

THE VOICE

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Special message from the Pope



"In the silence of the night a voice rings out..." In the silence of the night a voice echoed across the fields near Bethlehem, linking the glory of God in heaven with the peace of men on earth. The same voice later spread out from the countryside around Bethlehem to more and more places throughout the world, and today it echoes in the silence of Christmas night in every continent of the world.

And in a special way this Christmas voice, the voice of the Midnight Mass, rings out in this place to which Christians come, like the Bethlehem shepherds and the wise men long ago, to gather round the crib; they come to this place which so clearly reminds us of the shelter in which God came into the world because He could not find a proper roof.

"In the silence of the night a voice rings out, 'Rise up, shepherds, God is being born.'" And then it adds, "Run with all speed to Bethlehem."

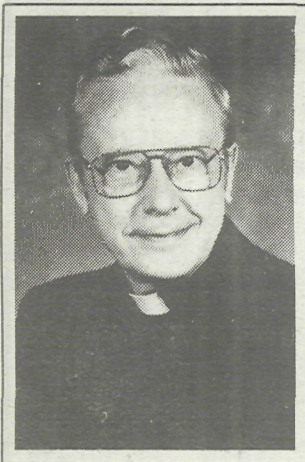
May this Christmas which we are celebrating increase the birth and presence of God in your souls and in all souls, in the soul of the whole nation, which prays to the infant Jesus: "Raise Your little hand, O Holy Child, and bless our beloved homeland."

From the book "The Word Made Flesh," by Karol Wojtyla, published by Harper & Row, Publishers, Inc.



A special Nativity

Children of the Marian Center perform their annual Nativity Play for parents and friends of the facility, an Archdiocese of Miami organization for special children. Shepherds, Magi, soldiers and choir (not shown) also are played by the children. (Voice photo by Prent Browning)



Archbishop's Greeting

Archbishop Edward A. McCarthy's 1985 Christmas greetings to the community:

On this holy feast of the birth of Jesus Christ, Our Lord and Saviour, the Catholic members of our community express warm greetings of peace and joy to their brothers and sisters of all faiths.

We recommit ourselves in union with them and with the help of the newborn

Prince of Peace to creating a South Florida where we all live together in harmony, as God fearing people. We pray that, as we renew together our lives of faith, our community will be enriched by a new commitment to mutual respect and assistance, to integrity, social justice, peace, security and prosperity.

Edward A. McCarthy

In the Nick of time

Is St. Nicholas good role model?

— Page 11



Jesus' step-father

The Nativity story from St. Joseph's point of view

— Page 18-19



Diocese loses suit against abortion clinics

ALBANY, N.Y. (NC) — New York's highest court has turned aside an effort by the Diocese of Albany to block the opening of two local abortion clinics.

The New York State Court of Appeals, reversing two lower court decisions, ruled unanimously that the state government had followed proper procedures in granting permits for the opening of the two clinics, in Albany and nearby Hudson.

A statement by the diocese said church officials had "mixed emotions" over the decision.

"We regret that the court has not agreed with the

majority decision of the Appellate Division of the State Supreme Court and the decision of the Special Term of the State Supreme Court relative to the merits of the case," the statement said.

The Special Term court is a one-judge, lower court, while the Appellate Division is an intermediate-level court.

"Four out of five of these justices found that the State Health Department indeed employed improper procedures in granting approval for two abortion clinics," the statement said, referring to the 3-1 Appellate Division decision and the lower court judge

who also had ruled that improper procedure had been followed.

The statement added, however, that "we are pleased that the Court of Appeals... left undisturbed the question of standing, in effect allowing consumers the right to seek judicial review of state agency decisions affecting their lives."

The case started in September 1983 when news of approval of the two abortion clinics was publicized.

According to the diocese, no public hearings had been held before the decision was made.

Wisconsin dioceses step up efforts to aid farmers

(Undated) (NC) — Troubled by agricultural problems in Wisconsin, the state's Catholic dioceses are gearing up efforts to assist family farms. The Wisconsin Catholic Conference, joining with the Wisconsin Conference of Churches in an interfaith venture, is supporting establishment of a Farm Crisis Response Network. The Archdiocese of Milwaukee, meanwhile, is developing Project Isidore, a non-profit operation to provide no-interest loans and political training to farmers. St. Isidore is considered the patron of farming. Bishop Cletus F. O'Donnell of Madison joined other Christian leaders in challenging state and federal agencies to expand their own responses to the rural economic emergency.

Police arrest suspects in robbery of St. Pat's Cathedral

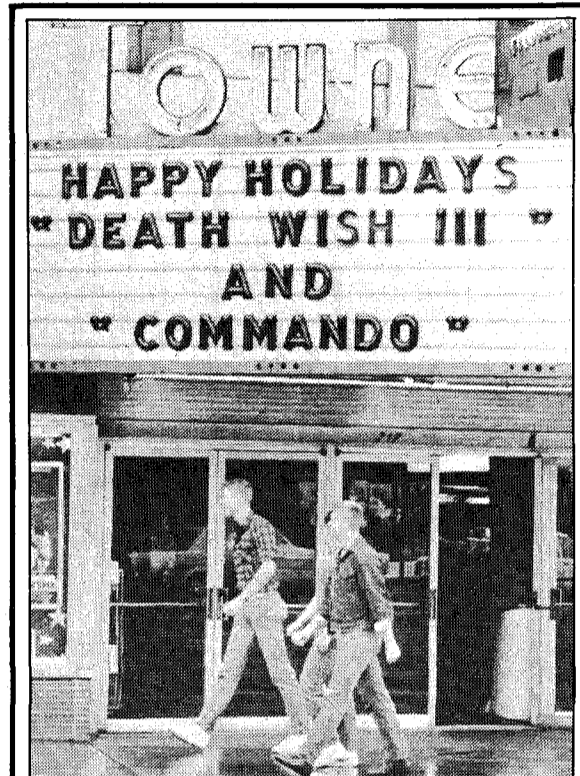
NEW YORK (NC) — New York police arrested two suspects in the robbery of collection money Nov. 30 from St. Patrick's Cathedral ushers. Two other men, including a former St. Patrick's maintenance worker alleged to have been the mastermind of the \$7,000 robbery, were under investigation as well and had been cooperating with the police, law enforcement authorities said. The robbery occurred when gun-wielding thieves handcuffed ushers at the parish house, adjacent to the church, and forced two maintenance workers to lie on the floor before taking the money from the collection plates, poor box and votive candles.

Top officials from Sudan hold private meeting with pope

VATICAN CITY (NC) — Three top government officials of Sudan, where Catholic bishops have complained about discrimination under Moslem laws, had a private meeting with Pope John Paul II. At the meeting were Prime Minister El Gizouli Dafalla, Foreign Minister Ibrahim Taha Ayous and Hilary Paulo Logali, president of the High Executive Commission for southern Sudan, announced the Vatican. The Vatican provided no other details. Earlier this year, the Sudanese Catholic bishops' conference called for repeal of the country's Islamic law, saying it discriminated against Christians. Islamic law is an effort to introduce Moslem beliefs in general society through a penal code.

Vatican censures U.S. court for ruling fetus isn't human

VATICAN CITY (NC) — A Minnesota Supreme Court decision that a fetus is not a human being under state law was strongly criticized by the Vatican newspaper, *L'Osservatore Romano*. The decision will probably aid the spread of abortion, said the editorial written by Father Gino Concetti, a moral theologian and editorial writer for the newspaper. "Abortion is practiced largely on the basis of the false thesis that an unborn conceived being is not a person," said the editorial. "Taking the latest steps in this direction was a recent Supreme Court decision of the state of Minnesota."



Mixed message

The marquee on the Town Theater in Oceanside, Calif., gives top billing to seasonal greetings, but the movies offered don't exactly send messages of peace and good will. (NC photo from UPI).

Catholic instruction no longer automatic in Italy's public schools

ROME (NC) — Catholic instruction in Italian public schools will become a matter of choice for individual students and their parents beginning in 1986, under an agreement signed this month by church and state officials in Rome. Currently, such instruction is given to all students unless a request for an exemption is made. The agreement means students or parents may opt for or against the religion classes. The agreement, signed by Italian bishops' conference president Cardinal Ugo Poletti, papal vicar of Rome, and Italian Education Minister Franca Falcucci, followed guidelines established by a 1984 concordat governing relations between the church and Italy.

'Hail Mary' film stirs protest in western Canada, Argentina

(Undated) (NC) — Jean Luc-Godard's French film "Hail Mary" has stirred controversy in western Canada and Argentina even before it has been screened. In Edmonton, Alberta, four people claiming to represent all the city's Catholics filed a complaint with city police in an effort to prevent a local theater from showing the film. Following a police investigation, however, Attorney General Neil Crawford ruled in the theater's favor. In Buenos Aires, Argentina, there have been strong condemnations by church officials and well-organized protests by lay groups against the film. Argentinian officials said the film is not in the country.

Bishop forbids Protestant clergy from accepting Host at funeral

MEMPHIS, Tenn. (NC) — Citing "clear and established norms," Bishop J. Francis Stafford of Memphis told Protestant clergy in a letter that they were forbidden from receiving Communion at the Dec. 11 funeral of retired Bishop Carroll T. Dozier of Memphis. Several non-Catholic ministers or priests had received the Eucharist at a Mass for Bishop Dozier the day before he died of a stroke. In his letter given to the non-Catholic ministers before the funeral Bishop Stafford said, "I bring to your attention that the theology and tradition of the Catholic Church does not make it possible for you to join in the reception of the Eucharist today."

Philippine bishops won't endorse presidential candidates

MANILA, Philippines (NC) — The Philippine bishops' conference has declined to endorse candidates for the Feb. 7 presidential election, said retired Bishop Francisco Claver of Malaybalay, Philippines. Bishop Claver, who works with the Institute on the Church and Social Issues, said the bishops want a fair and honest election. He said they are sensitive to charges of partisanship and would not identify with any party or candidate. Cardinal Jaime Sin of Manila has met with the opposition candidates, but also has refused to endorse a ticket. Corazon Aquino, widow of murdered opposition leader Benigno Aquino, and her former chief rival, Salvador Laurel, have announced they will challenge President Ferdinand Marcos in the election.

World Synod chosen by editors as major religious news of 1985

WASHINGTON (NC) — The world Synod of Bishops and the yearlong debate it provoked over the state of the Catholic Church 20 years after the Second Vatican Council was chosen by Catholic editors as the major religious news event of 1985. Editors answering the annual year-end poll by National Catholic News Service voted Pope John Paul II as top newsmaker in the world of religion for the eighth year in a row. Following the pope in second place as top newsmaker was "women in the church," who voiced their concerns around the United States through local and national hearings sponsored by the U.S. bishops. Cardinal Joseph Ratzinger, controversial head of the Vatican's Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith, was a close third.

Guatemala president pledges to seek justice for Indian majority

WASHINGTON (NC) — Guatemala's president-elect, Vinicio Cerezo, said he would seek economic and social justice, particularly for the country's Indian majority, when he takes office Jan. 14. The 43-year-old Christian Democrat also said he would "try to find the truth" about the fate of hundreds of Guatemalans who have "disappeared" in recent years. The current military government has been blamed by critics for many of those disappearances. Cerezo also said he had begun discussions with Mexican officials about the eventual return of Guatemalan refugees who have fled to southern Mexico from government-guerrilla fighting.

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Budget Act to hurt the poor?

By Liz S. Armstrong
WASHINGTON (NC) — Sometimes, Congress and the White House don't waste much time: In

Bayside 'visions' not real — Vatican

By Marjorie L. Donohue
South Florida Catholics have been advised by Archbishop Edward A. McCarthy that advertisements promoting our Lady of the Roses Shrine, Bayside, N.Y., might prove to be misleading to men and women of "good faith who are seriously devoted to the Mother of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ."

The Archbishop emphasized that the Shrine of Our Lady of the Roses is "not affiliated with the Roman Catholic Church."

In fact, it was reported last May that "the Vatican Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith has said there is nothing supernatural at Bayside," he declared, adding that "more recent communication with the office of the Holy Father's representative to the United States, has confirmed there has been no change in the status of the Shrine and the Shrine and its activities are not sanctioned by the Roman Catholic Church."

Archbishop McCarthy called on all the faithful to a "sincere and warm devotion to our Blessed Mother" and cautioned that they not be led astray from true devotion by non-sanctioned exercises of piety, which "rather than fostering faith, may prove to be detrimental to its development."

Large display ads have been placed by local followers of Veronica Lueken, who claims to have seen the Virgin Mary and Jesus in "apparitions," beginning 15 years ago at Flushing Meadow Park in Flushing, L.I. The ads promise "spectacular, premiere color miraculous photographs," as well as "solutions to both personal and world peace," in a series of one-time presentations held in South Florida since 1984.

On April 11, 1984 the office of the Chancellor of the Diocese of Brooklyn, where the shrine is located, advised that "a thorough investigation was made and the conclusion was reached that there was no doubt that the alleged 'apparitions' lacked complete authenticity." It is the official and firm position of the Diocese of Brooklyn that "no credibility can be given to the so-called 'vision' of Bayside."

When placing the advertising, promoters of the shrine present written copies of the now obsolete Canons 1399 and 2318 which have made it difficult for some dioceses to obtain disclaimers on the ads in the secular papers.

According to the newly revised Code of Canon Law, Canon 823 states: "In order for the integrity of the truth of the faith and morals to be preserved, the pastors of the Church have the duty and right to be vigilant, lest harm be done to the faith or morals of the Christian Faithful through writings or use of the instruments of social communications."

James Donohue and Arthur Becker, two members of a small group who devote themselves full time to spreading the word of the "apparitions" reportedly are traveling around the country making the presentations, usually in Holiday Inn facilities, free of charge.

short order Dec. 11, both House and Senate passed the Gramm-Rudman deficit reduction legislation and within 12 hours President Reagan had signed it into law.

However a key question — how the measure would affect the poor — remained unresolved after the final votes of 61-31 in the Senate and 271-154 in the House.

A flurry of activity had surrounded Gramm-Rudman, named after Republican Sens. Phil Gramm of Texas and Warren Rudman of New Hampshire. No hearings were held on the bill, it did not linger on the president's desk and in less than 24 hours of its passage on Capitol Hill it had been challenged in a court suit by Rep. Mike Synar, D-Okla., who questioned the constitutionality of some provisions.

Attached to another fiscal bill which faced a mid-December deadline, Gramm-Rudman mandates a balanced federal budget by 1991. Currently, the staggering deficit the new law intends to abolish is running at \$200 billion annually. In fact, the bill to which Gramm-Rudman was attached lifted the debt ceiling to more than \$2 trillion, increasing the government's borrowing power.

Advocates of the poor, while noting the importance of dealing with the deficit, also expressed fears the budget balancer might harm the poor by cutting funds for essential services.

Under the plan, which reduces the deficit in yearly increments through 1990, Congress and the president would have to agree on a budget — which means they would have to agree on what programs should be cut. If White House and Capitol Hill do not agree, automatic budget cuts would be imposed, with half of the reductions taken out of defense spending and half out of non-defense programs.

As approved by House and Senate, the measure is supposed to exempt certain basic anti-poverty programs, such as the Women, Infants and Children low-income nutrition program; Aid to Families with Dependent Children, the main welfare program; and Medicaid, the low-income health program, from the mandatory cuts.

'I am thinking of dialogue when borders are open and people are free to travel.'

Social gaps peril peace—Pope

VATICAN CITY (NC) — The "social and economic abyss" separating rich and poor countries and the self-interest of ideological blocs have become major threats to world stability, Pope John Paul II has said in his 1986 World Day of Peace Message.

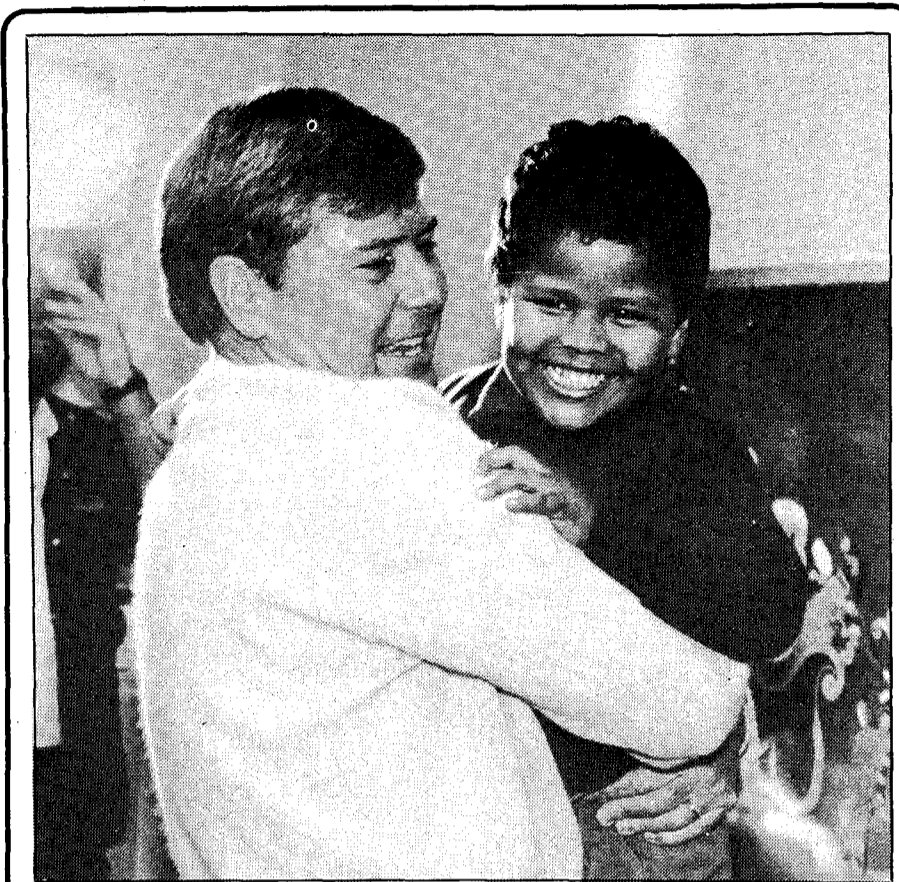
The pope called for a "new solidarity" between people of all countries that goes "beyond the barriers of ideologies and systems."

"Mental outlooks and political views contaminated by the lust for power, by ideologies, by the defense of one's own privilege and wealth must be abandoned," he said.

The 17-page text of the message was released by the Vatican Dec. 13. The 19th annual World Day of Peace will be celebrated Jan. 1. Its theme is "Peace is a Value With No Frontiers: North-South, East-West: Only One Peace."

The pope also praised ongoing U.S.-Soviet arms reduction talks in Geneva and other international forums as part of the necessary dialogue that must occur.

But dialogue should go beyond ideologies, he said, and should involve people who meet "in the reality of their human lives."



Teacher's pet

Three-and-a-half year-old Angel Ortiz insisted and insisted until he got a hug from Florida Governor Bob Graham, who was spending part of a recent "workday" as a teacher's aid at the Centro Mater Child Care and Neighborhood Center, an Archdiocesan facility in Little Havana. (Voice photo/Ana Rodriguez-Soto)

Nonetheless, budget analysts said, those programs would only be protected at the second stage of automatic cuts. They would not be spared at the earlier stage if Congress and the president agree on what to do about the budget and jointly decide to cut them. Thus, the two branches of government could concur that these programs could be axed anyway.

"They have no protection at all in the first stage. It's a free-for-all then," said Ronald Krietemeyer, director of domestic social development at the U.S. Catholic Conference. He added the USCC is pleased that some

safeguards are provided if the budget-making goes into the second stage of automatic cuts.

Moreover, programs such as aid to cities would not be protected. Some obviously affect the poor as well, as was pointed out Dec. 12 by San Antonio Mayor Henry Cisneros, a Catholic and a Democrat who is president of the National League of Cities. "Think twice before you do piercing damage to a system of government that has served this country well," he advised. "Think twice before you call everything of the last 30 years a failure."

"I am thinking of the kinds of dialogue that take place when borders are open and people can travel freely" or "when scholars are free to communicate" and "workers are free to assemble," the pope said in an apparent reference to totalitarian countries.

In past years, the pope has appealed for dialogue to heal world tensions and avoid war. This year, he tied that call in a particular way to economic injustice.

The pope criticized economic exploitation by international groups and local "elites" and exhorted businessmen around the world to "examine anew your responsibilities towards all your brothers and sisters."

The poor bear an "unjust share of the burden" of today's world, largely because they are caught in the middle of economic and ideological rivalries, he said.

Blocs of nations have engaged in "excessive self-interest" and a spiral of exploitation in order to gain strategic advantages, the pope said.

"In such a situation, it is the small and the weak, the poor and the voiceless who suffer most," he said.

The buildup of nuclear weapons, he said, is still "the most dramatic and

compelling example" of how people can be held in "social and economic subjection" by the force of power.

"The popular imagination is often paralyzed by fear" of nuclear weapons and strategies, the pope said.

"This fear is not groundless," but he said the increasing sale and purchase of conventional arms also exploits the poor, with major powers often acting out their rivalries in local conflicts, supplying the weapons and "ideologizing" the local differences.

Finally, he said, underdevelopment itself is "an ever-growing threat to world peace."

"In fact, between the countries which form the 'North bloc' and those of the 'South bloc' there is a social and economic abyss that separates rich from poor," the pope said.

In many cases, he said, economic injustice exists because of "special interest groups which operate internationally or function as elites within developing countries." The plight of many poorer nations is compounded by large debts, he said.

The pope warned that economic exploitation leaves people "defenseless and disillusioned" and more prone to violence.

Liberation theology II

Vatican plans second document

VATICAN CITY (NC) — The Vatican hopes to issue a second document on liberation theology in mid-February, said Cardinal Joseph Ratzinger, head of the Vatican Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith.

The document is being prepared in consultation with bishops' conferences, he said at a Dec. 12 press conference.

In September 1984 the doctrinal congregation issued a document on liberation theology warning that uncritical borrowing of Marxist concepts — such as class warfare and use of violence to promote social change — is against Catholic teachings.

The document also praised many aspects of liberation theology, especially its desire to correct social injustices, and promised the congregation would issue another document concentrating on the positive aspects of liberation theology.

The cardinal also said that formulation of a compendium of church teachings suggested by the Nov. 24-Dec. 8 extraordinary Synod of Bishops would probably be a cooperative effort among several Vatican congregations.

"But it is still too early after the synod for a formal plan to have been

Cardinal Joseph Ratzinger said the Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith has been consulting with local bishops' conferences and hopes to have the document ready in time for Lent.

worked out," he added.

The press conference was called to announce Vatican publication of a collection of the 58 documents issued by the doctrinal congregation since the end of the Second Vatican Council in 1965.

Cardinal Ratzinger told journalists he would answer only questions having to do with the congregation's work since Vatican II. He refused to answer several questions asking his overall assessment of the extraordinary synod, which was called to evaluate the teachings of Vatican II.

One of the synod suggestions was

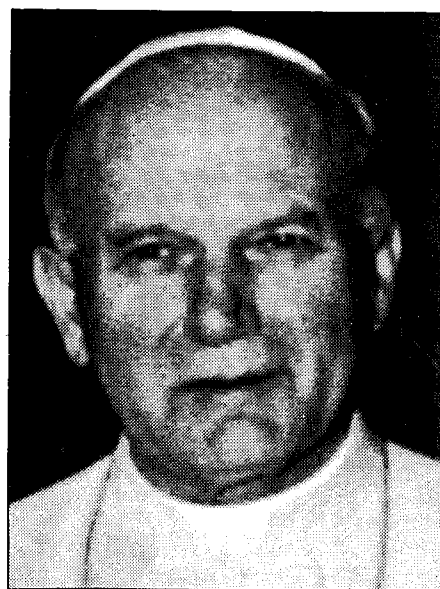
formulation of a universal compendium or catechism of church doctrine as a point of reference for local church catechisms. Pope John Paul II publicly supported the idea, but neither the pope nor the synod said who should draw up the compendium.

"The Congregation for the Clergy has the primary competence for catechetics," said Cardinal Ratzinger. "But this would require cooperation among several congregations."

Regarding liberation theology, Cardinal Ratzinger said the congregation has been consulting with local bishops' conferences and hopes to have the document ready in time for Lent, which begins Feb. 12.

Liberation theology developed in Latin America in the late 1960s as a Christian response to the need to overcome the region's misery and poverty. Some theologians have incorporated Marxist concepts in an effort to understand structural causes of injustice, while other theologians have not.

Cardinal Ratzinger said much of the consultation on the future document has been with Latin American bishops, who are on the "front line" of liberation theology.



Pope John Paul II: Conscience alone can't decide on birth control.

Pope defends birth control teaching

VATICAN CITY (NC) — Pope John Paul II strongly defended the church's teaching against contraceptive birth control again Dec. 13, warning that Catholics should not leave the issue up to their individual consciences alone.

The conscience can "deceive itself" about what is really good, the pope said. On the other hand, the magisterium, the church's teaching authority, helps the conscience discover "the truth of things."

"The church's magisterium does not present truths that are impossible to live out," he said. But neither does the church "limit itself to promoting 'solutions' that are rather easy and of immediate effect."

Rather, "like a good doctor, it seeks to cure the causes of the disorder," in this case, a misunderstanding of the sacred relationship in marriage, the pope said.

He was speaking to a plenary meeting of the Pontifical Council for the Family, which deals with pastoral and teaching questions on family matters.

Later in the day, he told an Italian group of natural family planning teachers that even the natural methods approved by the church — which rely on periodic sexual abstinence — must not be seen as merely biological practices but must be a part of a fully lived faith.

In his talk to the family council, the pope said church teaching on responsible parenthood has been clearly stated in Pope Paul VI's 1968 encyclical "Humanae Vitae" ("Of Human Life"), in his own apostolic exhortation on the family, during his several years of weekly audience talks on the subject, and in pastoral statements by bishops around the world.

In instruction of Catholics, he added the church should be careful not to relativize its teachings.

"One is not allowed to speak of the 'graduality of the law,' as if the law were more or less exacting according to the concrete situations," he said. All teachers should keep personal situations in mind, but "without weakening the principles."

New catechism almost ready

ROME (NC) — A new catechism of church doctrine was being written by the Congregation for the Clergy before the idea was suggested by the Nov. 24-Dec. 8 extraordinary Synod of Bishops, Cardinal Silvio Oddi, head of the congregation, said Dec. 16.

The document will soon be presented to Pope John Paul II, he said.

The congregation has been preparing the writings, which should serve as a "guide" for all locally written catechisms, for about five years, Cardinal Oddi said in an interview with National Catholic News Service.

The new catechism emphasizes traditional church teachings on such matters as original sin, the soul, hell and punishment, Cardinal Oddi said. He said some national catechisms

The new catechism emphasizes traditional church teachings on such matters as original sin, the soul, hell and punishment.

"skip over" these points of doctrine or fail to present them clearly.

Another section will delineate church teaching on moral issues, he said. That part will be modeled on the 10 Commandments, he said.

Both sections will be supported, point by point, by citations from Scripture, papal documents and teachings of councils and church

fathers, he said.

"This will be a directory of the truth, followed by a directory that proves the church has always followed that particular doctrine," Cardinal Oddi said.

Much of the post-synod speculation has centered on who would prepare such a catechism. In his talk to the synod, Cardinal Law proposed that a commission of cardinals be given the task and that the world's bishops be consulted.

But Cardinal Oddi said that if the pope approves the draft text, only the Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith would need to further review it. Under current church organization, the clergy congregation has the primary responsibility for catechetics. The doctrinal congregation deals with all matters of doctrine.

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Bishops survey laity to prepare for synod

OTTAWA (NC) — Canada's bishops are preparing for the 1987 synod on the laity by asking Canadian Catholics about their lives as Christians.

The Canadian bishops' conference has distributed 4,600 questionnaires asking individuals for information on subjects ranging from their participation in parish organizations to the quality of their prayer life.

"The responses will help the bishops obtain a widely based sample of what people are currently feeling about their life as Christians in society and the church," said Hans Daigeler, staff coordinator for the project.

He said the survey would also be helpful for "future pastoral planning."

Daigeler said that the bishops also hope that dioceses and other groups

will use the questionnaire "as a springboard for other initiatives in their local areas."

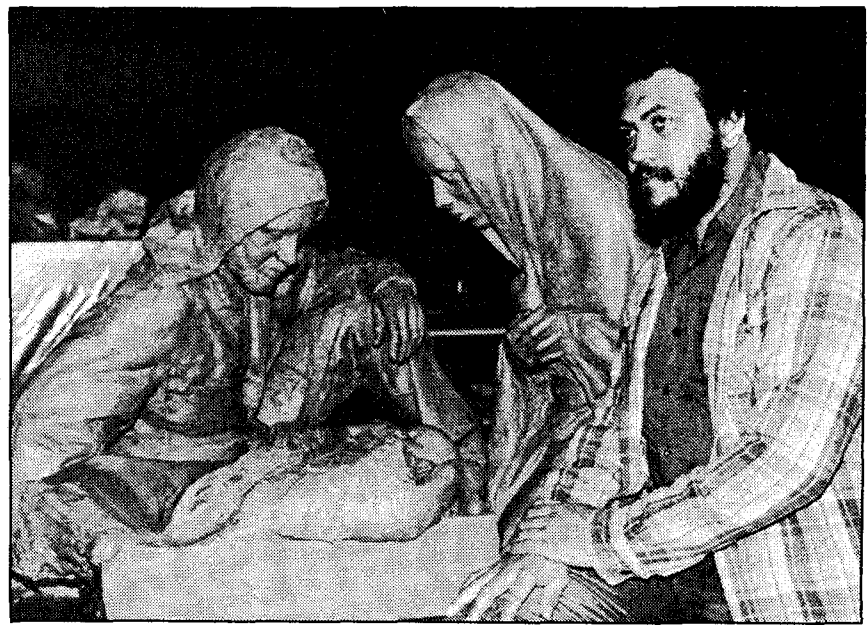
The survey seeks answers from a cross-section of Catholics, based on age, sex and residence.

Some questions focus on individual faith life, others ask whether Catholics should be more involved in the church's institutional life.

One asks whether prayer, Mass attendance, books, involvement in Catholic organizations, or other factors counted most in developing the respondent's faith.

Another asks how much influence the individual feels his or her faith has had on family, friends, employers and other elements of society.

It also asks Canadian Catholics to rate the changes in the church since the Second Vatican Council.



Homeless holy family

Baltimore sculptor James Reid sits beside his modern nativity scene, a sculpture which depicts a homeless black family on a steam grate. The National Park Service rejected his work, saying it is too political to be included in the national Christmas Pageant of Peace in Washington. (NC photo).

Pax Christi: Haiti church persecuted, needs support

WASHINGTON (NC) — The church in Haiti needs outside support to help it stand up to government repression, Auxiliary Bishop Thomas Gumbleton of Detroit, president of Pax Christi USA, said this week.

His remarks came at a Washington

press conference held to release a Pax Christi report on Haiti. A Pax Christi International delegation visited Haiti in early 1985 "to give support to the church in Haiti so that it can stand up for the poor," Bishop Gumbleton said.

Pax Christi is a Catholic peace group.


The "hopeful sign" in Haiti today is that the church is awakening, Bishop Gumbleton said. But because of government repression that hope is fragile "unless the people of Haiti, the church of Haiti, receives support from the outside."

Anti-government demonstrations took place in November to commemorate a 1984 crackdown on media and political opposition. Three students, including one who was inside a Catholic school, were killed by Haitian troops Nov. 28, and the two

Catholic radio stations in the country were forced off the air after reporting on the protests.

"If the Haitian government succeeds in getting the church not to take sides, just as in 1980 — when it crushed militants fighting for the rights of humanity, unions, politicians and free-lance journalists — the Haitian people will have no one left to stand up for them," Bishop Gumbleton said.

The average annual income in the small Caribbean nation is estimated at \$250, according to Pax Christi. It has been ruled by the Duvalier family since 1957.



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Priest: Divorced-remarried Catholics should seek help in Church's courts

WASHINGTON (NC) — The church's courts are the real answer for Catholics in irregular second marriages, said Father Donald Heintschel, a leading U.S. canon lawyer and associate general secretary of the National Conference of Catholic Bishops.

Father Heintschel dismissed as "simply impossible" a suggestion, raised in Rome at the Nov. 24-Dec. 8 world Synod of Bishops, that the church should find some new pastoral way of readmitting divorced-remarried Catholics to the sacraments.

Archbishop Karl Berg of Salzburg,

'Those who do apply probably will have their marriage declared null ... I'm sure there are cases that can't be resolved, but they are minimal.'

— Fr. Donald Heintschel,
National Conference of Catholic Bishops

Austria, had suggested to the synod that the church take a "more merciful approach to the divorced and remarried," such as readmitting them to the sacraments after a "period of penance."

A similar question had been raised five years earlier, at the 1980 synod on marriage and family life, by Archbishop Derek Worlock of Liverpool, England. He asked if divorced-remarried Catholics must be "forever"

denied "full eucharistic communion with the church and its Lord." Similar questions were raised by several other bishops at that synod.

The problem with some kind of penitential reconciliation that does not tackle the problem of the first marriage, Father Heintschel said, is that "the indissolubility of marriage is a church doctrine."

It is "the presumption of law" that the first marriage was a valid union which remains binding "until the opposite is proven," he said. "This is where the ministry of the tribunal comes in."

Asked if he agreed with a recent estimate by a civil lawyer that about 90 percent of separated or divorced Catholics could obtain annulments from the church, Father Heintschel said his experience suggested that was true.

"Those who do apply probably will have their marriage declared null... I'm sure there are cases that can't be resolved, but they are minimal," he said.

He emphasized that just having a divorce or separation itself does not cut a person off from the sacraments. That is a mistake often made in the media and a source of confusion to many people, he said, citing news reports from the synod which failed to distinguish between divorced Catholics and divorced-remarried Catholics.

When a couple separates or gets a civil divorce, "they may receive the sacraments," he said.

Also, if a divorced person seeking to remarry obtains an annulment of the previous marriage first, "that person is still in full communion with the church."

But when a divorced person remarries outside the church, he said, "this is the case where the person is prohibited from receiving the sacraments... This is where the pastoral ministry of the courts comes in — they can help the person who desires to come back to the sacraments."

Bishop plans protest on abortion clinic

ROCKVILLE CENTRE, N.Y. (NC) — Bishop John R. McGann of Rockville Centre has invited priests, members of religious orders and some pro-life leaders to join him Dec. 28 for a prayer service followed by "a walk for life" in front of an abortion clinic.

But the clinic's owner, abortion advocate William Baird, in a letter to the bishop termed the action "belligerent" and "divisive" and said the bishop's announcement of it was "inflammatory and offensive."

In his letter of invitation, Bishop McGann said the prayer service and walk will show "that a respect for all human life is a principle we cannot compromise."

Baird, who runs two clinics in New York and one in Boston, accused Bishop McGann of comparing "decent moral pro-choice Americans" to Herod the Great by choosing to stage the march on the feast of the Holy Innocents which commemorates the infants killed on Herod's orders by soldiers seeking to kill the baby Jesus.

Although he did not respond directly to Baird, the bishop said in a column Dec. 12 in the *Long Island Catholic*, diocesan newspaper, that "the choice of this feast is not meant to reflect on any religious group."

He also wrote that he wished "to make clear that in resisting the evil of abortion I in no way condone any kind of violence."

Notre Dame gets \$6 'McMillion'

NOTRE DAME, Ind. (NC) — The University of Notre Dame has received a \$6 million gift from Joan B. Kroc, widow of Ray A. Kroc, the founder of the McDonald's restaurant chain, to establish an institute for peace studies.

The benefaction is one of the largest personal gifts ever received by the university.

Holy Cross Father Theodore Hesburgh, university president, said Mrs. Kroc "displays an enthusiasm harmonious with Notre Dame's

deepest institutional aspirations. Her generosity will invigorate and dramatically expand several initiatives already underway here to promote peace in both the academic and policy-making worlds."

The institute endowed by Mrs. Kroc's gift will be directed by John J. Gilligan, former governor of Ohio and a Notre Dame professor since 1979.

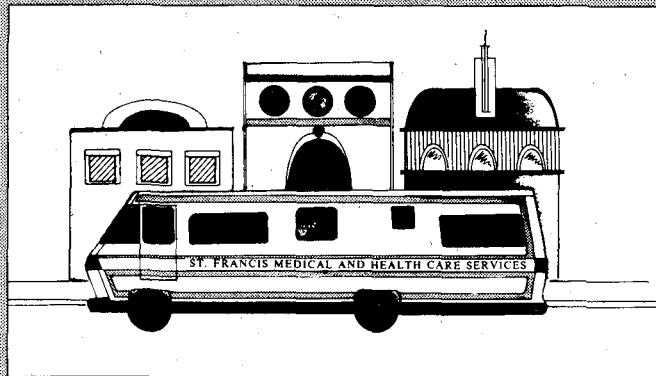
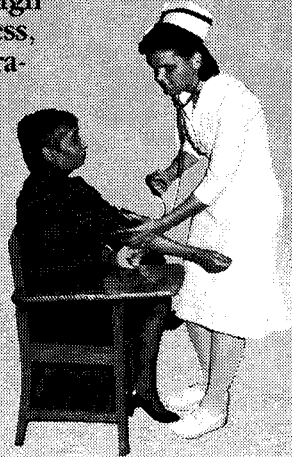
The institute, among other things, will consolidate existing courses into

a comprehensive peace studies program and will establish peace fellowships for young scholars of several nations.

Mrs. Kroc has become involved in a number of peace-related activities, including publishing full-page advertisements in major U.S. newspapers urging people troubled by nuclear arms to share their views with elected representatives. She also has given grants to disarmament groups.

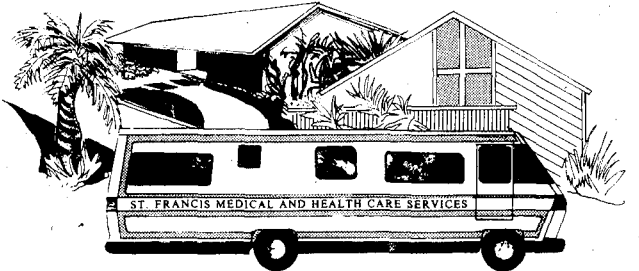
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Life. Be in it.

Real priests split on TV priest

By NC News Service

Father Noah "Hardstep" Rivers, the fictional priest played by Robert Blake in NBC-TV's recently canceled series "Helltown," received mixed ratings from two prominent real priests.

"I think we priests owe a debt of gratitude to Robert Blake," said sociologist and novelist Father Andrew Greeley, writing in the Dec. 14 issue of TV Guide magazine.

"At a time when the real image of the priesthood (as opposed to the official self-image) is of men overwhelmed with self-pity, 'Father Baretta' may just persuade a lot of younger men (and women, too) that perhaps they ought to think about the priesthood as a life dedication," he said.

But Father Robert Sherry, director of the U.S. bishops' committee on priestly formation, said, "Father Rivers doesn't relate to any priest I know. I've been involved in inner-city ministry and the day-to-day life doesn't have that levity."

Father Sherry's comments appeared in a syndicated column by James Breig, editor of The Evangelist, newspaper of the Albany Diocese.

"Helltown," whose final episode was scheduled for broadcast Dec. 25, revolves around the ministry of an inner-city priest to the orphans, run-aways, vagrants, prostitutes and drug

addicts that inhabit the ghetto surrounding the fictional St. Dominic's Parish.

NBC canceled the series, which aired opposite ABC-TV's "Dynasty," because of its poor performance in the ratings.

Father Greeley admitted that the program suffered from some self-inflicted wounds, including scripts that were "sometimes weak and sentimental" and unappealing secondary characters.

"Still, I find his simple statements of faith in God and moral choice to be utterly persuasive and the best that mass entertainment media have done for religion in a long time," Father Greeley said.

He praised the series for its portrayal of the humanity of priests, weaknesses and all, which he said was a departure from the familiar Spencer Tracy or Bing Crosby priest characters that were "too good to be true and, hence, finally not good at all."

Some Catholics have been "so profoundly educated to believe in the perfection of priests as a necessary sign of the validity of their faith and their church that they blind their eyes to the real condition of priests and demand only the most edifying — that is to say the most hormoneless — priests in the lively arts," Father Greeley wrote.

'His simple statements of faith in God and moral choice ... [are] the best that mass entertainment media have done for religion in a long time.'

— Fr. Andrew Greeley

'I've been involved in inner-city ministry and the day-to-day life doesn't have that levity.'

— Fr. Robert Sherry



Robert Blake as Fr. Hardstep.

priesthood" by focusing only on the social ministry and not even touching on the sacramental ministry.

Father Sherry also objected to the show's sexist language, its portrayal of nuns and the way the priest treats women.

However, he was pleased to see "the priest refer to prayer so frequently and with such sincerity."

Father Sherry told Breig he had watched one of the early episodes with several other priests. "One of them said, 'Can you imagine anyone watching that show if they didn't have to?'"

"If you want priests who do not find women attractive, then you want either robots or asexual or homosexual priests," he said. "If you want priests whose anger is not stirred — even to the point of being tempted to punch someone out — by the oppression of God's people... then you want arch-angels in Roman collars and not men."

But Father Sherry told columnist Breig that the series "doesn't help build up the image of priests."

"It's difficult to capture what a priest is because what we do doesn't make good television," Father Sherry said. He criticized the program for giving "only a single dimension of the

Pro-lifers offer reward for capture of clinic bombers

NEWARK, N.J. (NC) — Five pro-life groups have offered a \$5,000 reward for information leading to the apprehension and conviction of those responsible for the bombing of a New York City abortion clinic.

The New Jersey Right to Life Committee, New York Right to Life, the Connecticut Pro-Life Council, Families for Life and The Long Island Coalition for Life all shared in the reward offer. The money was in addition to another \$10,000 reward, also for information on the bombing, offered by New York City Dec. 12.

The bomb exploded in a bathroom of the Manhattan Women's Medical Center the afternoon of Dec. 10. A

'Obviously pro-life organizations had no motive for such an insane action. We were the beneficiary only of bad publicity...'

— Adolph Schimpf, New Jersey Right to Life

man called 11 minutes before the explosion, and then five minutes later, to warn people to get out. After the explosion, the man called a third time to ask if the bomb had gone off,

according to authorities.

Adolph Schimpf, president of the New Jersey Right to Life Committee, said the pro-life groups condemn "in the strongest possible terms" the bombing, but they also protest any attempts to link it with some kind of national conspiracy.

"We are appalled" by the "irresponsible remarks" made by the pro-abortion groups that imply or suggest a pro-life group is responsible, Schimpf said.

"Ordinarily, we would not respond to this contrived hysteria by the abortion industry, but it is perhaps time for us to be as vocal and aggressive as they are," he added.

Any responsible individual "must question if the New York City 'bomb-

ing' was truly an act of violence or a publicity stunt," he said.

"Obviously pro-life organizations had no motive for such an insane action. We were the beneficiary only of bad publicity after spokespersons for abortion and the abortion industry made inflammatory remarks that were intended to imply some involvement by the right-to-life community," he said.

Schimpf said the bombing took place after the CBS-TV series "Cagney and Lacey" aired a "blatantly pro-abortion episode" Nov. 11 which depicted the bombing of an abortion clinic.

"Law enforcement agencies tell us often events like this trigger the unstable, and copycat crime is common."

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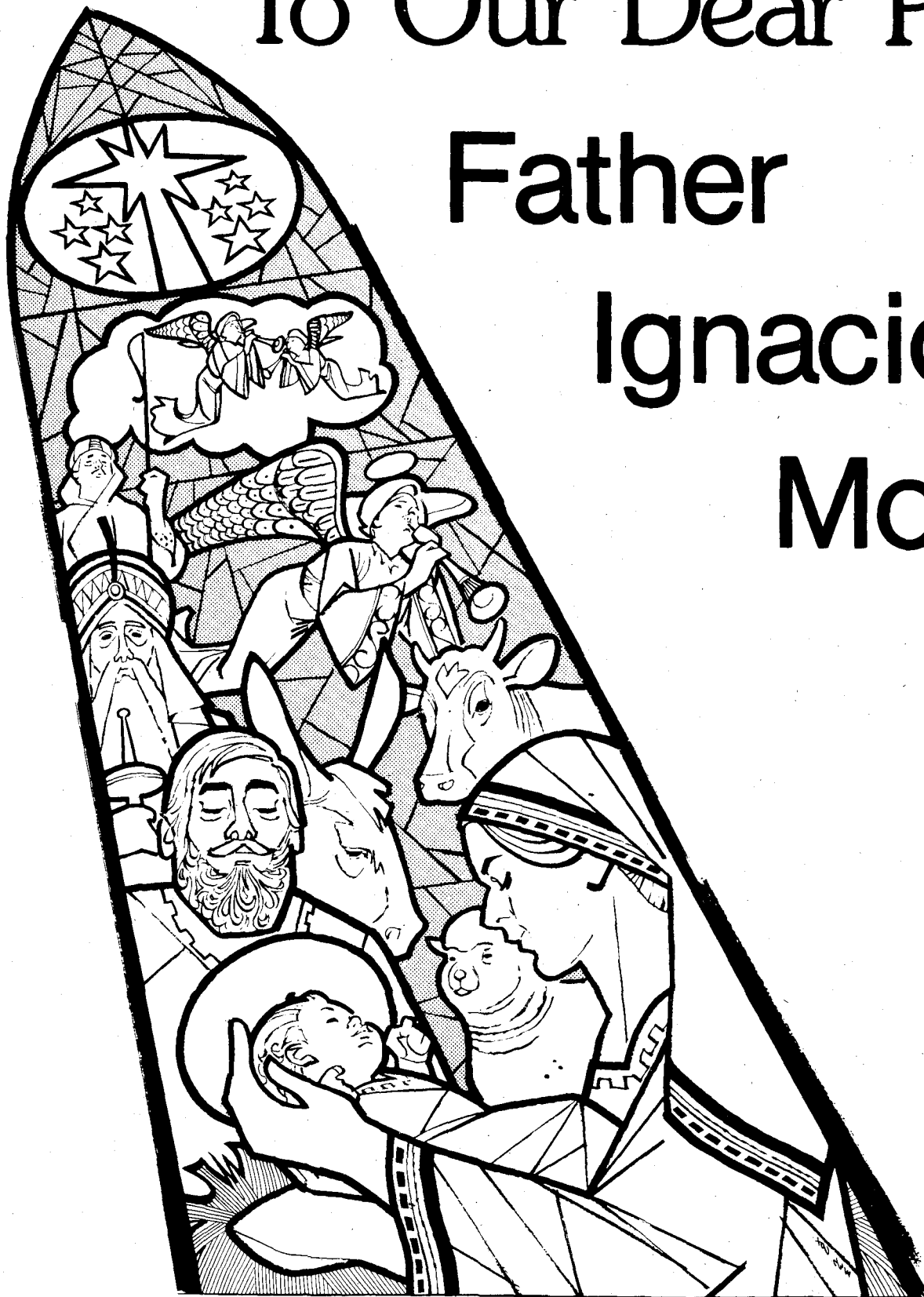
The Virgin shall be with child and give birth to a son, and they shall call him Emmanuel. A name which means "God is with us"

— Matthew 1:22-23

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Doctor criticizes amoral sex ed

Right-to-life president says schools must teach 'sexual morality'

By Betsy Kennedy
Voice Staff Writer

Giving teenagers contraceptive information — without teaching them virtue along with it — is like handing them a license to get pregnant, said Dr. Jack Willke, president of the Na-



'Planned Parenthood is ... giving teenagers subtle permission to have pre-

marital sex. They are saying, Look everybody is doing it ... We'll show you how.'

—Dr. James C. Willke,
President,
National Right to Life

tional Right to Life organization and an international expert on human sexuality.

Dr. Willke is one of the most prolific leaders in the pro-life movement and with his wife Barbara, he has authored nine books on abortion and sexuality. The Willkes were the guest speakers at the annual celebration of the Feast of Our Lady of Guadalupe sponsored by the Respect Life office of Miami and held at Annunciation Church in Hollywood on Dec. 14.

Organizations like Planned Parenthood "scream" about the number of unmarried pregnant teenagers and step up their efforts to saturate schools with sex education materials, but it does not result in fewer unwed pregnancies, said Dr. Willke. Planned Parenthood claims there are 1,000,000 unmarried women a year who have babies but the figure is actually closer to 660,000, he said, because they do not consider the number of teenagers who get married after they are pregnant — or who were married in the first place.

The Planned Parenthood approach to contraceptive teaching is "a colossal failure," pointed out Dr. Willke, because teenagers engage in sex when

they are caught up in the heights of passion or on a spur of the moment impulse. Others just don't want to be bothered with birth control devices.

"Two out of three teenage intercourses are done without the use of birth control. And only 10 percent of all teenagers who are active in pre-marital intercourse have no knowledge or access to contraceptives," said Dr. Willke.

According to Dr. Willke's research, in the cities where Planned Parenthood and similar organizations have the most clout with funding and the most extensive contraceptive education programs, there are the highest abortion and unwed pregnancy rates... and the figures show no indication of diminishing.

"What Planned Parenthood is doing is teaching a situational ethic — look, everybody is doing it, so we're going to show you how. They are giving the teenagers a subtle form of permission for pre-marital intercourse."

Society's nod of approval for sexual freedom is mirrored in the media, pointed out Dr. Willke.

"If you want to know what the teenagers are thinking and what their values are, just go to any one of the teenage films playing today. We're engulfed in a sex-saturated, permissive culture."

Too often, the parents are not the best paragons of moral behavior, he said. This is when Catholic schools should step in and provide sex education courses tempered with guidelines of virtue.

"If there is not a strong message of sexual morality in the Catholic

Tragedy leaves great gift

Betsy Kennedy
Voice Staff Writer

She hadn't been married very long when she and her husband had to make a long journey to Germany. Because she loved him very much she resigned herself to living far from home.

One night, while her husband was at work, she was startled by a loud noise in the apartment. It was an intruder. She fought hard, but she knew that if she continued to struggle he was going to kill her. He beat her savagely. Then he raped her.

Several months later, when she told her husband she was pregnant, he was very supportive. They were both opposed to abortion. Their friends rebuked them — and urged her to get an abortion.

"In some mysterious way, this is God's plan. I am going to have the baby," she told them.

A beautiful bi-racial boy was born unto them, and they rejoiced.

The next year, they decided to have a child of their own. But she was unable to get pregnant. Consultations with the finest doctors brought about a revelation: Her husband would never be able to father a child.

They were more certain than ever that they had received a gift from the Lord, a gift disguised at first by tragedy.

(This is a true event, told to Dr. Barbara Willke, pro-life author and noted authority on sexuality, by a woman she met on campus at St. Mary of the Woods College in Terre Haute, Indiana. The woman preferred to remain anonymous.)

schools, what are they there for?" said Dr. Willke.

Paradoxically, while the rate of teenage pregnancies is soaring, more and more of them are opposed to abortion. In his 20 years of counseling families Dr. Willke believes that the pendulum is swinging more and more toward pro-life.

"People in their 20's are more supportive and sympathetic to pro-life than the previous generation who are now the puppies."

In his book, "Abortion Questions and Answers," (1985, Hayes Publishing Co., Cincinnati, Ohio), a poll conducted by "Who's Who Among High

School Students" revealed that the percentage of approval of abortion by teenagers dropped from 70 percent in the 1970s to 39 percent in 1982.

The shift in sentiment will continue, said Dr. Willke, because society's values go through cycles.

"Abortion is the most monstrous of all evils and until we put a stop to its ugly violence, society will be unable to address even larger threats, such as nuclear war. But this business of libertarianism has been tried again and again. Ultimately, society vomits off its hangover and returns to more sensitive values... we're seeing this happening now."

Pro-life volunteers receive awards

During the Feast of Our Lady of Guadalupe celebration held at Annunciation Church on Dec. 14, the Respect Life office honored community members whose contributions to the pro-life movement have been outstanding.

The 1985 Respect Life Award was presented to Monica Moss for her work with the elderly. The award is given annually "to some-

one in the community whose works exemplify a true sense of dedication to the sanctity of all human life."

The Guadalupe and Juan Diego Awards were given to the following volunteers from each of the area Respect Life Emergency Pregnancy offices: Central: Ann D'Angelo and Rev. Mr. Anthony D'Angelo; Coral Springs: Antoinette Harland and Patricia Reames;

Hollywood: Patricia Olender and Josephine McCagh; Hialeah: Gina Gomez and Eddi Lopez; Miami Beach: Miriam Cavijo and Peter Kenny; Ft. Lauderdale: Gloria O'Gorman and Ellen Curran; Southwest Miami: Miriam Columbro and Audrey Wall.

A plaque also was presented to the volunteers of St. Anne's Thrift Shop in Hollywood for their dedication.

Catholics, Protestants to pray for unity

Catholics and Protestants will be doing many things together Jan. 12-19, during the Miami observance of the worldwide Week of Prayer for Christian Unity.

Highlights of the celebration will be a prayer service for clergy Jan. 17 and a worship service for the public Jan. 19. Special guests at both events will be two Brothers of Taize, a religious community where men from different Christian denominations live, work and pray together.

"The Brothers of Taize are the best experience that we have of ecumenism," said Auxiliary Bishop Agustin Roman, one of about 25 people, clergy and laity from different denominations, who are organizing the celebration.

"The brothers think that unity does not destroy the denominations, but that we can find unity in Christ," Bishop Roman said.

The Taize-brothers will lead the Jan. 17 Ministers' Prayer Service, scheduled for noon at the First Presbyterian Church, 609 Brickell Avenue, Miami.

They also will take part in the ecumenical worship service scheduled for Jan. 19 at 3 p.m. at St. Brendan Catholic Church, 8725 SW 32 Street, Miami. Ministers, musicians and choirs of all denominations are invited to participate, along with the public at large.

On an individual level, churches throughout Dade County will mark unity week with "pulpit exchanges"

and friendly visits to neighboring congregations.

"Go ahead and embrace your brothers in the area," said Rev. Max Salvador of the Episcopal Iglesia de Todos los Santos (Church of all Saints), who serves as chairman for this year's celebration.

"We want to make an open invitation to anyone who wants to participate," added another organizer, Rev. Martin Anorga of the First Spanish United Presbyterian Church.

The Week of Prayer for Christian Unity is a worldwide observance begun in 1908 in Graymoor, New York, by an Episcopal priest, Father Paul James Francis Wattson.

He later converted to Catholicism

and founded the Society of the Atonement, a Franciscan religious community which still promotes the celebration.

The traditional dates are from Jan. 18, the feast of St. Peter, to Jan. 25, the feast of St. Paul, and the observance previously has been known as the Church Unity Octave or the Chair of Unity Octave.

Catholics began celebrating it together with other Christians after the Second Vatican Council.

For information about the public worship service, call Rev. Max Salvador, 642-2951. The Brothers of Taize also will be available to speak at a few individual churches. For scheduling, call Terry Sundry at 754-2444.

Synod briefing

More than 200 religious brothers and sisters of the Archdiocese found out everything they wanted to know about the three-year Archdiocesan Synod during a recent "open forum" with Archbishop Edward McCarthy (pictured). Similar sessions had been held earlier with pastors and priests and will be repeated in January in every South Florida parish. The "open forums" deal only with the organization of the Synod, and serve as preparation for the public hearings in February, when individual Catholics can voice their questions and concerns about the Church in general. (Voice photo/Ana Rodriguez-Soto)



Jewel of a gift

Broward Catholic donates \$75,000 ring to Archdiocese

By Betsy Kennedy
Voice Staff Writer

Two weeks before Christmas, the Archdiocese of Miami received a gift which shines with a message of love.

Rosalie Heveran, 84, a staunch Catholic and until recently a member of St. John the Baptist Church in Ft. Lauderdale, wanted to do something to help deprived and orphaned children. So she gave the Archdiocese her six-carat diamond engagement ring worth \$75,000.

Described by her son, Bill, as a

sincere and religious woman who never wants attention for her donations to charity, Heveran had planned on giving the ring to Archbishop Edward A. McCarthy in private, at the Pompano nursing home where she lives with her husband.

Instead, an embarrassed Heveran found herself surrounded by glaring television camera lights and several reporters, after someone tipped off the media.

"It was a simple offering... I don't

want it exaggerated... I don't want this publicized," she told *The Voice* in a brief telephone interview several days later.

"She is a lovely woman and her action exemplifies the Christian spirit of giving... We are very grateful," the Archbishop said.

Proceeds from the sale of the ring will be donated to the Archdiocese Foundation for education, which helps subsidize teachers' salaries and provide tuition for poor students in Catholic schools.

Heveran said she will miss the ring because it was an anniversary gift from her husband to replace her original engagement ring, but added that she has no real need for it.

"Our life style is completely different now, so I wanted to give it to a worthy charity and the Archdiocese was the best place I knew of."

The Heverans have been together for 44 years, since they met and were married in Toronto, Canada. They lived in Golf and Skokie, Ill. and moved to Ft. Lauderdale many years ago.

Last year, William, 81, became ill with Alzheimer's disease and was

'Our lifestyle is completely different now, so I wanted to give it to a worthy charity and the Archdiocese was the best place I knew of.'

— Rosalie Heveran

moved to a Pompano nursing home. Heveran refused to be away from him. So she sold their Ft. Lauderdale home and joined him at the home.

Their son Bill said Rosalie Heveran has always had a generous heart.

"In the struggling years before my father became successful there wasn't much to give. But whenever they had the means they made very private donations to religious organizations and charities which feed the hungry."

Rosalie, who was his father's second wife, also instilled in Bill a loyalty to the church.

"She is not a self-directed person," he said. "She did not want publicity about this gift. She just loves the church."

'Tis not the season to be drunk

Some good advice for the holidays

These tips for hosts and guests at holiday parties were contributed by Fr. Michael Hogan, OSA, formerly of the Archdiocese of Miami and currently director of the Substance Abuse Ministry for the Diocese of Venice, Florida. The suggestions are good advice for celebrations that reflect the true spirit of Christmas.

Tips for hosts

- Don't make drinking the main focus of your social event. Plan stimulating activities to avoid letting people cluster into groups of heavy or non-heavy drinkers.
- Provide nutritious and appealing food when alcohol is served to slow down its effects.
- Don't push drinks. Respect an individual's decision not to drink. Provide equally attractive and accessible non-alcoholic drinks when alcohol is served. Recipes for exciting non-alcoholic drinks are available from the National Clearinghouse for Alcohol Information.
- Avoid serving after-dinner drinks — serve coffee, tea, or other non-alcoholic beverages instead. Cut off drinks at least one hour before the party ends.
- Know that drunkenness is neither healthy, safe, nor amusing. Excusing unacceptable behavior just because someone has had "too much to drink" serves no purpose; accepting drunkenness only rewards alcohol misuse.
- When entertaining, assume responsibility for your guests. If someone does drink too much, provide transportation home, a taxi, or overnight accommodations. Friends don't let alcohol-impaired friends drive.

Tips for guests

- Know that you may choose not to drink and can say "no" to alcoholic beverages for any reason.
- Measure the alcohol you use in mixed drinks: 1-1/2 ounces of distilled spirits in a mixed drink is about equal to the alcohol in one 12-ounce beer or 5 ounces of table wine. Diluting spirits with water or fruit juice will slow absorption down.
- Be particularly cautious about using alcohol when you are going to drive, when other drugs are taken, or when you are depressed or lonely.
- Drink slowly and avoid gulping a drink; remember that alcohol is a drug.
- Don't drink and drive. Avoid riding with a driver who is under the influence of alcohol.
- If you are a woman, realize that alcohol will have a greater effect on you even if you weigh the same as most men. If you are pregnant or nursing, the safest choice for you and your baby is not to drink.
- Don't drink alone.

Cuban bishop, 92, celebrates 50th

A Cuban-born Bishop, now 92, is celebrating the 50th anniversary of his ordination to the episcopacy.

Bishop Eduardo Dalmau, a member of the Congregation of Passionists, came to Miami in 1960 after being exiled by the Castro regime from his Diocese of Cienfuegos, to which he was appointed bishop in 1935.

Born in Havana on June 29, 1893, he studied for the priesthood at the International College of the Passionist Fathers in Monte Celio, Rome. He was ordained at the Church of St. Apollinare in Rome in 1915. For several years he taught theology in Rome until his appointment to the Diocese of Cienfuegos by the late Pope Pius XI.

One of the first members of the Cuban hierarchy to resist the Castro regime, he took refuge in South Florida as a guest of the late Archbishop Coleman F. Carroll, first Bishop of Miami and for five years was chaplain at the former novitiate of the Sister of St. Joseph in Jensen Beach. From 1965 to 1966 he served as chaplain at the Pennsylvania retirement hotel in West Palm Beach.



Cuban Bishop Eduardo Dalmau: Celebrating 50 years as bishop.

There will not be a formal observance of the Bishop's anniversary because of his ill health.

Just in the 'Nick' of time

Who is that fat man? Could he be a man with a mission?

By Kenneth Guentert

"Harry, guess who is my favorite social-justice saint?" Charlie asked me one day.

"Dorothy what's-her-name, the one with the raggedy sweaters," I said.

"No, no, I mean, officially canonized and everything," he said.

"I give up — Santa Claus, for all I know."

"You guessed."

"You're kidding. You don't mean the clown in the red suit who appears in the store ads shortly after Labor Day asking us to redistribute our funds to starving retail conglomerates."

"Look, you don't need to be snide about this," Charlie said. "Ever hear of St. Nicholas?"

"Of course I have. I went to Catholic school, with you as I recall."

"So what do you know about him?"

"That his feast day is December 6, that he was a bishop in Asia Minor, that he's good buddies with St. Christopher, who never existed either."

"I'm serious here. I believe in Santa Claus, who happens to be St. Nicholas, who happens to have been a real bishop in a real place."

"Myra, I know. But that's all we know."

"No, it's not. We know that he appeared in a dream to the Emperor Constantine on behalf of three soldiers who had been sentenced to death."

"That's a legend."

"So?"

"So? So it never happened. Just like Santa



don't know what to get men who have everything."

"So look what happens outside the stores."

"You mean where all those drunks stand around in red suits and try to get you to put your money in the drum?"

"Yep, where does the money go?"

"The poor, the oppressed, the downtrodden. Et cetera."

"See, every Christmas we start to think about people who are worse off than we are. Even if

"I think so. Don't you?"

"You're saying that Christmas is a time when children give their parents a want list a mile long?"

"Bingo."

"But let me ask you something: what happens to those children when they grow up?"

"What do you mean?"

"Do they still give their parents a want list a mile long?"

"Some do."

"But not most."

"Okay, not most. What are you driving at?"

"That children don't learn greed from Santa Claus. Instead, they learn that Christmas is a time for generosity to children. When they grow up, it is their turn to be gracious. That's how it is."

"So we get stuck paying the bills."

"I hear a little resentment there."

"From *moi*?"

"From *vous*."

"Okay, sure, why should we have to go out and buy all this junk to show our generosity to children?"

"Who says you do?"

"Santa?"

"Hah, you do believe!"

"Give me a break."

"Sorry, but look at it this way: St. Nick's message is that you have to be generous to children. Exactly how is open to debate."

"So how?"

"What kind of world are you leaving to your children?"

"Materially?"

"Sure, and spiritually, and culturally, and ecologically. Will they have safe water to drink? Beaches to swim at? Parks to play in? A safe place for your old plutonium? Are their homes a target for enemy missiles? Will they have to pay for the way you're living now?"

"Whoa, those are pretty large questions."

"St. Nicholas is a pretty large man."

"Yea, but this is the first time I've heard anybody tie him to the national debt before."

"There are many ways to care for children."

"So where do I start?"

"With a gift."

"Thanks."

"Merry Christmas."

(Reprinted with permission from Salt, published by Claretian publications, 221 Madison St., Chicago, Ill. 60606)

'So St. Nicholas of the legend was a nice guy. Big deal. It seems to me he's more about the business of selling cologne to women who don't know what to get men who have every-

thing.' Claus coming down the chimney."

"How do you know it never happened? Anyway you have to look at what the story *means*. The point is the soldiers were innocent. Unjustly sentenced. Oppressed."

"And St. Nicholas went to bat for them."

"Successfully, I might add."

"In the story."

"Want to hear another?"

"No."

"Okay, this man had three daughters of marriageable age, but he was too poor to afford a dowry for them; so he sent them out to be prostitutes."

"Hold on, what's a dowry?"

"Money that women had to give to the men before they could get married."

"Oh, I see. No dowry. No marriage. So St. Nicholas came in and got the emperor to change this unfair political system."

"No, no. In the middle of the night, he tossed three bags of gold into the daughters' windows."

"And rescued them from poverty and dishonor."

"Bingo."

"Okay, so St. Nicholas of the legend was a nice guy. Big deal. And now Americans let this socialist parade around on our streets in a red suit redistributing money from the rich to the poor."

"You're being funny, but isn't that what Santa Claus does?"

"Maybe, but it seems to me he's more about the business of selling cologne to women who

you do it in the middle of commercial hustle and bustle, at least it's something.

"Besides, it's perfectly appropriate for Santa Claus to operate inside and outside of department stores."

"Why?"

"Because he's the patron saint of merchants."

"Well, so much for your social-justice theory."

"How so?"

"Well, he can't be patron saint of the oppressed and patron saint of merchants, too."

"Don't be ridiculous. Where is it written that being patron saint of merchants means helping them make a bundle at the expense of the poor and the oppressed?"

"I don't know."

"Well nowhere, that's where. Listen, I'll tell you another story."

"No thanks."

"Okay. So this butcher runs out of bacon. Three boys come into his store, he entices them around the corner with some penny candy and then chops them up and stores them in his salt-

ing barrel. And what does St. Nicholas do? He brings the boys back to life."

"Wow! What happened to the butcher?"

"I don't know. The point is, he was a merchant whose business practices weren't the best..."

"To say the least."

"And St. Nicholas intervened on the side of the boys. He's the patron saint of children, too, you know."

"I know, he teaches them greed."

"Does he now?"

The impact of a few

Tom Lickona holds a doctorate degree in moral development and teaches within the state University of New York system at Cortland. His family, especially the two sons, enjoy "Sports Illustrated," but a few months back they felt offended and annoyed by an advertisement promoting a Seagrams' product.

Like an increasing number of current advertisements which try to sell such diverse items as body building machines, cognac, perfume, sun glasses and underwear, both the visuals and copy of that Seagrams' ad had a very erotic character to them. The message was hardly subtle and certainly,

'The problem may rest in the general public's reluctance to react in an intelligent, constructively critical and organized manner to objectionable presentations in the advertising, communication and entertainment fields.'

among other things, sexist in approach.

The professor first thought of cancelling their subscription in protest, but comments of dismay from his teenagers led him to another path. Lickona instead sent a carefully written letter to both the magazine and to the Seagrams' Company outlining his objections to what he termed a socially irresponsible style of marketing and advertising.

Neither the father nor the family expected any response.

BY FR. JOSEPH
M. CHAMPLIN



To their surprise, someone from "Sports Illustrated" called within days and expressed concern. However, the magazine staff person offered no promise of a change and only nebulous answers to pointed questions.

Within several weeks, however, Dr. Lickona received a lengthy letter from the president of Seagrams. The note expressed regret and maintained that the company has always considered itself as socially responsible to an exceptional degree among contemporary corporations. It went on to say that they had received a number of similar protesting letters, were modifying the offensive advertisement and hoped that the Cortland professor would be pleased with the revised promotion.

It seems that a few good people indeed can make a difference in our world today. This surely is the case in the advertising field. One firm's representative admitted, "If an ad campaign gets enough negative reaction, it will stop. Advertisers walk in great dread of offending potential consumers."

The problem may rest in the general public's reluctance to react in an intelligent, constructively critical and organized manner to objectionable presentations in the advertising, communication and entertainment fields.

While jogging across the bridge which links Pittsburgh's new Gateway with Three River's Stadium, I noticed a poster fixed to each upright girder. Identical, they carried this message: "Some

people do nothing, we dare to do something." Who were the "we" doing something? A photograph and words announced it was the Guardian Angels, that group of volunteer young people seeking to end violence in cities and bring peace to neighborhoods.

• Doing something is the first step to renewing the face of the earth and making our world a better place in which to live.

• But doing something with others to bring about changes is a second essential element.

Seagrams may never have shifted its approach had not a quantity of letters like Dr. Lickona's come to the corporate headquarters.

On both the east and the west coast during the past year, two physicians have discontinued flourishing abortion practices. Why? They ceased not because of any change in their attitudes, but because these men grew weary of protestors who day after day paced before their offices carrying placards objecting to the abortions.

• Doing something in an assertive, but thoughtful and respectful manner is a third element.

After the controversial movie "Hail Mary" opened at New York's Lincoln Center, some activists prepared a protest resolution for signatures. The proposal called for the dismissal of a statewide arts chairperson and the dismantling of two organizations which promote the fine arts. That type of advocacy would probably prove ineffective despite the number of signers. It asked for too much, the firing of good people and closing of productive offices, instead of seeking a more specific action. Furthermore, it carried many names but only one message and that text was not written in a careful, nuanced way. A few dozen articulate, intelligent letters of protest might achieve more.

While a few good people can make a difference, the opposite holds true. According to an old adage, "For evil to triumph, it is necessary only that good people do nothing."

Is the Church in crisis?

The cover story of the December 9th issue of *Newsweek* said the Catholic Church is a Church in crisis. Is that true?

If by crisis what is meant is that the Church is tottering on some precipice that could lead to destruction then, of course, the Church is not in that kind of crisis. If crisis is used to indicate there are tensions in the Church then of course, that is true.

It can also be truthfully said there have been in the history of the Church a succession of crises. This is not to belittle the present situation but to place it in proper historical context. It is important not to be overwhelmed by the idea the Church is in a time of tension — this is not unique to our own time. *Newsweek* noted that the late Jesuit theologian Karl Rahner said the cultural shift necessary in adaptation of the Church from European to world orientation was unprecedented since the first century. This may well be true but it is not to the heart of the truth about the church today.

The extraordinary synod that ended on the Feast of the Immaculate Conception in Rome was the occasion for the *Newsweek* evaluation of the situation of the Church today. It was in its realization the best possible indication of the truth about the Church today.

What was most significant about that synod was not that diverse views were expressed, diversity is in the essence of the Church, nor was it in the very serious discussions about the way the collegial relationship of bishops all over the world,

BY
DALE FRANCIS



with the Pope and with each other, is to be expressed — that, too, is proper to the nature of the Church.

What was most important was the unity that was affirmed. If there was diversity, it was within the context of the unity. If there were differences about how the insights of the Second Vatican Council can best be realized, there was unity in affirming the value of that Council. If the bishops of the world examined their roles as ordinaries of their dioceses, as members of national conferences, their collegial relationship with the Pope, there is no question that at the center of their unity is the Pope. The extraordinary synod was an occasion for a discussion of, and an opening to, many questions but it was, most importantly of all, an affirmation of unity.

The Church is a living Church. Because the Church is a living Church, the developing ideas of how to best carry out the mission of the Church in a diversity of situations creates tensions as natural results. In this day of instant communi-

cation, there is likely to be a greater awareness of the diversities.

Newsweek, pointing out that nearly half of the Catholics in the world are in the Southern Hemisphere, most in Africa and South America, said the Church is culturally and ethnically more diverse than ever before and faces the problem of being "everywhere different, yet everywhere the same."

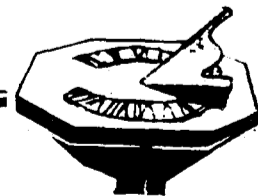
This is not something new for the Church, it has always been true. Mass celebrated in a small town in Ohio and in a village in Mexico is the same Mass but the setting and the way the people worship, one hands folded, the other arms outstretched, greatly differ. If the Church is to be, what the Church should be, to people everywhere, then diversity in forms is a necessity. As the Church has growth in diverse places, the diversity in worship is inevitable.

But diversity must always exist in unity. There must be a core of truth that exists wherever the Church is. At the synod, there was discussion of a world catechism that would state clearly those essentials of belief to which we must all hold in unity. It will not be easy to prepare but it may be necessary to assure that diversity does not become disparity. But the most certain guarantee of unity is what the bishops affirmed at the extraordinary synod. Though the Church exists all over the world with a natural diversity, there is one Church and at the center of the unity is Peter.

(Dale Francis is a nationally syndicated columnist.)

Time capsules

By Frank Morgan



Bethlehem, 'house of bread'

Bethlehem, the birthplace of Jesus, is today a town of 35,000 people of Jordan five miles from Jerusalem. Its name comes from the Hebrew words which mean "house of bread."

In 46 B.C., Julius Caesar moved the beginning of the year from March 1 to January 1. To realign the calendar with the seasons, Caesar ruled that the year we know as 46 B.C. would have 445 days.

In 1582, Pope Gregory XIII corrected the difference between the sun and the calendar by dropping

10 days. But it was not until 1792 when the Julian calendar was 11 days slow that the British and the Americans agreed to make the day after September 2, 1792 become September 14, 1792. Many people ignorant of the reason for the change felt cheated and actually rioted, shouting, "Give us back our 11 days!"

When the calendar was changed by the monk, Dionysius Exiguus, in the 6th century, he set the date of "the incarnation of the Lord" as 753 years

after the founding of the city of Rome. But his arithmetic was inaccurate.

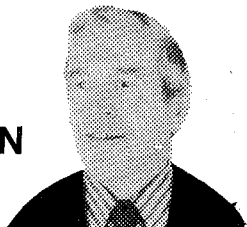
The Gospels say that Jesus was born while Herod was on the throne, but Herod died about 749 according to the Roman calendar or about 4 B.C. Also the census mentioned by St. Luke as the reason why Joseph and Mary traveled to Bethlehem was held in the Roman year 747 or 6 B.C. So that Jesus Christ was born, strangely enough, between 4 to 7 B.C.

The sudden ending

Q. What do you do when you date someone for a long time and it ends abruptly with really no sign that this is going to happen? (Maine)

A. The first thing you can do, if you wish, is ask for an explanation. It is

**BY
TOM
LENNON**



possible your friend has misunderstood something you have done and an explanation will bring this to light and perhaps clear the air.

Such discussions, however, are easier to handle in each other's presence than by phone.

Ask for an explanation in a matter-of-fact way. Don't be demanding. Don't beg or demean yourself in any other way. Simply get across the point that you have valued the friendship and would like to know why it is being ended.

You may get only a vague or flimsy explanation or none at all. It could be that your friend objects to something about your personality and knows

'The truth may be that your friend has tired of you or has found a new friend he or she considers more attractive now.'

that you cannot change without ceasing to be the real you.

Or the truth may be that your friend has either tired of you or has found a new friend he or she considers more attractive now.

Such a truth is hard to take. It can hurt in a devastating way. At some point you may want to have one or several good cries, either in private or on another friend's shoulder. A good cry can be healthy and helpful.

But don't go on crying and don't try to ease the pain with marijuana, alcohol or some other drug. Avoid self-pity at all costs.

Instead, get on with the adventure of building some new friendships. This will take effort on your part. You'll have to take some risks and you may encounter some disappointments along the way.

But if you go out of your way to try some new activities and new hobbies, if you try also to make friends with some people you might have ignored in the past you may reap a harvest of new friends.

And among these new acquaintances, you may find in a year or so another special friend who will enrich your life as much or more than the friend you have lost.

Don't hang on to the past. The sooner you take definite steps to build a new social life, the sooner the pain you experience at the present will come to an end.

A new life is yours for the taking. Enjoy.

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

(NC News Service)

Inside gifts

We were getting ready for Christmas when my two daughters and I started talking about gifts and why we give them.

**BY
ANTOINETTE
BOSCO**



Mary went running to her bookshelf, full of volumes from her study of the classics and linguistics. She came back brimming with information. Gift comes from "giefu," an Anglo-Saxon word, influenced by Old Norse, she said. As she translated the word, it meant to offer something that comes from oneself to become an enhancement for another.

But it was her following comments that touched me. "Giving is one of the most basic things about our culture," she said. "We would have no humanity without giving. And you couldn't have a culture if people didn't give to one another."

In fact, she continued, giving is so basic that apparently "no one ever had any impulse to change the meaning in any way." Gift means much the same today.

Her comments started me thinking. All I had been hearing, as usual, were complaints from co-workers and friends saying they were smack into the holiday "rush," all "pressured" and tired of the "commercialism."

They had fallen into the trap that is so easy to get caught in during the weeks just before Christmas as the flurry of Christmas preparations escalate. Their time was so budgeted for buying that they had no time to ponder why we are gift givers.

As my daughters and I conversed, we went back to considering how essential gift giving is — for giving is the statement that we choose to be a part of something, and someone, outside ourselves. It is the way we become connected to one another and show we care for others.

It's never been a mystery to me that Christmas is a time for gift giving. It is after all, the season to remember again that God touched us with his benevolence in a tangible way — by bringing love in the person of his son Jesus to earth.

We imitate God's benevolence when we give a gift and express love or friendship in a tangible way.

What we have to watch out for is falling into the trap of thinking that we're giving gifts when we're only exchanging merchandise. I've often heard people say the gift they gave wasn't appreciated or that they expected one in return.

When gifts are spoken of in terms of obligations, strings attached or gratitude, they really aren't gifts at all. The minute a condition accompanies an offering, it becomes a barter, a bribe or an obligation, not a gift. This kind of giving is only an exchange of a thing that does nothing to form a bond between two people.

In the concept of bonding lies the reason why we give gifts. Consider two people in love. When they exchange rings they have not simply decorated each other with twin circles. The rings signify the bond that exists between two individuals.

On Dec. 25, when the bustle is all calmed down for another year, and the gifts rest beautifully under the tree, I wonder how many will be just merchandise and not true gifts?

If they have been given to make someone feel better, happy, special, beautiful or enhanced in some way, they will be truly gifts, delivered out of the same motivation as the Lord's in giving us his Son.

Then we can feel how truly, through the centuries, giving has added to the store of goodness in the world.

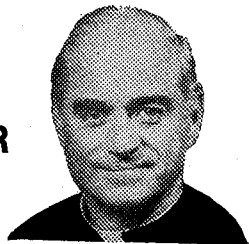
(NC News Service)



Authority's role

Jesus instituted a church, a body of faithful followers who would honor and worship the Father, not as a mass of unrelated individuals, but as a people. Jesus said to Peter, "He who hears you, hears Me." Authority was given. He called us to community, "that all may be one." He knew that every society needs an authority structure. But it isn't always easy to accept authority. Freedom

**BY FR.
JOHN CATOIR**



and authority are in constant tension. Individuals want their freedom, even though freedom has its limitations. For instance, a person, in one sense, is "free" to jump off the Empire State Building, but only once. We are free to disobey the Ten Commandments, but if we do, we have to suffer the consequences. Try stealing and see what happens. Happiness and survival depend a great deal on how we use our freedom. In the matter of spiritual survival, we'd better be clear about the essentials, otherwise we run the risk of using our freedom to our own detriment. That's where authority comes in.

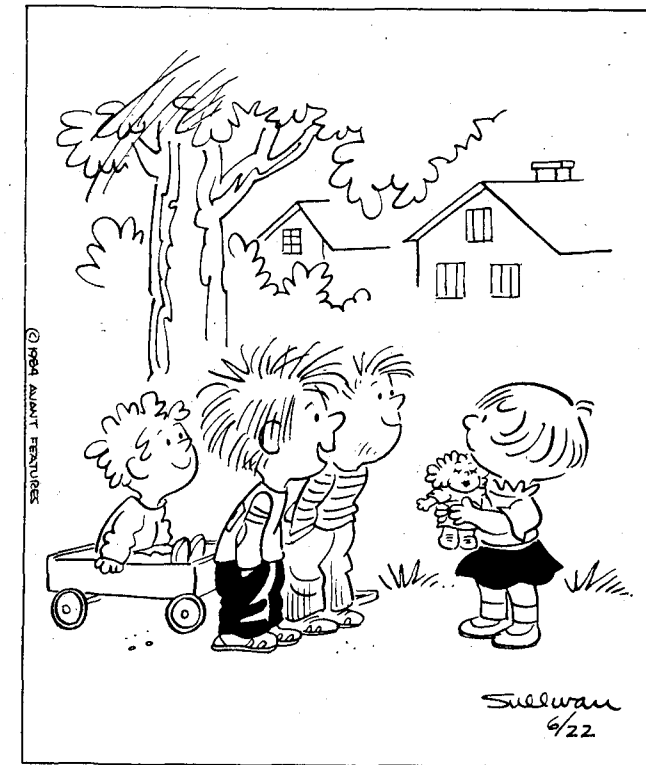
Faith is essentially knowledge. It is a matter of accepting as true something we cannot necessarily prove, but which we accept on the authority of another. People are in big trouble if their authority figure is deceived or is leading them astray. The Reverend James Jones induced the suicide of more than 900 people. He called himself a teacher of the truth, and people foolishly believed him.

Jesus is the only true authority. Trying to find out what He actually said and meant, however, is a matter of believing our teachers. His words have filtered down to us through the centuries in a variety of cultures and languages. The reason we can be clear on anything at all about Him is that we have the Scriptures, the oral tradition of the church, the writings of the Fathers, the Councils, etc. We have preserved the living memory of what Jesus said and did. The church came before the New

Testament and gave birth to it. Jesus established a church to be the forerunner of the kingdom of heaven. He said, "I am the Vine, you are the branches."

The Lord asks us to love one another, to become one people. We need one another. The future will lead us in the direction of a world church with many branches in a loving union. But first, we must learn to surrender to the Father's will; in doing that we use our freedom most perfectly.

For a free copy of the Christopher News Notes, "Who Is Jesus Christ?" send a stamped, self-addressed envelope to The Christophers, 12 East 48th St., New York, NY 10017.



"FATHER MULVANEY CAME OVER LAST NIGHT AND BLESSED OUR HOUSE! HE SAID IT WAS TOO LATE FOR THE FURNITURE, THOUGH."

Parents accused of child-abuse

Dear Mary: Three months ago our two daughters, ages 17 and 14, were taken from their school by the child-protection agency saying they were physically and sexually abused, which is not true. We have at home three sons and an infant daughter. There has not been any investigation, and we, the parents, were not questioned.

We have gone everywhere and done everything this agency said, for we want our girls home again. Also our girls have repeatedly expressed the desire to come home, saying their words were taken out of context, but this agency will not release them. We are going to family therapy and have been told, "You have been found guilty and need help" or "You are insane." Our words have fallen on deaf ears. We have been to our parish priest, and he is behind us. Can you please help? — Texas

Your letter forcefully affirms a point we have often made, namely, that we cannot solve complex family problems simply by referring people to an agency. You seem to have been gravely wronged, and you seem trapped by bureaucratic procedure. You claim you have cooperated and have taken every action you can think of. Your behavior does not seem "crazy."

If your rights have been abused as you describe, your need legal assistance. Hire a lawyer or seek help from legal aid. Inform your lawyer of all you have done in cooperating with the agency and of



BY
DR. JAMES
AND MARY
KENNY

the lack of investigation.

You might fear that legal action will alienate the agency which has charge of your daughters. However, agencies exist to serve the public. A good agency doing its job has no problem with scrutiny from the courts or with review by citizens. They are accustomed to public scrutiny.

Enlist the aid of relatives and friends. Ask your parish priest to write a letter in your behalf or to accompany you if you must present your case. Find neighbors and friends who can vouch for your character. Make a list of people who support you to give to your lawyer.

Try to make contact with other parents who have had their children taken away. Find out the circumstances and actions they have taken.

Political action is another avenue. Contact your city, county or state representatives. Follow up to

find out what action is taken by your representative's office.

If you belong to a minority group, contact your minority-rights organization. They too can provide you with support and suggestions or take action on your behalf.

Finally, many newspapers have a consumer-assistance department which helps readers with problems in the purchase of merchandise or services. Your problem is far more compelling. Perhaps a letter to the newspaper would prompt the paper to examine and publicize your case. An even more effective action might be to have your daughters write the newspaper and tell their story. They are old enough to speak for themselves.

You have several avenues open. Choose those you think will be most effective. It might be painful to publicize your story. On the other hand, you might save another family from a similar experience.

Our system holds that the accused is innocent until proven guilty. In your case the presumption seems to have been reversed. While difficult, the actions you take might help not only your family, but others who suffer abuses in our system.

Reader questions on family living and child care to be answered in print are invited. Address questions to the Kennys, Box 872, St. Joseph's College, Rensselaer, Ind. 47978.

(NC News Service)

Never enough Nativity sets

I have never been a collector. Little figurines such as some people collect do not interest me. I admire one's collection of china birds, salt/pepper shakers, and little teacups but their fascination eludes me. I just can't invest any emotion in china or pewter rabbits and I see them essentially as objects to dust.

But Nativity sets — ah, there's another story. I have always loved them. When I was a little girl living in a large family during the depression, we had a small creche set which we called The Crib. The manger was constructed of some sort of black paper mache and there was a plaster Mary, Joseph, Infant, cow and donkey.

Somewhere along the years we kids added plaster puppies, cats and rabbits. Our parents allowed us to touch and play with the figures and I used to love taking them out and rearranging the scene.

When my brother served in the army in Germany, he sent my parents a beautiful hand-carved creche set and the shabby one disappeared. But when my mother died and we disposed of her belongings, I was delighted to find it stored away. Nobody else wanted it but it is one of my most prized sets because of memories attached.

Since childhood I have become increasingly intrigued with Nativity sets. At last count I have over 30 of my own. Most are not expensive works of art. I don't care about signatures of artists.

What I love is the diversity of cultures these sets represent. I have one from Germany with Mary dressed in a Bavarian dress with pinafore and Joseph in lederhosen. And one from Santa Fe in which all the humans are Native Americans. The Three Wise Men offer an Indian rug, drum, and fry bread. Instead of the traditional cow and donkey,

BY
DOLORES
CURRAN



the animals number an antelope, coyote, and jack rabbit.

My husband surprised me with a creche from Indonesia in which the delicate Eurasian features and the palm tree create a totally unique set. In Mexico, I bought a scene with a mariachi band playing at the fiesta of Jesus' birth. From Alaska, I have Eskimo parents and Infant, with huskies as animals.

What fascinates me is that peoples all over the world have taken the Nativity scene and applied it to their culture. Some are crudely fashioned, definitely not pieces of art, but that's fine with me.

I don't hide my Nativity sets away and bring them out at Christmas, either. I rotate them and keep one or two sets out to enjoy throughout the year. They give me pleasure and I don't apologize for being out of season because I like to remember the joy of the Nativity during the year.

Collecting creches, however, creates problems. One is cost. "Can't you collect something with one piece?" my husband asks patiently. It's true. When one collects turtles, one buys a piece but a Nativity scene tallies anywhere from 3 to 25 pieces.

Space is another problem. I no longer look at large creches. The tinier the better. When Christmas comes, it's a challenge to find enough table tops to display the sets.

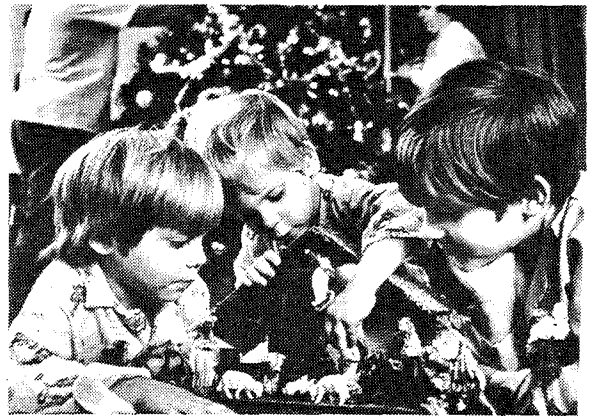
I've found I am not alone in my love of Nativity art. I can't resist a show or museum of collections. There must be thousands of people like me and we're always interested in seeing new sets, even if we can't possess them.

We're always looking for more, I admit. Collecting is an addiction. I want an African and a Japanese set but the ones I've seen are too large or too expensive.

But that's okay. It gives me an excuse to keep looking, which taxes my family's patience whenever I see a Christmas shop. And, for all their little comments, I find them examining my sets and rearranging the scenes occasionally.

Maybe it's catching.

(Alt Publishing Co.)



Family matters

Curran to speak at family life conference

By Linda DiPrima

After the hectic "busyness" of Christmas holidays is behind us, many families can become preoccupied once again with the daily routine of chores, rush-hour traffic and bill paying. As January approaches and we reflect on the New Year's resolutions we wish to make, perhaps we can focus on strengthening our family relationships as a way of welcoming another year together.

We here at the Family Enrichment Center have good news! On Saturday, January 11 we are hosting a conference at St. Thomas University highlighting many aspects of family life,



and we invite you to share this special event with us. Dolores Curran, whose articles you have enjoyed reading on this page, will be the keynote speaker in English. She will be addressing the topics of "Traits of a Healthy Family" and "Stress and the Healthy." Fr. Gabriel Calvo, the founder of the Marriage

Encounter movement, will present the same topic in Spanish, which focus on different areas of family life such as: "Strengths in the Single-Parent Family," "Creative Ways to Grow in Marriage," "Drug and Alcohol Abuse in the Family: What Can We Do" and "Teens and Sexuality."

What an exciting way to begin anew our efforts to grow in closeness and understanding within our families! We look forward to seeing you there.

Conference will be held at St. Thomas University, 16400 NW 32 Avenue, Miami, from 9-5 p.m.

REGISTRATION FORM

FAMILY: A PLACE TO LEARN, TO LOVE AND TO GROW January 11, 1986

Mail this form with the registration fee payable to:

Family Enrichment Center, 18330 NW 12 Avenue, Miami FL 33169

Registration Fee: \$15 per person — lunch included

Name _____

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Sunday, December 22, 1985

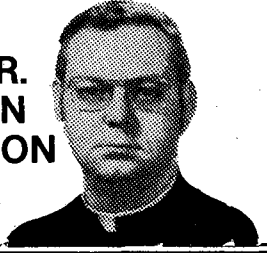
READINGS: Micah 5:1-4; Hebrews 10:5-10; Luke 1:39-45.

All but Christ's love shall pass

BACKGROUND:

Kings and monarchies are not the best images to use today to convey the thoughts they would have represented in Jesus' time. At

BY FR.
OWEN
CAMPION



least in Europe today, kings symbolize national unity and identity, they stand for the supremacy of constitutional law and of democratic processes over individual personal wishes, and they call for a patriotism and national interest that are above politics. In literature, they project a different image: an appearance often of greed, slyness, and immorality. Neither is anything like the ancient Jews' view of good kings.

Good kings were protectors, models, and fathers for the people. And, they were God's genuine servants. David's life had its ugly moments, but, ultimately, Jewish history judged him to be great.



This Sunday's first reading links Jesus with David. It sets Bethlehem as the birthplace of David. Bethlehem traditionally is honored as Christ's birthplace. David's wise strategies in war, and clever governance, saved the Jews from destruction. Jesus' sacrifice saves all from death. The parallels are many.

The second reading this weekend is from Hebrews. Hebrews frequently appears in the Liturgies of the Word (unlike Micah). Its focus is Jesus, the lamb of God, the glorified priest and victim.

St. Luke's gospel presents John the Baptist once more in this Advent's Liturgy of the Word. In the

that Christ plays in Christian life and in salvation.

The Church's message this weekend is clear. Christ comes! He is all!

An earlier verse in today's gospel, however, conveys another important lesson. It records the counsel that loans must be sanely

'Do we allow other interests or preferences to block our way to God — or his way to us?'

passage today recalling Mary's visit to Elizabeth, when both were pregnant, it is clear that Mary's child would bring the world's salvation.

REFLECTION:

John the Baptist is mentioned several times in the Four Gospels, and very often he painstakingly reminds his own followers that a leader far greater than he is about to come. Of course, that leader would be Jesus.

In this Sunday's gospel reading, the focus once again is upon Jesus — with John the Baptist as his subordinate and harbinger.

That focus occurs also in the second reading, and in Micah which supplies the first reading and reinforces the supreme role

handled. The financial difficulty of another at one time is no occasion for a lender to exploit the situation.

There is a deeper message. It is of detachment. Ultimately it calls us to the spirit and its needs. Material things pass away. They cannot in themselves bring peace and happiness, now or in the future.

John the Baptist would not allow himself to stand in the Lord's way. Do we allow other interests or preferences to block our way to God — or his way to us? Detachment simply means common sense in judging things and life. Are we detached? Do we know what is vital and what is not? Do we act accordingly? If we do, then in this Christmas, and forever, God will come to us.

Was Jesus really born on Dec. 25th?

Q. I just finished reading the November copy of a magazine with an article titled "Jesus' Birth: The Untold



BY FR.
JOHN
DIETZEN

Story." It says that Jesus was probably born in late September or early October and not on Dec. 25. I always assumed that we celebrate Christmas because that is His birthday. According to this article, it is actually a pagan holiday. I would really like to know. (Massachusetts)

A. Various theories, none of them really convincing, have been put forward attempting to pinpoint the day

of Christ's birth. Perhaps strange to say, the truth is that we have no idea about the date when He was born.

From information given, especially in the Gospel of Luke, scholars generally believe that Jesus was born between what we now call the years 8 and 6 B.C.

Why do we celebrate Christmas on Dec. 25? The most likely explanation, the one most generally accepted today, is that the birth of Christ was assigned to the date of the winter solstice.

This date is Dec. 21 in our calendar, the first day of winter. In the Julian calendar, November, which was used by Western civilization from the time of Julius Caesar until about 400 years ago, the date of the winter solstice was Dec. 25.

It is, incidentally, on Jan. 5 in the Egyptian calendar, still followed by some Eastern Rite Christian churches, which is why they celebrate Christmas on that date.

The solstice, when days begin to lengthen in the northern hemisphere, was referred to by ancient pagans as the "Birthday of the Unconquered Sun."

During the third century, Emperor Aurelian proclaimed Dec. 25 as a special day dedicated to the sun god whose cult was very strong in Rome at that time.

Even before this time, Christian writers referred to Jesus as the Sun of Justice. It seemed quite proper, therefore, that as Christianity began to dominate the religious scene in the Roman Empire, the date of the "new-born sun" should be chosen as the birth date of Christ.

Q. I am concerned about the validity of my marriage. Eighteen years ago I married a convert to the Catholic faith who had been previously married to a man who was either an atheist or an agnostic.

Their marriage lasted about 15 months. After instructions and her conversion to the Catholic faith, the priest looked into our marriage, said it was valid and that we need not question it.

We since learned that this priest left the priesthood and married. What is our standing? We both want to be good practicing Catholics. (California)

A. My first reaction is that you should continue to follow the instincts which have guided you during the past 18 years and accept what the priest told you at that time.

The fact that the priest left his ministry since then does not nullify his advice to you. Unless you now have some positive and substantial reason to think otherwise, you may still accept what he told you with good faith and honesty.

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What's Happening

Sr. Gott leaves separated and divorced ministry



Sr. Agnes Gott

By Betsy Kennedy
Voice Staff Writer

The fragile butterfly bric-a-braces and paintings which symbolize a remarkable ministry are being tucked away in boxes. The fond and equally fragile memories also will be put away, but only for safe-keeping.

Sister Agnes Bernadette Gott, O.P., Director of the Ministry to Separated and Divorced Catholics for the Archdiocese of Miami is leaving. On Jan. 1, she will assume her newly elected position as director of Personnel and Ministry for her order, the Dominican Sisters of Media, Pa.

A Mass of Thanksgiving and farewell reception was held for Sr. Gott at St. Maurice Church in Ft. Lauderdale on Dec. 16. Bishop Agustin Roman was the main celebrant, and Fr. Jim Young served

as homilist. Dozens of Sr. Gott's friends as well-wishers attended.

Sr. Gott, who is a native of New Castle, Delaware, graduated from St. Peter's High School and earned her B.A. from the College of St. Rose, Albany and her M.A. from Manhattanville College, N.Y.

When she came to the Family Enrichment Center at the Archdiocese seven years ago, the church was just beginning to adopt a more pastoral approach to separated and divorced Catholics. Through her efforts, the ministry here was shaped into what Fr. Jim Young, founder of the North American Conference for the Separated and Divorced, calls, "one of the best programs of its kind in the country."

Normally a shy person who avoids the limelight, Sr. Gott willingly took on assertive leadership task when she thought it would benefit those she served.

"She was an inspiration to all of us. She was the sparkplug that kept all of the separated and divorced groups at the parishes running smoothly. They tend to change and disband, but she kept them unified and knew how to develop membership," said Mike Moloney, a coordinator for the separated and divorced Catholics support group at St. Louis Church in South Miami.

After Sr. Gott's departure, Sr. Virginia McCall, of the Sisters of Presentation of South Dakota will assume the position of Director of the Ministry to the Separated and Divorced.

Anyone who wishes to keep in contact with Sr. Gott may write to her c/o T. Dominican Sisters, 2850 North Providence Road, Media, Pa., 19063.

Scripture brunches offer inspiration in Dade, Broward

Good News! Catholic women of the Archdiocese of Miami are ministering to one another at monthly scripture brunches. Both the Dade County Women of Light Brunch, held on the second Saturday of the month, and the Broward brunch, held on the third Saturday, continue to attract women hungry for deeper knowledge of the Word. The format of each brunch consists of song and scripture instruction, as well as an inspirational talk from someone witnessing to how the Lord is working in her life. Women from different parishes join together in fellowship and support — realizing that Christ reaches us very powerfully through the witness of others.

An exciting dimension of the brunches is the increasing spirit of outreach to

women alienated from the Church.

Dade organizer Kitty Janelle has also been impressed by this spirit of reaching out to others. Kitty says: "One of the areas that excites me is seeing mother and daughter relationships growing closer as they experience Jesus in the Word and witness. The young women, sometimes separated from the Church for various

reasons, find their way back into a renewed Church due to the changes of Vatican II."

The Dade County Women of Light Brunch will celebrate its third anniversary on January 11th from 9:30-11:30 a.m. at the Sheraton River House, 3900 N.W. 21st Street, Miami. Call Kitty Janelle at 887-8453 for information. The Broward

Women of Light will meet January 11th from 9:00-11:30 a.m. at the Holiday Inn, Fort Lauderdale North, 4900 Powerline Road, Ft. Lauderdale. Call Sharon Coe at 721-8486 for information.

Young marrieds group formed

A social/spiritual support group for young married couples has been started at St. Timothy parish in Miami. Called "Cana," the group will hold its first activity, a retreat, on Jan. 18 from 8:30 a.m. to 6 p.m. (including the closing liturgy) at the church, 5300 SW 102 Ave. Cost is \$10 per couple and free baby sitting will be provided. For information and registration, call the parish at 274-7732, and leave a message for Lourdes Casajuana.

Training set for ministers to elderly

Anyone interested in ministering to the elderly is encouraged to register for a 10-week training course which will begin January 13, 1986.

Classes will take place on consecutive Monday evenings, between 7 and 10 p.m. at the Sts. Joaquin and Anne Center for the Elderly, 18340 NW 12 Avenue, Miami.

Through lectures and group discussions, participants will be trained to carry on a ministry to the elderly in their own parishes.

For more information, call the center at 653-2921 or contact the Office of Lay Ministry, 757-6241 in Dade or 525-5157 in Broward.

It's a Date

The Cenacle will hold a compulsive overeaters retreat on Jan. 10-12 based on a 12 step program. Call/Write the Cenacle, 1400 S. Dixie Hwy., Lantana, 33462. Or call 582-2534.

Good Shepherd Catholic Church on Sunset Dr. and 142nd Ave. will be having a New Year's Eve celebration. Champagne and set-ups. Dancing. 9 p.m. to 1 a.m. Donation \$5. Contact Rosemary O'Leary at 385-1373.

Holy Family parish at 14500 N.E. 11th Ave. in North Miami will hold a New Year's Eve party on Dec. 31. Dinner 8 to 9 p.m. Dancing 9 p.m. to 1 a.m. Music by Jack Stevens. Tickets \$12.50 per person. For reservations call Jennie Mauch at 893-1980.

St. Henry Church in Pompano Beach will

hold a New Year's Eve party on Dec. 31. Big band orchestra. Buffet dinner. Dancing 9:30 p.m. to 1:30 a.m. \$30 per person. Call parish at 943-3932 for reservations.

The Catholic Widower Club of Hollywood will hold its monthly meeting on Jan. 3, at Nativity Parish Hall, 700 Chaminade Drive, Hollywood at 7:30 p.m. Guest speaker will be an attorney discussing Wills and Trusts. Social meeting and live music with refreshments. Guests \$3. Call Pat 566-4466, Sam 989-2558 or Mary 921-0685 for any information.

North Dade Catholic Widow and Widowers Club will hold a meeting and social, cards, games and dancing at 7:30 P.M. on Dec. 27, at Visitation Church Social Hall, 100 N.E. 191st

St., and N. Miami Ave., Miami. All faiths welcome. Call 651-5539 or 652-3052.

St. Hugh Church, Main Highway and Royal Road in Coconut Grove, Midnight Mass attendants arriving at 11 p.m. on December 24, will be greeted by an Olde English Brass Quintet. At 11:20 p.m. under the direction of Organist Millicent Callobre, a thirty voice Choir, a String Quartet with violinist Jose Montoto will present a Concert of Christmas and Classical Music and unique Spanish and Latin American Carols. Trumpets and Organ will herald the celebration of a Bilingual Midnight Mass with Pastor, Reverend John J. Vaughan, as main Celebrant.

St. Basil Catholic Church members will hold a Candlelight Procession as they sing Christ-

mas Carols in the neighborhood of the church. The 'Joyful Journey to Bethlehem' walk begins at 8 pm, Dec. 24 at the church, 1475 NE 199th Street, Miami. The parish welcomes all persons of good will to join them at 7:30 pm at the above address. Additional information available by phoning 651-0991.

St. Gregory's Church, 200 N. University Drive in Plantation will present a special Christmas musical program performed by members from the Ft. Lauderdale Symphony Orchestra. Christmas and Classical music before each Mass. Highlights from Handel's Messiah. Mass Schedule: Dec. 24 at 4 p.m., 5:30 p.m., 8:30 p.m. 10 p.m., midnight; Christmas day at 8 a.m., 9:15, 10:30 and noon.

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Campus ministry association meets at Barry

(MIAMI SHORES) — For the 12th time, the Catholic Campus Ministry Association will return to Barry University for its annual Eastern Study Week. Approximately 300 persons, both religious and lay, are expected on campus January 2-6, 1986. The theme of this year's study week will be "Believing Impossible Things."

Workshop presenters include Maureen Fuechtmann, assistant vice president and director of ministry at Loyola University, Chicago, Ill. Based on her extensive ex-

perience, Fuechtmann will present reflections on laity, team building and leadership in ministry.

The CCMA planning team listened to the needs of members and their students by providing workshops which will cover the following: theological reflection groups, ministering to the gay student, college age spirituality, retreat types, sanctuary movement, violence and rape preventions, stress management, suicide, music, clowning, the Myers-Briggs Personality-Type Indicator and the

Pastoral on Higher Education. For more information, call Ed Turner,

Barry University, 758-3392, extension 254.

St. Mary's Christmas Masses scheduled

Archbishop McCarthy will be the principal celebrant of Pontifical Christmas Mass at midnight on Christmas Eve at St. Mary Cathedral, 7525 NW Second Ave. A special program of Carols will be sung by the parish choir beginning at 11:15 p.m. accompanied by a brass ensemble and organ.

At 7:30 a.m. on Dec. 25 Mass will be celebrated in Creole for the Haitian community. The Cathedral Children's Choir will be featured during 9:30 a.m. Mass in English. At 11 a.m. Archbishop McCarthy will be the principal celebrant of another Mass in English. A special Mass for the Spanish-speaking will begin at 1 p.m.

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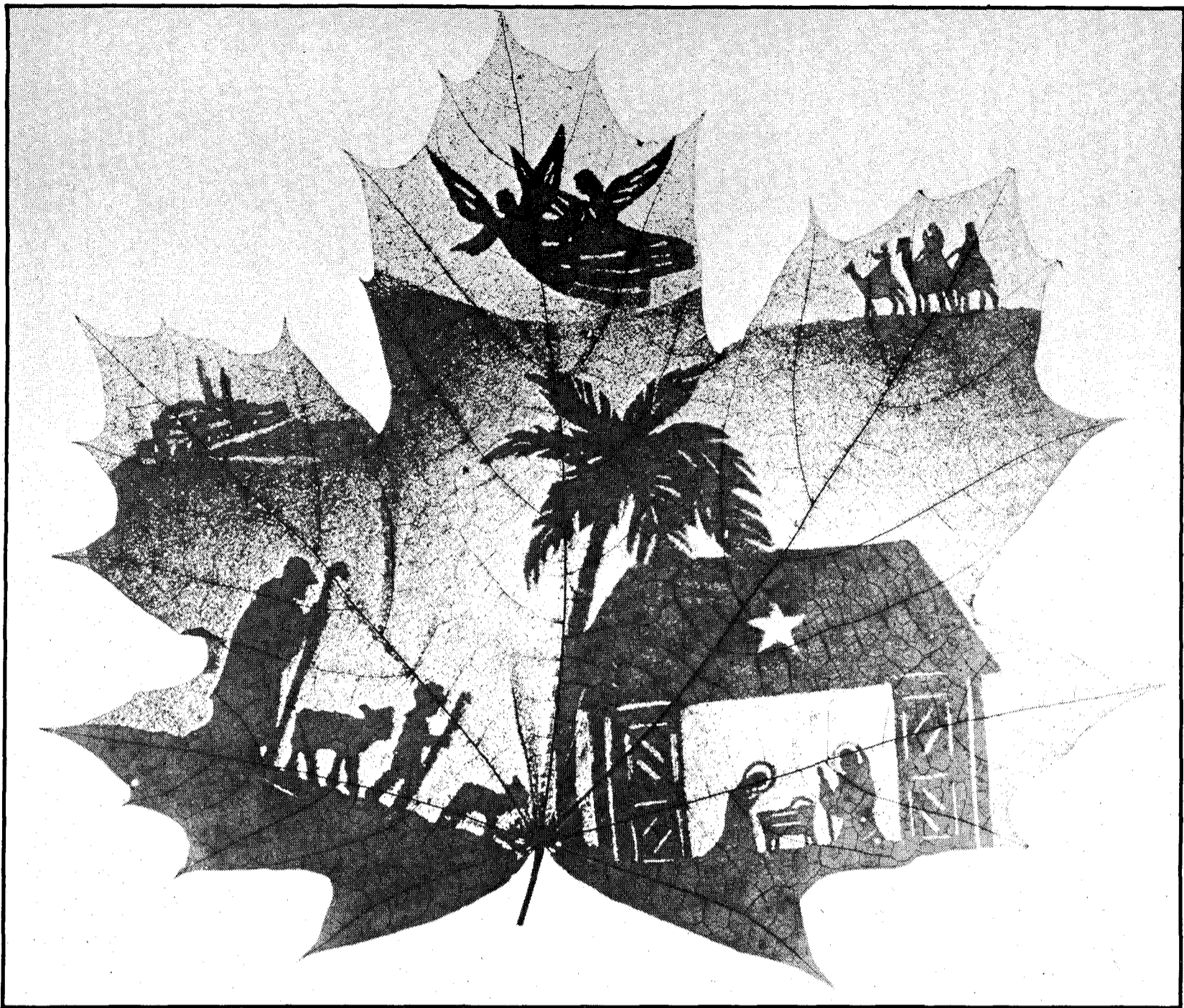
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A Christmas story

By Stan Konieczny
NC News Service

Joseph quietly slid out of the makeshift bed he had arranged in a corner of the stable. He did not want to wake his wife, Mary, who had given birth to her first child just a few hours earlier. Brushing straw from his robe and rubbing the sleep from his eyes, Joseph was ready to begin his usual morning prayers. But today the schedule was altered.

Today was special because, before he prayed, Joseph wanted to check on Jesus, the new addition to his family.

The sturdy carpenter crouched beside the manger-turned-crib and with childlike wonder marveled at how the blankets barely moved with the soft breath of this tiny, newborn miracle. The workman's hand gently caressed the back of the infant as he said, "Welcome, my little fellow. I hardly had a minute to myself with you last night. Things were pretty hectic.

"You're safe and warm and dry here," Joseph whispered. "But this isn't what I wanted for you. I tried so hard and you end up in this stable! Your mother and I have waited for you for so long. It seemed like an eternity but actually those weeks and months flew by as we tried to prepare everything for you back home.

"All that work helped me through the most difficult days of my life. See, I couldn't understand when Mary first told me about you. I still don't understand, but that doesn't mean that I have ever doubted my love for your mom or you for one minute."

'I tried so hard and you end up in this stable!'

Looking down at the manger, Joseph said, "I only wish that you could be sleeping in the cradle I made for you. It was the best I ever turned out of my shop.

"I planed and sanded that wood until it was so smooth," he chuckled.

Looking at the child asleep in the hay, Joseph apologized. "I was putting the finishing touches on that cradle when the neighbors told me the first rumors about this census."

"I sold your cradle to buy a donkey which would make the trip here to Bethlehem easier for your

mother," he said with grim finality.

"It was bad enough to change plans and prepare for an unexpected trip but I also had to cope with a thousand questions. Did I really need to spend our small savings to buy extra provisions? If I did, how would we provide for you? Could Mary handle such a strenuous trip? Who would help her once we arrived in Bethlehem?"

"We made it all right. We shared each other's strength. Your mom is a remarkable woman. You'll see. We came into Bethlehem late yesterday afternoon and every room was already taken.

"When I knocked at the last innkeeper's door, my knuckles were white. In that tense moment, I whispered a prayer for the three

of us. I was so nervous that my voice cracked and the sweat streamed down my neck.

"But there was no need to worry. The roly-poly innkeeper seemed like a jovial guy, although he acted like he had a little too much wine last night. Anyway, he brought us out back to this stable.

"You were in such a hurry to join us that I ended up rushing all over the place, sweeping the floor and piling straw to make some sort of a bed for Mary. I was out breath and my pulse pounded at my temples. But then all the rushing stopped and I held you in my arms for the first time," Joseph said.

"Sleep on, little one," the carpenter told the baby, adding as he stood up, "I guess you will want to hear that story time and again as you grow up. I know I will never forget it."

Savor
the
season

By NC News Service

Before Christmas "we dash about hurriedly writing cards, attending parties, shopping, cooking, supporting worthy causes, seldom if ever stopping for a moment of reflection and peace.

"Then on Christmas Day we abruptly end it all. We wash the dishes, throw away the ribbons and the wrapping, stack the toys and sigh, 'Thank God, it's over.'"

Does that scenario sound familiar? Bishop Joseph Maguire spoke of it in a pastoral letter to the people of the Diocese of Springfield, Mass. Christmas is a moment to "savor," he said.

Earlier generations seemed to know "a more leisurely way of doing things," partly by concentrating festive celebrations during the 12 days of Christmas, Bishop Maguire wrote. Could modern celebration be extended into the days after Christmas?

Consider holding an open house tied to the feast of St. John on Dec. 27, traditionally a day of hospitality, he suggested. In parishes, an open house for young people home from college can remind them they "are

Appalachian Christmas

A time for sharing despite hardships

By Cindy Liebhart
NC News Service

Rodney Frey remembers one special Christmas six or seven years ago.

Some weeks before Christmas, a man Frey knew was injured in a logging accident in the hills of southern Kentucky. The man, a husband and father of eight children, was unable to work because of his injuries and the family was "in a pretty tight situation," Frey said.

He and his brother, who lived

'Christmas is everyone in the family coming home to eat, to talk, to laugh, to take care of the babies.'

— Sr. Marty Conrad

'You can get a ham at a grocery store but you can't get a family there.'

Rodney Frey

nearby, knew of the family's hardships. They decided to bring a couple of large hams to the family on Christmas morning.

It wasn't an extraordinary or heroic gesture to Frey. It was just what a person did to help a neighbor in need.

The family, in turn, invited the two brothers in to share their Christmas meal. With the hams, there were sweet potatoes and cornbread, home-canned vegetables from the root cellar — a simple but festive meal.

For Frey, the family's hospitality transformed what might have been a bleak Christmas into a celebration filled with warmth and meaning.

"My brother and I didn't have any family then," Frey recalls.

"We supplied the meat for the table, but they supplied us with the family that Christmas."

"You can get a ham at a grocery store but you can't get a family there," he reflects.

Now 34, Frey grew up in a "very poor but happy family" just outside Somerset, Ky., a town nestled in the western foothills of the Appalachian Mountains.

Frey, who is raising his 2-year-old daughter as a single parent, has been disabled since 1980 by a disease of the central nervous system. He volunteers much of his time to help out at St. Mildred's Outreach Center — stacking groceries for the food pantry, sorting clothes at the clothing center, fixing electrical appliances people bring in, delivering loads of coal to nearby families, or just visiting with someone who needs a friend.

He remembers that while presents and pretty decorations were uncommon in his home, Christmas was still a colorful time as the entire family would come together — parents, children, grandparents, aunts, uncles and cousins.

They would talk and eat and talk some more.

Later the adults would sit out on the big porch surrounding Frey's parents' house. Heavy snows don't usually cover the hills until January, and the mild December air made it quite comfortable to be outside.

"People would bring guitars and banjos and my father played the violin," Frey said. "They would play music out on the porch into the night."

The children would listen for awhile. They would then play hide-and-seek or games of tag, build large bonfires and stay outdoors until midnight.

People anticipated the Christmas celebration with great excitement because this was often the only time the entire family was able to get together.

For most of the people whose



On the steps of a mountain home, a girl and boy act out the parts of Mary and the Infant Jesus. Though humble, Christmas in the Appalachians can be full of true meaning. (NC photo)

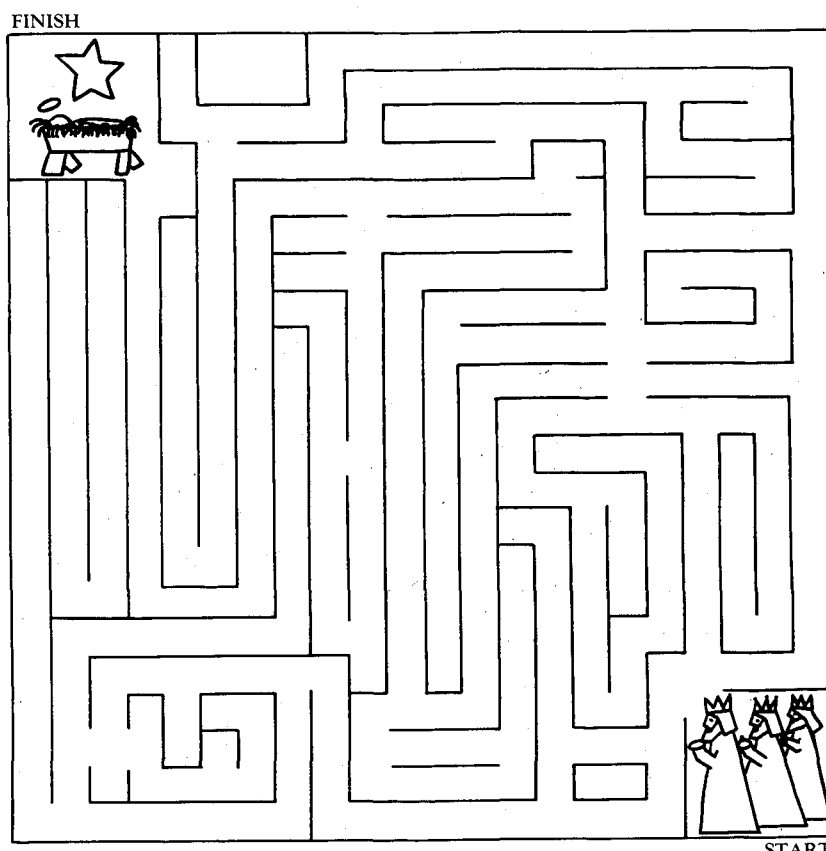
tin-roofed houses dot the hills and hollows outside Somerset, home and family are still what make Christmas special.

"Christmas is everyone in the family coming home to eat, to talk, to laugh, to take care of the babies," said Humility of Mary Sister Marty Conrad, who helped to develop St. Mildred's Outreach program 10 years ago and who continues to work there.

Many do not have much in the way of material possessions and most do not have the means for extensive gift giving, she said. But what they have, they share. Their homes are warm and welcoming, like "walking into a nest."

And the spirit of the season — hospitality, simplicity, concern for neighbor and deep appreciation for family — is the gift they try to give all year long.

Christmas Maze



The Three Wise Men have a long journey to make to find the Baby Jesus. They know they should follow a star in the East but they are having difficulty. Can you help them find their way?

still a vital part of the parish."

Children's parties for the feast of the Three Kings extend the feast of Christmas, as do liturgical celebrations like Christmas Vespers and caroling, the bishop said.

"The 12 days of Christmas revolved around family gatherings," he explained. "There are values and blessings in this that we should reclaim and never lose."

And Christmas is "a serious matter," he stressed. "Unless we take it seriously, we will find no real joy" and "will not really celebrate what the feast is all about." He observed:

- Christmas is about sharing and forgiving and reconciling and being one as a human family.
- Christmas is about us: about our yearning for peace; about the lowly and the forgotten, the castaways, the homeless, the imprisoned, the rejected and abused.

How do you think the moment can be savored? What does it mean to take Christmas seriously?



Spending a lifetime with someone you love isn't always a blissful elysium — there are bound to be tears along the way. But the golden moments, when two people are in harmony with each other and the world, make all the struggles worthwhile. (NC photo).

Love paints our world golden

By Father Eugene Hemrick
NC News Service

Without a doubt, anyone who has been married for a time has raised the question: "Is it worth it?"

During a particularly bad week in which every couple I ran into was quarreling I had a feeling that all married people must live most of their lives very unhappily. In a half joking manner I blurted out to a woman that all the lovey-dovey propaganda about the bliss of married life was "hogwash!"

No sooner had the words left my mouth than she replied with a gleam in her eye, "Oh no, it isn't! There are golden moments that make it all worthwhile."

She reminded me how precious is the experience of a special moment in life, short as it may be.

How true her words are! Those moments may not come in the same manner for everyone but one thing they have in common is the feeling of wanting to hold onto them forever. Their memory is the hope and glue that holds together so much and keeps so many going.

Often the golden moment is found in an embrace which says, "You are everything to me." A reunion with a beloved can so stir the heart that it heaves with a sigh that can only be called heavenly.

Music and the arts can rouse the very spirit in us and create an in-

stance in which we feel ourselves literally lifted out of self.

Mother Nature is no slouch in creating golden moments, be they her dazzling colors on a clear, crisp fall day or fir trees blanketed in snow under a blue sky.

Golden moments have an irony about them. They sometimes develop when they are least expected. They might be found in letting go of something or someone we felt bound to. In a moment of total release, a sudden peace so desperately sought can be found in the most unlikely place.

Nor is it unheard of that what seemed at the moment to be the blackest day of one's life turned out

to be a cross that became a necessary step for moving toward new life.

Then there is the golden moment of moments when the presence of God is felt so strongly that it leads to total enrapture. As beautiful as the world and those closest to us may be, all melts into insignificance at such a moment. The eyes of the spirit supplant our human eyes and life is seen in the most beautiful relationship it can produce — when Creator and the created embrace.

It is my New Year's wish that no matter what manner the Christ Child chooses to touch you, you be blessed with a precious moment, one that has the life expectancy of gold.

Age can't catch running brother

55-year-old sets club track records

NEW ROCHELLE, N.Y. (NC) — Christian Brother Joseph Kernan doesn't have to worry about old age catching up with him — he's running too far ahead of it.

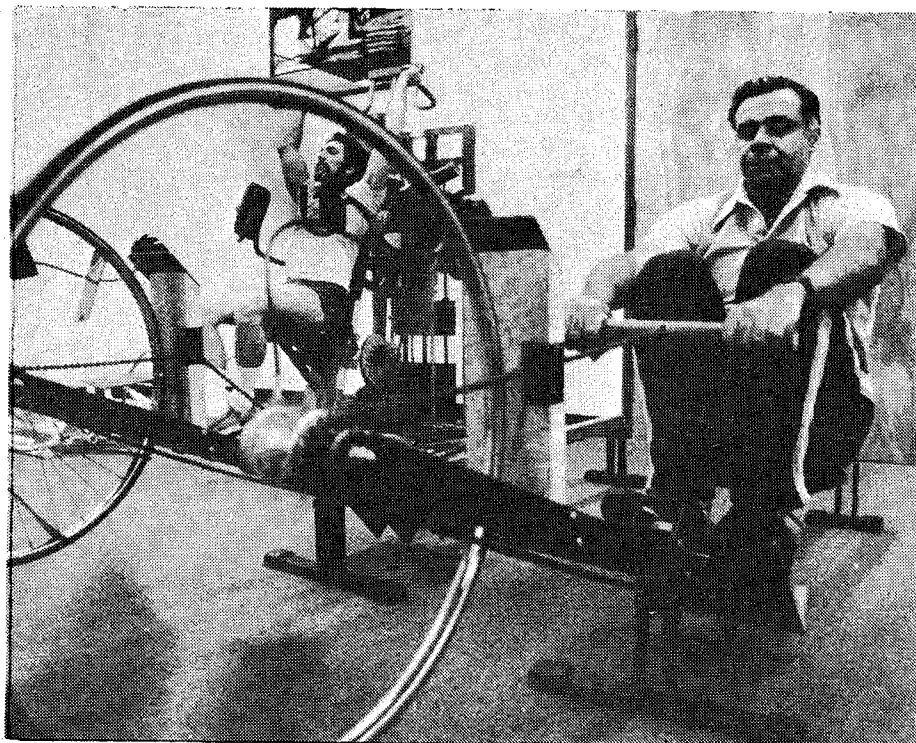
At age 55, Br. Kernan says he feels more physically fit than he did 20 years ago. As director of fitness at Iona College in New Rochelle, and member of the New York Masters Sports Club, which holds track events for runners age 40 and up, he spends most of his day doing physical activity.

He used to be one of the oldest runners in the age 50-54 category, but now he is one of the youngest in the 55-59 group.

"Many Masters look forward to getting old ... other people dread it," he says.

In his 14 years of Masters competition, Br. Kernan has nearly covered two jackets with patches proclaiming his achievements, and set club records for ages 50-54 in the outdoor mile, the indoor 1,000 yard run and the indoor quarter mile. He didn't run his first competitive race until he was 40 years old.

"It's gratifying to know that I am in better shape at 55 than I was at 35," he said. Br. Kernan has weighed



Christian Brother Joseph Kernan, director of the fitness center at Iona College in New Rochelle, N.Y. works out in the center. Since entering competition for runners at the age of 40, Br. Kernan has won records in the Masters Sports Club competitions. (NC photo).

as much as 218 pounds, which he considers heavy for his six-foot frame. His competitive weight is 185.

He joined the Christian Brothers in 1945. After teaching religion, math and social studies at the grammar and high school levels, he volunteered 17 years ago to instruct physical education at Rice High school in New York City. He has been involved with physical education ever since.

He came to Iona in 1976 as director of physical fitness. For the past four years he has supervised about 150 students, faculty and alumni who use the fitness center. He instructs them on proper use of the equipment, which includes exercise bicycles, and Nautilus and rowing machines.

"This job gives me the opportunity to encourage people to care for their health, which is important to their happiness," he said.

Br. Kernan is happy competing and keeping fit. After recently spending six months in Rome, he said he considered himself out of shape and was looking forward to preparing for the next outdoor season, joining his new age group and competing in his favorite events, the 800- and 1,500-meter races.