in the feast of the Wise Men. Epiphany, as the feast is called in the Greek Church, became and remains the fitting climax of the Christmas Gospel:

To us a Son is born; to us a Savior is given, irrespective of our ethnic and cultural backgrounds.



The legend of Befana

By Jerry Filteau
NC News Service
(Here is a story to read aloud)

Mary, many years ago — nearly 2,000 in fact — an old woman lived in a faraway land called Judea. Her name was Befana.

She lived alone in a small country cottage. Once, years before, Befana had a husband and a small son. But her husband and son became ill and died.

Befana had one treasure in her small, bare home was a chest of toys and other items that once belonged to her little boy. Befana often opened the chest and pulled the toys out, one by one. They reminded her of the delightful days when her small son filled the house with laughter.

"And so Joseph went to the town of Nazareth in Galilee to Judea, to David's town of Bethlehem... to register with Mary, his espoused wife, who was with child."

Luke, 2:4-5

ONE DAY three magnificent men dressed in brilliant gold, red and purple robes came riding along on large brown camels. They rode down the road past Befana's house.

"Who are you?" she asked as they reached the little path to her home.

"We are Wise Men from the East," said the first.

"Oh you look hungry and thirsty," said Befana. "Please stop and share dinner with me."

"Oh, no, we can't stop," the second Wise Man said.

"We're in a terrible hurry," the third Wise Man said, "looking for the new King of the Jews, who has just been born. We have royal presents for him."

Befana watched the Wise Men ride away until the jangling of the bells of their camels' harnesses faded and they looked like specks of dust on the horizon.

She went into her kitchen, had her small supper, cleaned the dishes and got ready for bed.

Then she took a last look in the direction the Wise Men had gone. There in the clear night sky, she saw a brilliant star she had never seen before.





That night some shepherds were in the fields outside the village, guarding their flocks of sheep. Suddenly an angel appeared among them, and the landscape shone bright with the glory of the Lord. They were badly frightened, but the angel reassured them.

"Don't be afraid!" he said. "I bring you the most joyful news ever announced, and it is for everyone! The Savior—yes, the Messiah, the Lord—has been born tonight in Bethlehem! How will you recognize him? You will find a baby wrapped in a blanket, lying in a manger!"

Suddenly, the angel was joined by a vast host of others—the armies of heaven—praising God:

"Glory to God in the highest heaven," they sang, "and peace on earth for all those pleasing him."

—Luke 2:8-14
"The Living Bible"



fana, 'the good witch'

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"WHAT A MARVELOUS star!" thought Befana. The king who has been born must be great and holy if such a sign shines for him.
The lonely woman went to bed then. But all night she tossed and turned, thinking about the Wise Men, their gifts, the new baby who would be king and the beautiful silvery star.
By morning Befana had made up her mind. She knew she must see this extraordinary baby and bring him a gift. "But what do I have in my poor house that a king would want?" she asked.
The answer came from her heart. "Children are children, kings or not—the newborn child will love my son's toys," she told herself.
Befana loaded her little boy's toys in a large basket and filled another big basket with fruit and candy. She strapped the baskets to her little donkey. Then Befana set off to catch up with the Wise Men.
Poor old Befana and her little donkey couldn't keep up with the Wise Men on their noble, fleet-footed camels. Soon she lost them.
Yet Befana went on. At every new town she asked the people: "Have you seen three Wise Men? Do you know where the new king of the Jews has

been born?
Everywhere she went, the answer was the same: "No."
One day Befana reached a city on the sea. She met a ship's captain and asked, "Do you know where I can find the new King of the Jews?"
"I'VE HEARD of no such king," the captain responded. "But if there is one, he must be in Rome. That is where the kings in this world live." In those days the Roman Empire covered what many thought was practically the whole world.
So Befana and her faithful donkey traveled to Rome. Some say the kindly sea captain took them on his ship. Others say they flew through the sky.
In any case, eventually they arrived in Rome. There Befana asked the wisest men in the empire if they had ever heard of the new King of the Jews. The men ridiculed her. "Of course, the Jews have no new king," they told her. "Besides, such a person would be a traitor and Caesar would have him killed. There is no king but Caesar."
Poor Befana was discouraged. For years she had been searching everywhere for the good child-king that the Wise Men and the star an-

nounced. She realized that even if she found this wonderful king, by now he would be too old to enjoy the toys her poor faithful donkey had carried so long.
THE OLD WOMAN was about to despair when suddenly the thought occurred: "Maybe I can give my presents to other children. If this king is as wonderful as the Wise Men suggested, nothing would make him happier than to see other boys and girls enjoy the toys and fruits and candies meant for him."
The very next night, Befana and her Donkey began to go from house to house through Rome, then through all of Italy. She gave presents to the children in every home. Befana began distributing her presents exactly 12 years and 12 nights after the Wise Men and the star announced the King of the Jews was born.

MARVELOUSLY, every time she pulled a toy or piece of candy or fruit from her large baskets, another appeared to take its place. Wherever Befana went, the children were asleep. But she didn't miss a single house or a single child.
In some places, where a child had misbehaved very badly, Befana left a stick or a lump of coal to let the boy or girl know she had been there. This would remind the child to act better during the next year.
Every Christmas from that time on, Befana makes her visits to children in Italy. Even today, on the 12th night of Christmas, Befana visits every home in Italy and gives beautiful presents of toys, fruits and candies to all the good children.
Italians call Befana affectionately "The Good Witch."

Reviving past Christmas customs

By Katharine Bird
NC News Service

Christmas is a fascinating blend of religious remembrances and secular customs whose origins often are shrouded in the mists of the past.

The term, "Christmas," first used in the 11th century, seems to come from the old-English term, "Cristes Maesse," meaning the Mass of Christ. Legend has it that King Arthur of the famed Round Table in the fifth century was an early celebrant of Christmas in England, while records show that King Alfred the Great set aside the 12 days of Yule as a time of celebration in the 9th century.

For the church, Christmas traditions evolved gradually over many centuries. Father Francis Weiser in his "Handbook of Christian Feasts and Customs," writes that the Church first celebrated an octave, eight days, of Christmas early on, in the 8th century.

FOR PEOPLE in the Middle Ages, Christmas became a hallowed time, a week-long series of religious festivals when families rested from their labors, performing only the most necessary chores. Often people prayed the rosary and sang carols at night.

For people today, Christmas often marks the end of celebration rather than the beginning. Yet for Catholics, the Christmas season traditionally begins with Christmas Eve and extends until the baptism of Jesus (in 1981 this day is Jan. 11).

Father Frederick McManus of The Catholic University of America, a well-known liturgy scholar and canon lawyer, points out that the church's celebration focuses on the "twin feasts" of Christmas and the Epiphany, days which mark God's manifestation to the world as a human being.

In remembrance of the past, I would like to suggest some ways for observing the Christmas season.

"For people in the Middle Ages, Christmas became a hallowed time, a week-long series of religious festivals when families rested from their labors, performing only the most necessary chores. Often people prayed the rosary and sang carols at night."

Centuries ago during the octave of Christmas the church designated certain days to honor the "companions of Christ," saints from earlier centuries who had a special connection with Jesus. Some of "Christ's nobility," as these saints are called: St. Stephen, the first martyr (Dec. 26), and St. John, the beloved apostle and evangelist (Dec. 27).

Talk about reasons why Jesus especially loved St. John.

3. PLAN a merry evening at home with family on Epiphany (In 1981, Sunday Jan. 4.) Feature the "Twelve Days of Christmas," an English folk song dating back at least to the early 18th century.

According to folk authorities, the origins of the song are obscure, but it



This painting of Bloemaert's "The Adoration of the Three Kings" hangs in the Central Museum of Utrecht, The Netherlands. (NC Photo courtesy KLM Royal Dutch Airlines.)

1. PLAN a special feast on the second day of Christmas. Remember St. Stephen, perhaps read his story in the Acts of the Apostles, Chapters 6-7.

2. CELEBRATE the third day of Christmas, the feast of St. John the Evangelist. On this day in central Europe people often bring wine and cider to the church for blessing. Perhaps this custom could be adapted for the home today. Serve cider with your dinner, in memory of St. John.

certainly is a chain song, a number song, enumerating the gifts sent by a lover to his sweetheart on the traditional 12 days between Christmas and Epiphany (Epiphany formerly fell always on Jan. 6).

Some early versions of the song feature tongue twisters such as the one starting "one old Oxford ox opening oysters," and ending with "Twelve typographical typographers typically translating types."

During our party, copy an early 19th century tradition found in the British isles. Children and adults then played

a game of forfeits to the rhymes of "The Twelve Days of Christmas."

To play the game; arrange dining room chairs in a circle. Choose a leader. The leader says or sings the rhyme for the first gift:

On the first day of Christmas

My true love sent to me

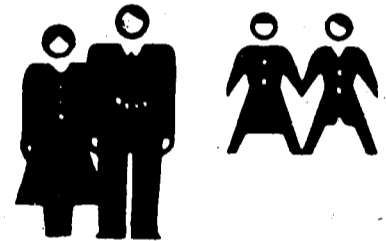
A partridge in a pear tree."

Each person repeats the leader's words. When all have finished, the leader starts again, this time calling out the first and second rhyme, with each person repeating the rhymes in turn again. This continues through all 12 gifts.

When a person misses a gift, he or she forfeiting a penny or small trinket which is handed over to the leader. At the game's conclusion, the forfeits are "cried for" by game participants. The leader raises high the trinket, the group suggests an appropriate ransom and the person who owns the item earns it back by performing the ransom.

Ransoms might include: reciting a nursery rhyme, turning a summersault, counting from 12 backward to one, singing a song.

Finally, following another British tradition, bake a 12th night cake in a large round pan, like a pie. Put a bean in the cake. The person who finds the bean is the king or queen of the evening's festivities.



Noel



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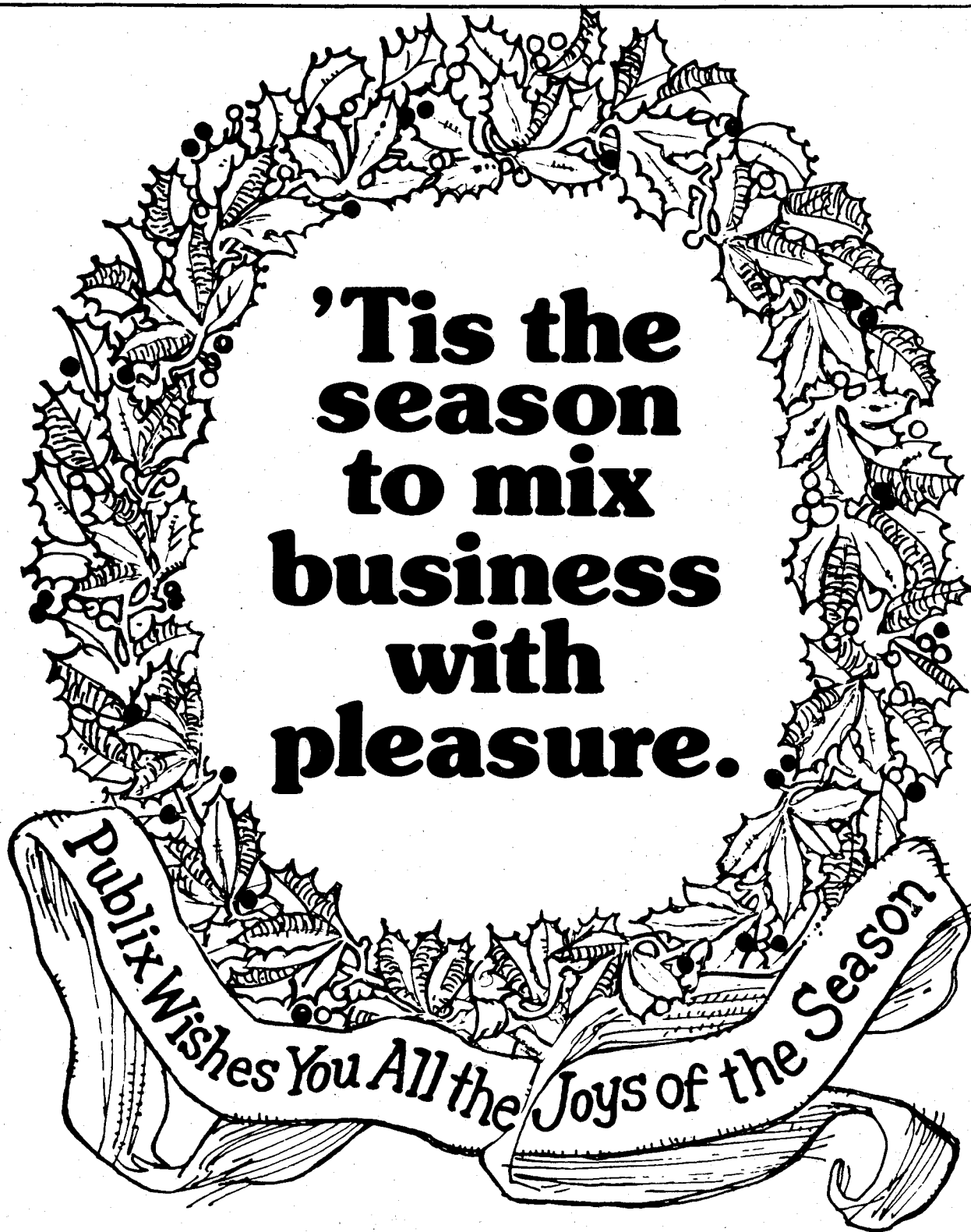
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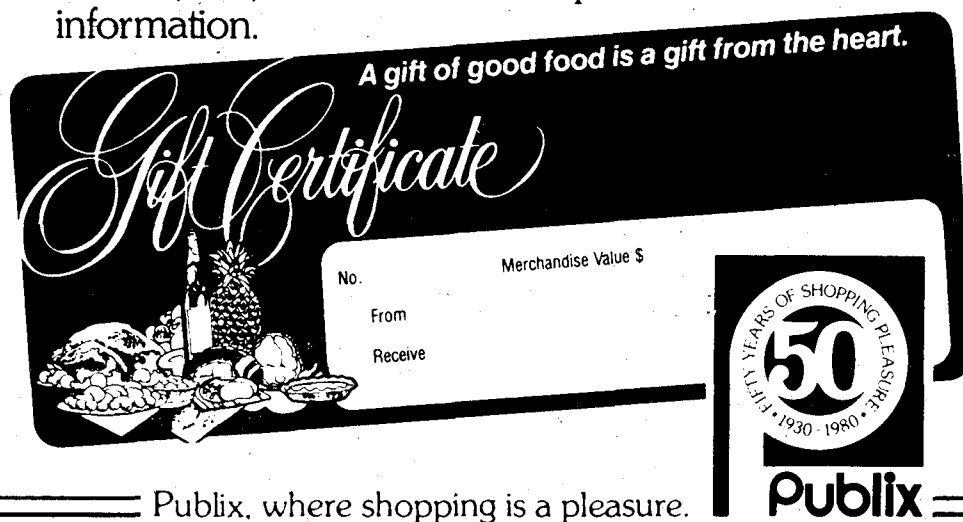


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A Christmas reverie

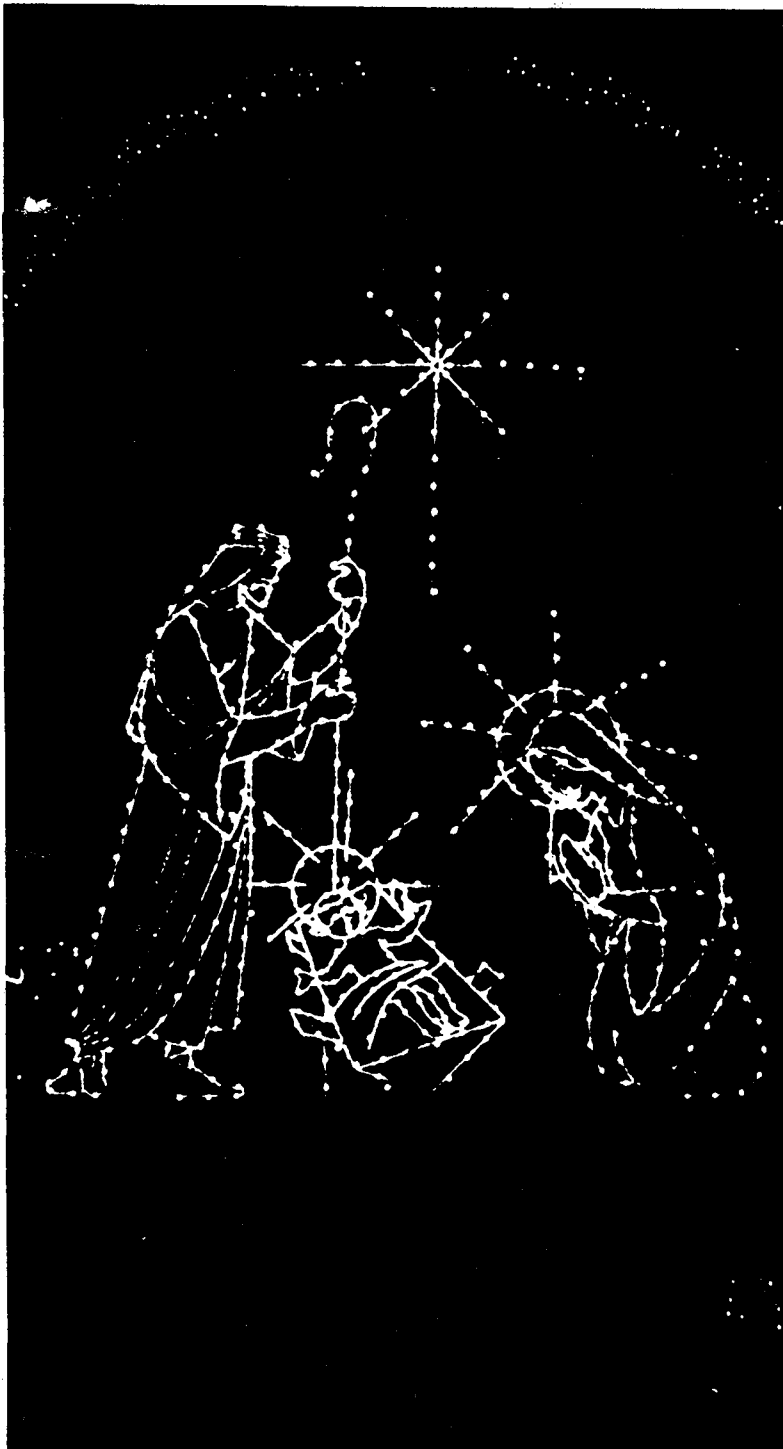
By Richard Conklin
 (Here is a story that friends and families can read aloud during the Christmas season. What memories of Christmas past does this tale bring back for you).

Back between the softest blankets, snuggled against a familiar pillow, in a darkened room close to childhood happiness, we find them — our memories of Christmas.

In a dusty coner in the attic of the human mind, we come across the much-marked box with the Advent candles, bearing the scent of the incense drifting up from the censer at Midnight Mass, mingling with the smell of natural pine. We see the snowflakes brush a scarf drawn up against the mouth, and we taste the cinnamon imbedded in handmade wreath cookies.

Over the years, we've stored these experiences up, locked them in airtight, wooden chests with hinge locks we lift once a year. Out comes the visual imagery of expensive puppets in Thanksgiving store windows now long shuttered; the succulent gifts of ovens now

continued on p. 13 B



NATIVITY IN LIGHTS

An illuminated nativity scene decorates a bank in downtown Philadelphia.

Will you tell them about the Baby in the manger?

The Christmas story is easily understood by the rejected—the refugee, the homeless, the outcast. Yet many, like this Cambodian mother with her child, have never heard it!

This Christmas, would you help tell the Christmas story? Please send a gift to the Society for the Propagation of the Faith, supporting the Mission work of the Church around the world.

Let the Light of Christ shine into their lives, too!



Yes, I want to tell the Christmas story to those who have never heard it. Enclosed is my gift of:

\$1,000 \$500 \$200 \$100 \$50 \$20 \$10 \$5 Other \$ _____

Name _____

Address _____

City _____ State _____ Zip _____

Please ask the missionaries to remember my special intentions in their Masses and prayers _____

12/80

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OR

Msgr. John J. Donnelly
 Archdiocesan Director
 6301 Biscayne Boulevard
 Miami, Florida 33138

Reverie...

continued from p. 12 B

blinking the computer numbers of microwave appliances; the toy service stations, now replaced by computer games with sounds like those made by city garbage trucks when they back up.

PLACE, too, keeps well in Christmas memory. I retain old family floor plans only because the Christmas tree stood in a particular place, as did a fake fireplace and a fragile village hummocked in cotton with a Christmasbulb backlighting the crimson windows of the frosted church steeple.

I can also recall the details of downtown street corners in blustery Decembers, the coziness of defunct bars strung with evergreen, the excitement of concealing a gift saw in the dank fruit cellar, secure against a father's curiosity.

Weather stirs remembrance. It always seemed the coldest night in December when we did it. The YMCA men's tree lot was framed in frigid white light. The men wore the heavy boots and wool-lined parkas favored by deer hunters in the Upper Midwest.

The snow had been trampled hard, and if you stood too long in one spot, the cold gripped right through your galoshes, wrapped around your shivering ankles and threatened to freeze you next to the balsams.

When the purchase was made, after much examination of the half-frozen trees for defects that would only become apparent in the warmth of a living room, the money passed from exposed hand to exposed hand above a flaming barrel.

The people. Grandmother presided in the old duplex, where four generations eventually would gather to receive the kind of blessing that comes from repeating small acts that testify to large hopes.

CHILDREN were always underfoot, usually entwined in the wrappings of someone else's present, while Claire Keeler, the unruffled matriarch, served grapefruit topped with sherry to the adults. It was, she explained, a tradition.

Almost anything done more than once at Christmas in our family became a tradition. The accretions over the years never seemed burdensome, they just piled up, fitting together in a cluttered sort of way, like the hodgepodge of ornaments that engulfed our balsam.

Yet not everything lasts. Kindergarten Christmas tree loops are discarded, grandmothers die and their homes pass out of the family; jamine replaces pine in incense shops; Lionel Barrymore's "Christmas Carol," with its "squeezing, wrenching, grasping, clutching old sinner" is replaced by a "Peanuts" holiday television special.

YET WE hold fast. We change, but our Christmas memory endures. It is a curious benchmark. If we did not have it, we could not so easily mark our

passage, nor know how much baggage we carry from innocence to maturity.

So there is a snow that will continue to fall fresh on the half-lit streets of Christmas memory. Let it fall to the sound of Salvation Army bells and colorful toys. Let it fall to the taste of hard candy and hard sauce.

Let it fall to the remembrance that makes each Christmas cumulative.



The Nativity is depicted with the use of "Hummel" figurines at a display in New York.

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The Gift Giver

By John R. Sullivan
NC News Service

"Dear Mom and Dad:

"For the past 30 some years, you have devoted yourselves to looking after first me and my brothers, and now our husbands, wives and children. You have listened to our dreams, tolerated our mistakes and soothed our disappointments. You've never turned your backs on us.

"We've all said, 'Thank you' when you've helped us, just as we were taught. And we meant it, every time. But somehow that hasn't been enough for us. It's time to say 'thank you' in a better way."

SO BEGAN an unusual Christmas present from one woman and her brothers to their parents.

"It took a lot of courage for us to do that," the woman said later. "Our family never was much at sharing feelings or talking about them.

"It used to be that families tended to stay in the same area as they grew up," said one neighbor when I asked about gift giving. "They knew each other better and knew what pleased each person. Gift giving was easier then. You could give something to someone and make it meaningful.

"But now, even if it is meaningful, you end up feeling like your gift was just another thing from the catalogue."

His children are scattered to three corners of the country. He rarely sees them, and they see each other together even more rarely.

"In some ways we're almost strangers. We try to make our gifts tell something about us to each other."

Sometimes there is success. Once there was a Christmas resolution: A daughter promised to quit smoking. She knew that would mean something.

A brief survey of other friends and neighbors unearthed a variety of unusual gifts welcomed by the

"The highest sign of friendship," wrote the Swiss physician-philosopher Paul Tournier, **"is that of giving another the privilege of sharing your inner thoughts. It is a personal gift in which there is a self-commitment."**

"But my brothers and I got talking last summer about giving our folks some special kind of gift for Christmas—something more than a fancy silver tray from a store—and the letter seemed right."

Theirs was one solution to the question of what to give parents, grandparents, aunts, uncles and others close to us.

There are, after all, only so many gloves, sweaters, neckties, platters and other geegaws adults can use. Then what?

"The highest sign of friendship," wrote the Swiss physician-philosopher Paul Tournier, "is that of giving another the privilege of sharing your inner thoughts. It is a personal gift in which there is a self-commitment."

MOST OF US give up our inner thoughts with difficulty. When we do share them it is not only a high sign of friendship, but a rare one as well.

But, more and more, it seems to be necessary—and to do so in the form of a Christmas gift seems appropriate to many.

recipients:

- A carefully hand-lettered, framed copy of a favorite poem.
- A resolution to telephone once a week (from a son transferred to a city 2,500 miles away from his hometown).
- An IOU to paint the house on the first warm spring weekend.
- A portable cassette recorder with which to exchange news—and the sounds of growing grandchildren—from a daughter living in the Far East.

Of course, there are the failures, too. The handcraft that falls apart in 20 minutes; the well-intentioned letter that sounds like a show-and-tell script. As William Bolitho wrote: "You need more tact in the dangerous art of giving presents than in any other social function."

"But after all," said a neighbor, "I don't give grades for great presents that people give me. I enjoy receiving gifts—and I enjoy giving them.

"I try to make gifts that tell something about me and how I feel. I hope others do the same for me."



All of us have grappled with the problem of what to give to those who are closest to us. There are, after all, only so many gloves, sweaters, neckties, platters and other geegaws that adults can use. It is the gift of oneself that often is the most difficult but also can be the most meaningful. (NC Photo by Bob Taylor)

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Too marvelous for words!

By the Rev. Robert L. Wilken

The first Christians did not celebrate Christmas at all, strange as that may seem today. No Christmas tree, no exchanging of gifts, no carols, no yule log, not even midnight Mass.

They not only didn't commemorate the anniversary of Christ's birth; they didn't even remember the day. When the ancient Christians began to wonder about the date of Jesus' birth, it was already too late to find out for sure. No one had taken the trouble to write the date down.

When did Christians first begin to celebrate Christmas?

THE FIRST mention of a Christian Christmas celebration comes early in the fourth century, more than 300 years after Christ's birth. But it was not until the end of the fourth century that the Christmas festival began to be observed widely.

The first Christmas sermon that we still possess was preached by Optatus, a bishop in Numidia (now Algeria) in North Africa in the year 383.

About the same time, records indicate that St. Ambrose, the bishop of Milan in Italy, St. John Chrysostom of Antioch in Syria and St. Augustine, bishop of Hippo in North Africa, (Tunisia today), were celebrating the festival of the nativity.

How did earlier Christians celebrate Christmas?

In Jerusalem the nativity celebration began the afternoon before the day itself, in Bethlehem, at a church called "At the Shepherds." This was followed by a service at the Cave of the Nativity and a long vigil which culminated in a midnight Mass.

Then the bishop, monks and the faithful marched in procession to Jerusalem, approximately four miles away, arriving at the Church of the Holy Sepulchre just before dawn.

After a brief service, accor-

ding to ancient sources, the bishop and people retired for a rest. The monks, however, continued to sing hymns until daybreak. Later they gathered at the church on Mt. Golgotha.

According to a fourth century pilgrim, its decorations were "too marvelous for words." This pilgrim said "the hangings are entirely silk with gold stripes, the curtains, the same... You simply cannot imagine the number and the sheer weight of the candles and the tapers and lamps and everything else they used for the services."

IN JERUSALEM the festival continued for eight days. In other parts of the Christian world the celebration was not so elaborate, but the general pattern developed of having three liturgies: a Mass at midnight, another Mass at dawn and later the Mass for the day itself.

What day did the Christians celebrate the festival?

Since no one knew for certain when Christ was born, some proposed one day, such as May 20; others preferred a different date. Finally, the festival was fixed on the day of the winter solstice, Dec. 21 in our calendar today.

The Christian fathers reasoned this way: since Christ was the "light of the world and the Sun of justice" (Malachi 4:2), why not fix his birthday celebration on the day when the sun begins to shine more brightly and the days begin to grow longer.

They also hoped the Christian celebration would take place of the pagan festival held on the winter solstice. This celebrated the pagan god, Sol Invictus (Unconquered sun).

In ancient calendars the winter solstice fell on Dec. 25 in the West and on Jan. 6 in the East.

Hence Dec. 25 became the day of celebration for Christians in the Western Church, Jan. 6 for Christians in the Eastern Church.

What did Christmas mean for the early Christians?

For them, Christmas was the celebration of Christ's birth, the mystery of the Word made flesh. But Christmas also was

the occasion to recall the birth of the church to a new life in Christ.

As Leo the bishop of Rome in the fifth century put it in a Christmas sermon: "The birth

of Christ is the source of life for Christian folk, and the birthday of the head is the birthday of the body".

FRANK FIGUEREDO CHEVROLET

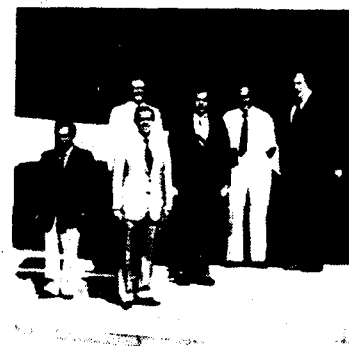
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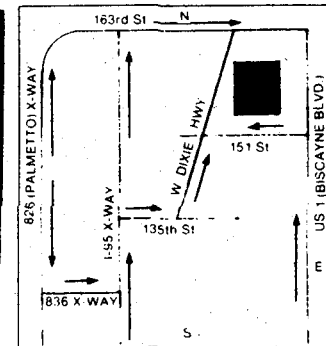
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