

Emmanuel in Miami



Neighborhood families stage Nativity play in Little Havana. Story, page 12. (Voice photo by Araceli Cantero)

A MESSAGE FROM THE ARCHBISHOP

'Christmas is 365 days'

May I wish you a blessed and joyous Christmas.

I pray that the day will be rich for you with the true joy, peace and hope that is experienced by those who have the gift of Faith, by those who are celebrating the birth of Jesus, our divine Redeemer, by those who are not preoccupied with vague and vapid sentiments of the modern secular humanists who have no room for the Lord in their inn and so mouth silly expressions of red-nosed reindeer and cabbage patch dolls, and find their merriment in the jingle bells of the full cash registers that Christmas shopping brings.

The coming of Jesus did not end with His Ascension into Heaven. Christmas was the beginning of the Lord's dwelling among us forever.

He promised to be with us through all time, even to the end of the world. He is with us in the celebration of the Eucharist and, indeed, of all of the Sacraments.

He remains with us in the reservation of the Blessed Sacrament. He continues with us in His Words, the Gospel He has left with us.

But there is a special way of dwelling in the world that Jesus initiated at Bethlehem. It very much involves you and me. For He continues to be present—through us—His Church.



Our world must come to know and believe in Him and His Father who sent Him, and His Mother who bore Him, through us.

Our world must experience and be attracted to the beauty of His Kingdom by the example we give of His love, of Him feeding the hungry, giving drink to the thirsty, caring for the sick.

It must hear Him proclaiming the Good News of eternal salvation through us. It must experience the abomination of sin, the suffering of the crucified One, in our attitudes and behavior.

This celebration of Jesus come to dwell with us is not a one day event—of Midnight Mass, of Christmas decorations, opening presents and a big family dinner. Christmas is a life-long celebration.

For the committed Catholic, celebrating, making real the presence of Jesus among us, is a 365-day living experience. The experience of Christmas needs to touch family life, business negotiations, entertainment, everything we do.

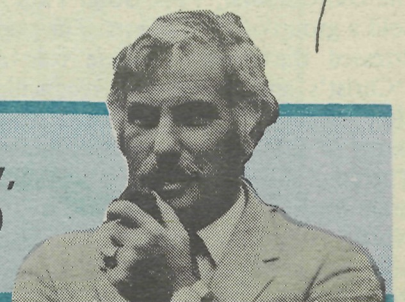
May you ever have the peace, the joy, the rewards of that Christmas experience.

Edward A. M. Coakley

WE'RE GOING TO FLY

Archbishop McCarthy says, announcing
ABCD chairman UM Coach Howard Schnellenberger

See story,
page 10



Half of child deaths avoidable — Unicef

By JEFF ENDRST

UNITED NATIONS (NC) — While an estimated 15 million children in Third World countries die each year — the equivalent of the entire under-five population of the United States — at least half the deaths can be prevented, according to a UNICEF report.

Drawing examples from 20 different countries, the report, "The State of the World's Children," documents four low-cost breakthroughs which it says could bring about a "children's revolution" and save the lives of half of those who now die.

The U.N. Children's Fund said that in 1983 most of the estimated 15 million children who died did not die from exotic diseases requiring sophisticated cures.

Five million died from dehydration

caused by simple diarrhea; over 3 million died of pneumonia; and 2 million died of measles, the report said. One and a half million died from whooping cough, while another million died with the convulsions of tetanus.

For every child who died, many more live on in hunger and ill-health, UNICEF said.

Of the 40,000 children who die each day, half could be saved, the report said, if four simple UNICEF-recommended techniques were followed. The revolution in child survival and development depends on:

- "Oral rehydration therapy" to prevent or cure the dehydration caused by diarrhea. By far the largest single cause of child deaths, diarrhea is a result of inadequate water, poor sanitation and hygiene and is a major cause

of malnutrition and slow growth;

- The promotion of present knowledge about the advantages of breast feeding and the dangers of bottle feeding. Children in poor communities who are bottle-fed, said UNICEF, are many times more likely to contract infections and suffer setbacks to growth and development;

- Immunization against the six main "immunizable" diseases of childhood which kill 5 million children a year and disable 5 million more. Because measles, whooping cough, tetanus, diphtheria, tuberculosis and polio also cause malnutrition, immunization not only saves lives but also spaces out setbacks and helps to maintain normal healthy growth;

- Growth monitoring, using simple 10-cent charts to make a child's growth

progress or problems visible to parents. With regular monthly weighing and advice from health workers, the report said, growth charts can help parents see when a child needs more or better food, more frequent feeding, or more persuasion to eat even when appetite is depressed.

At least 34 countries have begun industrial production of the oral rehydration salts, producing about 80 million packets a year. But UNICEF says that if parents know how to mix sugar salt and water in the right proportion an effective oral rehydration solution can be made in the home.

The agency suggested that among those who can help disseminate the new techniques are the churches and the clergy in the Third World countries.



NOBEL WINNER — Egil Aavik, chairman of the Norwegian Nobel Committee presents the 1983 Nobel Peace Prize to Danuta Welsa and her son Bogdan on behalf of her husband, Lech Walesa, in Oslo, Norway. (NC photo from UPI)

NCCC troubled by tobacco

RALEIGH, N.C. (RNS)—The North Carolina Council of Churches is debating the morality of tobacco growing in the nation's leading tobacco-growing state. Representatives of the industry and church groups have discussed the implications of growing what is simultaneously the state's biggest cash crop, and, according to the U.S. Surgeon General, one of the nation's leading health hazards. The church council has never taken a stand on the issue, but Rev. Rufus H. Stark II, United Methodist minister who chairs the council's tobacco study committee, says, "We are concerned about the troublesome reports related to the health issue, but on the other hand we are deeply concerned about the well-being of the state and its citizens." But William W. Yearging, a tobacco farmer and former director of the Tobacco Growers Information Committee told the council, "The majority of your churches were established by money from the tobacco farmer and all of your churches are sustained in some form or other by money from the tobacco farmer."

Prayer essential, Pope says

VATICAN CITY (RNS)—Pope John Paul II is urging American bishops to stress the importance of prayer. In a letter to lay Catholics attending a conference in Hong Kong, the pope prayed for the growth of Catholicism in Asia and urged Catholic parents in general to encourage religious vocations. The pontiff also told 16 visiting U.S. bishops that intense prayer should always precede social action by Catholics. "Through prayer, the struggle for justice finds its proper motivation," Pope John Paul said, adding that "only a worshipping and praying church can show herself sufficiently sensitive to the needs of the sick, the suffering, the lonely—especially in the great urban centers—and the poor everywhere."

Confessional a 'priority' — Pope

VATICAN CITY (NC) — Priests "must give priority" to the ministry of the confessional, Pope John Paul II told a group of U.S. priests. The pope stressed the priests' unique role as "Christ's ambassadors of reconciliation" during a meeting with 35 participants in the Institute for Continuing Theological Education, a study program for U.S. priests sponsored by the North American College, the U.S. seminary in Rome.

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News at a Glance

Preachers protest faith school

LOUISVILLE, Neb. (RNS)—Singing Gospel hymns and patriotic anthems, about 100 fundamentalist preachers and laypeople from across the country gathered in the southeastern Nebraska town of Louisville to protest the jailing of seven men allegedly involved in the operation of the controversial Faith Christian School. The men, all fathers of students at the school, were jailed in November for contempt of court after refusing to answer questions at a court hearing, held to determine the extent of their involvement with the school. The school was closed by the courts because it does not comply with state regulations on the accrediting of teachers. The Rev. Greg Dixon of Indianapolis, chairman of the National Coalition of Unregistered Churches, said the state should free the men. "We're not coming here to break the law," he said. "We're coming here to exercise our constitutional rights." Since 1979, the school has defied orders to shut down because its teachers were uncertified.

Anglican-Lutheran group asks for 'full communion'

GENEVA, Switzerland (RNS)—An international Anglican-Lutheran joint working group has urged the two denominations to continue moving toward what it called "full communion." But the theologians say they aren't sure precisely what that means for their churches. Church representatives from Canada, England, Namibia, Norway, Sweden, Tanzania, the United States and West Germany said in a report that full communion goes "beyond sharing the same altar," and "implies a community of life, an exchange and a commitment to one another in respect of major decisions on questions of faith, order and morals." The language used, though vague, suggested a relationship that could imply some structural unity between Lutherans and Anglicans. Before that happens, the two denominations spelled out five issues that Lutheran and Anglican churches must agree upon before reaching full communion. Those are authority in the church, the gospel and its implications, justification and salvation, the sacraments and the ministry.

Fr. Drinan calls for 'political activism'

NEW YORK (RNS)—Fr. Robert Drinan, the Jesuit priest who was forced by the Vatican to end his 10-year congressional career, says a good Christian must become involved in the political system. In a sermon to parishioners of the Episcopal Cathedral Church of St. John the Divine, Father Drinan said Christ forsook all of the sins of the nuclear age, "all of our sins of apathy, and non-involvement before he died on the cross." He challenged the congregation to "let this Sunday be their day of conversion to political activism."

Cdl. Casaroli encourages peace

VATICAN CITY (RNS)—The Vatican's secretary of state, Italian Cardinal Agostino Casaroli, has confirmed the Vatican's interest in reducing East-West tensions and indicated he would fly to Moscow and elsewhere for the cause of peace. "Everyone can see how serious and grave the situation is," the cardinal said. Cardinal Casaroli said the Vatican could try to mediate between the United States and the Soviet Union to encourage the resumption of U.S.-Soviet talks in Geneva on intermediate-range nuclear missiles in Europe. The Soviet Union abandoned the negotiating table in November after the first U.S. Pershing missiles were deployed in Europe. The cardinal said, "Despite the extreme political and, needless to say, military weakness of the Holy See, its moral prestige is recognized and accepted by all sides."

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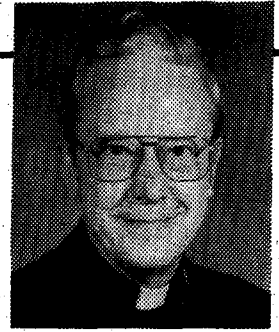
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Devotedly Yours



New Church law less 'legalistic'

'Facilitates carrying out mission we all have'

My dearly beloved:

I am in the air again! Flying home from Washington and a three-day workshop of bishops on the new Code of Church Law. This revision of international Church Law took effect on the first day of Advent, November 27, 1983. It replaces the Code of Canon Law that had been in use in the Church since 1971.

We met at a retreat house, the Villa Cortona. There were some 20 of us from the Southeast Region of our country. Two priest canonists gave the lectures and we had ample opportunity to discuss the implications of the Code. We prayed together as well.

To many, Church Law is a mystery. In the future, it should be less so.

Unlike the earlier Code which was in Latin, this one is available in official translations. Since the Church is a community of people working together, it is necessary that it, like any organization, have its regulations that facilitate and put order into the common activity of its members, that give expression and direction in living out the Gospel mandate which was given by the Lord to His Church.

These changeable regulations respect, of course, the immutable elements of doctrine and morals in the Church. Over the centuries, the regulations have been codified for use throughout the Universal Church.

WHEN POPE John XXIII called for the Second Vatican Council to review and refine current Church practices, he also called for a revision of the Code of Church Law that would reflect these developments in Church life.

The Code deals with such things as the organization of the Church, the establishment, the function, the direction of dioceses and of parishes.

It speaks of the various classifications of the members of the

functioning of the Church's court system, which deals principally with marriage cases.

AS I POINTED out in a homily I was invited to preach, it was appropriate that we bishops meet at Christmas time, for this symbolized the unique meaning of Church Law — it simply facilitates the carrying out of the mission we all have — namely, to share and to live the glad tidings of great joy of the Savior born to us Who is Christ the Lord.

The new Code of Canon Law does not introduce dramatic changes. Largely, it incorporates changes already made since Vatican II.

However, comparing the new Code with the 1917 version, one notes that in the new one there are only 1,752 Canons (or laws), compared to 2,414 of the older Code.

The language of the new Code is less legalistic. It reflects the more pastoral terminology of the Second Vatican Council.

There are significant additions, such as those dealing with the rights and duties of all Christians, the rights and obligations of the laity, the various new forms of participation in decision making, such as the

Priests' Councils and Diocesan Pastoral Councils, Parish Councils, and Diocesan and Parish Finance Councils.

THE CHURCH is seen less as a hierarchical structure and more as the People of God. All who are baptized are recognized as having a responsibility for the Kingdom. They are expected to participate in the Church's three-fold mission of teaching, preaching and shepherding.

Authority is viewed more clearly as a service. Ecumenism is to be encouraged. There is a simplification of Church procedures.

There is a stronger orientation to pastoral needs. There is a greater tendency to decentralize by relying on local legislation and local decision making.

All in all, the new Code of Canon Law is a beautiful document. Those who become familiar with it will, I think, admire the efforts of the Church to foster and to exemplify the highest principles of the Gospel as it pursues the Kingdom with love and respect for the people it serves.

Have a blessed Christmastide.
Devotedly yours in Christ,

Edward A. McCarthy

Archbishop of Miami

To many, Church law is a mystery. In the future, it should be less so.

Community of Faith — e.g. the laity, the religious, the clergy and of the rights and responsibilities of each in the life of the Church.

It provides directives for fulfilling the mission of the Church, especially in teaching the Faith and in administering the Sacraments and in private prayer.

It lays out regulations to assure the proper management and protection of Church property. It establishes the rules that guide the

Christmas schedule at Cathedral

Solemn Pontifical Mass will be concelebrated in St. Mary Cathedral at midnight on Christmas Eve by Archbishop Edward McCarthy and priests of the Cathedral parish. A concert of Christmas music will begin at 11:30 p.m. featuring the Cathedral choirs singing in English and Spanish.

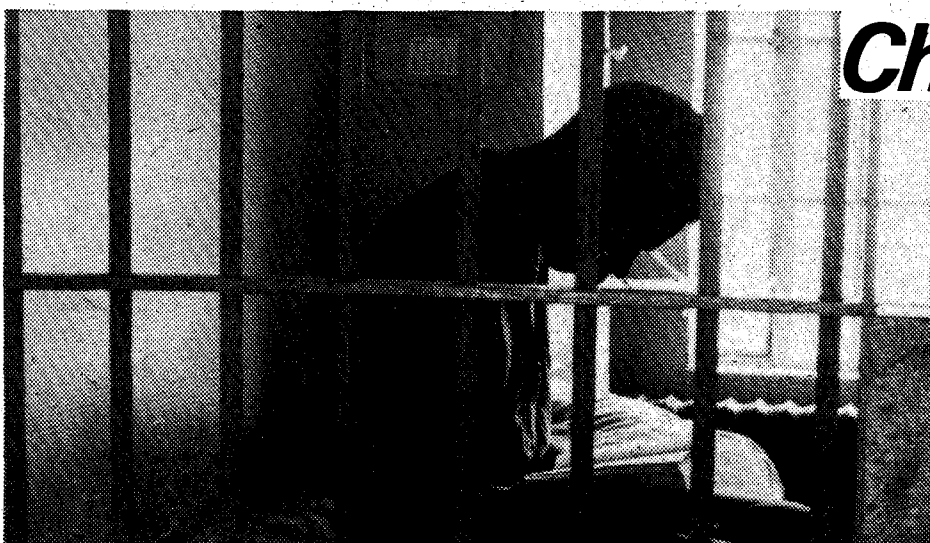
The Archbishop will also be the principal celebrant of Pontifical Mass at 11 a.m. on Christmas Day, when music will be provided by the Cathedral choir.

At 8:30 p.m. on Christmas Eve, a

Vigil Mass will be celebrated in French. Music will be provided by a French choir. At 1 p.m. on Christmas day, a Mass will be offered in Spanish.

At 11 a.m. on Dec. 24, Archbishop McCarthy will celebrate Mass at the Dade County Detention Center, 1321 NW 13th St. The Archbishop will visit with inmates beginning at 9 a.m.

Miami's Auxiliary Bishop Agustin Roman will visit the Women's Detention Center on Saturday and celebrate Mass for inmates at 10 a.m.



Prisoners in the Dade County Detention Center and at the Women's Correctional Institute will receive Christmas visits from Archbishop McCarthy and Auxiliary Bishop Agustin Roman.

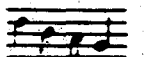
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Christmas celebrations...

By Tammy Tanaka
Religious News Service

"O little town of Bethlehem, how still we see thee lie; Above thy deep and dreamless sleep, the silent stars go by; Yet in thy dark streets shineth the everlasting Light; The hopes and fears of all the years are met in thee tonight..."

Christmas 1983 comes to a world standing on a "razor's edge of blowing up," as one minister says. Yet, through the darkness, shines the Light. Faith and Hope are alive.

The radiant outpouring of divine Love, which is the spirit of Christmas, bathes and lifts the earth once more.

Across the nation and world-families, congregations, communities—are gathering together in their own special ways to celebrate Christmas. Hope for world peace and love of family, however defined, are twin themes reverberating with great intensity this Christmastide.

The hopes and dreams find expression in family intimacy, congregational fellowship and the special acts of charity inspired by the Christmas season.

Family days

"It's family reunion time," says the Rev. William Lazareth, former director of the World Council of Churches' faith and order commission in Geneva, who will be celebrating his first Christmas this year as pastor of Holy Trinity Lutheran Church in New York.

"That's the genius of Christmas for Christians," he says, "to gather together as a human family, together with the family of God in adoration of the Christ Child and the Blessed Family of Bethlehem, in rededication to their own domestic Bethlehems."

"I like to emphasize the family motif," Dr. Lazareth continued. "It is particularly important now as many Protestant Christians come to a deeper awareness of the significance of Mary as the Mother of our Lord, and the model of Christian piety that she provides for all of Christ's devoted disciples."

The Rev. David Cornell, pastor of First Baptist Church in East Stroudsburg, Pa., is among the many Christians who look forward to

'In our lethargy, the message of hope, peace and love which is ours at Christmas lifts us from our ruts of complacency and reminds us that through Jesus Christ, we can have peace on earth and good will for all humankind.'

Christmas with extended families or friends in the local church. "On Christmas eve we first have dinner as a family and then we go to church," says the Baptist clergyman.

He and his wife, Heather, and their three children spend Christmas eve with his parents. Then after a Christmas morning worship service at the church they go to Long Island to spend Christmas day with her folks.

"We have a bright happy tradition, beginning with a Christmas eve service with candles," Cornell says. "After the service we all go outside and sing Christmas carols under the stars. People really love that. Lots of times its snowing in our area. And it's early

evening so we can include all the children, and people can go home and do some of their own celebrating... We believe that the Lord is alive right now, and that He will return, and that reality makes Christmas more meaningful."

Varied traditions

Community events highlight Christmas observances in Coshocton, Ohio, where residents gather at a Christmas tree in a "restored canal town," for an outdoor community candlelight service. Helen Wright, organist at the Presbyterian Church, says that in Coshocton, a rural industrial city of about 1,400 residents, the traditional treat following the service is ginger cookies and hot cider.

Many Americans observe Christmas through rites which began in other cultures. In Santa Fe, N.M., the United Church of Christ is decorated for Christmas in the Spanish "luminaria" style—with lighted candles in small sanded bags lining the sidewalk and walls.

"Quakers have a testimony about simplicity," says Jim Lenhart of the American Friends Service Committee, Philadelphia. He said that in his religious tradition, "We try to look at every day as important and holy, and therefore not overemphasize particular days. Christmas reminds us of the wonder of His birth and the condition in which he lived. We try to look at Christmas as a time to reach out to needy people."

Remember the poor

The poor and outcast will be remembered by many.

"Christmas is a time of rejoicing because of God's love, but it is meaningful because of our love for those around us who need us," says Commissioner Norman S. Marshall, national Salvation Army commander,

a religious tradition long noted for its efforts to bring Christmas to society's outcasts. He and his wife will spend Christmas day visiting Salvation Army programs in Washington.

Some 25 former homeless alcoholics will be treated to a "big Christmas meal" cooked by Fr. Joe Nugent of Our Lady of Victory Catholic Church in Brooklyn, N.Y. His parish has turned a former convent into a 25-bed residence for homeless men, called "Our Father's House." For the last 12 years, Father Nugent has spent Christmas with this "family."

"Christmas Eve, we go down to the Bowery, and join men at a sobering-up station there," Father Nugent says.

"We sing carols, read scriptures, I give a little homily relevant to them. I tell them, we find ourselves in a poor condition and we can wind up feeling sorry for ourselves. But Jesus who was also born in very poor surroundings reminds us of our worth and invites us to celebrate life where we are and improve our condition."

"It's so beautiful, so alive, going from the streets filled with drunks, prostitutes, you name it—to the high altar. After midnight Mass, the men go back to their house and find their gifts under the tree, practical things like scarves, gloves, underwear. For many of them, it's the first Christmas present they've received in years. The glow on the face of the men is like the glow on the face of a child and gives me the strength to go on," Fr. Nugent says.

Personal renewal

As Christians in homes and churches celebrate the birth of Jesus in intimate ways, religious leaders reflect on the theological significance of the holiday and urge members of their churches to experience the birth of the Christ within themselves.

"Christmas, the invitation and challenge that we all renew and transform ourselves according to the



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image of him who took upon himself the form of man, continues to call us to the appreciation of the angelic message for peace on earth, good will among men," says Archbishop Iakovos, primate of the Greek Orthodox Archdiocese of North and South America.

"The spirit of Christmas," he says, calls on all believers to "rededicate and commit ourselves to love and peace, the two powerful forces that can renew and save the world and its inhabitants."

The new National Council of Churches president, Bishop Philip Cousin of the African Methodist Episcopal Church, adds this about Christmas:

"Amid the strife and tensions which prevail in our world and threaten to destroy us, we as humans are prone to succumb to negativism and become apathetic in our striving for world peace and brotherhood. In our lethargy, the message of hope, peace and love which is ours at Christmas lifts us from our ruts of complacency and reminds us that through Jesus Christ, we can have peace on earth and good will for all humankind."

Pageantry

While most churches focus on the gentle intimacy of the season, large churches often treat worshippers to grand portrayals of the birth of Jesus. At the Crystal Cathedral in Garden Grove, California, the Rev. Robert Schuller plans to stage what he calls the world's largest living Nativity scene.

Dr. Schuller, preacher on the "Hour of Power" television program, says the church will provide live camels, "13



Eleven new electro-art sculptures depicting the theme "Journey to Bethlehem" have been added to the 14th annual Way of Lights display at the National Shrine of Our Lady of the Snows near Belleville, Ill. More than 125,000 lights are spread over a mile and a half route to illuminate the display which will continue until Jan. 8. (NC photo)

dancing angels that fly from the 12-story ceiling, and Fred Swann at the 14,000-pipe organ." He expects the 3,000-seat auditorium to be packed for each of the seven Christmas eve candlelight services.

The Episcopal Cathedral of St. John the Divine in New York will present a series of musical events including a Christmas play on "Daniel and the Lions," a musical celebration, Paul Winter and an "Animal's Christmas" cantata with the popular singer and composer, Art Garfunkel. The cathedral will be ablaze with "a sea of a thousand candles" on Christmas eve, says Dean James Park Morton.

"A big peace tree" stands at the

cathedral entrance, decorated by school children, Dean Morton said. "There will be all kinds of parties for all the life that's here at the cathedral. What we're doing is not an empty ritual. We're celebrating the birth of Jesus, the Prince of Peace, when we're on a razor's edge of blowing up."

"The peace of the new creation, born into the world 2,000 years ago, is capable of being reborn in our hearts this year," says Bishop James Malone of Youngstown, Ohio, president of the National Conference of Catholic Bishops.

"The gospel proclamation of Christmas is succinctly stated: peace on earth to those of good will. In the wake

of the recent U.S. bishops' peace pastoral and the searing vision of nuclear annihilation captured in the recent TV documentary, "The Day After," he said, "my confident hope and fervent prayers for Christmas 1983 and the New Year 1984 is that Christmas this year will find all people of good will reflecting on the gospel of peace and working wholeheartedly to become active peacemakers."

As he has for the last 20 years, Bishop Malone will spend part of Christmas day at the county nursing home. "I put on a white bib and help serve dinner," he says. "We try to bring a personal touch of the meaning of Christmas by our personal presence."

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Pastoral on U.S. economy called bishops' 'duty'

NOTRE DAME, Ind. (NC)—American bishops are "just doing their duty" in grappling with an issue "which concerns everyone," the American economy, Archbishop Rembert Weakland of Milwaukee said during a meeting at the University of Notre Dame.

Archbishop Weakland, who chairs a National Conference of Catholic Bishops' committee drafting a pastoral letter on the economy, also said the meeting with theologians, economists and business experts was "very important at this moment in history."

"We wanted expertise in the facts," he said. "We've heard now from all the major areas of concern. It is true we heard it before, but we wanted to hear it again."

ACKNOWLEDGING that questions already have been raised about the future document—some political analysts have said it could be used to help the Democratic Party in the 1984 elections—Archbishop Weakland defended the development of the pastoral.

"We know a document like this could be politicizing," he said. However, the document will not appear until after the elections.

"We do have a right to say what we feel and think and be a part of the consensus of public policy," he said. "We Catholics have as much right as anyone to speak out. We're just doing our duty. I find that" criticism that the bishops should not be involved in economic issues "to be very un-

American," he added.

The dialogue at the meeting focused on four areas: economic planning, the poor and disadvantaged, employment, and U.S. trade with developing nations.

MUCH DISCUSSION was not specifically economic. "We need some solutions which are political and moral, not economic only," said Michael Novak, resident scholar in religion and public policy at the American Enterprise Institute in Washington. He also said that "in order to be a Christian, one need not be a socialist."

'We Catholics have as much right as anyone to speak out. We're just doing our duty.'

Dennis McCann, a theology professor at De Paul University in Chicago, suggested that "Michael Novak's democratic capitalism is a liberation theology—it's a white man's liberation."

McCann said that "Catholic social tradition fails because it envisions the monogamous, male-dominant and permanent family as the norm."

Rachel Willis, an economics professor at the University of North Carolina, said that "the rules of capitalism as it is are that there will be winners and losers. We have to think about changing the rules of the game."

SOME CONFERENCE participants

said the United States should change its philosophy about the relationship between inflation and jobs.

"We should not use employment as a way to reduce inflation," said Gar Alperovitz, co-director of the National Center for Economic Alternatives.

"These days prominent economists on both sides of the political aisle regularly tell the public that we can neither have a robust re-stimulation of the economy nor a real end to unemployment without rekindling inflation," he said in a prepared report.

"The view that a high level of unemployment is necessary, however, is based not on economics alone but on a political judgment about the public's willingness to support an aggressive program to target jobs to high unemployment areas," to train unskilled people, improve productivity or implement economic planning policies, he said.

"In reality, it is a political judgment against (economic) planning, not inflation."

Msgr. George Higgins, a former U.S. Catholic Conference official now advising the bishops' committee, urged the bishops to support organized labor, which he said "is being systematically opposed by American corporations."

"Our priority will be with labor," said Archbishop Weakland. "That has been the Catholic tradition." He added that "labor is not used anti-thetically here with management."

OTHERS told the bishops to direct more attention to the Third World.

"We cannot afford the simple distinction between the 'we' and the 'they' in the Catholic Church; we cannot stand by in this while people in the world are trapped by poverty,"



U.S. Bishops are working on pastoral letter on capitalism.

said Lee Tavis, a Notre Dame business professor.

The bishops concurred.

"We really haven't captured the urgency of the needs of the poor," said Bishop William Weigand of Salt Lake City. "Somehow, we're going to have to sketch that theme or we're going to fail."

In remarks opening the meeting, Holy Cross Father Theodore Hesburgh, Notre Dame president, urged that the pastoral link the economic well-being of the nation with a moral obligation to take care of workers and the poor. "Economics does not exist in a vacuum—it exists for people," he said.

The committee, in addition to Archbishop Weakland and Bishop Weigand, consists of Archbishop Thomas Donnellan of Atlanta, Bishop George Speltz of St. Cloud, Minn., and Auxiliary Bishop Peter Rosazza of Hartford, Conn.

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Abortion, war, poverty linked as 'life' issues by Cardinal

By Jim Lackey

WASHINGTON (NC)—A significant new chapter in the history of the church's participation in issues of public policy may have been opened by Cardinal Joseph L. Bernardin of Chicago when he called recently for a "consistent ethic of life" cutting across numerous political issues in U.S. society.

Cardinal Bernardin used a lecture he had been invited to give at Jesuit-run Fordham University in New York to argue that the church has both the responsibility and the opportunity to link such diverse issues as abortion, nuclear war, capital punishment and foreign policy in a comprehensive pro-life program.

Cardinal Bernardin's speech obviously wasn't the first time that church officials have seen respect for human life as a consistent thread tying together the church's position on issues like abortion or government programs for the needy. It has been expressed many times in the catch phrase that the church supports life "from womb to tomb."

BUT CARDINAL Bernardin, whose leadership in the development of the U.S. bishops' war and peace pastoral helped make him perhaps the best known and most respected member of the American hierarchy today, expanded to an unusual degree on the link he sees between the issues and on how the church can work to present that link to the American public.

He also used the speech to assert flatly that as the new chairman of the bishops' Committee for Pro-Life Activities—which traditionally but unfairly has been characterized as concerned almost exclusively with the single issue of abortion—he was "committed to shaping a position of linkage among the life issues."

The approval by the bishops last May of their new war and peace pastoral helped create the opportunity the church now has to build a consistent ethic of life, Cardinal Bernardin said. One result of the pastoral, he said, was to bring a Catholic moral vision to a specific public policy issue, something the bishops now have the potential for doing in other areas.

WHILE U.S. citizens are "radically pluralistic" in moral and religious views, he added, an articulation of a Catholic religious conviction can lead, as it did in the war and peace pastoral, to "support from individuals and groups who do not share our Catholic faith but who have found our moral analysis compelling."

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He promotes new 'ethic of life' in Church's public policy stands

Another reason the bishops have the opportunity and responsibility for developing a consistent ethic of life is what Cardinal Bernardin called a "perceptible shift of emphasis" in the past 30 years in church teaching and pastoral practice toward life itself.

While the church has not yet accepted the view of some that life may never be taken, Cardinal Bernardin said, in the past three decades the church has strengthened the presumption against taking human life and made even more restrictive the exceptions when life may be taken, such as in self-defense.

This helps explain, he added, recent pleas by bishops and popes who, while not denying the classical right of the state to employ capital punishment, have urged that methods more humane than the death penalty be used to

defend society against criminal acts.

CARDINAL Bernardin said consistency in promoting an ethic of life also demands a linkage between abortion and aid to the poor, between arms control and foreign policy.

"It is this linkage which has led the U.S. bishops not only to oppose the drive of the nuclear arms race but to stand against the dynamic of a Central America policy which relies predominantly on the threat and the use of force," he said.

The linkage also has led the bishops to argue that the right to life of the fetus does not end at birth but translates into specific political and economic positions on issues affecting poverty, unemployment and hunger.

Through it all Cardinal Bernardin said several times that building a

constituency to promote a broad-based ethic of life would be difficult.

He cited the "significant opposition" that already exists to relating abortion and nuclear war, and he said there must be "honest recognition" that even in the Catholic community the church is far from finished in its efforts to shape a consensus on spectrum-of-life issues.

But "there is no better place to begin" than in the wake of the war and peace pastoral. The pastoral, he said, has helped the church to be seen as an institution committed to avoiding nuclear war, which he said is a profoundly pro-life concern.

He added, "We should not lose this momentum; it provides a solid foundation to relate our concerns about war and peace to other 'pro-life' questions."

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Nicaragua: Prepared for war

MANAGUA, Nicaragua (NC)—“They can land like in Grenada. They can make bombing raids like in Vietnam. But in the long run we’ll defeat them. It will be thousands upon thousands of Nicaraguans shooting at the invaders.”

With these words Daniel Ortega, coordinator of the government junta, expressed the fear of a U.S. invasion and the determination of the Sandinista government to organize the population for defense.

The determination can be seen and heard in the wee hours of the morning when all of Managua seems to begin a special shift. Across the city there is movement. Flashes from military training grounds are reflected on low-lying clouds and there is the constant sound of thunder.

JEEPS and trucks are heard racing through the city and many people awaken to the sound of Sandinista slogans from nearby militia post.

People heading for work often see and armed militia patrol arrive at an intersection, marching in cadence. The captain cries an order and they fall as one to prone firing positions. At present there are more than 100,000 militia members in a country with a 2.8 million population.

Long lines of women appear at government offices to register for military service. For men aged 17 to 40, registration is obligatory, but for women inscription is voluntary. Above a registration counter a banner reads: “Not by law but by conscience, we will defend our revolution.”

ALL DAY through the streets of Managua, personnel carriers transport troops of the Sandinista Popular Army, which numbers around 30,000. These are veterans of the bloody civil war which toppled the government of



Rifle in hand, Maria Luisa Molina, 17, picks coffee on a 500-acre plantation run by the Sandinista government. The girl is one of 47 high school students in the El Carmen unit trained by the government in weapons use and enlisted to compensate for a shortage of manpower to pick coffee. (NC photo from UPI)

President Anastasio Somoza in 1979. Defending their revolution is now a vocation.

A few years ago the members of the Sandinista Popular Army were teenagers tossing homemade bombs at Somoza’s National Guard. Today they are fully trained and equipped soldiers and the strong arm of a state power.

Children are being trained by the Association of Sandinista Children for specific roles such as helping with evacuation from fighting zones.

The Sandinista Defense Committees, which comprise more than 40 percent of the national population, are organizing every neighborhood. The committees are arming their members with rifles, shotguns and pistols, many left over from the struggle against Somoza.

The Sandinista radio and television stations have hourly commercials on how to improve your aim, give first aid and dig a trench to specifications.

IN MANAGUA, militia squads of 30 people are being formed. They

receive intensive training in small arms, grenades and hand-to-hand combat at 36 instruction centers.

“Production battalions” are being organized to cultivate and harvest the coffee, cotton and sugar cane crops vital to Nicaragua’s economy.

Behind this preparedness is the Sandinista belief that the United States is looking for an excuse to invade and may even provoke a domestic crisis.

“We’ve received reports, one more alarming than the other, of projects to assassinate religious leaders and representatives of right-wing parties in Nicaragua, with the intention of making us appear guilty of the crimes,” said Interior Minister Tomas Borge.

THE MARXIST—influenced government has had major conflicts with the Catholic bishops, especially over its military draft law which the bishops say is an example of totalitarian-type legislation. This has caused tensions in a country where more than 90 percent of the population professes Catholicism.

But most Catholics, including priests and religious, are participating in preparedness plans in keeping with the government slogan that “between revolution and religion there is no contradiction.”

Nicaraguans interviewed about the situation want a negotiated settlement with the United States. But many feel that with thousands of U.S. troops in Honduras, U.S. battleships off the coast and U.S.-funded guerrillas harassing the government, a bellicose momentum has started. Most say a scenario for peace is hard to imagine for Central America.

“We are eager to discuss anything, anything except our right to have our revolution the way we want,” said junta coordinator Ortega.

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Experts differ on Vatican's responsibility in bank collapse

ROME (NC)—The Vatican-Italian commission investigating links between the Vatican bank and Italy's bankrupt Banco Ambrosiano has given its report to Italian and Vatican officials, a commission member has said.

"We've finished our work and presented the report. It's now up to other officials to take the next step," said Pasquale Chiomenti, an Italian lawyer on the commission.

The report is now in the hands of the Vatican Secretariat of State, Italian Prime Minister Bettino Craxi's office and the Italian Treasury Ministry, all of which are negotiating a final settlement of the question, according to the Treasury Ministry's chief press spokesman, Tiziano Garbo.

Garbo, as well as officials at the Vatican and the prime minister's office, refused to comment on press reports that the Vatican is willing to pay part of Banco Ambrosiano's debt as a gesture of good will but not as an admission of responsibility in the bank's collapse.

MEANWHILE, a Rome newspaper reported that the joint commission's report contains a major disagreement by Vatican and Italian commission members over Vatican responsibility in the bank's collapse.

Garbo, shown a copy of the article in the Rome newspaper, did not respond to the points in the article's detailed summary of the report. But, he said, "it appears the newspaper has seen the document."

The joint commission was formed in

December 1982 by the Vatican and the Italian government to ascertain what the relations were between the Vatican bank, formally called the Institute for Religious Works, and Banco Ambrosiano, Italy's largest private bank at the time of its collapse.

The Italian government liquidated Banco Ambrosiano after discovering that the bank had debts totaling more than \$1 billion. The Vatican bank was a minority shareholder in the Banco Ambrosiano and had issued letters in support of some of the bad loans

responsible for the huge debt.

A VATICAN-appointed panel concluded in 1982 that the Vatican had no financial responsibility to Banco Ambrosiano stockholders. Cardinal Agostino Casaroli, papal secretary of state, said at that time that the trust the Vatican had placed in Banco Ambrosiano's president, Roberto Calvi, had been abused.

After the Vatican panel made its report, Pope John Paul II announced that the Vatican would cooperate with Italian authorities in the joint study.

The newspaper report said, without naming the source of its information, that the three experts named by the Vatican to the commission concluded that the Vatican bank was essentially blameless in the scandal.

The Italian experts, the article said, concluded that the Vatican bank must have had knowledge of, and therefore responsibility for, the activities of the Banco Ambrosiano Panamanian institutions involved in the bad loans, some of which turned out to be legally owned by the Vatican bank.

Editorial: U.S. — Vatican ties benefit government more

NEW YORK (NC) — The possible appointment of a U.S. ambassador to the Vatican would benefit the State Department more than U.S. Catholics, said an editorial in *America*, the Jesuit weekly magazine.

The editorial, published in the magazine's Dec. 24 issue, said, "The State Department recognizes the Vatican as a font of information about what is happening in the world." In addition, "the pope is simply too important for the State Department to ignore."

(Although President Reagan signed legislation Nov. 22 repealing an 1867 ban on formal U.S.-Vatican ties, no official nominations for the post have

been made, a White House spokesperson said Dec. 15.

(The Reagan administration and the Vatican "are certainly moving" toward establishing formal relations, said White House spokesman Larry Speakes, but the administration has not told the Vatican it wants an exchange of ambassadors.)

FORMAL diplomatic relations would not appear to help the U.S. bishops, who, the editorial said, seem "content with the present arrangement" of having an apostolic delegate to the U.S. church, and not an apostolic nuncio to the U.S. government.

The U.S. bishops, "growing in a sense of their own identity," probably "prefer to deal directly with the administration on public issues without the possibly complicating presence of a Vatican ambassador," *America* said.

On the other hand, the editorial said, the State Department "would like to influence, or at least know in advance," what the pope will do or say about various world situations.

The *America* editorial dismissed charges that formal relations with the Holy See would violate the separation

of church and state. If the U.S. government were to try to influence church appointments, that "would be a clear violation of the separation of church and state, but for it to have diplomatic relations for secular purposes would be constitutional."

The State Department "would like to influence, or at least know in advance" what the pope will do or say about various world situations.

The editorial also said that fears of church-state entanglement would be lessened if a U.S. ambassador to the Vatican were a non-Catholic.

"This would not only lessen non-Catholic fears of a Catholic conspiracy, but it would also lessen Catholic fears of an ambassador getting involved in internal church affairs."

Scientology a religion in Australia

PERTH, Australia (RNS)—Australia's highest court has granted official recognition to the Church of Scientology. The Australia High Court reversed a decision by a lower court that denied the church's claim for exemption from payroll tax. The high court said the sincerity of the movement's founder is not the test whether it is religious. "Charlatanism is a necessary price of religious freedom," the court ruled. Scientology was founded in the 1950s by science-fiction writer L. Ron Hubbard.

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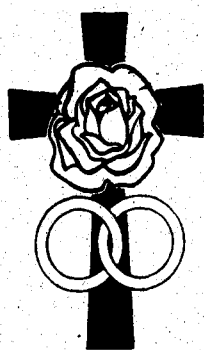


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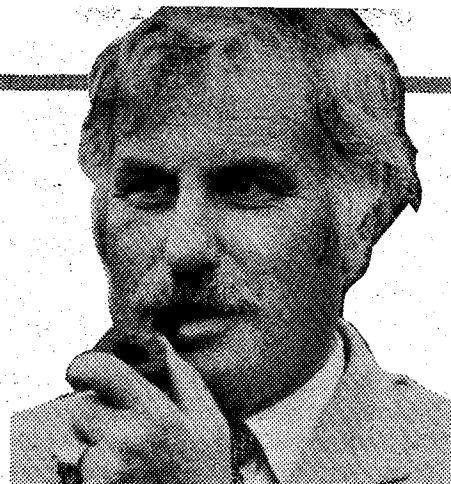
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ABCD 1984

By Ana Rodriguez-Soto
Voice News Editor

UM Coach is chairman; \$4.5 million goal set



Coach Howard Schnellenberger

"We're going to fly," Archbishop Edward A. McCarthy said of the 1984 ArchBishop Charities and Development Drive.

The Archbishop apparently hopes the drive will fly with the same success as a Howard Schnellenberger football team.

Schnellenberger, whose University of Miami football team is playing for a possible national championship in this year's Orange Bowl game, is general chairman of the ABCD Drive. Co-chairmen are Father James Connaughton and Fr. Jose Nickse.

"We're going to take off. We're going to fly," the Archbishop told more than 60 pastors gathered at St. Martha's Church for a kick-off meeting for the drive, which is expected to surpass its \$4.5 million goal.

A second meeting with north area pastors was held at Ascension Parish in Boca Raton.

"WE NEED the fuel," added the Archbishop, referring to ABCD funds as the gasoline that powers most of the social service programs and ministries of South Florida's Catholic Church.

"Trying to sell you people on ABCD is like trying to sell the president of IBM on computers," Archbishop McCarthy told the pastors, thanking them for their annual support of the drive in their parishes.

In recent years, the Archdiocese

consistently has surpassed the ABCD goal set for each campaign.

"I think (a \$4.5 million goal for this year) is realistic," Archbishop McCarthy said. "Personally, I expect this is the year we're going to break the \$5 million (mark). We came very close last year."

ALREADY, more than \$4 million of the \$4.9 million pledged for 1983 has been collected, the pastors were told by Fr. Vincent Sheehy, executive director of the Ministry of Temporalities of the Archdiocese. The 1983 goal was \$4.1 million.

Of 141 parishes in the Archdiocese, Fr. Sheehy said, more than two-thirds reached their 1983 goal.

Parishes which exceed their goal in cash collected receive half of that excess back to use for charitable activities at the local level, Fr. Sheehy said. The program began last year.

The only sad note sounded in recent ABCD campaigns, Archbishop McCarthy said, is that only 15 per cent of the 250,000 potential contributors in the Archdiocese give any money to the drive.

Of one million Catholics, he said, one in four can be expected to give, yet only 36,000 pledged any amount last year.

He suggested that pastors work to "broaden the base number of contributors."

SCHNELLENBERGER is a member of Our Lady of the Lakes Parish in Miami Lakes.

Fr. Connaughton is pastor of St. Ambrose Parish in Deerfield Beach and returns as co-coordinator of this year's drive. He served in the same position last year.

He is joined by Fr. Nickse, pastor of St. Brendan Parish in Miami and director of the Radio and Television Office of the Archdiocese.

Urging parishioners to contribute to ABCD, Fr. Connaughton told the pastors, "It is evangelization, because you're making committed Catholics, not just Catholics."

The job of the priest, he said, is to get people in the pews "to face reality, realizing there are people in great need."

That is the theme of the 1984 campaign, "One hope for many people," which is reinforced in a "multi-image" slide presentation.

WRITTEN by Carol Gallagher of the Radio and Television Office and produced by John Roth of Sunshine Productions, the slide show couples images of various pastoral and social service programs in the Archdiocese with narration which reminds

Catholics of their responsibility to help others in need.

"Your generous support... keeps the flame burning brightly, a beacon of hope to those who are suffering," says the narrator.

Citing the sick and lonely, the divorced and separated, migrants, refugees, handicapped children, unwed mothers, the unborn, the poor of the inner-cities and the elderly as those helped by ABCD, the narrator says, "We are their biggest hope. We are, for some, the only hope... We ask you to be as generous to others as others have been to you."

The slide show will be featured at 10 fundraising dinners to be held throughout the Archdiocese beginning Jan. 5.

Charles Starrs, director of Development for the Archdiocese, outlined the timetable for the 1984 ABCD campaign, saying the general drive should be scheduled in all parishes for the weekend of Feb. 3 and 4.

Final returns are due by the end of February so a report can be made to the Archbishop in early March.

The last weekend in January, a taped message from the Archbishop will be available for playing in all the parishes, perhaps in conjunction with the five-minute slide presentation, Starrs said.

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From kid to kid

Eighth graders give annual Christmas party for needy kids

by **BETSY KENNEDY**
Voice Staff Writer

There was ice cream and "Jingle Bells" and Santa Claus too. But perhaps best of all, there was a Tiny Tim kind of loving spirit at the annual Christmas party for underprivileged children given by 8th grade students at St. James school in North Miami.

Sr. Joan Marie, O.P., school principal, had a smile that almost outshone the Christmas tree lights when she looked at a parish hall decked with happy children.

"Christmas isn't give me... it's give. That is what we try and teach our students here.

"It is a tradition to give these parties. We've been doing it for 16 years and we're not about to stop," she said with a twinkle in her eye.

THE LUCKY kids this year were 30 kindergarten and first grade students from St. Francis Xavier.

"I want a bike for Christmas," said wide-eyed Senneca Denson, age 6. And my biggest Christmas wish would be for there to be peace in the world."

Tyrell Gumbs, age 7, hopes that Santa will put a brand-new Atari under his tree.

"My Christmas wish is for everyone to be happy and for hungry kids everywhere to get food," he said.

Marie Barnes, who has been teaching at St. James for the past 18 years, wouldn't have missed the party.

She is still on sick leave after re-



A first grader from St. Francis Xavier inspects her Christmas gifts while seated on Santa's (Cory Mason) lap during St. James School's Christmas party. (Voice photo by Betsy Kennedy)

covering from surgery, but she joined in energetically with the other teachers. "I wouldn't feel like it was Christmas without our party for the children."

That tradition continued until Sr. Marie realized, "We had plenty of our own Catholic kids in need and I decided it was time to do something for them."

From the very first party to the current one, the 8th graders assume full responsibility for the event, from planning food and decorations to raising money for toys from Santa.

This year's Santa was 8th grader Cory Marston, who despite the loss of a portion of white mustache, was a very jolly and kind St. Nick.

Ricardo Sellek, student council president, will graduate this year from St. James, but said he will always remember the Christmas parties as a lesson in giving.

"This year was a great success and a lot of fun. Seeing the smiles on their faces made the effort worthwhile."

As children unwrapped their games, books, stuffed dogs, and then raced around the room to show off their new treasures, Sr. Marie grew pensive.

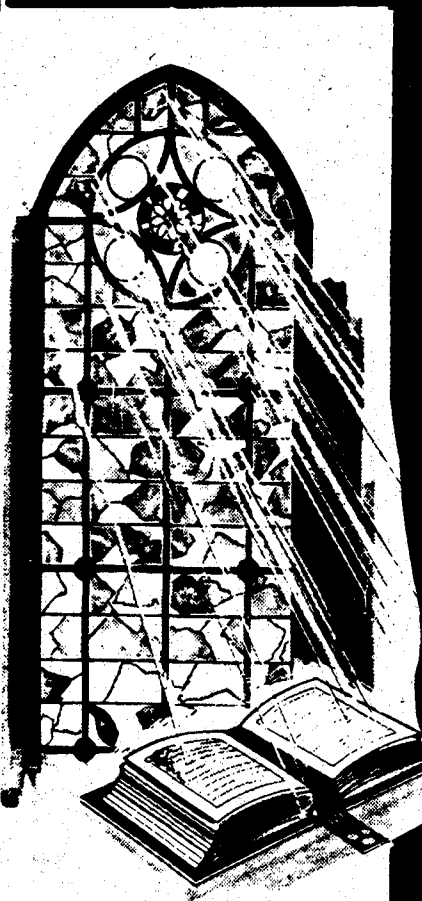
"Christmas is for children. It's so hard for many people to believe there are still children who just won't get a Christmas at all."



ST. JAMES 8th graders first began entertaining impoverished children in 1967 with a party given for students from Bunche Park Elementary school.

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Christmas in the streets

Little Havana neighborhood celebrates with 'living Nativity'

By ARACELI CANTERO
Staff Writer, La Voz

Night had fallen, and the bright spotlight shining on King Melchior's crown made it seem like more than cardboard. The Wise Man's purplish-blue, gold-trimmed cape fluttered in the wind as he tightly held a small coffer full of gold, a present for the baby Jesus.

Despite his four years, the little king (Melchior Ignacio Gaston) walked on stage with aplomb, ignoring the hundreds of neighbors who watched as he approached the cardboard-and-palm-wood manger in Little Havana.

The little king stood before the microphone and briefly lifted one hand from the coffer to straighten the glasses which slid from his tiny nose. He took a deep breath, as if for strength, and began reciting:

"Angels with bells come from the tropical skies to see the child and offer him royal palms. What shall I give this child? What present that he would like? All my love and a sweet little kiss."

Nervously, King Melchior responded to the thundering applause. Then he opened his coffer, and showing its golden contents to the public, said: "I am Melchior and I bring you gold for you are King."

Bowing his head, he placed his gift near the Christ Child and took his place around the manger.

He was followed by Gaspar and Balthasar, also dressed with royal capes and crowns. King Gaspar (Alberto Oviedo) brought incense "because You are God." King Balthasar (Charlie Huin) offered myrrh because "You will suffer for us."

Moments before, the shepherds had heard the Good News from the angels and left the warmth of their campfires to see Jesus in the manger. They found an eight-month-old baby (Mauricio Salgado) happily lying in a crib as



The sons and daughters of Little Havana neighbors played out the story of the Nativity in a tradition that now goes back four years. (Voice photo by Araceli Cantero)

Mary (Jeanette Gomez) gave him his bottle.

About 300 spectators had gathered to watch the living Nativity unfold before them, a tradition now four years old begun by the residents of N.W. 33 Avenue, between 4th and 5th Streets.

Impressed by its success, nearby St. Michael's Parish has begun promoting the event and coordinating similar ones in other neighborhoods.

The neighbors contribute everything to the performance including the child actors. Raul Masvidal and a group of

volunteers carry the spotlights from scene to scene, set up in Clara Gomez's front yard.

The scenery was built by Jose Oviedo: a corner for the shepherds, with painted mountains in the background and a lighted fire in front; a white house, with working door and all, from which innkeepers Barbara Garcia and Allen Jose Oviedo would tell Mary and Joseph that there was "no room at the inn" and a manger.

"Christmas is not only a time for vacations and presents," said Lena

Roman, mistress of ceremonies. "The neighbors, families and friends of this block gather this day to celebrate the birth of Jesus, a sign of peace, happiness and brotherhood."

With the street closed to traffic, the different scenes of the Nativity story unfolded as the choir sang appropriate carols: the Annunciation, the Visitation, Mary and Joseph's (Rafael Perez) journey to Bethlehem.

The trip included an unexpected hitch: the lights and applause made the donkey nervous, and he threw Mary off, but this was a minor inconvenience.

Later, children of different nationalities, dressed in typical costumes from the United States, Colombia, Guatemala, Cuba, Spain, Israel, Japan and even Russia, sang and danced for the Christ Child.

A little drummer boy played for Him.

Joy was reflected in every face. Margarita Cardoso originated the idea of celebrating Christmas in a special way in the neighborhood. The first year, carolers simply visited every home. The second year, the living Nativity was started, "to include the children and families" in the celebration, she said.

"The most important thing is the sense of community this fosters among the neighbors," said Maria Elena Oviedo. "We rehearse the whole month of December. Each year, more and more people take part."

After the performance, members of the audience are invited to sign up for a "census" as Joseph and Mary did, giving their names, addresses and religion.

"It's a way of knowing next year who is interested and wants to help," said Aida Masvidal.

A toast ends the celebration and the entire block feels united by the birth of Jesus. Indeed, this is truly Christmas.

Plays, songs, gifts, wishes:



Parishes and schools find many different ways to celebrate the season in the Archdiocese of Miami. Here's a small sampling: St. Vincent's Parish in Margate presented "Birthday of a King" last weekend, with Steve Wertheimer as Joseph and Jeanne Veneziano as Mary. The children's and adult choirs added to the beauty of the performance, organized by the church's Family Enrichment Team. At St. Joseph's Parish on Miami Beach, the traditional lighting of the Christmas crib was followed by dancing and singing with parishioners of many different nationalities dressed in native costumes. In addition to Hispanic, Italian and Irish representatives, natives of the Philippines (above)



also delighted a packed house. At St. James, in North 800 gifts for the needy of the Cuban Children's Home Kindergarten students of St. Monica in Opa-Locka r scenes and wishing "for many gifts to share with my the words of Luis Valdez, pictured. (Voice photos by Prent

A surprise love story

He gives girlfriend gift of conversion

By ANA RODRIGUEZ-SOTO
Voice News Editor

Forget partridges in pear trees, turtle doves and even cabbage patch kids. One week before Christmas, Marcia Thrasher's true love gave her a gift sparkling with true meaning.

He surprised her by becoming a Catholic at Mass after secretly studying the faith for several months.

She found out only minutes before St. James Parish's 9 a.m. liturgy last Sunday, when she rendezvoused with her boyfriend, Eric Fulton, in a small room at the back of the North Miami church.

Waiting for the moment when the news would be "popped" were four other converts, their godparents and Fr. Dan Kubala, their religious instructor, who broke the news to the Barry University nursing student.

Fulton would have waited longer, until mid-baptismal ceremony, perhaps, to surprise his girlfriend. But Fr. Kubala decided not to take the risk that Thrasher would faint in mid-Mass.

"I thought he finally was going to come (to church) with me one Sunday," said a surprised Thrasher, a member of Holy Redeemer Parish in Liberty City who has always attended Catholic schools.

She and Fulton discussed religion often since meeting last Christmas Eve at a post office. His parents are Baptists, but he had never been baptized and had stopped attending years ago.

Thrasher had expressed her desire to have Fulton accompany her to Mass sometime, but he refused. She didn't know why, and finally she decided "it had to be his own choice."

Until he met her, Fulton said, his only knowledge of Catholicism came from the stories of disenchanted former Catholics who claimed Catholics had Bibles with distorted views and worshipped statues of saints.

Thrasher resembled no such creatures.

"She's just something else," Fulton



Marcia Thrasher and boyfriend Eric Fulton, moments after she heard the news of his conversion. (Voice photo by Ana Rodriguez-Soto)

said, unabashedly proud. "She's 110 per cent Catholic" and "very happy with it. I decided the Catholic faith was more than it seemed."

Early one Sunday morning in May, the lanky, six-foot-five 19-year-old walked into St. James after seeing the church building from I-95.

"I got a strange feeling, a very good, peaceful feeling" that first time, he recalled. "It was a nice church... I didn't see anyone worshipping saints."

Without telling his girlfriend, he began attending 9 a.m. Mass. After two weeks, he enrolled in the Parish's Rite of Christian Initiation for Adults class, being taught by Fr. Kubala. St. James holds another class in the spring, and annually about 20 converts are baptized.

Fr. Kubala recalled that Fulton always attributed his interest in Catholicism to his girlfriend, "but we never saw her."

Two months ago, the priest and Ful-

ton's classmates discovered that he planned to surprise Thrasher with his conversion.

"He never missed a day," said Fr. Kubala, adding that Fulton took two buses across town to attend the classes.

"He was always right in the front row" at Mass, remembered Patricia Graham. For months, she and Fulton sat next to each other every week. Fulton finally asked if she and her husband, Jerome, would serve as his godparents at Baptism.

Flattered, they accepted, and Sunday, after Fr. Kubala anointed him with oil and poured water on his head, "in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit," the Grahams helped their spiritual godson put on the gleaming white robe of a sin-free child of God.

Fulton explains he did not become a Catholic only to please and surprise his girlfriend.

"I did it for me," he said. "I always

felt inside there was something I wanted to grab hold of but I didn't have time for it."

Athletics and academics had filled his high school hours, he explained, relegating religion to the closet of his mind. Now a student at Miami-Dade Community College, hoping to enter the police academy in February, Fulton said Thrasher's convictions slowly "rubbed off" and "I began asking questions."

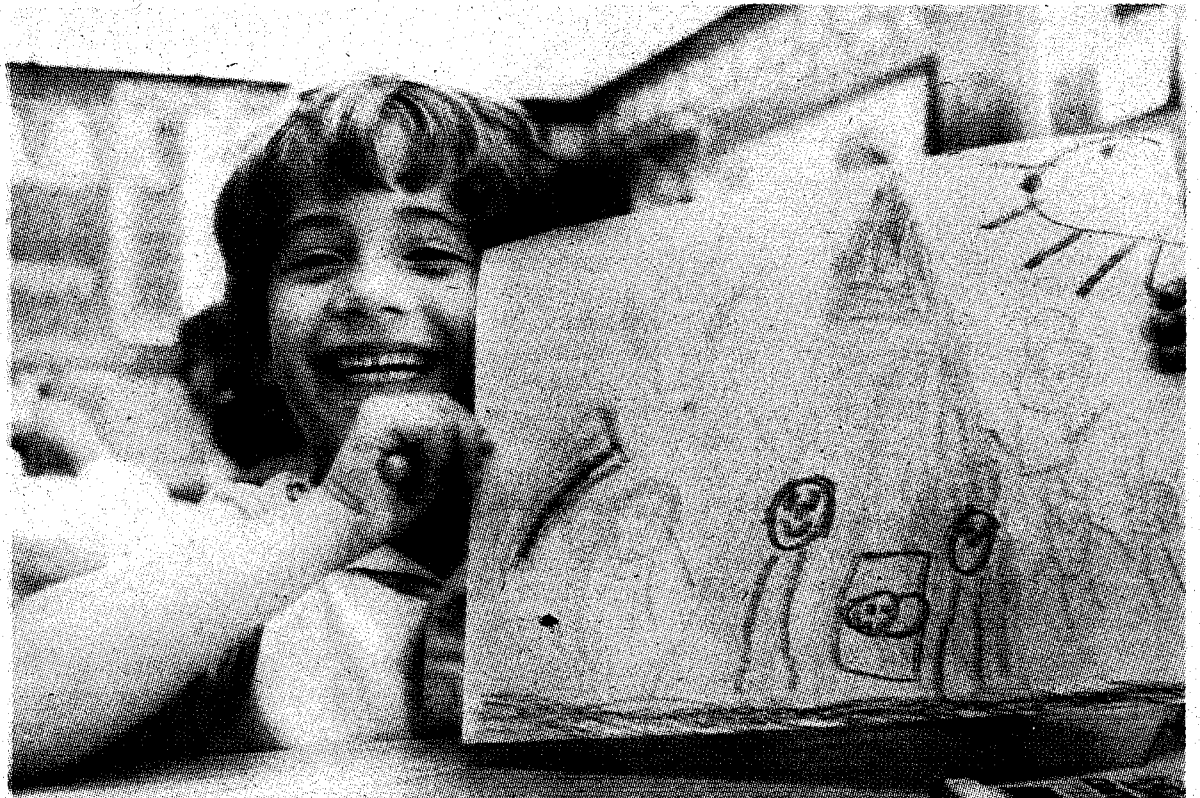
Sunday, all the answers came together.

"This was all for me, a turning point in my life that I wanted to share with her," he said.

Moved, Thrasher added, "It's wonderful for us, too, because now we'll be in the same faith. That's important to the relationship."

"This really has been a turning point in time," Fulton repeated as if talking to himself. Indeed, 1983 "has been a very good year."

Christmas around the Archdiocese



North Miami, children from every grade donated between 600 and some, continuing a tradition begun many years ago. Finally, the children reflected on the meaning of Christmas by drawing Nativity scenes with their friends and with other children who don't have anything," in front of Browning and Araceli Cantero)

Matter of Opinion

Why has Christmas lasted?

(The following is a reprint of a previous Christmas column by Msgr. James J. Walsh, Pastor Emeritus of St. Agnes parish.)

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

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

Some said the spirit of gift-giving answered a 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 simply: "Christmas will never end, because the child born was God Himself." This is the only answer deep enough to explain Christmas.

Gift giving indeed is one of the good effects of Christmas (if we can manage to look beyond the bizarre commercial efforts to give us the "real spirit" of the day). But the gift-giving is really a minor, albeit pleasant, aspect of Christmas, unless the gift concept reminds us that God wants one gift from us — 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 comparative few. And if Christ were only an unusually gifted teacher, which unfortunately is the weak, watered down belief of some Christians today, His birthday would be about as popular as that of Buddha around the world.

Just one fact makes the difference. Everyone has a birthday, but this one is like no other. Like every birth, this one had a mother present, but after the delivery of her Son, she remained a virgin. This Child could have no human father, because He had come from heaven as the Second Person of the Trinity. His mother gave Him a human nature, which God does not have. He came to the home of miserable, wretched men 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 to some extent its meaning.

Christmas, then, has this one enduring quality about it. It, therefore, can never become a bore or get out of existence.

But in our amazing, and at the same time, depressing world, how full of contradictions all this is. God, the all powerful, the Creator of all living things, 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've been to the moon and brought part of it back to earth. We're just flexing our scientific muscles. Our power potential is so enormous it is frightening. Are we then still to believe in the Christmas message?

A baby is God? Why, a baby is the most helpless of all creatures. The calf, when free of its mother, wobbles to its feet. The colt at once assumes a little independence. A kitten quickly recovers from its sleepiness and weakness and roams.

But an infant seems the least intelligent, the most awkward and dependent of all creatures. God in the manger?

With this in mind, we can grasp something 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 off the road.

We would guess that accepting His divinity, when He had reached adulthood, would have been somewhat easier. People saw Him do things no man had done. He spoke with wisdom no one had experienced before. He opened the eyes of the blind and the ears of the deaf and breathed life into the dead 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, 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 uniquely:



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.

This is why Christmas will last, even though its meaning may be splintered into unrecognizable fragments. It will endure even in heaven for eternity where the wondrous truth that God came to earth as a child will never be fully explored.

Letters to the Editor

Of altar girls and Communion

To the Editor:

I have been noting the interest of your readers in the legal question of female altar servers. Today I received a periodical with an article on the subject by a teacher of church law at the Catholic Theological Union in Chicago.

He says: "There is no prohibition in the universal law of the Latin Rite against female altar servers." By coincidence, I received this article on the same day the subject came up in the course of the new canon law being offered at our Archdiocesan seminary to update the priests.

The professor was asked why the Archbishop of Chicago did not simply dispense his diocese from the law against altar girls. His answer: "As of Nov. 28, there is no canon law against altar girls from which to dispense."

Another item in my field of liturgy disturbs me. You could do a lot of harm by publishing the gratuitous opinions of a Lutheran layman on Communion from a common cup. Perhaps this would be a good time for you to reprint the official guidelines of our

Archdiocese on that subject.

Those guidelines include the results of laboratory experiments reported in the *Journal of Infectious Diseases*:

"Experiments on the transmission of test organisms from one person to another by common use of the chalice showed that approximately 0.001 per cent of the organisms are transferred even under the most favorable conditions. When conditions approximated those of actual use, no transmission could be detected... It is concluded that in practice the communion cup is not an important vector of infectious disease. ... Other modes of transmission, notably airborne infection, are of much greater importance and the relatively insignificant role of the chalice becomes apparent."

Perhaps that Lutheran gentleman should ponder the words of Martin Luther: "Christ was well aware of all future dangers, and yet he saw fit to institute both kinds for the use of all his Christians."

Jack L. Totty
Pastor, St. Jude
Boca Raton

Death penalty not for poor only

To the Editor:

A few comments to refute Msgr. Walsh's presumption that the "Death Penalty is for Poor Only."

—Robert Sullivan enjoyed 10 years of legal defense maneuvers while searching for loopholes at the expense of taxpayers. Although he may have been poor, he enjoyed more legal assistance than a wealthy man could afford.

—The people of Florida have expressed their belief to elected officials that capital punishment is a deterrent. That is why Florida condemned 447 people to death during the past 11 years. The last year capital punishment was substantially demonstrated in the United States was 1962 when 47 persons were executed. It should be noted that 8,400 murders were committed in that year. In 1980 there were no executions, but there were 23,040 murders!

—The Church would be well advised to direct its compassion to the "innocent victims" about to be murdered, than to those very few about to be executed.

—The fact that a few people with money or connections may escape the death penalty is no more reason to throw it out than to throw out speed

limits because a few speeders escape detection. Besides, maybe they actually were innocent.

Thank goodness we will be serving up justice in Florida at long last. Let those soft on crime live in states opposed to the death penalty such as Michigan. Keep in mind, however, that the murder rate in Detroit between 1972 and 1978 was 42 per 100,000 population, twice the fatality rate of the German bombardment of London between 1940-1945. (National Review, Sept. 16).

Is it not time the Church took an active role to save its parishioners, not the Robert Sullivan murderer types who masquerade as Catholic? In the next six months, more Americans will be murdered than have died by execution in this entire century. (National Review, Sept. 16).

Yes, Msgr. Walsh, who is kidding who?

Dexter R. Goose

Proud Catholic

To the Editor:

Archbishop Edward McCarthy feels ashamed to be a Floridian because of the Governor's execution of Robert Sullivan. I feel proud to be a Catholic because of the Archbishop.

Palm Beach Gardens

Paul Kearns

Telephone etiquette reviewed

In October I articulated one pet peeve of mine—a secretary's telephone or personal interrogation, "May I ask who is calling, please?"

The more than usual number of calls and letters in response indicated that this column must have touched a sensitive area among readers.

Half of the respondents strongly supported my objections to this question and the other half just as vehemently opposed my view.

AN EXECUTIVE in social service work wrote: "Bravo! Being one of those of little power, I find the question of who is calling an affront, a diminution of me and my humanity—Thanks!"

A retired pastor, not always in agreement with this column, nevertheless found on this point he totally supports my opinion.

Years ago he called the home of parishioners. Their young children answered. When he asked for the mother, the tiny tot replied, "Who is calling, please?"

After the mother finally came to the phone, this now irritated priest inquired if she allowed the children to filter all telephone calls. The woman,

A secretary from Scranton, Pennsylvania, for example, concurs with the mother trying to train her children in good business etiquette."

"Correct telephone manners instruct the person calling to say, 'Hello, this is Mr. Smith of Smith and Smith Publishing. May I please speak with



BY FR. JOSEPH M. CHAMPLIN

Mr. White?' That will eliminate irritation all around and is, of course, only proper procedure."

An executive from Boca Raton, Florida at one time instructed his secretaries:

"I'll answer my phone. If it is important

ed to change my 'modus operandi.' Now all my calls are intercepted, some 30 to 40 daily; less than 10% introduce themselves; and 3 out of 4 calls should have been made directly to subordinate department heads who could have promptly served them in their respective areas of responsibility. This is a very serious problem in business."

Two New York State respondents, one a real estate executive and another the veteran secretary to a plant manufacturing manager, would support both the observations of the man from Boca Raton and his recommendation that we stress better telephone manners. They find that knowledge of who is the caller and the general nature of the business to be transacted help in several ways: the executive can thus react more personally and effectively and the secretary often as able to supply needed information or refer the caller to the more pertinent individual.

After reading through these letters, I recognized a need to improve my telephone etiquette and, when appropriate, to disclose my own identity.

However, that leaves unanswered the issue of privacy, particularly in such people oriented locations as rectories, social service departments and doctors' offices.

To repeat the question from last fall's column: Should an anxious, pregnant and unmarried teenager or a nervous Catholic alienated for years from the Church be required or expected to reveal her or his identity over the telephone or at the door? The answer, I think, should be obvious.

My conclusions: Practice, whenever feasible, the telephone etiquette which would have callers identify themselves and perhaps even the topic of the conversation. If it is a delicate matter, do not reveal your identity, but simply indicate that you have a confidential issue to be discussed. Those two steps should eliminate, the still, in my judgment, offensive question, "Who is calling, please?"

'Should an anxious pregnant and unmarried teenager or a nervous Catholic alienated from the church be required or expected to reveal his or her identity over the telephone or at the door?'

presumably rather annoyed herself, remarked, "I am trying to teach them good business telephone manners." Her pastor retorted, "And at the price of your privacy!"

TWO IDEAS in that sharp exchange probably summarize the heart of this issue: proper telephone etiquette and adequate personal privacy.

Those who rejected my position maintained with reasonable arguments that, if the calling person would first identify herself or himself, much of the difficulty disappears.

enough for a person to call me, I owe them the courtesy of directly responding. Please intercept my calls only if I'm in a meeting or another party is in my office!"

He also always identified himself when calling others.

However, this Florida businessman finds telephone etiquette today is totally lacking and consequently has been compelled with regret to alter his style. He wrote:

"Because most people do not follow a courteous attitude on the phone, I have been forc-

The Pope and the bishops

I don't know what the truth is about any conflicts between the Pope and the U.S. bishops. It's talked about, *Newsweek* and *Time* have discussed it, which doesn't necessarily illuminate the situation.

I know the Pope when he spoke to groups of U.S. bishops on their ad limina visits spoke forcefully on those articles of faith where there has been a modern erosion. But he didn't say anything new, he emphasized what is clearly established teaching.

Bishops I've heard from say he was reaffirming principles of faith that must be held by all bishops, that his words were really addressed to all bishops and not just to American bishops. I can believe that, the Pope is the Pope for all. But even if he did address them especially to U.S. bishops then what would be wrong with that? He has not just the right but the responsibility to be concerned about the Church everywhere. And what kind of pride could cause U.S. bishops to be offended by a challenge to be faithful to the teachings of the Church?

What I notice about this is something that is a little disconcerting. There has been a response that there is a collegiality among the bishops and there is a fraternal relationship of the Pope with his fellow bishops all over the world. That's true, there is such a collegial relationship and it is significant. The Pope speaks to his fellow bishops and the Pope listens to his fellow bishops.

But that's not all. The bishops understand that while they share in collegiality with the Pope that he holds a primacy in power over all the churches and that, indeed, the bishops exercise their own episcopal office both in communion with and under of the authority of the Pope.

Sometimes I think that in understanding the very important reality of the collegial relationship of the Pope with his fellow bishops, some fail to understand the distinction of the role of the Pope in relation to all the other bishops. And that distinction includes the fact that he holds a primacy of power over all the churches and that



BY DALE FRANCIS

bishops, although they hold the responsibility for their own dioceses, exercise their own episcopal office under the authority of the Pope.

This is not some theory of my own, this is what is clearly stated in Vatican II's Decree on the Bishops' Pastoral Office in the Church.

That doesn't mean that the Pope simply tells his fellow bishops what they must do and they must snap to it. That's not the way it works, that's not the way Pope John Paul II works. There is a sharing of insights. The role of the Pope is a listening role.

We've heard a great deal about the importance of the U.S. experience. The Pope doesn't fully understand the U.S. experience, we hear. I'm not

quite sure what that U.S. experience is, although I judge the bishops believe they know what it is. Obviously the Pope should know of this and it is likely he does know a great deal about it. But it is a conceit of American Catholicism that what is called the U.S. experience offers a model for the entire Church. Former apostolic delegate, Archbishop Jean Jadot, said the other day that it is a fault of the Church in this country that it tends to think of itself as the center of the Church. But the Church draws wisdom from the experience of those throughout the world.

All of this isn't saying much about a conflict between the Pope and the U.S. bishops because in the fullest sense, no conflict can exist. There may be tensions, there always are, no reason to expect there wouldn't be. But U.S. bishops are faithful to the Church. Some may individually think they know more than the Pope about which way the Church should go, but they understand the Pope holds primacy over all the churches, that they exercise their own episcopal office under his authority, and on this there can be no disagreement.

(Dale Francis is a Nationally Syndicated Columnist).

Until we meet again

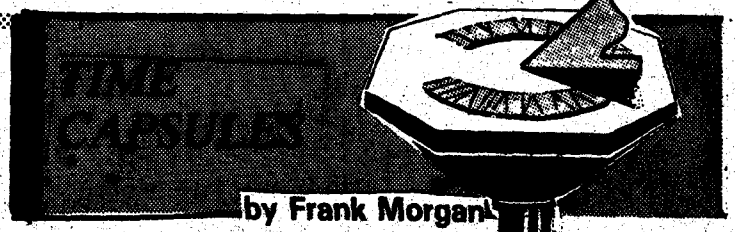
The following is an ancient Irish blessing:

May the road rise to meet you.
May the wind be always at your back.
May the sun shine warm upon your face,
The rains fall soft upon your fields,
And until we meet again
May God hold you in the palm of His Hand.

Among the world's greatest ballet dancers, the Russian born Pole Vaslav Nijinsky was alone in being able to achieve the "entrechat dix" — crossing and uncrossing the feet ten times in a

single leap.

Unstable throughout his life, Nijinsky spent the last years of his life in an insane asylum convinced that he was a horse.



by Frank Morgan

Counting on Christmas

There will be no special bulletins on the evening news this year saying, "Sorry, Christmas has been called off this year." No announcements that Christmas has been taken over by rebel forces; no computer errors that will divert Christmas to the moon instead of earth; no trust-breaking games, as there often are in human relationships, that end in a phone message, saying, "Too bad, I won't be there. I've got

be able to count on the goodness and orderliness of what happens in our lives.

That's not the same as saying we'd like to peer into a crystal ball and know our future. Not at all. That would be boring.

No. We want the surprises but we want them all to be good. We want, in fact, the certainty that they will be good.

YET ON the earthly level, certainty doesn't exist. People can go relatively quickly from happy to sad, healthy to sick, wealthy to poor, employed to unemployed, married to divorced, peace to war.

It is a fact of life. We live with question marks in this earthly existence.

But Advent reminds us that on the other level of our lives, the spiritual, that's not the case at all. We can make our preparations for the arrival of the Lord without worrying whether he'll stand us up.

And that is where our certainty really lies. The Lord comes to bring us the good news that life is ours for the asking, that no matter what happens, he loves us. It is the good news that he is with us all days, and that if we listen to him, believe him and follow him, our Father in heaven will be there to welcome us when we make our transition from life on earth to life forever.

Without hesitation the savior spells out the road map that is the certain course to happiness eternally. It's a sure one. It's in our control to follow or not. It's not a decision made by chance but by choice.

IF WE FALL into the trap of treating Advent as merely the preparation time for a holiday—instead of the coming of the savior—we'll never see the real gift this waiting time offers us. For what we'll do is inject all our ordinary uncertainties into the very season of Advent itself.

And we'll miss its essence when we should be reveling in its therapeutic message—that the Lord is coming, no ifs, ands or maybes.

How long is an hour?

Q. Why is Mass so long? If Mass were shorter, more people would willingly attend. (Rhode Island).



BY TOM LENNON

A. In my young and crazy days, three high school buddies and I sat through two consecutive showings of the just-released blockbuster movie, "Gone With the Wind."

It was an eight-hour day, but the hours didn't seem long at all.

Most Masses are not even one-fourth as long as this movie. So the length of the Mass is not really the issue. Something else is.

The flaws of many present-day liturgies can be listed easily.

FIRST, BE aware that movies and television have accustomed you to rapidly changing images and sounds and to passive entertainment. Practically nothing is required of you. The Mass, however, demands activity of the heart and mind. Thought, concentration, faith, love and repentance—these are some of the things the Lord asks of you when you come to worship him.

But these activities are not easy when your head is filled with the noise of modern civilization, the worries of a hectic world and the slogans of a pagan culture.

So when you arrive at church, perhaps the first and best thing you can do is to try to simmer down and to ask the Holy Spirit to help you be with the Lord in a special way during the coming hour.

THEN CALL to mind that poignant incident in Jesus' life the night before he died. As he prayed desperately for the strength to do his Father's will, his disciples fell asleep.

A while later Jesus woke them and asked them sadly, "How is it that you three were not able to watch with me for one hour?"

Perhaps it would be helpful for you to imagine Jesus saying something like this you:

"In humanity's desperate time of crisis, are you not able to watch with me for one hour on Sunday?"

"Might you carefully search the scripture readings at Mass for those phrases that will help you lead a better life during the coming week? And can you do the same with the homily?"

"MIGHT YOU keep on struggling, no matter how difficult it is, to pay attention to the prayers of the priest and people and pray with them?"

"In every Mass might you seek to give your everyday life to God just as I offer myself to the Father?"

"And might you cherish in a very special way those moments of Holy Communion when we encounter one another and share our deepest thoughts and feelings?"

The Mass is not intended to be blockbuster entertainment. Many have found, however, that the effort they put into Mass gives them solid contentment and even a quiet whisper of joy.

(Send comments and questions to Tom Lennon, 1312 Mass. Ave. N.W., Washington, D.C. 20005.)

BY ANTOINETTE BOSCO



something more important to do."

No. Advent holds a promise that, for a change, there's something we can count on. There is no question about it: The child will be born; the savior will come.

The certainty that accompanies Advent each year is so needed and welcomed in this world of ours, where so many things are subject to interruptions, disruptions and terminations.

WE GO from day to day not knowing what each will bring, trusting most of the time that we will progress with blessed ordinary normalcy, but never knowing for sure.

One of the finest priests I ever knew, Msgr. John Cass, is credited with being the leading advocate several years ago for delayed vocations seminaries in the United States. He recognized the unrest people live with and our need to find the security of an anchor. He wrote about this in a fine book called, "The Quest for Certainty."

Father Cass addressed the fundamental desire we have to

A vision of Christmas

The Christmas story is told in great detail in the private revelations of Anna Catharina Emmerick. This German nun, a stigmatic of the early 19th century, had spiritual visions which were recorded in a four-volume work entitled, "The Life of Our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ" (Academy Library



BY FR. JOHN CATOIR

Guild, Fresno, Cal.) Here are a few excerpts from her vision of the birth of Jesus, condensed from about six pages.

"Mary had to wait standing while Joseph went up and down in search of an inn... nowhere did he find room, everywhere he went he was sent away. And now it began to grow dark....

"Joseph returned in great dejection. I saw that he was shedding tears and because he failed again to find an inn he hesitated to approach. But suddenly he remembered a cave outside of Bethlehem which was used as a storing-place by the shepherds when they brought their cattle to the city.

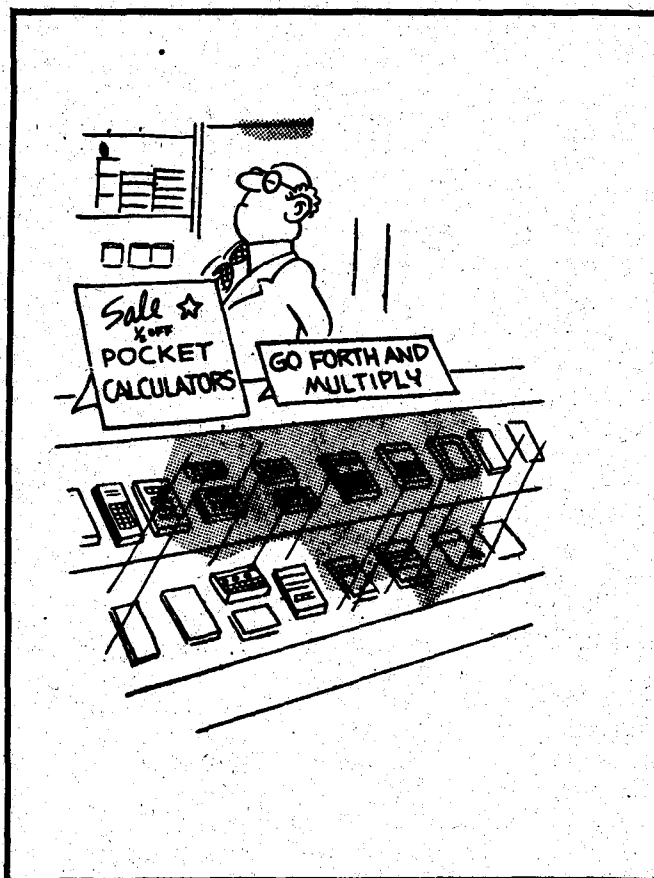
"....I saw Joseph on the following day arranging a seat and couch for Mary. She begged him to do all in his power that they might receive as honorably as possible this Child promised by God, this Child supernaturally conceived. And she invited him to unite with her in prayer for those hard-hearted people who would afford Him no place of shelter.

"When her time was drawing near Mary told Joseph to betake himself to prayer. He left and turned toward his sleeping place to do her bidding. Before entering his little recess, he looked back... He saw the cave filled with the light that streamed from Mary..... He sank prostrate to the ground in prayer and looked not back again. The glory around Mary became brighter and brighter, the lamps that Joseph had lit were no longer to be seen. Mary knelt... At the twelfth hour her prayer became ecstatic....

"Her eyes bent low upon the ground. At that moment she gave birth to the Infant Jesus. I saw Him like a tiny shining Child, lying on the rug at her knees and brighter far than all the other brilliancy... I saw her spread a cover over the Child, but she did not yet take Him up, nor even touch Him. After a long time, I saw the Child stirring and heard it crying, and then only did Mary seem to recover full consciousness. She lifted the Child, along with the cover, to her breast and sat veiled, herself and the Child quite enveloped. I think she was suckling it. I saw the angels around her.... prostrate before Him."

Alleluia, Alleluia, Alleluia.

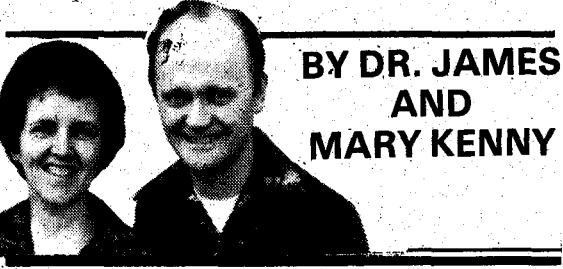
For a free copy of the Christopher News Notes, "And on Earth, Peace....," send a stamped, self-addressed envelope to The Christophers, 12 East 48th St., New York, NY 10017.



Too soon to remarry

Dear Dr. Kenny: Recently widowed, I have been dating a wonderful person who lost her spouse a few months ago. We have much in common and spend a lot of time recalling memories of our partners. (We were not friends before.)

Our friends are reluctant to accept the situation because it has been "less than a year" since our partners died. Where are the relatives and people who were quick to say, "If there's anything I can



BY DR. JAMES
AND
MARY KENNY

do, let me know?" They are never around when needed.

We have our families raised and are considering marriage someday. Having enjoyed a successful marriage we both feel this would be a credit to our first spouse.

You've written on young marriages. What about us in our 50s? (Indiana).

My first reaction is to be very supportive. Your lives are your own, and the opinions of other

people should be secondary.

Your friends are probably motivated by lingering loyalty to your departed spouses. They are having trouble juxtaposing the new person in the old position.

Give your friends time. Mourning usually goes through four stages, which are not easily hurried. First, you must accept the loss. Second, you must express all the emotions you feel. Third, you must get used to life without the deceased. The fourth stage is to replace the deceased.

Your friends are in stage three. You have moved on to stage four.

How did you get to stage four more quickly? Perhaps your spouse had been ill for some time and you had the chance to say goodbye before death. This hastens the grief. Or perhaps you have grieved more intensely than your friends, which will hasten the process.

Whatever, you are dating each other and finding joy in a deepening affection. I applaud your courage to trust your own judgments and not let custom dictate your behavior.

Yes, I agree with you that remarriage after the death of a spouse can be a compliment to your first spouse and the satisfying life you had together. Good experiences beg for repetition.

Further, the evidence is that older persons are more mature in their selection of a partner and

show a better record of marital success. You have much to recommend your union.

One caution, however, following my first positive counsel. Society and its customs are not pointless. The year-long period of mourning after a death has a purpose. The purpose is to protect you.

From what? From many extraneous factors which could add to your motivation to marry. People remarry on the rebound, to avoid going through the sense of loss. Should a sense of loss come after the remarriage, it is devastating to the newly formed relationship.

People remarry to cover up loneliness. Better to let the tears come for a while (stage two) and to shuffle your way through a few months without your beloved (stage three). Unless you take time to say goodbye to your deceased spouse, your new partner will suffer the unfairness of comparisons, and may gain only half a partner.

So be sure you have said goodbye to your lost partner and that you have had time to mourn. Have patience with the counsel of your friends. Then reach confidently for the affection and support that men and women find in each other. You have every chance for a fine and lasting love.

(Reader questions on family living and child care to be answered in print are invited. Address questions: The Kennys; Box 872, St. Joseph's College; Rensselaer, IN 47978.)

'I'm just no good'

"I'm just no good," he said, head bowed on hands, eyes refusing to meet those of the adults gathered round to help him. "I've never been any good," he added after a pause. "I can't get good grades, I can't run good so I can't make a team and look at my face." He raised his head and we dutifully viewed mild adolescent zits sprinkled here and there.

I'll call him Tony, age 15, a classic example of what we call a shame-based personality. He was being counselled for drug experimentation and inability to communicate with his family.

His family—that's another story. It matched the billboard image of the good family of past definition—two parents, upwardly mobile, intensely interested in rearing successful children, and strong authoritarian Christians. We had met with them and found them to be caring parents but their style of parenting hearkened back to the sad method of shaming and humiliating their children who didn't perform well in family, school, or sports.

They couldn't accept Tony's natural limitations in school and athletics and instead, under the guise of support, pressured him to achieve the impossible. If they pushed enough, they were sure he would find the brains to be an A student and the muscles to make the team.

MORE SADLY, they failed to recognize his natural gifts which would have given him the self-esteem he was so tragically lacking if they had

been acknowledged and valued. Tony had wonderful gifts. He got along well with everyone (except his parents). He preferred cooperation to



BY
DOLORES
CURRAN

competition so he didn't play to win or try to outshine classmates. He stepped in whenever someone bullied a weaker one. He was a sensitive introspective young man with absolutely no self-worth—a prime candidate for drug abuse.

Nine out of ten young drug users have shame-based personalities. Like Tony they view themselves as unworthy in a society that judges individuals by their achievement rather than their character. The remaining one out of ten has good self-esteem and views his or her drug use as a behavior which needs correcting, not evidence proving unworthiness.

Tony needed help but his family needed it first. We had to work with his parents, teaching them to help Tony to like himself and that was difficult because, while they loved him, they weren't proud of him. He was an embarrassment to them because he got C-minuses and didn't make any

teams.

His dad's anguished question still rings in my ears, "How can you raise his self-esteem when he doesn't have anything to work on?" He glimpsed little value in the strengths I listed above. He says only class rank, awards and trophies are criteria.

I MEET TONY'S parents everywhere. They want to know how to recognize and value special gifts in children that weren't valued when they were children. I begin by listing gifts to look for and encouraging them to praise their children for these: Is your child a peacemaker? Does he care about others? Is he pleasant to be around? Is he good at fixing things? Does he have humor that defuses family tension? Does he enjoy solitude? Does he have a strong sense of fairness? Does he help others knowing he won't get any credit for it? Does he have a good memory, filling in details the family has forgotten? Is he a good listener even if he doesn't want to talk or argue?

I'm happy to report that Tony's parents are starting to affirm these qualities and are having limited success. They realize they were trying to change him into something he isn't and they're seeing an improved self-acceptance as a worthwhile person.

But they also wish they had started earlier so it wouldn't be so painful for all of them.

(1983 Alt Publishing Co.)

(Contributed by Mimi and Terry Reilly)

Family Night

Opening prayer

Sing a Christmas carol and talk about its meaning for you.

Something to think about

Advent culminates in Christmas, the celebration of God's goodness and generosity to us.

Activity ideas

Young Families
Read the Christmas story (Lk 2:1-20). Retell it using pantomime, act it out, move the crib figures in place as the story is read, or record it on a cassette tape.

Middle Years and Adult Families

Gather around the Christmas tree. Have each person bring a handmade ornament, a symbol of something they want to say about Christmas, about Jesus, or about family.

LEADER: Lord, we believe that you are here present, that you are part of our family. We are going to celebrate your birthday as we have celebrated no other. We praise and thank you for the gift of life, symbolized by this tree. We acknowledge that you are our light in the midst of darkness. (Light the tree taking special note of the brightest light on the top representing Christ.) Help us to recognize your gifts, especially the gifts of life and love with which we have been blessed.

Each person takes a turn putting an ornament on the tree and then offers a prayer. Read 1 John 4:9-14. Close with your favorite family Christmas carol.

Snack time

Bake a birthday cake for Jesus. Decorate it and enjoy his birthday party.

Entertainment

1. Wrap a birthday present for Jesus from the family. Each one can write a note to Jesus wishing Him a Happy Birthday. Give the gift you wrap for Jesus to an organization serving needy families.
2. Choose a favorite Christmas story to tell or to read aloud.
3. Pass around the Christmas cards that have been received. Arrange them in an attractive display.

Sharing

- Share what aspect of Christmas warms your heart the most.
- Share the happiest Christmas you ever had.
- Tell about the most meaningful gift you have ever received.

Closing prayer

Thank you, God, for the gift of your son Jesus. May our family ever more fully experience the life and love he brings. Help us to live our lives in the example of your son from the poverty of Bethlehem to the suffering of the cross, knowing that it leads to the glory of the Resurrection. Amen.

Christmas day is joy fulfilled

READINGS: Isaiah 9:1-3, 5-6 Titus 2:11-14 Luke 2:1-14

BACKGROUND:

The theme in all of the readings for Christmas day is that of joy fulfilled. In the first reading, Isaiah speaks with great hope about the next ruler to come to his kingdom. In its fuller



**BY
FR.
JAMES
BLACK**

sense, obviously, the passage applies to the coming of Jesus as well.

The gospel account from Luke is the Christmas story, familiar to virtually everyone. It speaks of Bethlehem, the inn, shepherds, angels and the manger.

In the second reading, the author of the letter to Titus reflected on what Jesus' coming as man really meant.

REFLECTION:

I opened a few Christmas cards the other day, looked hurriedly at the signature, and set each aside. Once I

realized what I was doing, I slowed down.

I remembered that when I was pick-

ing out my own cards for this season, I was very careful to find some that really reflected my feelings toward the peo-

ple to whom I would send them. Surely, the people who sent me these cards went through the same procedure. I should at least take the time to read the message in each card.

Essentially, all the cards said the same thing; at least, they did until I realized who had sent them. Then the messages became far more personalized and more important.

There were good wishes from my present and former students and their parents; from priest friends throughout the country, and even from readers I've never met.

For me, Christmas becomes most real when people take the time to relate to other people. That only seems to work when we slow down a bit and immerse ourselves in all the joy of the season.

Let me close by extending my prayers and sincere best wishes to all newspaper staffers and readers in the dioceses of Nashville, Evansville, Biloxi, Miami, Atlanta, Erie, Louisville, Indianapolis and Covington. Thanks to each of you for many kindnesses. All the best to you in the New Year!



The gate is narrow to life

Q. I am a married Catholic who believes in birth control, which, some tell me, is in total contradiction to the teachings of the church and inexcusable any time. However, that is not the whole story and the priest I talked with seemed to feel that the answer is not that simple.

I love my husband and children. I was from a large family. My mother is



**BY FR.
JOHN
DIETZEN**

high strung; while she did her best I'm sure she was not cut out for raising nine children.

I'm like her in a lot of ways. I enjoy my two children, they are my life. I feel I am a good mother now, but if I had more children to cope with I know I would be a terrible mother. I know my tolerance level and I don't want my children to grow up remembering a

screaming, unhappy mother.

A priest in confession told me that the church does not approve birth control but that I should not discontinue the sacraments because of this. What do you think? (Iowa).

A. I HAVE TWO observations, both of which I believe are essential for you to consider. First, the priest gave you good advice, at least as far as he went, and judging only from what you have told me in your question.

While some individual priests may feel they must be more rigid than your priest, he seems to be following directions pointed out by nearly every conference of bishops in implementing the teaching of the church concerning birth control.

Our American bishops, for example, in their pastoral advice following the encyclical "Humanae Vitae" of Pope Paul VI on this subject in 1968, urged "those who have resorted to this never to lose heart, but to continue to take full advantage of the strength which comes from the sacrament of penance, and the grace, healing and peace in the Eucharist."

THE CANADIAN BISHOPS at the same time pointed out that people may honestly and prayerfully see themselves faced with clear and serious conflict of duties, in reconciling the living of their married life with responsible parenthood to children already born, with the health of the mother and so on. Whatever decision the couple makes in this way, say these bishops, "they may be safely assured that whoever honestly chooses the course which seems right to him does so in good conscience."

At that time Pope Paul himself ex-

**APOSTLESHIP OF PRAYER—
INTENTIONS FOR DECEMBER**

*recommended to your prayers for
Pope John Paul II*

**Respect for
the Workers
of the Third World**



The worker has a right to respect, the right not to be deprived of the little he or she has, the right to be free from exploitation at the hands of the rich and the powerful. Workers have a right to help that will allow them to develop their true dignity as sons and daughters of God.

The above are a few ideas of the Holy Father from his many talks on work and the worker. The constant theme of these talks has been justice for the worker and the dignity of every working man and woman.

This month, he asks your prayers for the workers of the Third World countries; they are particularly plagued by abuses and injustices. In many of these countries, they are particularly plagued by abuses and injustices. In many of these countries, women must work at heavy labor, often 12 hours a day, carrying bricks or breaking rocks. In many places children work in factories or mills beside their mothers under appalling conditions and often without any salary.

Pray in support of these workers who suffer so unjustly. Pray that we and others may begin to see in the poor and oppressed worker, Christ Himself. Pray in the very words of the Holy Father: "Jesus, teach my eyes to discover the truth, to recognize You, Lord, in the little worker, the humble worker that I see."

pressed satisfaction with this understanding of how good Catholic couples might approach such a decision.

Another factor, however, must be

prayerfully reflected on by couples who wish to make their decisions in a Christian and loving way. As Pope Paul pointed out in "Humanae Vitae," we "cannot hide the sometimes serious difficulties inherent in the life of Christian married persons.

"For them as for everyone else, 'the gate is narrow and the way is hard that leads to life.' But the hope of that life must illuminate their way, as with courage they strive to live with wisdom, justice and piety in this present time."

This is simply to say what I'm sure sincere couples already know. Decisions such as these, having such far-reaching, eternal consequences for others as well as for the husband and wife, are clearly decisions which must be made with the utmost love and generosity.

Couples must search their motives and priorities to be as sure as they conscientiously can that their decisions reflect the teachings of the Gospel and the church, as well as their own highest aspirations for their lives and their marriage.

Furthermore, such decisions must be re-evaluated with some frequency, to discover whether changing circumstances might later lead them to different conclusions. Life and death are obviously matters we must always approach with tremendous humility, openness, and as much big-heartedness as we are possibly capable of.

(A free brochure outlining Catholic practice about cremation and some other funeral questions is available by sending a stamped, self-addressed envelope to Father Dietzen, Holy Trinity Parish, 704 N. Main St., Bloomington, Ill. 61701.)

(Questions for this column should be sent to Father Dietzen at the above address.)

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Some raves, pans...and yawns

Just as you're getting ready to celebrate new year, TV is getting ready to mark the halfway point in its year, which begins in September and ends



BY
**JAMES
BREIG**

"Harcastle and McCormick" (ABC): Mr. Cannel is also in charge of this one about a retired judge and his sidekick who go after felons that have escaped the law's grasp. Here, Mr. Cannel hits the mark a little more often. Tires still squeal and police cars are forever rolling down embankments, but the dialog can be sharp.

Still, there's the underlying premise which says that vigilantes can do more for us than the justice system. And the car isn't as cute as K.I.T.T. on

"Knight rider."

"Scarecrow and Mrs. King" (CBS): Kate Jackson and Bruce Boxleitner play a housewife and a spy who link up for adventures in this series—and I find it nicely diverting for Monday nights.

My one objection: It has kept me from watching "Boone."

"AfterMASH" (CBS): Who hasn't seen this sequel to "M*A*S*H"? Potter, Klinger and Mulcahy go to Missouri where they pick up a wife, a wife and—well, no wife. I like the show. It hasn't got the frenetic wackiness of its progenitor, but it's

and I usually give a series more than one gander, but this was so off-putting at first viewing that I have not returned to it.

"Lottery" (ABC): Ditto for this series about winners of hundreds of thousands of dollars. The problem with both shows is that I don't like the format, which is also seen on "Love Boat" and "Fantasy Island," wherein guest stars of dubious distinction take part in episodic segments of little dramatic or comedic content.

"Mr. Smith" (NBC): Have you caught this sitcom about an orangutan who talks, writes symphonies, plays chess and consults with the government—all the result of his having ingested some secret formula?

The first episode was funny because of the premise, but it has grown quickly stale. Hearing the hairy one deliver punch lines was funny the first time around, but that's about it.

"For Love or Honor" (NBC), **"Yellow Rose"** (NBC) and **"Emerald Point, N.A.S."** (CBS): I have so far skillfully avoided having to watch any



HOLIDAY HAPPENINGS

Television will offer a wide variety of holiday specials this year—everything from the mythical Mickey Mouse on parade to Grace Kelly in her last film appearance, "The Nativity."

"Walt Disney's Very Merry Christmas Parade" airs live from the Magic Kingdom on Dec. 25 in a special on ABC (Channel 10) at 1:30 p.m. Princess Grace will appear as the hostess of "The Nativity" on Dec. 25 on WPTV, Channel 5 at 9 a.m.; at noon on WTVJ, Channel 4 and on Selkirk at 5 p.m.

The romantic ballet based on the Frank Lehar opera, "The Merry Widow," will be broadcast Dec. 26 on PBS, Channel 2 at 8 p.m.



whenever reruns begin (usually in early Spring).

So it's a good time for me to catch up on programs which debuted last Fall and to give my quick assessments of the ones which remain (I never did get a look at "Cutter to Houston" and a few others which met early deaths).

So here are some raves and pans:

"The Rousters" (NBC): This was on and then off but may return again. It stars Chad Everett as Wyatt Earp III and centers around a small carnival. It has the same car chases as every other action series and should have had a little pizzazz since it was under the tutelage of Stephen Cannell, who worked wonders with "Rockford Files" and other series.

Not this time. "Rousters" was just another squealing tire-ade in which Southerners are portrayed as either dumb or vicious. (When are you folks down there going to get together to protest this stereotyping?)

RELIGIOUS TV

Christmas Eve

A "showcase of gospel music" is presented at 9 p.m. with South Florida's outstanding gospel choirs, groups and soloists in performances and interviews on PBS, Channel 2.

At midnight, "Christmas Rome, 1983" joins Pope John Paul II as he celebrates midnight Mass from St. Peter's on NBC, Channel 7.

Christmas Day

"Kalikimaka: Christmas in Hawaii"—join the islanders in a Christmas service from the Kawiahao Church in Honolulu at 12:30 p.m. on ABC, Channel 10.

well done most of the time with a slower pace.

At times, it borders on being just another sitcom (e.g. the Thanksgiving episode, which was sappy), but then it can be unique (in its treatment of veterans and their problems). I'll keep watching.

"Bay City Blues" (NBC): What can you say about a series which debuted by showing us someone vomiting?

The series centers around a minor league baseball team, but the emphasis is not on that game; it's on the game of hide-and-go-sleep. And that's putting it politely. Every character on this show, it seems, has some sort of sexual malfunction: impotence, bed-wetting, adultery, fornication, and those are the ones I can name in print.

The show must have been written by people who have never looked above the waist.

"Hotel" (ABC): I watched it once

of these overblown soap operas. Aren't you proud of me?

"Jennifer Slept Here" (NBC): Me, too. During the show.



By George:
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Making reconciliation a celebration

Fr. Seamus O'Shaughnessy
Associate pastor
Christ the King Church

Who said confession is not popular? Last Tuesday evening, December 13th at Christ the King Church in South Dade, literally hundreds turned out for the Sacrament of Reconciliation. It was beautiful to see such a multi-ethnic and varied age group present; parents, youth, grandparents, young singles, divorced and widowed. They all responded to the call to "Come Home," "O come all ye faithful." They brought family members and friends; some who had been away from the Church for 23 years. It was really a conversion experience.

The program, conducted by Fr. Seamus O'Shaughnessy, had 11 priests from surrounding parishes and the college seminary participating in this time of great healing. The ceremony began with the church in darkness. From out-

side the church one could hear the soft singing of the 60 member choir when slowly the church doors opened and the procession of choir members, carrying candles, and priests entered to the song, "O Come, O Come Emanuel." The procession advanced to the front of the church, lighting stationary candles among the aisles, and then placed their candles on the floor surrounding a young lady portraying the Virgin Mary. After the greeting and opening prayer by Fr. O'Shaughnessy and a musical number by the choir, twelve individuals, representing members of the parish, came from various places of the congregation, one at a time, lifted one of the candles around the Virgin Mary and made proclamations such as, "I don't contribute to the gossip, I only listen to it. Isn't that OK?" and "I've never had an abortion, but it's legal. Doesn't that make it right?" Needless to say, this was very powerful.

The Sacrament of Reconciliation followed with the 11 priests assigned to locations throughout the church to hear confessions. The lines to each priest were like that to see the movie "E.T." The program ended with a closing prayer, music and dance, and refreshments.

The program was preceded by months of preparation. Invitations were sent and the entire parish family, through collective responsibility, was encouraged to reach out and bring someone home through the reconciliation program. Reminders of the upcoming program kept mysteriously cropping up all over the place with "Come Home" stickers seen on supermarket windows, in the car parking lot, on the church pews and in the parish bulletin. Both priests preached a homily on "Coming Home."

This was the fifth reconciliation program presented by Christ the King with

incredible results. The response gets bigger each year. It is a celebration. It is festive. It is long anticipated and joyfully remembered after it is long over. It touches the very fiber of one's being. Today, like never before, it builds good memories. It no longer is a fearfilled experience where the priests of the past "chewed you out" or where you had to take a swig of whiskey to calm your nerves before going to confession.

The recent World Synod of Bishops meeting in Rome suggested that this sacrament must develop fond memories in our Catholic people. It must be looked forward to; it should be joyfully anticipated and long remembered. This has been realized for the past five years at Christ the King Church. How else can we explain the literally hundreds who attend?

(Fr. O'Shaughnessy is currently publishing a book on Advent and Lenten reconciliation programs)

Volunteers receive awards for Respect Life work

In two separate celebrations this month, 14 persons received awards for their untiring efforts to foster respect for life in our community.

The annual awards ceremonies were held in conjunction with the feast of Our Lady of Guadalupe, honored by the Respect Life Apostolate as the patroness of the unborn.

The Respect Life Award was given

to Barbara Cruse, director of Child Welfare for Catholic Community Services. Fr. Dan Kubala, director of the Respect Life Apostolate, described Cruse as the "matriarch of Respect Life."

She was there when Respect Life first ventured into the work of the Emergency Pregnancy Service and has remained with REspect Life throughout its growth, he said.

CRUSE conducted the first volunteer training session, Fr. Kubala added, and continues to give workshops for the volunteers.

"She has always made herself available for advice and recommendations," he said. "The work of Respect Life has been attempted with much greater confidence because of her knowledge and wisdom."

The Guadalupe Award, named for Our Lady, was given to one person in each of the six area Respect Life Offices. Those receiving the award were:

Nancy Bohlen, Stuart
Mary Anne Maraist, West Palm Beach
Cherry Bowman, Coral Springs
Barbara Groeber, Hollywood
Libby Johnson, North Dade
Maria Fernandez, Hialeah

The Juan Diego award was also given to one person working in each of the six area Respect Life Offices. The award is named for the faithful, obedient servant who carried forth the message of our Lady of Guadalupe. Those receiving the award were:

Jackie Cheatham, Stuart
Virginia McManus, West Palm Beach

Barbara Chiras, Coral Springs
Mary Anne Prentice, Hollywood
Rosemary Foreman, North Dade
Bertha Rodriguez, Hialeah

Another award was given to Jean Hering, in gratitude for her "peaceful presence" in the Respect Life Office. Jean is an adult student at the Marian Center, whose sister-in-law works at the respect Life Office.

Pastoral center hosts World Peace Art exhibit

Artists Speak For Peace, which has had three successful exhibitions on the theme of World Peace in the past three years of its organization, is now embarking upon a fourth exhibition at the Pastoral Center of the Catholic Diocese January 3, 1984. Artists have come forward to visualize the Theme of World Peace, Brotherhood and Justice in their various media.

The exhibit will be held concurrently with the Conference of the Catholic Diocese during Catholic World Peace Week at the Pastoral Center, 9401 Biscayne Blvd., Miami, Florida, January 3, 4, 5 and 6, 1984 and for two weeks thereafter. The theme of the exhibition is World Peace, Brotherhood and Justice. Works are to be brought in December 27, from 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. Regional, national and international artists will be represented at this showing.

Catechetical center closed for Christmas vacation

Archdiocesan Catechetical Center will be closed for Christmas vacation from noon, Friday, December 23, until Tuesday January 3, 1984 at 9: AM.

St. Thomas More holds home mission

Catholics, Protestants and even a person affiliated with Jews for Jesus participated in a Home Mission program at St. Thomas More in Boynton Beach which broke an attendance record for the Southeastern region of the United States.

A total of 1,436 people took part in the program conducted by Passionist priests Fr. Paulinus Gepp C.P. and Fr. Peter Halisy, C.P., from Our Lady of Florida in North Palm Beach. The event began on Nov. 28 and ended Dec. 9.

Families from a total of 38 locations—mobile home parks and homes—opened their doors to the priests in order to strengthen and renew their faith within the privacy of their own residences.

"It was an evangelical event. The priests heard confession. Conducted Mass and answered any questions people asked about the church," said Deacon Leo Rayball of St. Thomas More.

No one was excluded from the Home Mission's outreach. Youth groups,

Msgr. Donnelly at national meet

Msgr. John Donnelly, Archdiocesan director of the Holy Childhood Assn., attended the organization's annual conference in Washington at which an award was presented to a mission priest in Haiti who was featured in The Voice recently.

Father Lawrence Bohnen, SBD, feeds 12,000 children daily in a Port au Prince ghetto and is supported in part by Food For the Poor, a South Florida lay organization. He was given the Bishop Charles de Forbin Award.

Msgr. Donnelly attended various workshops and exchanged ideas on programs and activities to help needy children.

CCD students and senior citizens were all invited into the program. A special segment was also conducted by Fr. Halisy for the deaf and hearing impaired.



CATHOLIC COMMUNICATOR. During the national convention of Catholic communicators, Sr. Berta

archdiocese Radio and Television Center, was elected Pres. of the Catholic conference of Hispanic communicators. She will now be a board member of UNDA, the international association of Catholic communicators.

St. Brendan's celebrates anniversary mass

In South Dade, St. Brendan Church, 8725 SW 32nd St. Miami, will celebrate the 30th anniversary of the first Mass offered in the parish during Midnight Mass on Christmas Eve under a tent.

Msgr. Thomas O'Donovan, founding pastor of the parish, now retired, will be the principal celebrant of the concelebrated liturgy with the Rev. Jose Nickse, pastor, and priests of the parish.

The outdoor Mass will be offered in English and Spanish.

Catholic Women's Bible Breakfast

The Office of Lay Ministry, Palm Beach County District, will sponsor a monthly Bible breakfast for the women of the Archdiocese of Miami, North area, beginning Saturday, January 21, 1984 from 9:00 a.m. until 11:00 a.m., at the Ramada Inn located at 1800 Palm Beach Lakes Boulevard, West Palm Beach across from the Palm Beach Mall.

Tickets will be \$6.00 and may be obtained by calling Sharon at 848-8485. We ask that reservations be made by January 12, 1984.

The format will be one of song, scripture instruction, and an inspirational talk.

It's a Date

The Booster Club of Chaminade High School will hold their annual Galo New Year's Eve party at the school, 500 Chaminade Dr. in Hollywood at 9 p.m. Dancing, Live music, Buffet. Tickets are \$18 and can be purchased at chaminade or through the mail addressed to the booster club. For further information call Bill Bravo, 981-5359 (between 8 and 10 p.m.) or Ed Drugan, 989-9305.

St. Gregory's Church in Plantation will present a special Christmas music program before each Mass on Dec. 24th and 25th. Masses on Dec. 24 th are at 4 p.m., 5:30 p.m., 8:30 p.m., 10 p.m., and midnight. On Christmas

day they are at 8 a.m., 9:15 a.m., 10:30 a.m. and noon. Selections from Handel's Messiah, the Bach Cantata and Christmas carols.

All Chaminade High School invites alumni, wives and friends to attend the Annual Christmas Reunion & Party, Monday, Dec. 26th at 7:30 p.m. on the campus, 500 Chaminade Drive, Hollywood. Admission is just \$1.00 per person and no reservations are necessary. For further information call 989-5150 weekdays.

The Father Solanus Guild meeting will be held on Sunday, January 8, 1984 at the Blessed Sacrament parish hall, 1701 E. Oakland Park Blvd., Ft. Lauderdale at 2 PM. Refreshments will be served.

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GOD in the Human Situation

A strong message of Christmas

By Father James A. Black
NC News Service

During the Christmas season, the church selects scripture readings from the sections of the Gospels known as "the infancy narratives."

There are only two infancy narratives to be found in the gospel accounts: One is in Matthew, the other in Luke. The two accounts contain significant differences.

Matthew's account mentions Joseph and his espousal to Mary. Matthew describes the violence of Herod against the children of Nazareth. He tells of the magi who followed a star.

LUKE describes the kinship between Mary and Elizabeth, the appearance of angels to the shepherds at Bethlehem and the birth of Jesus in a manger.

In all their details, the two authors were trying to present information that was more significant than biographical detail. Instead, they were trying to say something important about who Jesus was.

Matthew opened his narrative with a genealogy of Jesus. His audience was largely composed of Christian converts from Judaism. Such a genealogy would have been important to them because one of Jesus' ancestors was King David.

You might remember that God made a promise to David: From David's line would come the Messiah.

THE CIRCUMSTANCES surrounding the birth of Jesus are found in Matthew 1:18-25. This brief passage contains most of the New Testament statements about Joseph.

Chapter 2 of Matthew relates the coming of the magi—symbols of the gentile world—to see Jesus.

Herod's reaction to Jesus' birth is also described. His intent, obviously, was to eliminate Jesus as soon as possible. Herod viewed Jesus as a threat to the throne.

The first two chapters of Luke also contain an infancy narrative. Luke described the Annunciation, perhaps an event unknown to Matthew. Luke also described the circumstances surrounding the birth of John the baptizer.

'Each evangelist wanted to make clear one indisputable fact, no matter how he chose to express it: God became man. God himself came down from heaven to become one with us.'

Some remarkable similarities can be found when comparing the infancy narratives in Luke with several Old Testament stories in which a child was born through God's intervention.

THREE COME immediately to mind: the
Page 22-Friday, December 23, 1983-THE VOICE

By Bob Dylak
NC News Service

It's OK to give Christmas presents. About this time of year we may need that affirmation because some otherwise good and kindly people try to convince us that gift giving demeans the spirit of Christmas. That can happen, but it doesn't have to.

Love is the reason people do most of the things they do at Christmas time. And lots of us count on a gift to somehow express our affections, because when it comes to expressing love, our society is pretty primitive.

A friend helped me put this into some perspective a few years ago as we shopped in a hardware store (they sell everything in some of those places). Last-minute shoppers were busily gathering games off the shelves.

"What people are really buying is love," he said.

Gift-wrapped

AWARE that he had a rather dry sense of humor, I waited for a punch line. "How's that?" I finally asked.

"Most of those folks will never get around to playing those games with their kids. They know a lot of the games will be lost or broken a few weeks after the holidays. But they see these things advertised on television and the commercials show families playing games together.

"Everybody's happy. Nobody's fighting or shouting. The little kids aren't accusing each other or cheating. Everybody wants that kind of family. They buy the games and hope their family will find that kind of instant happiness.

"But it's a substitute for love. It's not the real thing."

I thought a while before answering.

"Maybe it's not so different. Sure, people want families to be fun. They want to be together and they want to be happy—especially at Christmas. That's good."

In response to his shrug, I pointed out that just buying those kinds of things was an effort at communicating care. "They're saying, 'This is what I hope for us. This is what I'd like.'"

"There are people who think the whole idea is commercial. They don't see any good in it. There are also people who measure the holiday in terms of the gifts they accumulate. They're wrong—and they're a minority."

You don't have to give or get a gift at Christmas to know that you are loved. But it helps if you are able somehow to give one.

Most of us know that Christmas is the best time to tell the people around us we love them. We don't give that message often enough.

You can't possibly dump a sufficient amount of love on people—especially children—in a set time and expect it to last for days, weeks or months.

LOVING is easier than explanations.

That's why a lot of us give gifts. We want family, friends and neighbors to know that we care. The words we want to say somehow don't

angel's announcement to Sarah about Isaac's birth in Genesis 17; the similar announcement to Samson's mother in Judges 13:2; the announcement of Samuel's impending birth in 1 Samuel 1.

The Old Testament accounts all involve elderly women who could hardly bear children under normal circumstances. But Mary was young, engaged to be married. She asked how she could be the mother of God's son. Upon hearing the angel's response, she professed her willingness to



Rodney Fulton saunters down Pine Chapel Road in Hampton, Va., whistling a merry tune while carrying a gift for his grandmother. His pooch, Duchess, comes along to keep him company. Love is the reason people do most of the things they do at Christmas time and a gift is one way we try to express our love. (NC Photo from UPI)

fit together in our minds and sound strange in our mouths.

The miracle of Christmas is that it makes us want very much to say them.

So if you get my present, even if it's tacky or the wrong size, it doesn't matter. What I'm trying to give is some of myself.

Love is truly the best thing each of us has to offer. A lot of us just don't know exactly how to wrap it.

be a part of God's plan.

The traditional story of the birth of Jesus—the Gospel used at Midnight Mass—is found in Luke 2:1-14. Because of the crowded and public nature of inns at the time, it was probably just as well that Mary and Joseph were directed to a nearby stable. At least the stable provided some privacy for childbearing.

There are so many differences between the accounts in Matthew and Luke that we'll never know in specific detail what happened at Jesus' birth. But each evangelist wanted to make clear one indisputable fact, no matter how he chose to express it: God became man. God himself came down from heaven to become one with us.

That is indeed a fact worth celebrating.

The world's 'business as usual'

By Gabe Huck
NC News Service

Like most other tribes, the Christian people have waited. We have waited, and called those waiting days "Advent."

We have waited to tell the stories and sing the songs and pray the prayers. We have waited to put into word and melody and procession all that we want to stake our lives on: this place, this earth, this flesh-God's dwelling place.

Before there were theologies for

'It is a true story being told, for that, we know, is the way it goes, the way it went, the way it will go: We've all known kings like Herod.'

Christmas, there were stories. Around the stories there came to be festivity.

The stories were not histories or documentaries. They were tales told about a birth by people who had to see everything through the other end of life, the death in which Jesus triumphed.

And so the people told of a woman from Galilee called Mary who, as the poet Gerard Manley Hopkins wrote:

**"Gave God's infinity
"Dwindled to infancy
"Welcome in womb and breast,
"Birth, milk, and the rest...."**

THERE WAS a birth. There was the bursting of waters, pushing, cutting cord, fondly wrapping. There was parting at the beginning, as at every beginning.

And not only, the stories tell, the blood of birth spilled, but other blood, the world's most innocent blood in the death of the innocents.

It is a true story being told, for that, we know, is the way it goes, the way it went, the way it will go: We've all known kings like Herod.

It's practically a prerequisite for the job: "Sure, somebody's going to get hurt—a few lives lost, but isn't it worth it?" It comes with the territory.

But then consider how the medieval drama called "The Play of Herod" ends. We see the escape to Egypt, the hasty retreat of the magi, then the intrusion of the military into the village and, as the children are put to death, the biblical wailing of Rachel who would not be comforted because her children are no more.

But this is not the end of the play. Did the medieval authors somehow invent a happy ending? Nothing of the kind. The ending is not happy. It is a great mystery. For there is a "Te Deum" sung: "We praise you, God,



A Salvadoran mother in a Honduran refugee camp holds her child close as she ponders their uncertain future. Her humble surroundings might be akin to those of Mary and her child when she gave birth in the manger. (NC Photo)

we confess you as Lord."

THE GREATEST chant of praise and thanksgiving. This is sung by Mary and Joseph, processing through the audience. But they are joined in their song and procession by the animals and the angels, by the shepherds, by the lamenting Rachel and the parents of Bethlehem, and they are joined by the soldiers and their victims and by Herod.

They all process and all sing praise. And we sing too, finding ourselves in the procession.

Today we can't imagine it. We take our Christmas with lots of sugar. And we take it in a day. Though we've been baptized into his death, we have little time for or patience with how that death is told at Christmas, a death that forever confuses lament and praise.

And no wonder we are careful to keep Christmas at arm's length. What is Herod in these times?

"O the night of the weeping children!

"O the night of the children branded for death

**"Sleep may not enter here...
"Yesterday mother still drew
"Sleep toward them like a white moon..."**

**"Now blows the wind of dying,
"Blows the shifts over the hair
"That no one will comb again."
(From "O the Chimneys," by Nelly Sachs (New York: Farrar, Straus and Giroux.)**

NOT ABOUT Bethlehem but about Auschwitz. Or maybe about any place the world's Herods (include us in) have wandered. From the year's news of 1983: How many places, how many innocents?

Where is that mystery in our Christmas, the mystery that is only the victorious cross? It is right there in the stories we tell, the carols we sing, the gifts we give and cards we write, the time we take to process through the dozen days from Christmas to Epiphany, the many ways we have to whisper to one another that the days are numbered now for the world's business as usual.

Somehow, some way, we are going to join hands and take the procession all over this earth.

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A	S	A	M	T	S	I	R	H	C	H	G	S	I
C	O	R	Q	M	E	H	E	L	H	T	E	B	H

Know Your Faith

**GOD
in the
Human Situation**



The world's 'business as usual'

By Gabe Huck
NC News Service

Like most other tribes, the Christian people have waited. We have waited, and called those waiting days "Advent."

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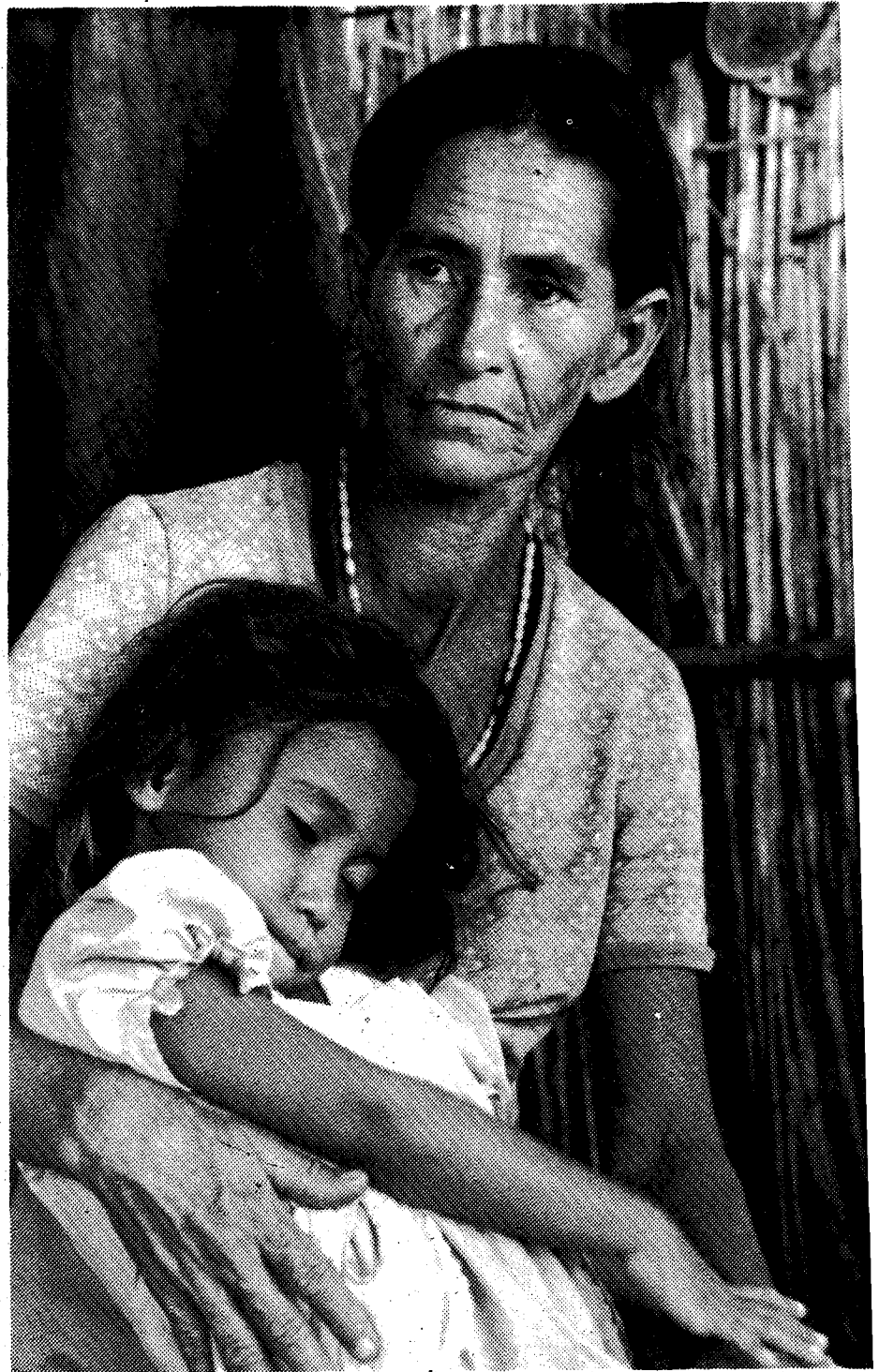
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It's practically a prerequisite for the job: "Sure, somebody's going to get hurt—a few lives lost, but isn't it worth it?" It comes with the territory.

But then consider how the medieval drama called "The Play of Herod" ends. We see the escape to Egypt, the hasty retreat of the magi, then the intrusion of the military into the village and, as the children are put to death, the biblical wailing of Rachel who would not be comforted because her children are no more.

But this is not the end of the play. Did the medieval authors somehow invent a happy ending? Nothing of the kind. The ending is not happy. It is a great mystery. For there is a "Te Deum" sung: "We praise you, God,



A Salvadoran mother in a Honduran refugee camp holds her child close as she ponders their uncertain future. Her humble surroundings might be akin to those of Mary and her child when she gave birth in the manger. (NC Photo)

we confess you as Lord."

THE GREATEST chant of praise and thanksgiving. This is sung by Mary and Joseph, processing through the audience. But they are joined in their song and procession by the animals and the angels, by the shepherds, by the lamenting Rachel and the parents of Bethlehem, and they are joined by the soldiers and their victims and by Herod.

They all process and all sing praise. And we sing too, finding ourselves in the procession.

Today we can't imagine it. We take our Christmas with lots of sugar. And we take it in a day. Though we've been baptized into his death, we have little time for or patience with how that death is told at Christmas, a death that forever confuses lament and praise.

And no wonder we are careful to keep Christmas at arm's length. What is Herod in these times?

"O the night of the weeping children!

"O the night of the children branded for death

"Sleep may not enter here...
"Yesterday mother still drew
"Sleep toward them like a white moon..."

"Now blows the wind of dying,
"Blows the shifts over the hair
"That no one will comb again."
(From "O the Chimneys," by Nelly Sachs (New York: Farrar, Straus and Giroux.)

NOT ABOUT Bethlehem but about Auschwitz. Or maybe about any place the world's Herods (include us in) have wandered. From the year's news of 1983: How many places, how many innocents?

Where is that mystery in our Christmas, the mystery that is only the victorious cross? It is right there in the stories we tell, the carols we sing, the gifts we give and cards we write, the time we take to process through the dozen days from Christmas to Epiphany, the many ways we have to whisper to one another that the days are numbered now for the world's business as usual.

Somehow, some way, we are going to join hands and take the procession all over this earth.

CHRISTMAS PUZZLE BOX

Circle 18 Christmas season words, horizontally, vertically or diagonally.

S N I E E R T K D S A M X O
U F Y T I V I T A N P H Q U
N M H S C B N L U Q R F I L
O X P T D W I A M R R O W M
L S A N T A D R Y A S R S E
E G R E G N A M T P G E H H
N N P M L U V S F H N P E C
A I E A D R H M A G I A P E
C K Z N W T O E H S K S H R
Y C B R R I L T U J E K E C
D O R O D P L M X N E I R T
N T N C B Z Y A H W R O D R
A S A M T S I R H C H G S I
C O R Q M E H E L H T E B H

Know Your
Faith

GOD
in the
Human Situation