

Joy to the World!

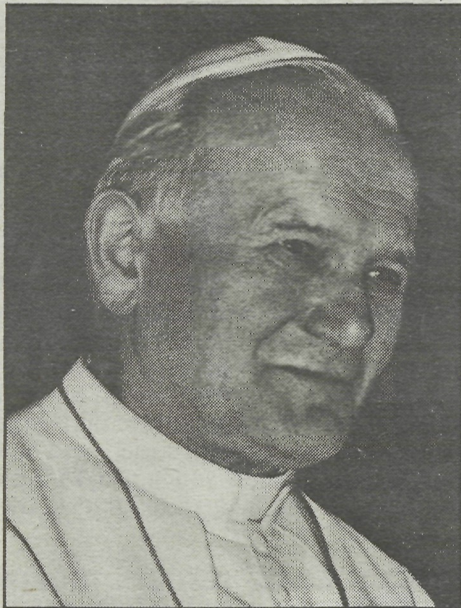
"The virgin shall be with child and give birth to a son, and they shall call him Emmanuel, a name which means "God is with us.""

Matt. 1: 23-24



Leandro Andres Fernandez, 4, and Nataly Veronica Rendon, 5, enjoy the beauty of a ceramic Nativity scene. (Voice photo/Prent Browning)

Pope pleads for brotherhood



VATICAN CITY (NC) — Pope John Paul II's 1987 World Peace Day message is more than a plea to world leaders to resolve the main threats to world peace.

It is also an urgent call for individuals and nations to see that lasting peace cannot be achieved unless "we truly grasp that we are brothers and sisters in a common humanity."

The pope defines this as problem-solving from the perspective of human solidarity.

Unless problems are examined from this viewpoint, chances of lasting solutions are limited, the pope warns.

"The underlying challenge to all of us is to adopt an attitude of social solidarity with the whole human family and to face all social and political situations with this attitude," says the Peace Day message, released Dec. 11. World Peace Day is celebrated Jan. 1.

"What unites us is so much more than what separates and divides us: It is our common humanity," it says.

"To look into the eyes of another person and to see the hopes and anxieties of a brother or sister is to discover the meaning of solidarity," the pope says.

Applied to governments this means that policies must be based on "the radical equality of all men and women." States should foster "policies and programs that build open and honest relationships among peoples, that forge just alliances, that unite people in honorable cooperation."

In international relationships it means nations must deal with each other "as equal partners."

"Seeking economic, military or political superiority at the expense of the rights of other nations places in jeopardy any prospects for true development or true peace," the message says.

'Be promoters of peace'

My beloved:

On this sacred feast of Our Lord's birth, I offer the reverend clergy, religious and faithful of our Archdiocese my warmest greetings and blessings of this Holy Season.

As you kneel before the crib, like the Three Kings you bring your gifts to the newborn Saviour. You bring your gifts of love and faithfulness to the way, the truth and the life that He was born and died to proclaim and to give to us. Your gifts are more precious than those of the Wise Men. My prayer is that, by God's grace and Mary's intercession, you will ever be faithful.

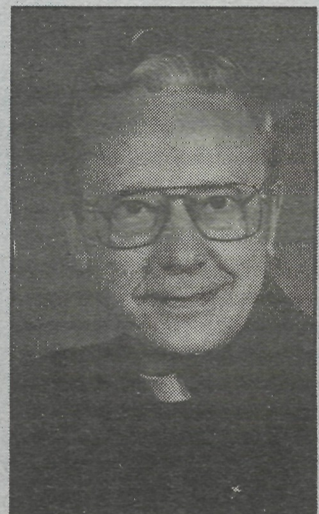
In a special way during this Jubilee Year, as we

prepare for the visit of the Holy Father, I ask a New Year's resolution of each of you—to become peacemakers. First of all, be at peace with God, help others to be at peace with God.

Be promoters of peace among families, relatives and in our community. The song in our hearts at this Holy Season and throughout the year must be "Glory to God in high heaven, peace on earth to those on whom His favor rests."

Devotedly yours in Christ,

Edward A. McCarthy
Archbishop of Miami



FCC: Who started false rumor of atheist petition?

WASHINGTON (NC) — The Federal Communications Commission is trying to track down the source of an 11-year-old petition which falsely states that atheist Madalyn Murray O'Hair has asked for a ban on religious broadcasting.

Sharon Jenkins, an FCC consumer information specialist, said Dec. 12 the commission has begun keeping track of the origins of phone calls it receives about the bogus petition, which has plagued the FCC since 1975.

The FCC hopes to find the source of and put an end to the campaign, on which it estimates the American public has "wasted about \$1.5 million," Jenkins said.

Since the petitions started arriving at the FCC the agency has received "16 million letters" and about as many calls to protest the bogus ban associated with O'Hair, who fought successfully to end prayer in public schools in 1963.

Currently, the FCC gets 50 to 60 calls a day to oppose the non-existent O'Hair petition, Jenkins said. She added that the effort is completely worthless since the FCC could not approve a call for such a ban even if were sought because of guarantees of freedom of speech.

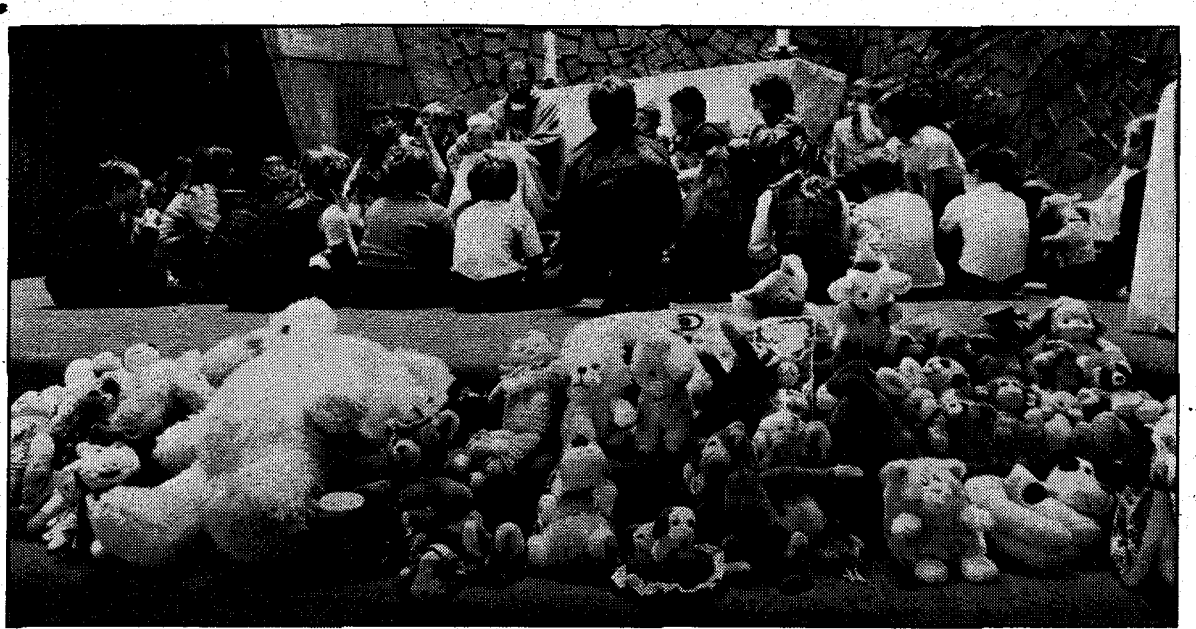
Monitoring FCC telephone calls has proven inconclusive so far, added Jenkins, who said that calls have come in "from California to Maine." The only pattern in the calls is that they increase around major religious holidays, such as Christmas and Easter, she said.

"We don't know who" started the petition drive "or how or why" it continues, said Jenkins. O'Hair

"denies initiating it," she added.

The petitions state opposition to RM 2493, the number given to a real petition filed with the FCC in 1974. That petition, which O'Hair had nothing to do with, sought to freeze applications of religious

groups seeking to operate television and radio stations reserved for non-commercial, educational purposes. The FCC denied the petition in 1975, but shortly thereafter the bogus petitions began to flood the agency.



Stuffed animal Mass

At St. John Evangelist Church in Rochester, NY, Father Matthew Kawiak is surrounded by children as he celebrates a stuffed animal Mass. Each of the children brought a stuffed animal to the Mass to be given later to an underprivileged child for Christmas. (NC photo)

High Court: Pro-life group can't be denied freedom of speech

WASHINGTON (NC) — The U.S. Supreme Court has ruled that subjecting a Massachusetts pro-life group to federal laws restricting corporate political activity violates the First Amendment. In its 5-4 decision, the high court ruled that applying the restrictions to the pro-life group, Massachusetts Citizens for Life, is unconstitutional because it "infringes protected speech without a compelling justification for such infringement." The court majority noted the narrowness of the decision and cited the possibility that the number of organizations affected "by our holding today will be small. That prospect, however, does not diminish the significance of the rights at stake. Freedom of speech plays a fundamental role in a democracy."

Catholics no longer preach 'Gospel of hatred' for Jews, rabbi says

CHARLESTON, S.C. (NC) — Old Catholic-Jewish hatreds have given way to a revolution of mutual esteem, said Rabbi Marc H. Tanenbaum, director of international relations for the American Jewish Committee. "The Gospel of hatred of Jews" for being Christ-killers is no more, the rabbi told a predominantly Jewish audience attending Synagogue Emanu-El's annual scholar-in-residence weekend in Charleston. Bishop Ernest L. Underkofler of Charleston, sharing the speaker's platform with the rabbi, said that the Second Vatican Council in the 1960s marked the beginning of harmonious Catholic-Jewish relations, but more still needs to be accomplished in everyday life.

Bishop: Black families threatened by 'feel good' values, poverty

CLEVELAND (NC) — Poverty and the "feel good" values promoted by society threaten the black family, said Auxiliary Bishop James P. Lyke of Cleveland. While the "demise" of the black family is a "cyclical theme in American mythology," it would nevertheless be naive to ignore the fact that the black family is in crisis, wrote Bishop Lyke. Bishop Lyke is urban vicar for the Cleveland Diocese and one of the 10 black U.S. bishops. His comments came in a 5,500-word pastoral reflection addressed to black Catholics of the Cleveland Diocese.

U.S. dioceses should put economy pastoral into practice, bishop says

NEW YORK (NC) — Bishop Anthony M. Pilla of Cleveland, chairman of the follow-up committee for the U.S. bishops' new pastoral letter on the economy, said that dioceses should apply the pastoral's principles of economic justice to their own structures. But he also said dioceses should not wait for that task to be completed before doing anything else. Implementing the pastoral within the church itself, he said, will be important for "our credibility with the wider public."

Judge upholds pro-lifers' right to picket doctor's home

CHICAGO (NC) — Pro-life pickets cannot be banned from in front of the home of a doctor who performs abortions, a federal appeals court ruled in a case brought by the Catholic League for Religious and Civil Rights. The 7th U.S. Circuit Court of Appeals in Chicago ruled that picketing in public places, including residential streets, is constitutionally protected and "the inevitable consequence of living in a great and restless democracy." The case began in May 1985 when the town of Brookfield, Wis., a suburb of Milwaukee, issued an ordinance prohibiting picketing on public property "before or about the residence or dwelling of any individual."

L.A. bishop bans AIDS education group from Church facilities

LOS ANGELES (NC) — Archbishop Roger Mahony of Los Angeles withdrew permission granted to an AIDS education program to use church facilities because the AIDS program promotes use of condoms. AIDS Project Los Angeles, a counseling, lobbying and assistance service for AIDS victims, had asked the archdiocese to conduct an education program aimed at Hispanics. The workshops were to include information on the use of condoms as a means of preventing the spread of the disease. When this became known, the archbishop withdrew permission for use of church property as sites for the program. A statement issued by Archbishop Mahony said Catholic doctrine prohibits the use of contraceptives and forbids sexual activity outside of marriage.

Catholic editors: Abp. Hunthausen was top newsmaker in '86

WASHINGTON (NC) — Archbishop Raymond Hunthausen of Seattle took clear first place as both religious personality and news event of 1986 in the annual National Catholic News Service poll of Catholic editors. It was the first year since Pope John Paul II's election as pope in 1978 that the pontiff was not voted the leading religious newsmaker. He finished third. Forty-four U.S. and Canadian editors answered the poll. Archbishop Hunthausen has been in the national news since early September when he revealed that under Vatican instructions he was ceding full authority over certain archdiocesan affairs to his auxiliary, Bishop Donald Wuerl. A clear second in editors' votes, both as news personality and news story of 1986, was moral theologian Father Charles E. Curran and the controversy over the Vatican decision that he can no longer teach as a Catholic theologian.

Chief Justice says good Christians should be 'slow to sue'

WASHINGTON (NC) — A good Christian, "just as he is slow to anger, should be slow to sue," Supreme Court Justice Antonin Scalia told Catholic educators in Washington. Scalia, a Catholic who was appointed to the court in June, called on the educators to teach, as St. Paul did, that Christians should obey lawful civil authority not out of fear but "for conscience's sake." Scalia spoke on "Teaching About the Law" at the fourth annual Seton-Neumann lecture sponsored by the U.S. Catholic Conference Committee on Education. Addressing the role of law in society and how that role should be explained to young people, Scalia warned that "we have lost the perception that laws have a moral claim."

'Santa's dead' remark meant to stress true meaning of Christmas

COLONIA, N.J. (NC) — Parents said a New Jersey priest tried to kill Santa Claus, but his pastor said he was only trying to convey the true meaning of Christmas. With parents in an uproar over a parish priest's remarks debunking Santa, the pastor has apologized for "any lack of sensitivity" but stressed that Christ's birth is the real point of Christmas.

Prayer Petitions

"Call to me and I will answer you" Jer. 33:3. The employees of the Archdiocese of Miami Pastoral Center gather each Monday morning to pray for the intentions of you, our brothers and sister of the Archdiocese. Petitions will be included in our individual daily prayers each week as well as during this special time of community prayer. We invite anyone with a prayer request to write (no phone calls), to us at this address: Prayer Petition, Archdiocese of Miami, 9401 Biscayne Blvd., Miami, FL 33138.

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Haiti revisited

New spirit of freedom mixed with new tensions

My beloved:

I am flying high again. This time I am returning from Haiti, where three of us United States Bishops met with the Bishops of Haiti to discuss ways of collaborating especially at this critical time of need and of change in Haiti.

The Haitian Catholics had completed a symposium reflecting on means of resolving the problems of their nation, according to Christian social and economic principles. The concluding message of the week-long meeting of Bishops, clergy, religious and laity was proclaimed at a solemn liturgy in the Cathedral in which we American Bishops participated. The liturgy was also observing the Feast of the Immaculate Conception.

The stirring message calling for justice, freedom, unity, change and concern for the poor was read at the time of the homily. It was carried on radio and television and employers and school authorities were requested to suspend activities to permit the message to be heard by all Haitians. This was especially important since the majority of Haitians are unable to read.

The huge throng of people crowded the large 75-year-old Gothic-Romanesque Cathedral to overflowing. It is a grand church, even though large sections of the stained glass of the windows are now missing. The plaster walls of the interior are off-white in color and the lofty quasi-Corinthian columns and other architectural features are a yellowish tan. For the ceremony, each of the columns bore a lovely bouquet of blue and white flowers, their long stems reaching out in sort of a lacy filigree pattern. Since it was the Feast of the Immaculate Conception, a statue of Our Lady was carried in the procession escorted by young girls wearing white gowns with blue sashes.

The large congregation participated fully in the singing. At times they were highly animated, waving in unison their white music sheets. Periodically, they responded to the reading of the message with deafening shouts of approval.

The United States delegation was invited to dinner at the Seminary, along with the Haitian Bishops, to view the expansion and improvements there that were made possible by generous gifts from United States Catholics. I was especially proud because of the very generous gift I brought with me from the Archdiocese. It was raised by

priests of the Archdiocese. There are more applicants for the seminary than can be accommodated—all eager, typical seminarians excited about giving to their people the Church leadership on which they depend in these critical times.

Our hosts had us see something of Haiti by taking us on a trip from the capital, Port-au-Prince, across a mountain range of a highway provided by the French government, to the intriguing city of Jacmel. It was at one time a very prosperous seaport,

among these, are professionals and politicians who had been exiled. Some of them are finding difficulty in adjusting. I was told that there is some tension with the returning politicians.

Some feel that they have all the answers for leadership, whereas some of the local Haitians feel that, having remained in Haiti and lived through the dictatorship, they have qualifications which should not be underestimated. I was told that, while there are many candidates for the Presidency, only about six are serious contenders.

'There seems to be among the people a fresh sense of dignity, expectation... There is uncertainty about developments. There is suspicion'



Two Haitian boys sift through powdered milk at a Catholic Relief Services warehouse.

crowded with shops housed in French Colonial two-story buildings with balconies. Today many of the shops are closed and the quaint city has something of the character of a ghost town. It had opposed the dictator Duvalier and, in turn, he closed the port and dealt ruthlessly with many of the inhabitants.

I am told the trip through the Haitian countryside reminds one of Africa. There are many thatched-roofed little huts among the trees. In some cases, burial vaults are in the yard. Many pedestrians are making their way along the highways. The women carry huge loads upon their heads. One sees buses brightly decorated with religious symbols so crowded that some passengers are on the roof.

I learned that some exiled Haitians are returning to Haiti since last February, when the younger Duvalier was overthrown. I am told that,

We also were told of those who exploited the Haitian people by charging them \$2,000 American dollars to smuggle them into the United States. The refugees get this money by selling all they have, borrowing, and with help from Haitians already in the United States.

The Bishops are concerned about the Mormons and other denominations that are proselytizing vigorously in Haiti. We heard a report from the Haitian Bishops on how they had used financial help from American Catholics. With Catholic Relief Services assistance and help from other sources, they have undertaken a massive project to teach the people to read and write and thus become active citizens. The simple textbook they have designed has also been adopted for use by the government. According to evaluations, the program is proceeding on schedule and with higher enrollment and

enthusiasm than expected. The Bishops also reported how they had remodeled the two seminaries which have about 230 seminarians, and how they are also developing Radio Soleil, a Catholic radio station that reaches 60% of the population and is highly important, since most Haitians are as yet unable to read.

We detected a new spirit in Haiti since our visit in March. There is a certain impatience at freeing the country from the influence of Duvalier. There seems to be among the people a fresh sense of dignity, expectation, freedom to speak out, to protest. There is uncertainty about political developments. There is suspicion. There is in the air suspicion of the United States government. There are graffiti saying CNG (the government) and Americans = 1915 (the time when the United States Marines occupied Haiti). There is talk about the "American Plan," and suspected sinister efforts by the United States government to implement it. This is said to be a plan to destroy the little farmers in Haiti and make it possible for large land owners to buy the property to grow fruit for export. Some Haitians disapprove of American food aid and refuse to accept it. They see this as creating dependence on the United States and undercutting Haitian farmers—a way the United States politicians please their constituents by disposing of American surplus. They resent the smuggling of rice shipments from Miami to Haiti and underselling the Haitian rice growers and putting them out of business. They resent an American-sponsored program to destroy all the pigs of Haiti because they were supposed to have been infected. They feel this drastic step was not necessary. It destroyed small farmers. They say new replacement pigs were sold at a price the farmers could not afford, and the breed required expensive food and care.

Indeed, it was an interesting trip. I was inspired by the unity of the Bishops and their people, their commitment to creating an exciting new nation, their building their hopes on the help of the Lord and unity with His Church.

Devotedly ours in Christ,

Edward A. McCarthy
Edward A. McCarthy
Archbishop of Miami

ABCD chairmen named

The 1987 Archbishop's Charities and Development drive will be headed by two prominent bankers and a realtor, according to the Archdiocesan Development office.

Appointed by Archbishop Edward McCarthy are:

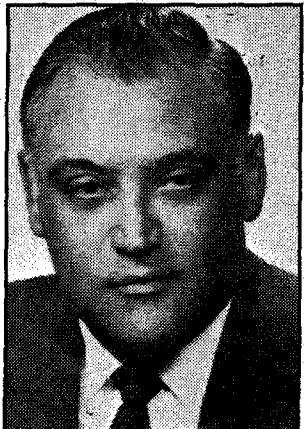
Dade County chairman, Carlos J. Arboleya, 57, chairman of South Florida regional Barnett Banks.

Broward County chairman, J. Joseph Tuohy, 60, chairman of Citizens and Southern Florida Corp.

Monroe County chairman, Realtor Lee Ganim who also served in that capacity last year.

Arboleya is a living American Horatio Alger story. He came to Miami in 1960 with his family and \$40, starting as a clerk in a shoe factory and rising to the upper ranks of a major banking institution, winning numerous honors along the way. He in fact received the American Schools and Colleges Horatio Alger Award in 1976. Arboleya and his wife Marta are members of Sts. Peter and Paul Parish, Miami.

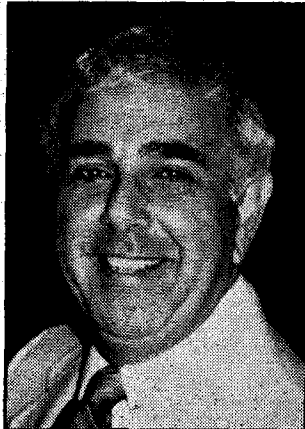
Tuohy, originally from Indiana and a banker there, came to Florida in 1979 and in 1984 became chief executive officer of Landmark Banking Corp. He and his wife Virginia are



Carlos J. Arboleya



J. Joseph Tuohy



Lee Ganim

members of Assumption parish in Pompano Beach.

Ganim is president of Ganim Realty and a member of St. Justin Martyr parish in Key Largo.

The Archbishop also appointed the following priest coordinators: Father James Fetscher, pastor of St. Louis Parish, Dade County. Father Patrick O'Donnell, Pastor of St. Clement Parish, Fort Lauderdale, Broward County. Father Eugene Quinlan, Pastor of St. Peter Parish, Big Pine Key, Monroe County. ABCD events will begin in January and be announced in detail later.

Cathedral sets Christmas Masses

Archbishop McCarthy will be the principal celebrant of Pontifical Christmas Mass at midnight on Christmas Eve at St. Mary Cathedral, 7525 NW 2nd Av. A special program of traditional carols and excerpts from Handel's "Messiah" will be presented by the Cathedral Choir and features soloists accompanied by a brass ensemble and organ beginning at 11:20 p.m.

A Mass will be offered in French at 8 p.m. on Dec. 24. On Christmas Day Mass will be celebrated in Creole at 7:30 a.m. A Mass at 9:30 a.m. will feature the children's choir and the 11 a.m. Mass will be offered by Archbishop McCarthy. Music will be provided by the Cathedral Choir accompanied by brass ensemble.

Mass will be celebrated in Spanish at 12:30 p.m. with music provided by the Cathedral Hispanic choir.

Churches in the 105 parishes of the Archdiocese will have Masses at midnight on Dec. 24, including the Shrine of Our Lady of Charity, next to Mercy Hospital in Miami.

Government OKs first Hungarian religious order in 35 years

VATICAN CITY (NC) — The Hungarian government has given permission for the formation of the country's first new religious order in more than 35 years, according to Vatican officials. But at least one knowledgeable Vatican observer says government in the new congregation may make it unattractive to many potential members. The order, called the Sisters of Our Lady of Hungary, is to be based in the Archdiocese of Esztergom. Its members will work with the elderly, the sick and the handicapped, as well as participate in some spiritual formation programs.

Reaction by Vatican officials — all of whom declined to be further identified — has been mixed.

"It's a step forward," said one, because Hungarian officials "recognize the need for Christian charitable institutions." He estimated that the new congregation would begin with about six to eight members.

Another official familiar with the issue said the new congregation is intended at least in part to attract members of religious orders long banned by the Hungarian government.

However, because of extensive government involvement in the formation and supervision of the new congregation, he added, many Religious may be unwilling to participate in it.

The freedom of religious orders in Hungary has been a source of church-state tension since 1950, when the government suppressed all orders. An estimated 10,000 Religious were interned at the time.

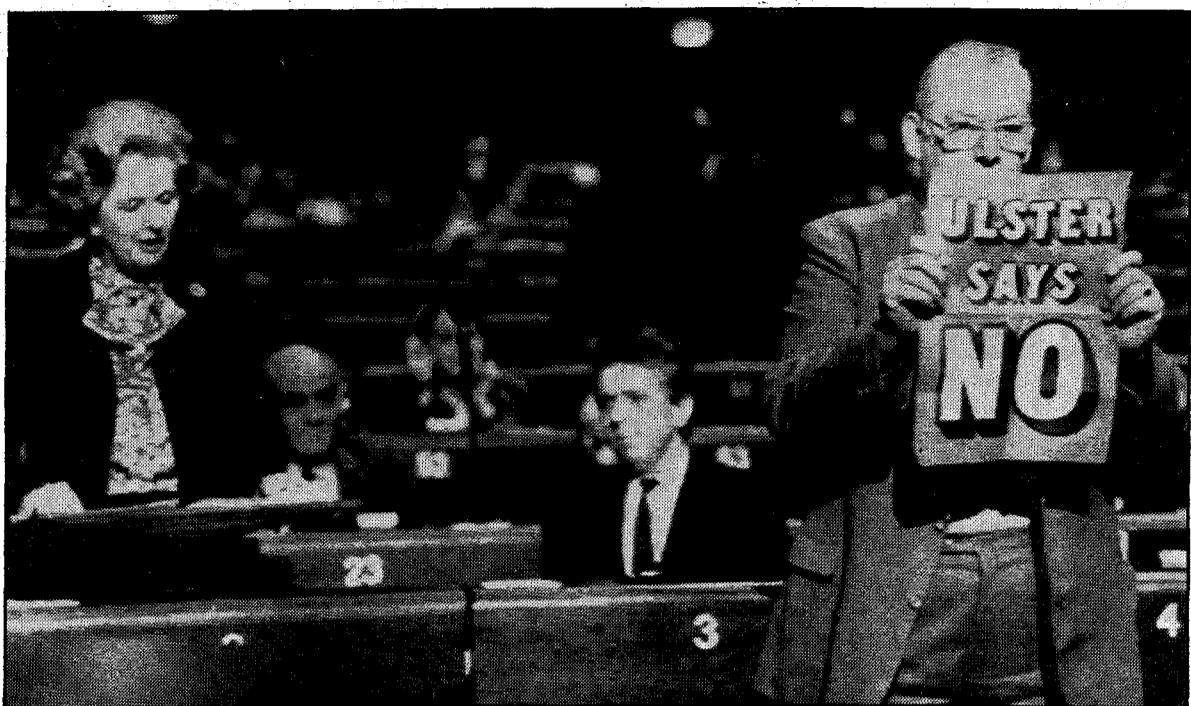
The government exempted four orders — the Benedictines, Franciscans, the Order of the Pious Schools (Piarists) and the School Sisters of Szeged — from total suppression, however. These orders were allowed to staff two schools each. They have not been allowed to expand their educational activities or move into other religious activities during the intervening 35 years.

Cardinal: Pope's visit to Chile will boost human rights there

VATICAN CITY (NC) — Pope John Paul II's April visit to Chile will be of "major importance" in the fight for human rights and for a return to democracy, said Cardinal Raul Silva Henriquez. Cardinal Silva, retired archbishop of Santiago, Chile, said most Chileans want a return to democracy after 13 years of military rule. "The visit of the pope will have a major importance, not only for human rights but also for the return to democracy, which is what the overwhelming majority of the Chilean people want," Cardinal Silva, told Vatican Radio.

China, Vatican slow in resolving differences, cardinal says

ROME (NC) — Progress has been slow in resolving differences between the Catholic Church and Chinese officials over religious relations, the Vatican's top diplomat said. Secretary of State Cardinal Agostino Casaroli added that the Vatican sees the China problem as "simple and complex." "Simple because it is enough that they accept the common hierarchy — and then not too many other things would be asked [of them]," he said. "The real problem is communion [with rome.]" But Chinese authorities, who sponsor the National Association of Patriotic Catholics, which rejects ties with Rome, are apparently not about to change their position, the cardinal said. "I think that in this case, it's the Chinese more than we who are going slowly," he said.



Sign of dissent

During a speech by British Prime Minister Margaret Thatcher to Parliament, the Rev. Ian Paisley, leader of Northern Ireland's Democratic Unionist party, holds up a sign to express his hostility toward the prime minister. (NC/IUPI-Reuter photo)

Pope: Protecting children must be one of humanity's top priorities

UNITED NATIONS (NC) — Humanity must "protect and promote the well-being of children everywhere," Pope John Paul II said in a message marking the 40th anniversary of UNICEF. "Today, in addition to war, poverty, and famine, children are being subjected to new forms of suffering as a result of moral and cultural crises," the pope said. The message, addressed to UNICEF Director James Grant and released at the United Nations, added that "religious faith confirms the special claim that children have on our love and care."

Asians, Africans encouraged to take up liberation theology

MEXICO CITY (NC) — A conference of Third World theologians has called for greater participation by Africans and Asians in defining liberation theology. Participants said that the adaptation of the Gospel to concrete social situations is not exclusively Latin American. They said it is adaptable to other world regions and cultures. Conference participants also promoted an increased role for women in the Catholic Church and noted the presence of more women than at previous meetings.

Bishops protest arrest of Catholic editor in South Africa

PRETORIA, South Africa (NC) — The southern African bishops have issued a protest and warning after the black editor of their newspaper *The New Nation* was detained in a pre-Christmas crackdown by police. The detention of editor Zwelakhe Sisulu meant that "one more prominent person is added to the 20,000 and more already in detention" since South Africa declared a state of emergency in June, the bishops said. Sisulu and an unspecified number of government opponents were arrested in an early-morning raid in Johannesburg.

Artificial insemination, pre-natal diagnosis criticized by cardinal

PARIS (NC) — Cardinal Jean-Marie Lustiger of Paris, in a letter to medical personnel, warned against some artificial insemination procedures, attacked the "banalization" of abortion and called prenatal diagnosis potentially dangerous to fetuses. The letter was issued about two months after a baby girl was born as the result of in vitro fertilization at a hospital attached to the Catholic University of Lille. The procedure involves the fertilization of an egg in a laboratory dish, after which it is implanted in the mother's womb for normal gestation.

Latin American bishops giving more aid to needy children

UNITED NATIONS (NC) — A report of the U.N. children's fund shows the Latin American church increasing its aid to the region's neediest children. The report by UNICEF said the Latin American bishops' conference resolved in a November meeting to support a program for child survival and development "as a special mission of the church." It said that UNICEF's experience is being tapped by church programs in Brazil, Colombia and Venezuela. Bishops from Honduras, Mexico, Nicaragua, Haiti and Paraguay have expressed interest in launching similar programs, the report said.

Bishop accuse Britain of 'blocking justice' in South Africa

GLASGOW, Scotland (NC) — Two South African bishops said Britain's reluctance to apply major economic sanctions against the apartheid regime in their country is seen as a roadblock to justice. "The perception of black people in South Africa is that Britain is an obstacle to the resolution of the problem by its continual support of ineffective measures," said Bishop Wilfred Napier of Kokstad, South Africa. Only heavy economic pressure could bring about the end of apartheid, South Africa's system of racial segregation, he added.

Vatican may set up department to handle labor disputes

VATICAN CITY (NC) — The Vatican is studying a plan to create a permanent department to handle labor matters and a tribunal for employees' grievances, according to church and lay employee representatives. Both bodies, if approved, could have a major impact on the way labor disputes are handled at the Vatican. At the same time, the Vatican and the 1,700-member Association of Vatican Lay Employees agreed on a 10-level wage scale, ending a dispute that lasted several years and which twice brought lay workers to the brink of a strike.

Bishop will head cease-fire committee in Philippines

MANILA, Philippines (NC) — Philippine President Corazon Aquino named Bishop Antonio Yapsutco Fortich of Bacolod as chairman of the National Cease-fire Committee to oversee the 60-day truce with the communist-led National Democratic Front. The 73-year-old bishop is director of the Philippines bishops' National Secretariat for Social Action. He has been involved in local peace negotiations and is recognized for having the respect of the government and the guerrillas.

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Cardinal calls AIDS crisis a 'moral Chernobyl'

LONDON (NC) — The AIDS crisis is "a moral Chernobyl" which will force people to reconsider personal and sexual relationships, said Cardinal George Basil Hume of Westminster, England.

"Just as Chernobyl made us question what we were doing with our human environment, so I think this AIDS question, agonizing though it is, is going to force us to consider our at-

titude toward personal relationships, human relationships; and how sexuality fits into that," he said in a television interview.

Cardinal Hume was interviewed following Catholic Church criticism of government and British Broadcasting Corp. campaigns concerning AIDS, acquired immune deficiency syndrome.

The cardinal said he thought the

campaigns did not place enough emphasis on the moral aspects of AIDS. He said advocating the use of condoms was "a counsel of despair," and it was not a question of using contraception or getting AIDS.

"There is a third way, and that is the way of self-denial and living chastely," the cardinal said.

People are urged not to smoke, not

to drink and drive, not to take drugs, and to diet and exercise because all of those things enhance the quality of life, the cardinal said.

"Each of them implies that we have to be able to say 'no' to ourselves," the cardinal said. "It means developing self-discipline. If it is so in these matters, why should it not be so in respect of sex?"

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Childcare Program Baffles Experts

Results termed "incredible" — 85% of kids saved!

BOGOTA, COLOMBIA—University sociologists throughout the world are outwardly baffled by the success of an innovative child outreach program run on a shoestring budget in this city.

This experimental program, developed and run by a Salesian priest, has to date saved the lives of 85% of the children it helps—and has turned their lives around. This is an astonishing accomplishment in a city where 50%-60% of homeless children die within the first year.

A Secret 100 Years Old

According to those scrutinizing the renowned "Bogota Project," the success of this program stems from a 56 year old Catholic priest named Xavier de Nicolo, and his adherence to a 100 year old Salesian philosophy of caring.

"It's really a matter of focus," relates Father Xavier. "Most organizations seem to have a short term focus to a problem like helping homeless kids. So much time is devoted to helping a child live for that day, and not much thought is put into providing for that kid tomorrow."

"Our approach is different," the Father continued. "Here we run a four-phased program built entirely around the concept of 'Voluntary' participation. So, when an abandoned kid off the street comes to us, we can direct him down a real path of hope."

The First Step

To a Bogota street urchin, distrust isn't just an emotion—it's a way of life. Scorned and abandoned by their parents, these street kids have no one to help them but themselves. By the age of ten, the Gamine (French word for street urchin) has already experienced sex (oftentimes by being raped), violence, the thrill of stealing, capture, punishment and escape. He has been sick with hunger so often he has grown sick of the outside world.

It's against this backdrop that Father Xavier steps into these lives, with step one of his program—"Operation Friendship."

"These kids have learned not to trust anyone. So my workers and I go to them, offering food, a bus trip—anything to gain their confidence. Soon, they come to our day Centre to hang out, have a bath, and test us out."

Making a Life and Death Choice

"The second step is 'Operation Motivation.' In addition to the Day Centre, we have two night shelters in the city. They're welcome to come and stay for a month, but at that point they must make a choice—stay or leave.

"Once the child decides to stay (and most do) they begin the third step—'Operation Education.' Here, in one of our four boarding schools, the kids learn to read and write, and just as important, how to co-exist with each other."



The boy in this picture (directly above) had been made to drink a quart of whiskey. He was then raped and left in a public park. Some street boys called Father Xavier, who went to pick him up and bring him to a hospital. He stayed with the boy the entire morning till he knew that he was out of danger.

"Getting along" is a key element in this incredible program. In order to remain in the program, each Gamine must prove himself, day-in and day-out. A visitor will never forget a walk through the immaculate dormitories. The blankets on the cots are so tight you can bounce a quarter off them.

The Incredible Last Step

It is the final step that is most incredible, and most inspiring. After weeks of training and love, and love and training, the Gamines go off to "La Florida," a huge complex outside Bogota.

A tour throughout this complex is like a tour through a beehive. All throughout the "La Florida" complex 500 young boys rush through the adventure of discovering hope and opportunity. Here, amidst immaculate grounds, the boys run their own orchestra, sports team, a cooperative shop, a cafeteria, a bakery and their own bank—with their own currency.

At the same time, they take part in primary and secondary school, they learn basic industrial and farming skills, and they become further introduced to an indispensable friend—the Lord.

"Religious training has special meaning to these kids. Take Juan over there," whispers Father Xavier, as he motions to a slender eight year old boy.

"When we found him on the street, he was totally alone. His mother didn't want him, his father beat him. It was terrible.

"Juan didn't need a meal, he needed a full-course of God's love! We took him in, and now look at him. He's going to make it."

A Shoestring About to Break

Unfortunately, dark clouds are now hovering over Father Xavier's "Bogota Project." For years now, a large portion of the funding has come from the Colombian government. But, because of recent financial troubles, the government has cut funding.

People in America Keep the Miracle Alive

In order to keep the "Bogota Project" (and its kids) alive, the Salesians have turned to America—and a special group of Americans called the New Life Partners.

By making a monthly contribution of \$10 a month, the Salesian Missions New Life Partners fund the "Bogota Project"—and many other unique Salesian projects around the world.

In return for this modest contribution of \$10 a month, New Life Partners receive a story of the month telling how an actual child was helped, the *World Bulletin* newsletter, a membership card, the colorful Salesian quarterly magazine, and books of inspirational poems.

The program now is nothing short of a miracle. It would be a tragedy to see it die now.

Note

In order to save the flood of children desperate for life-saving help, the Salesians have set up a Bogota Emergency Fund. People wishing to support these children are asked to send their gifts to:

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"Bogota Emergency Fund" TV Box 728, New Rochelle, NY 10802

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Apt. # _____

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Father Xavier mentions he needs gifts of \$10, \$20, \$50. In return for a gift of \$25 or more, if you ask, the Salesians will send you a video cassette of the TV special about the "Bogota Project" entitled "Children of the Streets." If you would like a copy, please specify VHS or Beta format with your request.

Quit if you can't stop abusing human rights, cardinal tells government

SEOUL, South Korea (NC) — Cardinal Stephen Kim of Seoul said the South Korean government should resign if it continues to violate human rights.

The cardinal's statement — his strongest public criticism yet of government crackdowns on political opponents — was made during a homily at Myong-dong Cathedral during a Mass marking Human Rights Week.

The cardinal also opposed the ruling party's campaign for a constitutional amendment which would change the current presidential form of government to a parliamentary one.

Attacking what he called piecemeal amendment of the constitution, the

cardinal said the country needed a constitution that acted as a protective umbrella for human rights.

The government of President Chun Doo Hwan has encountered mounting protests by Koreans claiming his policies are anti-democratic. Opposition groups are calling for direct presidential elections, which they say would be less susceptible to manipulation than the current system. Currently, the president is elected by a popularly chosen electoral college.

Cardinal Kim said that among those whose human rights have been violated are hundreds of political dissenters — mostly students — whom the government has imprisoned and charged with being communists.

The indictment of civil rights activists under the National Security Law splits the nation and hurts national reconciliation, the cardinal said.

He described the more than 2,000 political prisoners as people who chose to follow "the law of conscience and morality" over the law of the state.

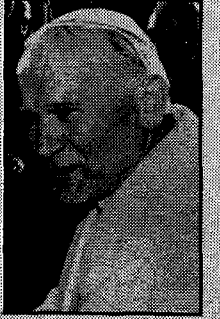
"We must not forget our brothers and sisters who are held in cold prison cells for their activities dictated by their conscience," he said.

Quoting the late Indian Prime Minister Jawaharlal Nehru, Cardinal Kim said that a government should be wiping people's tears away. But apparently alluding to the use of tear gas at demonstrations, he said the current government was making people weep.

DIPLOMAT:

Pope criticizes rights abuses of all forms of government

ROME (NC) — Pope John Paul II's position on human rights comes from spiritual criteria rather than political ideology and applies to all political systems, a top Vatican diplomat said.



The pope considers the unjust distribution of material goods as "the first systematic threat to human rights," said Archbishop Achille Silvestrini, secretary of the Council for the Public Affairs of the Church.

The second great threat to human rights, he said, is the violation of religious freedom, which the pope considers a "radical injustice," Archbishop Silvestrini said.

He said the church sees human rights as "an extremely valid test" and also a measure of the "legitimacy of political authorities."

"The critical position of the pope concerns all the social systems. The West tries to legitimize itself through 'rights of freedom,' the East through 'social rights.' But the problem is the integration of all rights into a system of truth and values in which man is considered globally," he said.

Archbishop Silvestrini spoke at a meeting of the Italian Society for International Organization. The event celebrated the anniversary of the 1948 U.N. Declaration on Human Rights.

The archbishop said human rights in the Third World are threatened by "action and interference by the West and the East."

Christmas at Vatican

Giant tree, basket of bananas among signs of season

VATICAN CITY (NC) — On a recent morning at the Vatican's bronze doors, a basket of bananas arrived with a card addressed to Pope John Paul II.

A few steps away, in the middle of St. Peter's Square, workmen were unloading truckloads of iron pipe and scaffolding under the shadow of the ancient Egyptian obelisk.

And somewhere amid the still-flowering gardens behind St. Peter's Basilica, Vatican City officials were preparing to haul a 300-foot string of yellow-and-white bulbs out of a closet.

The signs of the times were obvious: Christmas at the Vatican was just around the corner.

At his desk in the Vatican City governor's office, Chicago-born Archbishop Paul Marcinkus was tracking the pilgrimage of what he hoped would be the tallest-ever Christmas tree to grace St. Peter's Square.

"We've been promised a certain height, but I can't tell you what that is yet. I'm not saying anything until it's up in the square," said the archbishop, who runs the Christmas decorating operation with a banker's caution.

Archbishop Marcinkus, head of the Vatican bank, is also pro-president of the commission for the Vatican City-State. Since 1982, when the pope asked for "something Christmassy" in the square, he said, he has helped call the shots — setting up a larger-than-life nativity scene and the tree alongside.

"You can't just put a crib up, you've got to have a tree, too," Archbishop Marcinkus said, espousing an

Even the Pope makes a 'surprise' visit to the crib scene, usually on New Year's Eve.

American philosophy in the country where the "presepio," the creche, is king. The first year, he said, he had only 10 days to find a decent fir tree — not an easy job in Italy.

But since then, tree growers have vied for the privilege, and the Vatican gets two or three offers every year, he said. "We've always got one in reserve" just in case.

At week's end, this year's tree rolled into the square on a flatbed truck after an odyssey from near Italy's border with Austria. Its unofficial height was put at about 76 feet — a Vatican City record.

When it comes to decorating, Archbishop Marcinkus has fought against "too much tinsel" in favor of a simple string of plastic-covered light bulbs — a policy that not always finds favor among other Vatican City residents.

"They ought to get the people who do Marshall Field's tree (in Chicago) to do this one. The whole world sees it, after all," said one resident who thinks the adornments lack imagination.

Nearly everyone agrees, however, that the traditional crib scene and tree have given the square a needed touch of Christmas and made it a pilgrimage spot for thousands of children. Even the pope makes a "surprise" visit to the crib scene, usually on New Year's Eve.

How did that tradition start? "The first time, he wanted to see what kind of job we'd done," said Archbishop Marcinkus. The "manger" today takes a work crew more than a week to set up.

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Teen pregnancy 'solutions' disputed

WASHINGTON (NC) — A national panel's recommendations Dec. 9 to stem teen pregnancies through more abortion and contraception "are exactly the recommendations made over 15 years ago by Planned Parenthood," said Richard Doerflinger, assistant director of the U.S. bishops' Committee for Pro-Life Activities.

"Those proposals have been tried and have failed miserably," he said, and the panel has proposed only "more of the same."

The panel, the National Research Council, which is affiliated with the National Academy of Sciences, included among its recommendations in a lengthy report on teen pregnancy:

- Widespread availability, free or at low cost, of birth control pills as "the safest and most effective means of birth control for sexually active adolescents."

- Easier availability of condoms to teen-agers, with efforts to distribute them widely in places where teen-age boys gather.

- Easy availability of abortion, without requirements of parental consent, for adolescents who get pregnant.

- Promotion of school-based

'There's no scientific evidence that contraceptive programs have reduced [teen] pregnancy.'

Richard Doerflinger,
U.S. Bishops' Committee
for Pro-Life Activities

health clinics which provide contraceptive services.

Doerflinger particularly objected to the panel's recommendation to expand school-based health clinics, a project rapidly gaining attention across the country.

"If a school is put in the position of handing out contraceptives, it's going to undermine the message that the schools should be transmitting to children," he said. "Teen-agers will laugh at you if you say, 'Shoplifting is wrong. But in case you're going to continue doing it, there's a panel of experts down in Room 212 to show you how to do it without getting caught.'"

U.S. Secretary of Education William Bennett said of the council's backing for school-based birth control clinics, "This is not the first time a

prestigious-sounding group has advocated a dumb policy."

Numerous Catholic bishops also have opposed the idea of school-based clinics. The bishops of Ohio recently called them a "false safety net," and Bishop Edward O'Rourke of Peoria, Ill., said such clinics would make it look like the schools "endorse fornication."

Doerflinger noted that one of the five foundations which sponsored the National Research Council's \$600,000 study was the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation. That foundation, he said, has been one of the chief funders of a campaign to establish school-based clinics across the country (including Dade County) to give contraceptive services and abortion referrals.

Doerflinger objected to claims by the head of the study, Dr. Daniel

Federman of Harvard Medical School, that the study was "very much controlled by research data" and "based on the evidence" rather than on political views.

"There's no scientific evidence that contraceptive programs have reduced pregnancy," Doerflinger said.

As one example he cited a recently published family planning study in Pennsylvania reporting on two groups of teen-agers, one receiving intensive contraceptive advice and services and the other a control group obtaining no special help on contraceptives. The study found that both groups, over a 15-month period, had the same cumulative pregnancy rate.

On the research council's recommendation on access to abortion, Doerflinger said one problem when abortion is seen as a response to teenage pregnancy is that repeat pregnancies increase.

Sexually active adolescents who neither use contraception nor carry their pregnancies to term are likely to get pregnant again more quickly and frequently than their counterparts who are not active, use contraception or carry a pregnancy to term, he said.

Bishops praise Vatican action against Father Curran

WASHINGTON (NC) — The Vatican's decision to prohibit Father Charles Curran from teaching moral theology was "for the good of the faithful," said the president of the Puerto Rican bishops' conference.

The Puerto Rican bishops are "in total solidarity" with actions taken by the Holy See to reprimand the Catholic University of America moral

theologian, said the president, Bishop Fremiot Torres Oliver of Ponce, Puerto Rico.

His comments came in a Spanish-language statement titled "A Note of Clarification from the CEP (Puerto Rican Episcopal Conference): Father Charles Curran, Ex-Professor of Catholic Theology." It was published in an issue of *El Visitante*, the news-

paper of the Puerto Rican Catholic bishops.

In August, the Vatican announced that Father Curran was "not suitable nor eligible to teach Catholic theology" because of his positions on several moral issues, from artificial contraception to abortion, euthanasia

and divorce.

In his statement, Bishop Torres wrote that Father Curran's "strategy of claiming to dissent only from the 'non-infallible' teaching of the church has no basis" since the teachings he dissents from are infallible because they are "the teachings of Christ."

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Immigrants told how to become legal

WASHINGTON (NC) — A report spelling out who will qualify for legalization under the new immigration reform law has been published by the U.S. Catholic Conference's Department of Migration and Refugee Services.

The four-page report also describes the penalties to which employers are subject for hiring illegal aliens.

Written in Spanish and English and in question-and-answer form, it is available in diocesan resettlement offices. (In South Florida, call 751-4439 in Dade for information.)

Aliens eligible for legalization, according to the USCC report, are those who arrived in the United States before Jan. 1, 1982, and have resided here illegally and continuously, except for short trips outside the country.

In addition, according to the report, to qualify

USCC outlines requirements of new immigration law

for legalization an illegal alien must:

- Not have been convicted of a felony or three misdemeanors in the United States.
- Demonstrate a history of employment in the United States and not have received public cash assistance.
- Undergo a medical examination at his or her own expense.
- Not have assisted in the persecution of another person or persons.
- Be registered or willing to register for the draft.

The report says there will be a 12-month application period starting within the six months after the bill became law in November.

Illegal aliens who qualify would first become lawful temporary residents. After 18 months, they could apply for permanent residence. After five years as permanent residents, they could apply for U.S. citizenship.

Immigrants who meet the eligibility criteria, the report says, may apply for legalization through qualified voluntary organizations and church groups designated by the U.S. attorney general. In addition, applications may be made through attorneys or directly with the U.S. Immigration and Naturalization Service.

The report recommends illegal aliens seek counsel before going directly to the federal immigration authorities.

To establish eligibility, illegal aliens may submit pay stubs, income tax withholding forms, rent receipts, utility bills or bank statements. Corroboration of the information contained in the documents, such as affidavits from landlords, employers or co-workers, must be provided.

Celibacy and intimacy

Priests told not to avoid intimate friendships

PARK CITY, Utah (NC) — Leading a celibate lifestyle need not prevent one from establishing intimate relationships nor require a denial of one's sexuality, Salt Lake Diocese priests were told.

Sexuality is "more than copulation," said Jay Feerman, a consulting psychiatrist to the Servants of the Paracletes, during a fall convocation on sexuality in Park City.

He called sexuality one aspect of an individual's personality.

"We need to deal with our lives on all levels," he said. "We live our lives on intellectual levels, emotional levels and spiritual levels, as well as sexual levels."

"People have needs for intimate relationships on the non-genital level," he said. Priests, like everyone else, he said, must develop intimate social relationships.

"We are all sexual people," said Father Bill Perri of Jemez, N.M., a priest of the Servants of the Paracletes, "even if we are not genitally active."

'Celibacy doesn't deny a full experience of that gift [of intimacy]...What is important is that we behave in ways compatible with our chosen lifestyles, whether we are married, single or celibate.'

Jan Parker,
Diocese of Fort Worth-South Bend, Ind.

He said the church has never considered celibate priests and Religious to be asexual. "When I am at a party, for example, and see an attractive person, people assume I'm not having feelings. That's absurd. I'm made in God's image, and I am a sexual individual."

Feerman said in the past some priests may have dealt with their own sexuality by denying it.

"If a person doesn't have an under-

standing of his or her own sexuality, blind spots occur... and the rest of the personality suffers," he said.

Father Perri said priests who under-

stand their sexuality are better able to help lay people look at their lives on mental, spiritual, emotional, sexual and physical levels.

Jan Parker, resource center director for the Diocese of Fort Wayne-South Bend, Ind., and a panelist at the convocation, called intimacy a gift from God.

"Celibacy doesn't deny a full experience of that gift. It is all a part of accepting and recognizing our natural romantic feelings... and deciding what we will do with them. What is important is that we behave in ways compatible with our chosen lifestyles, whether we are married, single or celibate," she said.

Abp. Hunthausen undergoes surgery to remove malignant tumor

SEATTLE (NC) — Archbishop Raymond Hunthausen underwent major surgery to remove his prostate gland after test results showed a malignant tumor in the gland, the Seattle Archdiocese announced.

After the operation, doctors attending the archbishop said he came through the surgery in excellent condition. They anticipate a complete recovery.

Archbishop Hunthausen, 65, entered the hospital Dec. 10 to undergo diagnostic tests. According to his physicians, the initial tests indicated

the presence of a malignancy in the prostate gland, but they thought it was contained within the prostate.

But later test results showed a microscopic amount of the tumor had spread into some of the surrounding lymph node tissues. The doctors decided late Dec. 15 to operate. They said that as far as they could tell all of the tumor was removed.

In September, Archbishop Hunthausen announced that, under Vatican instructions, he had ceded his authority over several archdiocesan matters to his auxiliary, Bishop Donald Wuerl.

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New agency to manage elderly housing

Construction of S. Dade residence/nursing center, new fund-raising group announced

By Ana Rodriguez-Soto
Voice News Editor

Calling it "a very special Christmas gift to the elderly," Archbishop Edward McCarthy announced this week:

- The creation of a new Archdiocesan agency to deal exclusively with the building and management of apartments and health care facilities for the aged;

- The construction of a Catholic nursing and rehabilitation center in South Dade; and

- The establishment of a foundation to ensure that poor elderly can be admitted there.

Msgr. Bryan O. Walsh, director of Catholic Community Services (CCS), will also head the new agency, which will be known as Catholic Health and Rehabilitative Services (CHRS).

In announcing the construction of the South Dade Catholic Nursing and Rehabilitation Center, the Archbishop noted that "the need to care for the aged and infirm here is greater than in other

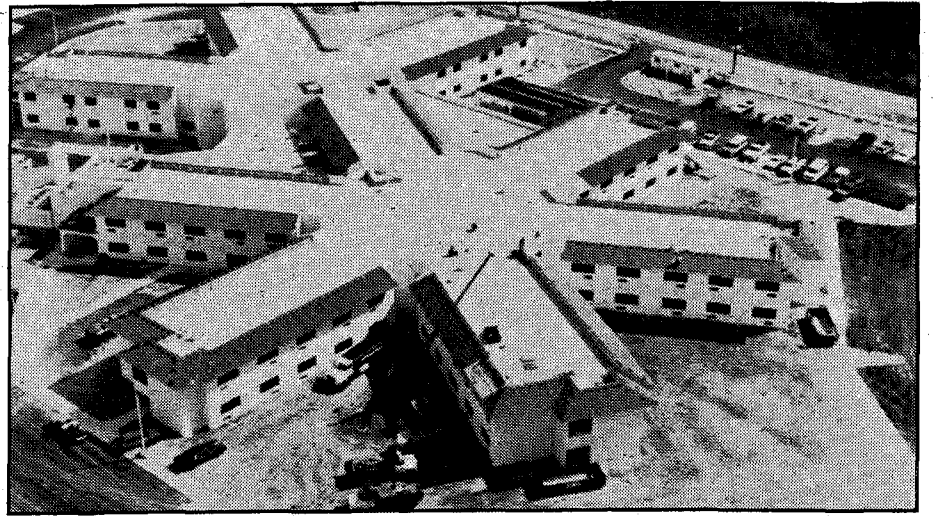
parts of the country."

He stressed the Archdiocese's desire to meet the needs of the elderly through "varying levels of care": affordable apartments for those who can live independently; congregate living facilities for those who need a little help with housework and cooking; and nursing homes for those who cannot care for themselves.

The South Dade facility, scheduled for completion in April of next year, will comprise a 180-bed nursing care center and a 120-bed congregate living facility. It is located at Quail Roost Drive and SW 119 St.

"Once a person is in our system no one will be abandoned," the Archbishop said, stressing that elderly residents will be able to move through the different levels of care as their needs change.

Moreover, he said, the Archdiocese plans to ensure that at least one-third of those in its health-care facilities are poor. To accomplish that goal, the Catholic Health and Rehabilitation Foundation has been established and charged with raising \$1 million by June



The South Dade Nursing and Rehabilitation Center is scheduled for completion in April, 1987.

of '87.

The foundation's long-term goal is between \$3 and \$5 million, the interest from which will pay for the care of needy elderly.

"We're not asking for money to build these institutions. We're asking for funds so that poor people can be admitted to these places," said Msgr. Walsh, pointing out that a Dade County bond issue --guaranteed by the Archdiocese-- has paid the \$10 million

construction cost of the South Dade facility.

Anthony R. Abraham, a Miami industrialist and philanthropist, and Ralph A. Sanchez, auto racing entrepreneur, have been named to head the Catholic Health and Rehabilitative Foundation.

Others on its board of directors are: Horacio Aguirre, publisher of the Spanish-language newspaper, *Diario Las Americas*; Carlos Arboleya, vice-chairman of Barnett Bank; R. Ray Goode, president of The Babcock Co.; James McCaughan, president of McCaughan Mortgage Co.; John H. McDonnell, former executive director of the Dade Foundation; Rafael Penalver, a Miami physician; and David M. Walters, former U.S. envoy to the Vatican and now president of the Miami Children's Hospital Foundation.

The South Dade Nursing and Rehabilitation Center is modeled after St. John's Nursing and Rehabilitation Center in Broward, which opened in 1980 and houses a 42-bed congregate living facility and a 180-bed nursing center.

CHRS will take over management of both St. John's and the South Dade home, along with the eight Archdiocesan housing projects for the elderly which until now were managed by CCS.

The Archdiocese also plans to begin construction next year on three more housing projects for low-income elderly who are able to live independently: Hurley Hall in Hallandade; Palmer House in West Dade; and St. Mary Tower near St. Mary Cathedral in Miami.

Construction funds for all the Archdiocesan housing projects are provided by the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development.

Official

ARCHDIOCESE OF MIAMI

The Pastoral Center announces that Archbishop McCarthy has made the following appointments:

THE REVEREND CYRIL HUDAK --to Pastor, St. Sebastian Church, Fort Lauderdale, effective December 14, 1986.

THE REVEREND ERNESTO MOLANO --to Associate Judicial Vicar in the Metropolitan Tribunal, Miami, effective December 3, 1986.

THE REVEREND RAFAEL ESCALA --to Associate Chaplain of the Legion of Mary, Regina Pacis, Miami (Spanish), effective December 5, 1986.

THE REVEREND JOHN MERCANTANTE --to Associate Pastor, Immaculate Conception Church, Hialeah, effective January 19, 1987.

THE REVEREND PEDRO LEO, SCH. P. --to Associate Pastor, Little Flower Church, Coral Gables, effective January 26, 1987.



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member of your family can come for support, advice and understanding. Join us Saturday, January 10, from 10 am to 2 pm for our free seminar program, **Creating the Child Wonderful** with featured speaker **John Rosemond**, psychologist and nationally syndicated columnist. **Reservations call 868-3746.**

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Christmas is love!

Groups throughout Archdiocese put meaning into season by giving to others

Presents arrive in 'nick' of time

Santa Claus almost didn't come to LaSalle High School for a special celebration December 15th. He was held up by customs. Two hundred and fifty presents were held up, to be exact, donated by a school principal in Hong Kong and destined for elderly residents of Carroll Manor. The celebration, a dinner hosted by LaSalle High School students for the Manor residents (LaSalle is located a block from Carroll Manor, overlooking Biscayne Bay), was actually the idea of the Hong Kong principal, Thomas T.S. Liang, whom Archbishop Edward McCarthy met when he visited China this summer. Liang, a philanthropist as well as a principal, likes to sponsor events expressing the traditional Chinese respect for the elderly. The presents (right), 250 Seiko clocks and Chinese mugs, were clogged by "red tape" at U.S. Customs several days before the event, and it looked like they might never arrive. Florida Congressman Claude Pepper, however, intervened and the gifts cleared in the "(St.) Nick" of time. At the celebration, which included a Chinese meal catered by one of Liang's Miami relatives, LaSalle students (below) dressed as Santa's elves and performed dances and songs. (Voice photos/Prent Browning)



For migrants

Children of St. John Neumann elementary school in South Dade (above) place donated food onto a truck bound for migrant workers in Immokalee as part of a food drive they conducted this Advent season. Pictured are, from left, George Diaz, George Minosa and Leo Capizzo.



Adopted families

Seventh and eighth grade students (left) at Sts. Peter and Paul School in Miami "adopted" ten area poor families for Christmas. The families recently received deliveries of toys and food donated by the children or bought with monies they raised through a bake sale.

Project Magi

Thanks, Magi! Needy's wishes came true

Thanks to generous readers of *The Voice* and *La Voz*, a number of South Florida families will really have a Merry Christmas this year.

Two schoolgirls will be able to continue their education at Holy Redeemer School in Liberty City; a wife will be able to care for her husband more easily thanks to a new electric bed; a grandmother will be able to buy clothes for her grandchildren; a Broward family will get their refrigerator repaired; and a teenager will ride a 10-speed bike for the first time in her life.

Those are only some of the people helped by **Project Magi**, which as of Dec. 19 had collected \$6,035 for South Florida's needy.

Two of the latest donations were very special. Knights of Columbus Father Flynn Council 4772, Hialeah, sent in a \$1,000 check "to be used at any time as a replenishment of funds for the retarded programs," according to Gene Fitzpatrick, past Grand Knight of the council.

"We felt it would be a good time, particularly at Christmas, to help some of the families who are really in need," he said. The money was raised by the Knights during their annual Tootsie Roll Fund Drive.

Seventh-graders at St. James School in North Miami also decided that "the Advent season would be a special time to give a little extra," according to their teacher, Joyce Pickover. Although the students had collected toys for underprivileged children and food for the Sisters of Charity of Mother Teresa, they chipped in an extra \$50 to **Project Magi**.

"We hope our small contribution will help someone have a brighter Christmas," wrote Pickover.

Thanks! It did. On behalf of all those who were helped, *The Voice* and *La Voz* wish our "Magi" a Christmas filled with all the love and peace that the Christ child came to bring. And may His blessings be with you throughout the New Year.

Following are the names of the most recent contributors. Duplicate gifts will be used to help needy

families in similar situations.

- Nahon Perez, Miami
- Miriam Izquierdo, Miami
- Diane Bucchino, Miami Lakes
- Carmen Salazar, Pembroke Park
- Hannah P. Donohue, Hollywood
- Carmen Larriviere, Hialeah
- Julia C. Solares, Miami
- Christina Cafiero, Hollywood
- Anthony D. Giargio, Margate
- Marie R. Natrass, Big Pine Key
- Margaret Froehling, Miami
- Sherry and Jud Ewing and family, North Miami Beach
- Jackie Bain, Ft. Lauderdale • Nancy Kearns and family, Pembroke Pines
- St. James School 7th graders, North Miami
- Knights of Columbus Fr. Flynn Council 4772, Hialeah
- And anonymous contributors

Priest: Guns won't help Central America

Jesuit missionary says U.S. should seek peace

By Ana Rodriguez-Soto
Voice News Editor

Sending guns to Central America is not the way to solve the region's problems says an American priest who works in Honduras. In fact, U.S. weapons only ensure that social justice will never flourish there.

Father Joe Owens, a Jesuit and former Florida director of the National Farmworker Ministry, says the "huge military build-up" which the U.S. government is paying for in Honduras, Guatemala and El Salvador is not justified by any Communist threat, but is a means of "keeping the rich rich and the poor poor."

"The basic war is against the poor people. Society is being structured in

such a way that the poor people cannot get organized," the soft-spoken priest told *The Voice* recently, during the last leg of a 10-day trip through Florida which was sponsored by "old friends" in the farmworker ministry.

Father Owens' message was simple: the U.S. should "move toward a more peaceful settlement of the conflicts down there" by endorsing the Contadora process which the Central American bishops support.

The Contadora nations --Mexico, Colombia, Venezuela and Panama-- have been trying, so far unsuccessfully, to reach a negotiated solution to the conflicts between Nicaragua's Sandinista government, the U.S.-backed "contras" who oppose it and neighboring nations

worried about their security.

Father Owens said even Nicaragua's bishops, who are the Sandinista regime's harshest critics, have endorsed the Contadora efforts.

He challenged the U.S. justification for the arms build-up, which is that the Sandinistas are deploying a massive army in order to destabilize neighboring countries and bring them into the Communist sphere.

"In the perception of most people down there that's simply not the case," Father Owens said. Nicaragua's own arms build-up "is almost certainly a reaction" to U.S. hostility.

He admitted, however, that in Nicaragua "there's a lot of disillusionment" with the Sandinistas, due mainly to the severe shortages of food and other economic staples.

In addition, he said, there's "tension" within the Catholic Church and within the Jesuit order itself because some members wholeheartedly support the Sandinistas while others are wary of them.

The closing of Nicaragua's only independent newspaper, *La Prensa*, and the expulsion of a Nicaraguan bishop and priest (Bishop Pablo Antonio Vega and Church spokesman Msgr. Bismarck Carballo), haven't helped the Sandinistas' image, Father Owens admitted.

"Those actions just seem to be unnecessary and unjustified. They're mistakes, really," he said. "But even though they are mistakes, they don't justify fighting a war."

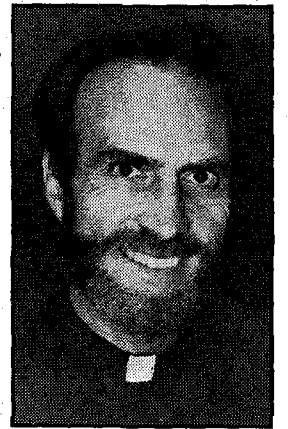
From speaking with other Jesuits who live and work in Nicaragua, he estimated that between 60 and 70 percent of the people still support the Sandinistas. Most of those who are leaving the country are "middle class people who found it hard to maintain the same lifestyle after the revolution."

"A lot of young men who don't want to be recruited into the army" also are leaving, Father Owens said, but their numbers don't compare to the numbers of refugees from El Salvador and Guatemala. He has heard reports that as many as 30,000 Salvadorans and about 1,000 Guatemalans have fled their countries' civil wars.

Father Owens personally has not come into contact with the refugees because he ministers in the northern part of Honduras, away from the Guatemala/El Salvador border area. He has worked in the Honduran town of El

'The basic war is [being fought] against the poor people.'

Fr. Joe Owens



Progreso for the past three years, both in a parish and as administrator and teacher in his order's school.

He said missionaries in the region, especially in Guatemala and El Salvador, often are harassed by the military "basically for doing nothing more than ordinary Church work."

"Anybody who organizes poor people, who tries to defend their rights, becomes subject to repression by the military because they are seen as subversives and Communists," Father Owens said.

In years past, a number of Catholic priests and nuns were killed for this reason, but the violence "is at a lesser level now" because of U.S. pressure. "The State Department, of course, is interested in avoiding any kind of publicity that would make a country look bad. So they act quickly."

Nevertheless, Father Owens said, lay workers and missionaries are routinely detained and interrogated by the military, a tactic calculated "to make people afraid. A lot of times people are just simply threatened."

He stressed that U.S. military aid only aggravates the problem by giving more power to those who want to maintain "the terrible extremes of poverty and wealth" in those countries.

Real democracy and economic progress in Central America will come "only when there's a change in the social structure," he said.

Guatemala and El Salvador, he noted, have democratic forms of government, but "the grass-roots organizations are just not allowed to exist in any real way...So democracy is just a hollow shell."

While the Catholic Church has taken a "very active role" in defense of these popular organizations, U.S. tax money is being spent to stifle them. Father Owens says the American people should know that.

2 Are ordained deacons

Relatives and friends of Robert Vallee and Oscar F. Castañeda gathered last Saturday at St. Mary Cathedral to witness a joyful event: the young men's ordination to the diaconate, the last step before the priesthood.

Archbishop Edward McCarthy concelebrated the liturgy along with the rectors of the major and minor seminaries and other priests of the Archdiocese.

Rev. Mr. Vallee, 25 and a native of Warwick, RI, is a graduate of Holy Family elementary school in North Miami and Msgr. Edward Pace High School in Opa-Locka. His parents, Robert A. and Tina Vallee, have lived in Holy Family parish since 1968. He has one younger brother, John Paul.

Right after high school, Rev. Mr. Vallee entered St. John Vianney College Seminary in Miami, where he obtained a Bachelor's degree in Philosophy. He then entered St. Vincent de Paul Regional Seminary in Boynton Beach, where he was awarded a Master's in Theology last spring.

As part of his pastoral internship he worked at St. Luke's Drug Abuse Center last summer and



Rev. Mr. Castañeda currently serves in St. Mary Cathedral.

Rev. Mr. Castañeda, 32, was born in Moron, in the province of Camaguey, Cuba. He moved to South Florida with his family in 1968, and has resided in Hialeah's Immaculate Conception parish ever since.

A graduate of Miami Springs High School with a Bachelor's degree in elementary education from Florida International University, Rev. Mr. Castañeda studied pre-theology at St. John Vianney, then entered St. Vincent de Paul, where he also was awarded a Master's in Theology last spring.

Rev. Mr. Castañeda has been working in Corpus Christi parish in Miami since last June.

Both Rev. Mr. Vallee and Rev. Mr. Castañeda will continue their studies at St. Vincent de Paul Seminary while working part-time in their assigned parishes until the time of their ordination to the priesthood, which is set for next May.

Baby Jesus, troublemaker

By Father John Shea

Is the Christ child a cuddly kid, cherub fat, lullabied by angels into a sleep as sweet as peace---a virgin's gift?

Or is he string-bean thin, with a colic cry and thrashing arms, hanging onto life with a scream--a mother's worry?

There is probably no need to choose. The presence of God on earth, which the baby symbolizes, is both an event of peace and an event of struggle. But most people have a deep preference for peace; and so Christians quote, in liturgy and on cards, the words of Wisdom:

For while gentle silence enveloped all things, and night in its swift course was now half gone thy all-powerful word leapt from heaven from the royal throne

Those who quote tend to scissor the passage at that point. But the second half carries a complementary message:

into the midst of a land that was doomed, a stern warrior carrying the sharp sword of thy authentic command

The birth narratives in Matthew and Luke were written in the light of the total event of Jesus Christ. They reflect the major themes of his life, death, and Resurrection. When the angels in Luke sing "Glory to God and peace on earth," they encapsulate the double solidarity of Jesus' life - praise to God and reconciliation among people. The theme of peace is prominent. This is the birth of the one who rode into Jerusalem on a donkey's colt rather than on a warrior's horse.

But the stories also foreshadow the fight that characterized Jesus' life. This child is not only the bringer of peace. He is immediate and unremitting trouble. In these times Christians may have to look unflinchingly at the struggle the child initiates before they can receive the peace the child brings.

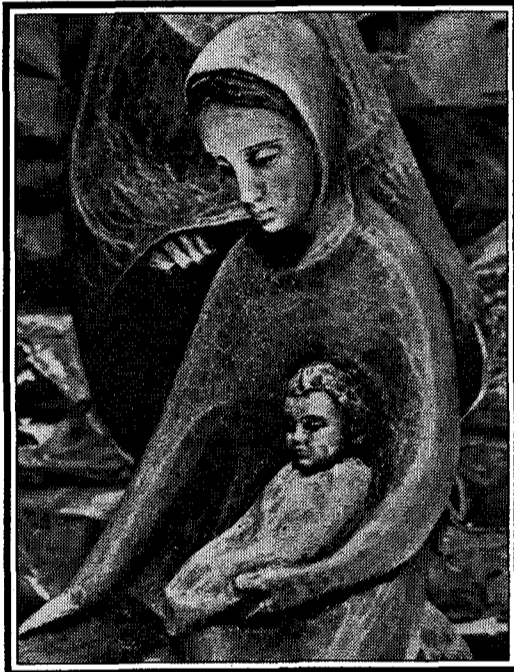
In Matthew as soon as Mary is pregnant "by the power of the Holy Spirit," Joseph is in a dilemma. The law demands one thing; his love demands another thing. He seeks a resolution in the strategy of "divorcing her quietly." The first news Gospel readers have of Jesus is that he is precipitating the conflict of law and love.

But Joseph is not the only one troubled. When the wise men tell Herod of the star and the impending birth of the king of the Jews, "Herod was troubled and all Jerusalem with him." Here is the beginning of the enduring Christian question of ultimate allegiance. Which king will be served? The king in the crib or the king on the throne? The birth of this child is a threat to all authority that is built on terror and fear.

Luke also notes this conflict in a subtle way. The census of Caesar is the unwitting accomplice of God. The empires of this world are subordinate to the Kingdom of God which is active throughout history. They survive insofar as they serve. And people must serve what survives.

The paradox is that the forces of death do not lay down and die. Evil is a sleepless and clever power of destruction. The flight into Egypt and the return to Israel symbolize the proximate victory of God's purposes. His Son is still alive. Later a new Herod will help finish what the old Herod had started. Jesus will be crucified; but God's love will resurrect him.

'This child is not only the bringer of peace. He is immediate and unremitting trouble. In these times Christians may have to look unflinchingly at the struggle the child initiates before they can receive the peace the child brings'



Victory will be won by the poor and the powerless. This is the truth that came into the world at the birth of Jesus-unconquerable love can transform suffering. This truth is symbolized by the star which "rests over the place where the child was." The star is the symbol of fate. Life is ultimately ruled by the impersonal movements of the heavens. The fault, dear Brutus, is in the stars. But in the birth of the baby, cold rule gives way to warm presence. The unfeeling

overseer of heaven becomes the suffering companion of earth. More important, a predetermined world, where the powerful crush the poor, yields to a world of possibility. The star is not its own reality; its sole purpose is to point to the child who will overcome.

The birth narratives in Luke are also concerned with the struggle the child inaugurates. A pregnant Mary begins her song with soaring lines about divine love, "My soul magnifies the Lord, and my spirit rejoices in God, my savior." But by the end the divine struggle is expressed, "He has scattered the proud in the conceit of their hearts, he has put down the mighty from their thrones, and exalted those of low degree."

But perhaps the key to the nature of the struggle is in the "sign" given to the shepherds. There is an announcing angel and angels in the sky; but they are not the sign. "And let this be a sign to you: you will find a babe wrapped in swaddling clothes and lying in a manger."

"A babe wrapped in swaddling clothes." This reflects a line from the Wisdom of Solomon.

I was nursed with care in swaddling clothes, For no king has had a different beginning of existence;

there is for all people one entrance into life, and a common departure.

This indicates that the baby's kingship will be in terms of raw humanity. His rule will not be the rule of "lording it over." This child will meet all people in the midst of those conditions that all people must undergo-birth and death.

"Lying in a manger." In a Midrashic tradition on the curse of Adam, Adam asks in anger: "Shall I be tied to the manger to eat with my donkey?" The baby is taking on the effects of the sin of Adam and transforming them. He is tying himself to the manger, to the hungers of the alienated human condition and their hope of being fed. Eventually, in the Gospel of John, he will be hailed as the bread that has come down from heaven for the life of the world.

The Christmas stories in Matthew and Luke highlight the divine peace which is the promise of the birth of Jesus. But this peace does not preclude fight. This is a catalytic child, who sustains the struggle of love and law, of ultimate allegiance, of victorious suffering, of free destiny over prescribed fate, of commitment to raw humanity in its alienated hungers. If the Son of God truly entered history, the effect of his presence could not be other than this.

When the child has grown, he will be a man of peace. But he will never seek peace by turning away from struggle. All that is given by turning away is an uneasy calm and the fear that it will soon be disturbed. What is given in the midst of struggle is the peace that Christmas promises, the "peace that surpasses understanding."

(Reprinted from Salt, 221 W. Madison, Chicago)

Merry Christmas, Son (from the heart)

By Emelyn Swan

It's Christmas Eve. The tree stands in the window, fully trimmed. Child-crafted ornaments reflect the dancing lights, and I recall a treasury of memories. Your kindergarten angel, precariously clinging to the topmost branch for the eleventh year, bears small resemblance to the immortal "angel of the Lord" who hovered over Bethlehem.

Twelve small oval pictures fill a frame across the room. One center space awaits your senior picture, soon to come.

Where are the years that linked those smiling faces? Where are the Christmases when every wish a little boy could conjure up was magically fulfilled, when every wild dream became reality? The days are now behind you when that jolly man who fancied chimneys over doors could touch your heart and lead you to believe all things were possible, if only once a year.

Somewhere on the journey from that child's world to now, you have come to realize life isn't quite so simple. Sadly, inevitably, you discovered that the source of all this seasonal splendor is a mercenary world. You also learned the family checkbook had its limits, and you began to give your Christmas lists more careful thought. The number of items gradually diminished as the importance of each was diligently weighed and added in order of priority.

I found your list today when I was tidying your

CHRISTMAS LIST

- Ski jacket (yellow stripes)
- Skis and goggles
- Amplifier for my stereo

room: an amplifier - technical description follows to guarantee results desired. We'd rather give you quiet, to sense the Lord's presence and hear his voice.

Your second item is a ski jacket, sky blue with yellow stripes and filled with down. We would give you rainbows and the warming of his love.

You'd like a pair of skis. I can see you on a reckless course that twists and turns across white hills and slopes. We would give you patience and the white light of a star to guide you through the paths of life.

You've listed goggles to protect you from the blinding brilliance of the snow. We wish you his radiance and would place you in the shadow of his wings.

This is the list you didn't give me.

The things you asked for lie wrapped and ribboned underneath the tree: a heavy sweater, socks to match, a pen and pencil set.

It's midnight now. Your father and I kneel before

the crèche and place the Infant Jesus in the stable where his porcelain parents have waited patiently. Each year since cradle days were yours, we've prayed that this wee Babe will always have priority over the tempting trappings of the world outside this room. Your understanding of the heart of Christmas tells us he's heard our prayers.

Time moves so fast. Where will you be this time next year? Will you be hurrying with the crowd? Tonight we add another prayer - that you will walk slowly to see the changing leaves in fall, to hear the laughter of children playing in the snow, to smell forsythia and lilacs in the spring, to feel the warmth of summer sun no stronger than our love.

These brightly packaged gifts beneath the tree are from our hands. This prayer, with all our love, comes from our hearts.

Merry Christmas, Son.

(Reprinted from Ligourian, Ligouri, Mo., 63057)

Communion Fast rules

Q: I am a Sister working in a parish taking care of the sick. Can you tell me who is exempt from fasting an hour before communion? (Louisiana)

A: Generally speaking, anyone is excused from the required fast before Communion if there exists a relatively serious reason. The regulation concerning the fast is not placed by the



By Fr. John Dietzen

church to keep people from Communion but to assist them toward a reverent approach to and preparation for this sacrament.

Thus no one is expected to stay away from Communion if it is necessary to eat or drink in order, for example, to keep from becoming ill. This is clearly the intent of the church, as indicated in the following. Certain other situations might enter the picture but I imagine you are most concerned with the sick.

As you know, the present rule of the church is that we fast for one hour from food and beverages with the exception of water before going to Communion. This practice continues the ancient tradition of the church which it is hoped will express and increase our devotion in receiving the Eucharist.

Because of their special needs, this discipline is considerably relaxed for the sick and the aged, and for people like yourself who take care of them.

Thus the period of the eucharistic fast is reduced to "about a quarter of an hour" for:

1. The sick in hospitals or at home, even if they are not confined to bed.
2. Those of advanced age, even if not bedridden, who are confined to their homes or a nursing home.
3. Sick or elderly priests.
4. Persons who care for the sick or aged and any family of the sick or aged who wish to receive Communion with them when they cannot conveniently observe the one-hour fast.

(Rite for Holy Communion and Worship of the Eucharist Outside of Mass, 24.)

The Code of Canon Law simply says that the sick and aging, and those who care for them can receive the Eucharist even if they have consumed something during the preceding hour (Canon 919).

Obviously the intention is that the sick should be given every possible opportunity to receive Holy Communion.

Medicine never breaks the communion fast for anyone.

(A free brochure "Infant Baptism: Catholic Practice Today" is available by sending a stamped, self-addressed envelope to Fr. John Dietzen, Holy Trinity Parish, 704 N. Main St., Bloomington, Ill. 61701.)

Questions for this column should be sent to Fr. Dietzen at the same address.

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The first Christmas card

For days I listened as co-workers and friends bemoaned the fact that they hadn't yet sent out their Christmas cards. Their comments come across like complaints about an annual "chore."

Certainly it is a big preoccupation for people in December and a big business too. The major card manufacturers-- Hallmark, American Greetings, and Gibson and the 300 or so other card companies in the United States all report that Christmas cards are the most popular of all the 7 billion cards they produce each year.

This year alone the prediction is that about 300 million Christmas cards will be sold over the counter and 1.7 billion boxed cards sold for a value of about \$700 million.

But all this activity is certainly not just for the sake of business. Christmas cards do have a meaning. If they didn't, busy people would soon break the habit.

My friends and I send cards precisely because they do have meaning. They are a way of sharing with our friends and loved ones the essence of what Christmas really means to us.

The spokespersons for the major card companies I interviewed said that Christmas as reflected in people's choice of cards is warmth, family, caring, giving, hearth, home, fireplace, holly, Santa, nostalgic scenes and religious feelings.

An American Greetings spokesperson said, "There's definitely a revival of religious cards."

"Five years ago the trend for religious themes was down but in the last two or three years the interest in religious cards is increasing," a spokesperson from Gibson told me.

For me, there was never any question that the cards I sent would reflect the original religious meaning of Christmas and the message of Jesus' birth-- love and peace entering the world, goodness and caring for one another.

Interestingly enough, in researching the history of Christmas cards, I found that the very first Christmas cards reflected the basic religious values of caring for others and sharing with them.



By Antoinette Bosco

Back in 1843 a British businessman named Henry Cole started the idea of sending Christmas cards. He asked an artist friend to design the card and divided it into three panels with a main illustration showing the elders at a friendly family party raising wine glasses in a toast.

The panels on either side showed two of the oldest traditions of Christmas-- feeding the hungry and clothing the needy.

When we send cards at Christmas, we really are sharing our belief that the world should be a place of peace where we care about one another. Cards reflect the relationship that we have to each other, not only by saying "I'm thinking of you," but also by expressing basic Christian values.

As Christians there always should be a meaning to the cards we write out each year-- a chance to spread the joy and peace of the Lord from one person to another.

It appears that the card-buying public does have that intention since traditional themes hold priority position in Christmas cards year after year.

That original Christmas card which started the lovely tradition of sending a caring message inside a small work of art bore the same greeting I am sending my readers today:

"A Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year to you."

(Copyright (c) 1986 by NC News Service)

The spirit of Christmas

Christmas is a time for giving, and while you're getting into the Christmas spirit, why not think about doing some volunteer work after the holidays?

There are over 84 million volunteers in America providing \$64.5 billion worth of free services every year. In terms of time, they give away more than 8 billion work hours annually, and they love every minute of it.

Gladys Longo, a retired social worker and diabetic from Providence, R.I., volunteers at the local Lung Association, and the local chapter of the American Diabetes Association. She also finds time to work as a court-appointed advocate for neglected and abused children. "Helping others helps me," she said. "It makes my life worthwhile."

Some people volunteer on the spur of the moment because of an urgent need.

In Fort Wayne, Ind., 30,000 teenage volunteers filled and hoisted 900,000 sand bags when heavy rains threatened to burst the dykes.

No one is ever too old or too young. In downtown Philadelphia, an 11-year-old was moved by the plight of the street people. Trevor Ferrell persuaded his father, Frank, to drive him to the inner city so he could give his own pillow and extra blanket to a man sleeping on a grate. Later, Trevor and his father raised money to open a shelter for the homeless.

Barbara Staley of New York volunteered her services to Covenant House, Father Bruce Ritter's shelter for runaway youths. "I was excited to find a special service agency centered around prayer and Christ...receiving the Eucharistic

daily and seeing your co-workers praying with you provides real strength."

People volunteer because of their faith; some just need to be needed; others want to help themselves cope with loss or grief. Some just like making new friends or learning new skills. There are even those who do it to make reparation for some wrong they've done earlier in life.

Whatever the reason, you are needed, and it's almost impossible to help others without helping yourself. Think about it. Maybe you can find a couple of hours a month to pursue some special interest as a volunteer. Any sacrifice you make today will pay big dividends tomorrow.

Remember, it's better to light one candle than curse the darkness.

(For a free copy of the Christopher News Notes, "Volunteers," send a stamped, self-addressed envelope to The Christophers, 12 East 48 St., New York, NY 10017.)

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By Fr. John Catoir

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Time capsules

Fixing the date for Christmas

In 354 A.D., Pope Liberius Christianized a pagan festival day by calling for Christians to celebrate the birth of Christ on December 25th. He also replaced Saturday as the Sabbath with Sunday because the Resurrection took place on a Sunday. He made it a weekly holiday and forbade anyone to work on that day.

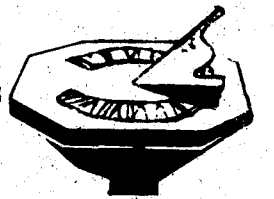
Then there's the story of the man who dreamed that he was walking along the beach with the Lord. Across the sky flashed scenes from his life. In each scene he noticed two sets of footprints in the sand, one belonging to him and the other to the Lord. But many times he noticed that there was only one set of footprints in the sand.

He also noted that this happened during the lowest times in his life. This bothered him and he questioned the

Lord: "Lord, you said you would walk beside me all the way, but I noticed that during the most troublesome times of my life, there was only one set of footprints. Why did you desert me?"

The Lord replied, "My son, during your times of trial when you saw only one set of footprints, it was then that I carried you."

According to legend, Clovis I of France was given an iris by an angel for accepting Christianity in the early 500's. The iris was called at the time, flower of the lily or fleur-de-lis, which he then used as his and his country's coat of arms.



By Frank Morgan

Tips on teen New Year's parties

Dear Mary: My daughter, a sophomore in high school, wants to have a New Year's Eve party. We have already given permission, but we have never given a party for teen-agers. Do you have some suggestions? -- Illinois.

Good for you. Almost all parents of teens would like their children to have fun in an atmosphere where they are supervised but not stifled. However, not every parent would give up his or her own New Year's Eve party to host teens.

As a parent, your job is to be in the home all through the party. You must be available without intruding. You might be in another room or on another floor, but you are there, and the guests know you are there.

Here are a few don'ts in assisting at the party.

1. Don't tell your daughter how to plan her party. You can make suggestions, but if she tells you, "Mom, playing games is dumb," trust her. She knows her peers. Agree on a starting and stopping time beforehand. Then try to go along with any of her ideas which seem reasonable.
2. Don't be critical of her moods. Many adults get jittery over planning a party. Expect your daughter to get a bit nervous too. Be understanding.
3. Don't object to noise. The music will be loud, but it is only for one night and hopefully you have tolerant neighbors.
4. Don't take an active part in the party. You are

By Dr.
**James and
Mary Kenny**



not "one of the crowd." Be friendly but unobtrusive.

Despite your precautions, problems might develop regarding drinking, sex and party crashers. All three will be reduced, perhaps eliminated, by your presence. Consider each.

There will be some teen guests whose sole intention is to spike the punch or soft drinks. You might discourage such a guest by moving in and out of the party unobtrusively, refilling potato chip dishes, removing dirty plates.

If you catch such a guest, show him the door immediately. If he or she has been drinking, arrange a ride with a non-drinker or drive the teen-ager home yourself.

If teens are persistent, they might successfully smuggle liquor in despite your low-key vigilance. In anticipation, some wise parents collect all car keys from guests upon arrival. Such an action prevents trips out to procure liquor during the party. It also permits you to view and evaluate each one before returning car keys.

Confine the party to one area of your house. Your presence can prevent guests from seeking out empty rooms for privacy. You might invite another couple to chaperone with you. Your own teen might feel more comfortable if you are visiting with your friends and not spending every minute "listening in" on the party. The teens will be even less inclined to seek out other areas of your house if you and friends are using them.

Party crashing is popular. Frequently, an entire carload of uninvited guest arrives at once. A teen host or hostess cannot get rid of them. However, party crashers will not generally stand up to parents; party crashers are even less likely to face four adults. While your daughter might not appreciate your presence, she will probably be grateful not to have to face uninvited crashers alone.

Parents, schools, churches and teens themselves often complain that teens have no place to go and nothing to do. You are providing the most obvious and effective solution to that problem, opening your house to your daughter's friends. Be glad she wants to bring her friends home. You are fortunate to have such a daughter, and she is fortunate to have you.

(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.)

What if Christmas were illegal?

Christmas, the high festival of our culture, is the one time during the year when we Puritan work-ethic heirs take time out to celebrate. We don't have the joyous Octoberfests, Mardi Gras, and other festivals our European relatives enjoy. We pack everything into December.

But I was surprised to learn that it was not always thus. Back in 1643, England's Roundhead Parliament banned all observance of saint's days and sternly forbade the observance of Christmas, Easter, and Whitsuntide. And it stated determination to enforce the ban with troops.

In our own Puritan Massachusetts, it was likewise against the law to celebrate Christmas. The Great Court there decreed in 1651, "Anybody who is found observing by abstinence from labor, feasting or any other way, any such day as Christmas day shall pay for every such offence five shillings." The law remained in effect for thirty years.

Why such restrictive laws and punitive attitudes toward a celebration of Jesus' birth? Part was due to the Reformation, of course. Christmas celebrations, largely religious in nature, were Popish, Catholic and unacceptable at a time when Catholicism was considered one of the great evils in society.

A second reason stemmed from the belief that to be sacred religion had to be grim and foreboding. One did not smile in church nor exclaim joy in experiencing God's presence.

By
**Dolores
Curran**



God was imaged as a stern and punitive taskmaster who kept a careful log of our wrongdoings and virtues, toting them up daily to keep us aware of our eventual fate on that fearful day we would meet and answer to Him. Celebrations were considered the work of the devil, not of Christ.

We see vestiges of this still today- people who cannot smile at the exchange of peace because they are in church, parents who frown at children who frolic in the pew, parishioners who won't chuckle over a homily joke. But we're getting better as we discover a less forbidding God in our lives.

Some of the charismatic and evangelistic congregations discomfit us because they are spontaneous and joyous. A few years ago, when I delivered a lecture on family before a large interfaith group, someone in the audience shouted out enthusiastically, "Amen, Sister," and two or three others echoed him.

I was non-plussed, stopped in mid-sentence and laughed. "You have to forgive me," I said. "I'm a Catholic and this doesn't happen in our church. But I think it's wonderful." They reacted with applause.

The Puritan law makes me reflect on how we would observe Christ's birth today if it were illegal to do so. Let's pretend a totalitarian regime ruled our country, as it does others, and severely punished any open celebration of the holiday.

Gone would be department store materialism, parties, trees, trappings that have subsumed the real celebration of Jesus' birth. In its place we would be furtively planning quiet liturgies and get-togethers to mark the religious meaning of the holiday.

If we were putting our lives or reputations on the line by acknowledging the significance of Christmas in our beliefs and daily lives, I wonder how precious the nativity scene would be and how meaningless the tinsel and gifts would become.

Would we be courageous enough to defy the law? What would we do in the secrecy of our homes to celebrate? Would we, like earlier Christian forebears, develop secret codes and meeting places? Would we risk our lives and jobs to celebrate an illicit Christmas liturgy?

I pray we will never have to face such decisions but thinking about it might help us put the real celebration of Christmas in perspective.

Family matters

Gifts of all shapes and sizes

by Carol A. Farrell,
Director of the Family Enrichment Center.

In the frenzy of buying that precedes Christmas, it is easy to overlook the fact that the gift is not the focus of the gift-giving. Gifts are meant to celebrate relationships and love: God's love for us in the gift of his Son, and our echoing of that love in the love we have for each other.

What follows is the work of an unknown author. I share it with you today in the hope it offers you an opportunity to quietly reflect on all the gifts in your life.

Persons are gifts which the Father sends to me in different wrappings.

Some are wrapped very beautifully; they are attractive when I first see them.

Some are in very ordinary wrapping paper.

Others have been mishandled in the mail. Once in a great while there is a Special Delivery package.

Some persons are gifts which come very loosely wrapped; others tightly wrapped.

But the wrapping is not the gift! It is easy to make this mistake . . . it's amusing only when children make this mistake.

Sometimes the gift is very easy to open.

Sometimes help is needed to open the others.

Is it because they are afraid? Does it hurt? Maybe they have been opened up before and been rejected.

I am a person - therefore, I am a gift too!!

A gift to myself, first of all. The Father gave myself to me.

Have I ever really looked inside the wrapping? Am I afraid to?

Perhaps I've never accepted the gift I am. . . . Could it be that there is something else inside the wrapping than what I think there is?

Maybe I've never seen the wonderful gift that I am. Could the Father's gifts be anything but beautiful?

I love the gifts others give to me. Why not this beautiful gift from the Father?

And I am a gift to other persons. Am I willing to be given by the Father to others? A person for others?

Do others have to be content with my wrapping never permitted to enjoy the gift?

Every meeting of persons is an exchange of gifts. This exchange of gifts is Friendship. Friendship is a relationship between persons who see themselves as they truly are:

A Friend is a gift not just to me, but to others through me. The more I share this gift, the more the gift grows.

Persons are gifts which the Father sends to me in different wrappings.

Christmas spirit beats TV 'love'

'Twas the night before Christmas
and on the T.V.
we could view several couples
in L-O-V-E.

David and Maddie were there
if you like,
followed by copycats
named Jack and Mike.



By
**James
Breig**

Sam and Diane hoisted
soda and beer
to wish one another
some holiday cheer.

Frank and the D.A.
J.R. and his friend
initialed a message
of love without end.

Spenser wooed someone
(another D.A.)
and lawyers were spooning
way out in L.A.

Amanda with Scarecrow--
oh, gimme a break;
I'm weary of lovers
who come off so fake.

At this holy season
when love should be real,
I don't want to focus on such
phony deals.

As we approach Christmas,
I'm longing to say
that my mind is on Joseph
and Mary each day.

To them, add the love
of the shepherds and Spirit,
the magi, the creche
and the animals near it.

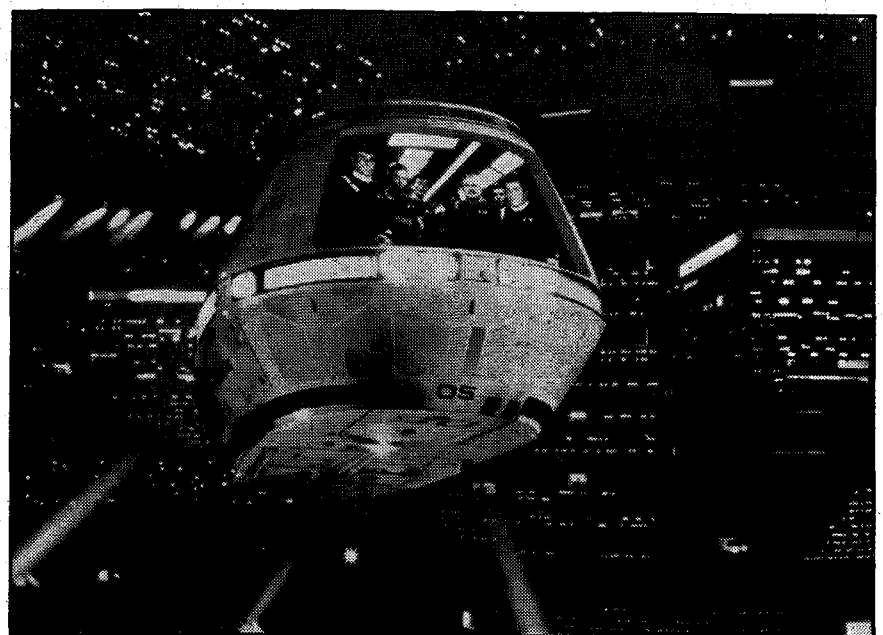
Now throw in the angels,
that choir above,
and I begin seeing
the meaning of love.

The play and the tease
that we see on TV
are nothing compared with
God's great love for me.

His love and affection,
His care and concern
are tender and wholesome,
I've started to learn.

He makes no conditions;
He gives it for free;
it's not something offered
on late-night TV.

My prayer for this season
is that we all know
His love from above
that's more than a show.



GOING HOME. Travelling in a shuttle craft (above), the crew of the U.S.S. Enterprise sails through San Francisco in 1986 to save the whales in "Star Trek IV, The Voyage Home," a Paramount release. Calling it "an ideal family film," the USCC classifies it A-II. (NC photo)

Movie joyfully examines womanhood

"Crimes of the Heart" (De Laurentis) is a portrait of three sisters whose mutual love and uncompromising acceptance of each other's flaws help them survive in a small town in Mississippi.

Traumatized as youngsters by a father who abandoned them and a mother who hanged herself in the kitchen along with the house cat, three grown-up

These are no-fault crimes caused by the broken hearts of children. Director Bruce Beresford allows the drama to take on a confessional tone -- intimate, honest, and charming.

Nevertheless, the sisters are not so much to be admired for their independence as they are to be recognized for their enduring grace in spite of self-doubt and self-deception.

'The sisters are not so much to be admired for their independence as they are to be recognized for their enduring grace in spite of self-doubt and deception.'

sisters reunite at their grandfather's homestead.

Lenny (Diane Keaton) has stayed at home leading a sheltered existence, trying to maintain some moral standards. Meg (Jessica Lange), rebellious and promiscuous, has just returned from an extended but failed attempt to launch a career in Hollywood. She's accustomed to taking what she wants.

Babe (Sissy Spacek) is in the midst of legal action. She's released from jail after shooting her husband who caught her having a fling with a local black. Decidedly zany, frightened and insecure, she makes humorously failed attempts at suicide.

Based upon Beth Henley's Pulitzer Prize-winning play by the same name, the film vainly tries to ennoble a rural South lifestyle where little people living small lives commit innumerable crimes of the heart: Meg lies to her dying grandpa about her career, Lenny wallows in self-pity and selfishness, Babe is indiscreet, foolish and still feeling the loss of her mother.

Their exuberant discussions are marked by a kind of amiable madness. What surfaces from their comical interaction is a vibrant and lilting optimism, a strong sense of reconciliation and an understanding of

one another in spite of their eccentricities. The film becomes an intimate, joyous examination of womanhood in three divergent yet supremely naturalistic, compassionate and benevolent manifestations.

Meg's one-night stand with a married man, Doc (Sam Sheperd), and Babe's attempted suicide are amiably de-emphasized and are mere threads in the complex fabric of characterizations that leave the viewer with an overall positive outlook on life. The U.S. Catholic Conference classification is A-III - adults. The Motion Picture Association of America rating is PG-13 - parents strongly cautioned to provide special guidance for attendance of children under 13.

(Reviewed by Tony Zaza. Zaza is on the staff of the U.S. Catholic Conference Department of Communication.)

Mother Teresa opens in Miami

The acclaimed film, *Mother Teresa*, opened its exclusive Miami engagement at Wometco's Sunset at Kendall Theatre, Sunset at Kendall Mall, 107 Ave. Kendall Drive on Friday, Dec. 19.

The film documents the work and life of Mother Teresa and was made over a period of five years, starting in 1980. It was filmed in ten countries on four continents in the world's worst trouble spots: the Middle East, Latin America, Africa, India and the urban ghettos of the United States.

"Whenever there is a catastrophe in the world or some real failing of the human spirit," says filmmaker Ann Petrie, "you can count on Mother Teresa

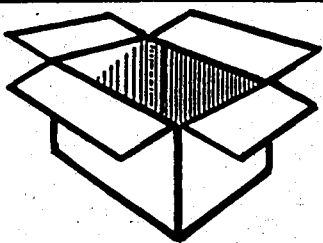
to be there."

"She works with the sisters and brothers of her order in the slums of New York, Chicago and Detroit," Petrie, who produced the film with her sister Jeanette, said in an interview with the Denver Catholic Register.

"She doesn't evangelize or try to convert," she said. "She only talks of the importance of God's love. I think in her heart she still prefers working directly with people."

Mother Teresa had its world premiere at the United Nations and the film has had unprecedented screenings at the United States Senate and the Vatican.

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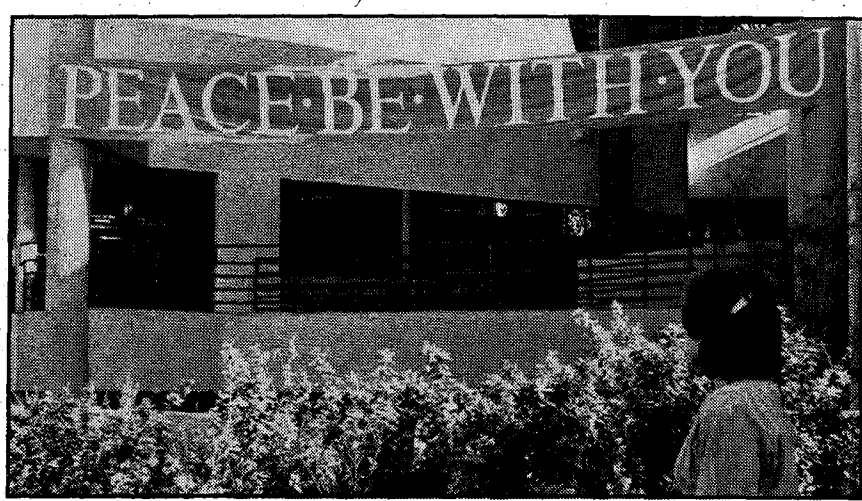
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What's Happening



PEACE BANNER. Greeting motorists on Biscayne Blvd. this holiday season is a 37 ft. long banner strung in front of second floor offices at the Archdiocesan Pastoral Center. The banner reads "Peace be with you" with letters 3 feet high.

'Walk for Life' slated for Jan. 17

Catholics and others throughout South Florida will be "walking for life" from 9 a.m. to noon on Saturday, Jan. 17, to commemorate the 14th anniversary of the U.S. Supreme Court's decision legalizing abortion.

The walk-a-thons, to be held in each of the seven Respect Life Offices in Dade and Broward counties, will provide a "visible witness" to the belief

in the sacredness of human life. The money raised also will enable each of the Respect Life offices to help pregnant women who are in need.

Families, school and Church groups are encouraged to "walk for life" or sponsor walkers. To sign up, contact your local Respect Life office. The offices' phone numbers and walk locations follow. Please note that the

PULSE discusses police beatings

A delegation from the PULSE organization met with interim Dade County Police Chief Fred Taylor to discuss the organization's concerns about senseless killings and beatings of black men by some white Dade county police officers.

The organization had been pushing for a meeting with the former Director to find ways to stop the senseless killings and beatings of black men. "We know that Chief Taylor is new in this position," said Rev. Alonzo Anderson, Chairman of PULSE Committee to End Discrimination, "but after our meeting we are confident that these kinds of incidents will be stopped under his

administration. They held a very favorable meeting with the chief and his staff, but the bottom line is he must be able to control his men working in the black community."

The director told the group that the Police Department Internal Review has completed its investigation of the Willie Spikes killing in Opa-Locka, which happened on Oct. 7th and has forwarded its results to the State Attorney's Office. Once Janet Reno has finished her investigation, she has promised the group that a full public inquest will be held so that the public can hear the results of this investigation. "We hope that this doesn't take another two months," said Rev. Anderson.

D'Emic honored at CDA luncheon

The Catholic Daughters of the Americas, Court Holy Spirit #1912 of Pompano Beach, held its 23rd Anniversary Celebration at a luncheon at the Crystal Lake Country Club on Dec. 9.

Organized and instituted on Dec. 7, 1963 by Regent Florence D'Emic, the group, which includes St. Ambrose, St. Coleman, St. Elizabeth's and St. Paul's parishes, has grown under her

leadership.

Accolades of praise were given to D'Emic in her absence for her deep devotion and loving care for those in need.

This year's celebration was planned by Regent D'Emic and directed from her hospital bedside until last-minute complications required her daughter, Anne Pantan, a Charter Member and the 1st Vice Regent in 1963, to follow-up.

Christian Unity week activities planned

In connection with the international annual Week of Prayer for Christian Unity 1987, the Miami community will hold a number of activities, over a one month period, in celebration of oneness in faith for those who have been brought into the Covenant by Jesus of Nazareth.

In South Florida the mix of ethnic and religious beliefs is fertile ground for sowing the seeds of harmony and respect for each other in shared prayer and opportunities for discussion. Celebrations are being planned for Jan. 17- Feb. 15. The theme for the 1987

observance is "Reconciled to God in Christ."

The planning committee, co-chaired by Rev. Samuel Jones, Pastor of South Miami First Baptist Church and Carlos Cueto, a Catholic Layman from St. Louis Parish, announced the two main liturgical celebrations.

The opening ecumenical service will be held at St. Sophia's Greek Orthodox Church on Jan. 17 at 4 p.m. This service will be led by His Eminence, Archbishop Iakovos, Primate of the Greek Orthodox Church of North and South America. After the service there will be a fellowship hour. There is no admission fee and people of all Christian denominations are cordially invited to attend.

The closing ceremony will be held on Feb. 15 at 3 p.m. at the Miami Shores Presbyterian Church. It will be led by pastor Timothy Croft and attended by Archbishop Edward McCarthy. Fellowship hour follows.

Miami Beach walk will be held on Jan. 24, one week after the others.

- Coral Springs: St. Bernard and St. Andrew churches; 753-0770;
- Ft. Lauderdale: St. Coleman Church; 565-8506;
- Hialeah: Our Lady of the Lakes Church; 883-2229;
- Hollywood: St. Stephen Church; 963-2229;
- North Dade: Archdiocesan Pastoral Center; 653-2921;
- Southwest Miami: St. John Vianney Seminary; 233-2229;
- Miami Beach: St. Patrick Church; 534-2229.

Prayer petitions

The employees of the Archdiocese of Miami Pastoral Center gather each Monday morning to pray for intentions of our brothers and sisters of the Archdiocese. Petitions will be included in our individual daily prayers each week as well as during this special time of community prayers.

Anyone with a prayer request is invited to write to: Prayer Petition, Archdiocese of Miami, 9401 Biscayne Blvd., Miami, Fl. 33138.

Baum competes in national olympics

Danielle Baum, 12, of South Miami, a 7th grade student at St. Thomas the Apostle Catholic School, competed in the 1986 National Junior Olympic Cross Country Championships held on Dec. 13 at the University of California campus in Irvine, California. To qualify Danielle placed first in a 3,000 meter race in the Florida Junior Olympics. Only 11 people from Florida were selected for the National Junior Olympics.

Its a date

Fr. Dan Doyle, S.M. and the Chaminade Community of Faith Prayer Group invite you to attend a Mass with Prayers for Healing and Anointing of the Sick. The Mass will be held on Jan. 6th at 8 p.m. in the school cafeteria, 300 Chaminade Drive, Hollywood.

The Barry University Auxiliary is sponsoring a luncheon/theatre trip on Jan. 17 to the Burt Reynolds Jupiter Theatre leaving at 10 a.m. The comedy is "You Can't Take it With You" starring Brian Keith who plays Judge Hardcastle in "Hardcastle and McCormick." Reservations by Jan. 5 call 758-3392, Ext. 311 or Verna Hodges at 895-2137.

St. Clement's Women's Club will host a day of reflection at the church, 2975 N. Andrews Ave., Wilton Manors, Fl. from 9 a.m. to 2 p.m. Jan. 24. Fr. Edward Bryce, Pro-Life Activities Director for the U.S. Catholic bishops, will be the conductor. For reservations call Doris Frick at 763-2185.

St. Maurice parish in Ft. Lauderdale is hosting a talk by Fr. Patrick Brennan, President of the National Council for Catholic Evangelization, on Jan. 11 at 7 p.m. He will address the process of evangelization to inactive Catholics, the R.C.I.A. program, and youth ministry.

World Peace Day

Archbishop McCarthy will celebrate a Pontifical Mass at St. Mary's Cathedral on Jan. 1 at 11 a.m. in observance of the World Day of Peace. Msgr. Bryan Walsh will be the homilist. The theme is "Development and Solidarity: The Keys to Peace."

Archdiocesan catechists courses scheduled

South Dade

• **Ensenando Religión en los 80's - Parte I:** (Spanish) St. Agatha Parish; Mondays, Jan. 5 - Feb. 9; 7:30 - 10 P.M.; Mrs. Esperanza Ginoris.

• **Ensenando Religión en los 80's - Parte II:** (Spanish) St. Joachim Parish; Thursdays, Jan. 8 - Feb. 12; 7 - 10 P.M.; Mrs. Esperanza Ginoris.

• **Ensenando Religión en los 80's - Parte II:** (Spanish) St. Michael Parish; Saturdays, Jan. 10 - Feb. 14; 9 - 11:30 A.M.; Mrs. Esperanza Ginoris.

• **Teaching Religion in the 80's - Part II:** (English) Little Flower Parish; Thursdays, Feb. 5 - March. 5; 7 - 10 P.M.; Sr. Rosa Monique Pena, O.P.

• **La Iglesia Después de Vaticano II:** (Spanish) St. Timothy Parish; Tuesdays, Feb. 3-March. 10;

7:30 - 10 P.M.; Mrs. Esperanza Ginoris.

• **Introducción a los Sacramentos:** (Spanish) St. Cecilia Parish; Wednesdays, Jan. 7 - Feb. 11; 7:30 - 10 P.M.; Mrs. Esperanza Ginoris.

• **Introduction to the Sacraments:** (English) St. Michael Parish; Thursdays, Feb. 12 - March 12; 7 - 10 P.M.; Sr. Doreen M. Lynch, I.H.M.

North Dade

• **Introducción al Antiguo Testamento:** (Spanish) St. John The Apostle Parish; Wednesdays, Jan. 21 - Feb. 18; 7 - 10 P.M.; Mr. Elías Ortega.

• **Introduction to the New Testament:** (English) St. Patrick Parish; Saturdays, Jan. 24 - Feb. 28; 9 - 1 P.M.; Rev. James P. Murphy.

• **Teaching Religion in the**

80's - **Part I:** (English) St. Lawrence Parish; Mondays, March 2 - April 6; 7 - 10 P.M.; Sr. Rosa Monique Pena.

South Broward

• **Teaching Religion in the 80's - Part I:** (English) St. Maurice Parish; Wednesdays, Jan. 21 - Feb. 18; Tuesday, Feb. 24; 7 - 10 P.M.; Sr. Rosa Monique Pena, O.P.

• **Teaching Religion in the 80's - Part II:** (English) Nativity Parish; Saturdays, Feb. 14 - March 14; 9 A.M. - 1 P.M.; Sr. Rosa Monique Pena, O.P.

• **Introduction to the New Testament:** (English) Our Lady Queen of Martyrs Parish; Wednesdays, Jan. 14 - March 4; 7:30 - 9:30 P.M.; Ms. Verónica Spezzacatena.

• **Introduction to the Sacraments:** (English) St. Bartholomew Parish; Mondays, Feb. 23 - March 23; 7 - 10 P.M.; Fr. Paul Vuturo.

• **The Church after Vatican II:** (English) St. David Parish; Wednesdays, March 11 - April 8; 7 - 10 P.M.; Ms. Cecelia M. Bennett.

North Broward

• **The Church after Vatican II:** (English) Our Lady of Mercy Parish; Saturdays, Jan. 17 - 31; 9 A.M. - 3 P.M.; Ms. Cecelia M. Bennett.

• **Teaching Religion in the 80's - Part I:** (English) St. Gregory Parish; Tuesdays, Feb. 3 - March 3; 7 - 10 P.M.; Sr. Doreen M. Lynch, I.H.M.

• **Introduction to the New Testament:** (English) St. Anthony Parish; Wednesdays, Feb. 4 - March 11; 7 - 10 P.M.; Sr. Dorothy Beck, acj.

• **Introduction to the Sacraments:** (English) St. Andrew Parish; Thursdays, Feb. 26 - March 12; Monday, March 16; Sunday, April 12; 7 - 10 P.M.; Sr. Dorothy Beck, acj.

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5A- Novenas

ST. JUDE NOVENA

May the Sacred Heart of Jesus be adored, glorified, loved and preserved throughout the world now and forever. Sacred Heart of Jesus pray for us. St. Jude, maker of miracles pray for us. Thank you for prayers answered. Publication promised. P.A.M. C.S.I.

Thanks for favor granted by Novena to The Sacred Heart. E.M.L.

Thank you Blessed Mother for your special messages of Love and thank you Jesus for my special Christmas gifts. Happy Birthday Jesus, Love Maryann.

5A - Novenas

Thanks to St. Jude and the Holy Spirit for prayers answered. Publication Promised .I.W.

Thanks to the Sacred Heart St. Jude & Blessed Mother for prayers answered. Publication Promised. A.G.

THANKSGIVING NOVENA TO ST. JUDE

Oh, Holy St. Jude, Apostle and martyr, great in virtue & rich in miracles, near kinsman of Jesus Christ, faithful intercessor of all who invoke your special patronage in time of need, to you I have recourse from the depth of my heart and humbly beg you to whom God has given such great power to come to my assistance. Help me in my present and urgent petition. In return, I promise to make your name known and you to be invoked with Our Fathers, Hail Mary's and Glory Be's. Amen. I have had my request granted. Publication promised.

TANIA

PRAYER TO THE HOLY SPIRIT

Holy Spirit you who solve all problems. Who light all roads so that I can attain my goal. You who give me the divine gift to forgive and to forget all evil against me and that in all instances of my life you are with me. I want in this short prayer to thank you for all things and to confirm once again that I never want to be separated from you, even in spite of all material illusion I wish to be with you in eternal Glory. Thank you for your mercy towards me and mine. Publication promised.

TANIA

Thanks to St. Jude for favor granted. Publication promised. L.M.F.

5A - Novenas

Thanks to The Holy Spirit for given favors. Publication promised. M.S.

Thanks to St. Jude for prayers answered. Publication promised. C.A.B.

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The wonder of Christmas

God made it so simple; why do we complicate it so much?

By Dan Morris
NC News Service

I leaned my axe and then myself against the stump of the Douglas fir I had fallen the day before. My arms and back were tired from limbing the tree.

I'd rest a bit before firing up the chain saw and bucking the log to saw more firewood. Using the front of my sweatshirt I towed sweat out of my eyes and off my forehead and neck.

The forest was simultaneously quiet and full of gentle sound.

Interestingly to me, my thoughts turned to Christmas as they have so many times in recent months. To my delight, those thoughts -- even

'No thunder, no earthquake, no storms. God speaks to us through a young family's struggle, a mother's pain, an event as accessible to four shepherds as to Persian kings.'

unplanned meditations -- were neither stimulated by merchants' pre-Halloween Yule decorations nor by an avalanche of Christmas catalogues addressed to "occupant."

Rather they have come during quiet moments in the woods or on the beach. They have come as I watched a spider weave its web in the twigs of an older branch. As I marveled at the intricate and delicate ferns that grow near our trailer house. As I whittled a chunk of sweet-smelling cedar. As I closed my eyes and listened to sea gulls cry and call to one another.

Our family's recent decision to attempt a more basic lifestyle -- moving from a major metropolitan area to a small island off the coast of Washington state near the Canadian border -- has brought us dramatically closer to creation. And creation has brought us closer to Christmas.

Maybe because we are more vulnerable to the elements, financial and earthly. Maybe because we were too distracted in the city. Maybe because God



After moving to a small island away from any large city, "the Christmas story for us has become more concrete," writes Dan Morris. "We wonder about the worry and physical discomfort Mary must have endured in those anxious hours in Bethlehem." (NC photo)

speaks so powerfully and profoundly through his gifts of sea and earth. Whatever the reasons, the Christmas story for us has become more concrete. We wonder about the worry and physical discomfort Mary must have endured in those anxious hours in Bethlehem.

As we sit around our own wood stove, we imagine the gratitude Joseph and Mary must have felt finding some place warm and out of the weather. We talk about the flesh and blood reality of childbirth and how Jesus' first moments of life must have swirled with the experience of the warmth of his mother's

body, the scents of domestic animals, the sounds of his stepfather's voice, the feel of simple cloth.

We are awed by the simplicity of God's way and we are curious about our attempts to complicate it. Isn't it wonderful that Christ and the church bring us Christmas every year to again patiently remind us of the remarkably ordinary birth of Christ?

No thunder, no earthquake, no storms. God speaks to us through a young family's struggle, a mother's pain, an event as accessible to four shepherds as to Persian kings.

Scriptures

The Biblical meaning of 'peace'

By Father John Castelot
NC News Service

"Glory to God in high heaven, peace on earth to those on whom his favor rests" (Luke 2:14).

Peace...

What's in a name? Well, there is no little irony in the name given the son of David and Bathsheba. He was called Solomon, "man of peace."

The irony is that David was primarily a warrior king, a fighter from his youth. And Bathsheba's first husband had been a soldier in David's army.

One can only speculate on the reason for Solomon's name. Was it wishful thinking? Did it reflect David's weariness with war? Was the name a sort of prayer from Bathsheba's heart, broken by violence and healed by love?

Whatever, that was the new prince's name and

it turned out to be quite fitting.

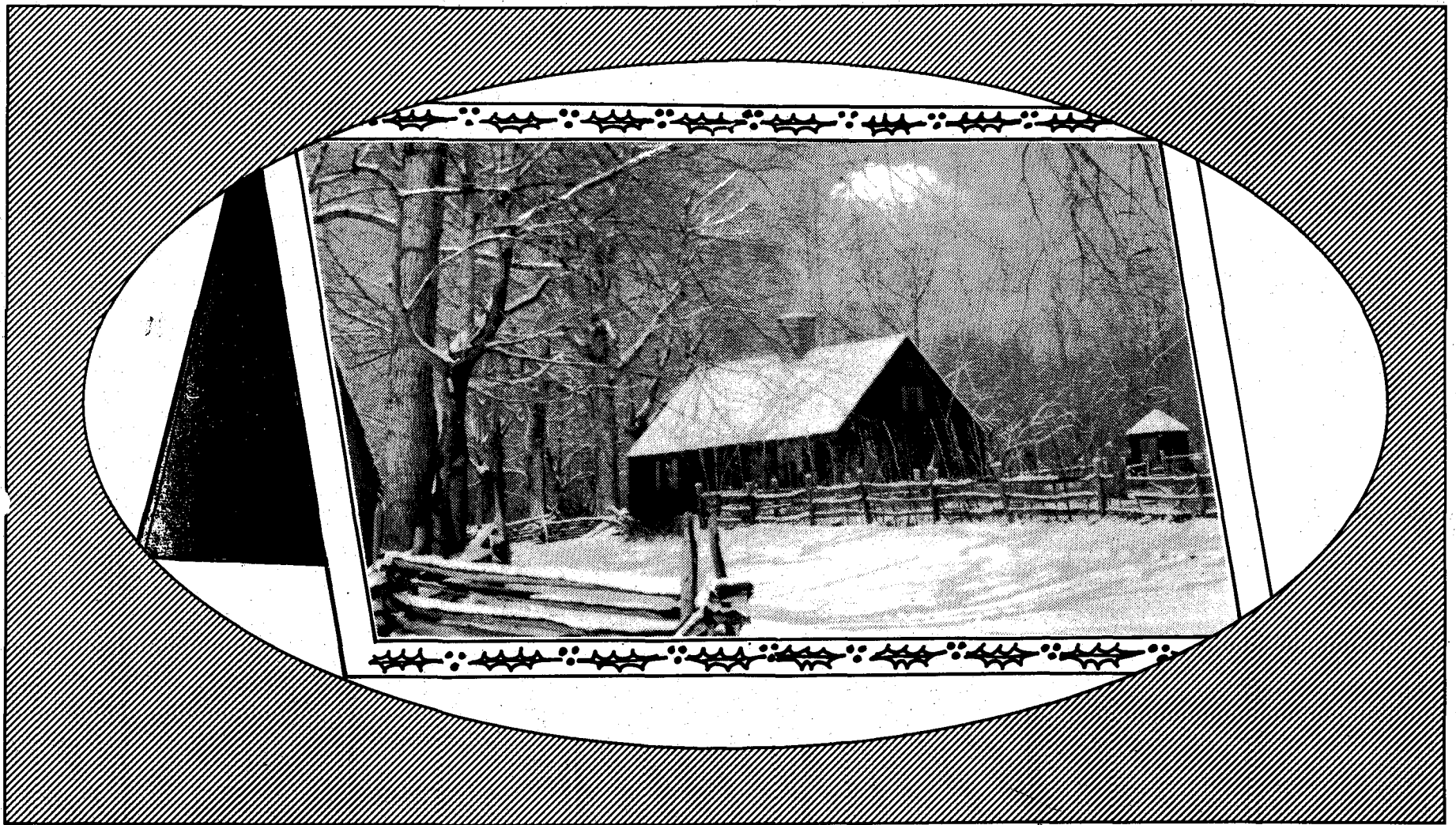
When Solomon came to the throne, Israel's enemies had been subjugated. So there was no need for him to go into battle. He was able to devote himself to setting up an efficient administration, initiating ambitious building projects, creating a vast financial empire, promoting general prosperity.

Unfortunately Solomon forgot that there can be no peace without justice for all people. His insensitive treatment of his subjects prepared the way for the civil war after his death.

However, there is a message for us in the efforts made by this "man of peace." They did not involve overcoming hostility by violence. Instead he promoted what he conceived to be well-being.

And well-being is what the biblical notion of peace is about. The word itself is "shalom," which is still the usual form of greeting in Israel. It

Know Your Faith



What is Christmas peace?

By Cindy Liebhart
NC News Service

Untrampled, snowy forests. Quiet New England villages. Families gathered happily around the dinner table. Gentle Nativity scenes. Angels. Shepherds. A single candle. A church on a hill. A child's face.

As the days grow closer to Christmas, mailboxes fill up with cards bearing these colorful images. Cheerful, soothing, warm, tranquil scenes. Cards conveying in a hundred different ways wishes for happiness, love, God's blessings, peace.

The cards leave no doubt: Christmas is a time for peace among people of good will.

But it would seem that the images of peace proclaimed by cards and holiday advertisements are only part of the picture.

If peace is to have real meaning in life today, with all of its stress and pain, change and disappointment, busyness and conflict, it has to encompass more than fleeting warm feelings.

What does peace imply for a busy family of five where both parents work outside the home, juggling career demands, the needs and hectic schedules of growing children, their own needs as a couple plus outside commitments to their community?

What does peace mean to a 50-year-old father of five who, after being laid off by the company where he had worked for 30 years, discovers he has a degenerative heart condition which will prevent him from seeking work in his field?

What does peace mean to a young married couple, expecting their first child, settling into a new home, looking happily toward a bright, albeit changed, life?

Or to a widow, facing her first Christmas without her husband of more than 40 years?

What does peace mean to a homeless person? To the spouse of an alcoholic? To a soldier stationed thousands of miles from home?

Perhaps it would be easiest if there were scientific formulas to guarantee that if a person does A,B,C, and D, that person will "achieve" peace.

But peace means different things to different people, depending on their circumstances. And the ways it breaks into people's lives at unexpected moments cannot be predicted or duplicated or even, really, planned for.

Still, a broader notion of what peace means --and some attitudes to cultivate peacefulness-- might include the following:

- Knowledge and acceptance of oneself, limitations and all, and willingness to share oneself honestly with others. Peace with oneself must come before a person can make peace with others.

- Balance, or a right ordering of priorities. In other words, being clear about what one values most, and then taking steps to accomplish those things.

- The willingness when priorities get knocked out of whack to make the necessary efforts to put things back into order or to make needed adjustments.

- Forgiveness of and reconciliation with others. Can there be peace where hatred or bitterness flourish?

- Integrity --acting on one's beliefs.

- Absence of violence in speech and actions toward another.

- Recognition of the blessings or goodness in one's life.

- And, of course, justice --care for the needy and helpless-- is a peace component. The more we are peacemakers, the more peace fills us.

'Of course, justice --care for the needy and helpless-- is a peace component. The more we are peacemakers, the more peace fills us.'

comes from a word meaning to be complete, fulfilled, perfect. The word "peace" signifies the fullness of blessings, the full enjoyment of all material and spiritual goods -- in a word, perfection.

It was in that sense that St. Paul consistently wished people "grace and peace" in his letters to the Christian communities he had founded. Especially interesting is his concluding wish for the Thessalonians: "May the God of peace make you perfect in holiness (wholeness)" (1 Thessalonians 5:23). Paul even defines the kingdom of God in terms of peace. And it is worth noting that he links justice with peace:

"The kingdom of God is not a matter of eating and drinking (a reference to the dietary laws), but of justice, peace and the joy that is given by the Holy Spirit...Let us, then, make it our aim to work for peace and to strengthen one another" (Romans

14:17,19).

In Luke's story of Jesus' birth the angels herald his coming by proclaiming "Glory to God in high heaven, peace on earth to those on whom his favor rests." Jesus spent the whole of his life in the pursuit of this peace.

Actually, Jesus promoted "shalom" by curing the sick, giving sight to the blind, hearing to the deaf, mobility to the lame (Matthew 11:2-6). When he sent his disciples out on a trial mission, he instructed them: "On entering any house, first say, 'Peace to this house'" (Luke 10:5).

When the Old Testament prophet Micah looked forward to the birth of an ideal king of the line of David, he envisioned him in these terms: "He shall stand firm and shepherd his flock by the strength of the Lord...he shall be peace" (Micah 5:3-4).

Centuries later the author of the New

Testament letter to the Ephesians identified Christ in the very same way: "It is he who is our peace" (2:14).

Peace, "shalom," is so much more than the mere absence of hostility, much more than a casual formula of greeting. It means the positive fulfillment of all the dreams of humanity for justice, harmony, health of mind and body, material and spiritual well-being.

"Blest too are the peacemakers" -- this Beatitude applies to all who strive to promote peace in its full sense, that peace which Jesus left us as his final bequest: "Peace is my farewell to you, my peace is my gift to you; I do not give it to you as the world gives peace" (John 14:27).

The peace Jesus wants for us is biblical peace, "shalom." It is "God's own peace, beyond all understanding" (Philippians 4:7).

Santa and the Christmas spirit

By Theodore Hengesbach
NC News Service

I took a little survey about Christmas the other day. I asked a few of my relatives and friends to share a favorite Christmas memory. I discovered that practically all of them had something to do with Santa Claus.

One prominent journalist told me matter-of-factly that she and her brother had actually seen Santa flying past their window in his sleigh when they were 9 and 7.

'It is the tradition in Holland and Germany for the infant Jesus to deliver gifts on Christmas day.'

My niece remembered the agonizing annual tour of town viewing the display of lights on Christmas Eve. Only later was she to find out that this gave Santa time to put out the gifts at home.

My wife was shattered when the Santa who visited her house on Christmas sounded exactly like her Uncle Karl.

My older brother remembered the frantic shopping trip he was unexpectedly called upon to make a few days before Christmas after his wife delivered their fourth child early, and a visit from Santa was quickly scheduled.

I remember putting the names of all family members on chairs and sofas in the living room so that Santa would get the right gifts to the right people. And I always managed to get my name on the largest chair.

Now I own my own Santa suit and appear on request at grade schools and homes and even at the university "ho, ho, hoing" wherever I go. From Santa's perspective, I see a lot of happy smiles and excited eyes.

It isn't so surprising that Santa plays such a large part in our Christmas memories, is this really what Christmas is all about?

Maybe it's time for Christians to make peace with Santa. Maybe Santa and Jesus can get along.

Let me explain.



Santa Claus appears as a jolly, robust man with a white beard in his red and white suit accented by black belt and boots. He is mysterious, arrives in a flash and leaves gifts and goodies without fanfare or the chance to say "thank you."

He is a bit overwhelming, expects people to be good but is kind and forgiving and generous. He is tireless and full of energy, able to visit each home in the whole world in one short evening and to give a personalized gift to both children and adults.

This is the stuff of fantasy, dreams and memories. Santa is quite a guy.

We know that our Santa today is the literary creation in 1822 of a biblical

scholar, C.C. Moore, who was perhaps inspired by St. Nicholas, a bishop of the fourth century who was as popular then as Santa is now.

Many churches were dedicated to St. Nicholas and all kinds of legends developed about him. St. Nicholas was the mysterious giver of bags of gold to poor families; he even is said to have interceded to bring some young children back to life; he became the patron saint of children, travelers and bakers.

St. Nicholas was quite a guy too. He went about doing good, giving his gifts in secret, not waiting for thanks. He was a protector of the defenseless and those in distress. And as a bishop in

his red robes, he may have looked like our Santa. Even today St. Nicholas delivers presents on his feast day Dec. 6 in much of Europe.

The tradition of St. Nicholas is over 1,500 years old and still going strong.

It is interesting to note that it is the tradition in Holland and Germany for the infant Jesus to deliver the gifts on Christmas Day.

This brings me to my main point: Santa Claus stands in a long line of gift-givers aptly expressed in the 1,500-year tradition of St. Nicholas. But it finds an expression too in our more recent legend about the robust, vigorous, generous Santa.

Imperfect but holy families

The following is a reflection by the staff of the Family Enrichment Center.

One of the most enduring and damaging myths that haunts most of us is the belief that our family is flawed or lacking in some important way, but that others we see and know seem perfect, or nearly so. Quite unnecessarily, we experience guilt and unhappiness for unfavorably comparing our family to others who appear to be untouched by the realities that are a part of our life. Our experience of family on a daily basis makes us painfully aware of the effects of original sin: of the desire of each of us to have our own way, to be at times selfish and uncompromising, to use power to resolve issues in a way favorable to ourselves, to be insensitive and disrespectful of the deeper needs of others because we are preoccupied with our own.

Many of us have seen advertisements of perfect Christmas scenes or perhaps have even experienced that one "perfect" storybook Christmas. Maybe we even feel cheated when reality does not measure up to our unreal

expectations. The usual experience of Christmas may be one of NOT having the entire extended family gathered at Christmas dinner, of NOT being able to decorate the tree singing carols and having all the children present and joyfully participating, or even of setting up the darn tree straight in its stand

Holy Family Mass

Everyone is invited to a pontifical Mass in honor of the Feast of the Holy Family on Sunday December 28th at 3 p.m. in St. Mary's Cathedral (Spanish and English liturgy).

without a scene. How many times do we not appreciate the goodness of what is because we mentally place it next to perfection?

Some even experience depression or weep after watching episodes of "The Bill Cosby Show" or "The Waltons" because their experience of family life is so lacking in comparison. Or they

come home after hearing someone share some extra-ordinary family experience and say to themselves, "Why can't my family be like that?" Many single-parent families even have difficulty recognizing themselves as 'family' because they don't fit the traditional mold. All of us have felt something similar at some time in our life.

Certainly we all need to experience models of healthy families within our friendships and communities, and to see them on TV also, but at the same time, we must remind ourselves that we are only aware of a small slice of their life, not the whole of it. If we could know that family on a more intimate level, we would see that they are tainted by the same imperfections that touch our lives.

Perhaps it is the effect of reading too many fairytales when we were young that it seems natural to expect that we can live storybook-perfect lives in which children always obey, parents always smile, there are always two parents and nothing disastrous ever happens as they live happily together ever after with music playing softly in the background.

Reality is harsher - but infinitely richer as we struggle to grow, to forgive, to accept and to love even when we don't feel very loving. Real families, as opposed to mythically perfect families, have had to learn to cope with the human imperfections of its members and, more often than we realize, with problems bordering on tragedy. The tendency is to keep pain and growth from public view.

We need not shout our faults and failures from the rooftops. However, there is a certain element of bonding, healing and wholeness experienced through our willingness to share our pain with other families.

Labelling our family as flawed and others as perfect is an injustice to both. To expect perfection of ourselves or to assume it in others only serves to maintain distance and falseness. The lived experience of family struggle and growth is authentic, genuine and holy.

Pope John Paul II urges families to "become what you are" . . . communities of love and intimacy. We add: You don't have to be perfect. Celebrate what you are! Today is your day.