

Making Connections

Bishop W. Shawn McKnight comments on what parishes have learned by evaluating and updating their pastoral plans during the pandemic.

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The CATHOLIC MISSOURIAN

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Newspaper of the Diocese of Jefferson City



“O come let us adore Him!”

Children of Visitation Inter-Parish School in Vienna reenact the birth of Our Lord during this year’s Christmas program on Dec. 9 in Visitation Church.

MOVING? If you are moving or changing parishes, please fill out information below. Clip and mail to THE CATHOLIC MISSOURIAN, 2207 W Main St, Jefferson City, MO 65109-0914. Or email changes to dbarnes@diojeffcity.org. Allow two weeks.

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NEW PARISH _____

OLD PARISH _____

12/17/21



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Pray for deceased priests

Dec. 19 — **Fr. Guido M. Nardoni**, Visitation of the Blessed Virgin Mary, Vienna (1962); **Fr. Leo G. Oligschlaeger**, Assumption, Morrison (1972)

Dec. 21 — **Msgr. Gerold J. Kaiser**, Holy Family, Freeburg (1987); **Fr. Patrick J. Shortt**, Our Lady of the Snows, Mary's Home (2017)

Dec. 22 — **Fr. Stephen J. Carew**, St. Aloysius, Baring (1970)

Dec. 26 — **Fr. Robert J. Arnold**, St. Anthony of St. Padua, St. Anthony (1989)

Dec. 27 — **Fr. John W. Buchanan**, Holy Guardian Angels, Brinktown (1984)

Dec. 28 — **Fr. Gottlieb V. Steinwachs**, Holy Spirit, Centralia (1989)

Jan. 1 — **Fr. Robert J. Dwyer**, Immaculate Conception, Montgomery City (1982)

Jan. 4 — **Fr. Edward M. Owens**, Chaplain, Pershing Memorial Hospital, Brookfield (1997)

Jan. 7 — **Fr. Michael N. Schaller**, St. Margaret of Antioch, Osage Bend (1980)

Jan. 8 — **Fr. Leo T. Buhman**, Immaculate Conception, Macon (2011)

Position Openings - Chancery Office



The Chancery Office of the Diocese of Jefferson City has the following positions open in the Jefferson City office at 2207 West Main Street:

Creative Services Coordinator — We are looking for an individual to create quality communication assets for the diocese, in print, audio/visual and digital format. This individual will be responsible for updating the diocesan website and serve as support for parish websites. We are specifically seeking an individual who has a desire to use technology to make the Catholic Church more accessible and relevant. Experience with Adobe Creative Suite, WordPress and audio/video editing software is required. Final candidates will be required to submit a portfolio of creative work.

IT Coordinator — This person will be responsible for coordinating, planning and leading computer-related activities within the diocese. This position provides direct support to the chancery office and is a supportive consultant to parishes. The focus of this position will require the coordinator to have hands-on experience with complex data management systems such as Blackbaud, email maintenance, telecommunication systems, website development as well as management and support for telecommunications and audio visual needs.

Qualified candidates for either of these positions should send their resume to HRDir@diojeffcity.org.

Advent reconciliation services

Advent is a good time for an examination of conscience and to receive the sacrament of reconciliation in preparation for the celebration of the Incarnation of Jesus Christ. Here is a partial list of Advent communal reconciliation services in the Jefferson City diocese. Most services will include a short prayer service followed by individual confessions. Extra priests from neighboring parishes are typically present to help out. Additional services will be added to the online version of this article at cathmo.com and to the diocesan calendar at diojeffcity.org/events as they are publicized.

Frankenstein — Saturday, Dec. 18 at noon;
Wednesday, Dec. 22 at 6 pm, Our
Lady Help of Christians Church

Linn — Saturday, Dec. 18 at 10 am, St.
George Church

Mexico — Friday, Dec. 17 at 6 pm, St.
Brendan Church

Monroe City — Tuesday, Dec. 21 at 6:30
pm, Holy Rosary Church

Salisbury — Friday, Dec. 17 at 6 pm, St.
Joseph Church

Sedalia — Sunday, Dec. 19 at 4 pm, St.
Patrick Chapel

Taos — Tuesday, Dec. 21 at 10 am, St.
Francis Xavier Church

Mass by candlelight in J.C.

DATE: December 23
TIME: 6 am

St. Peter Parish in Jefferson City will hold a Rorate Caeli Mass by candlelight at 6 a.m. on Thursday, Dec. 23, in St. Peter Church, 216 Broadway, near the State Capitol.

The Rorate Caeli Mass is a traditional Advent devotion where the Mass is offered just before dawn.

The Mass takes its title from the words of the Introit, which are from Isaiah 45:8: "Drop down dew, from above you heaven, and let the clouds rain the Just One: let the earth be opened and bring forth a Savior."

In the dimly lit setting, priests and faithful prepare to honor the Light of the world, Who is soon to be born, and offer praise to God for the gift of Our Lady.

The Catholic Missourian

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"A diocesan paper serves as a bond of unity by publishing diocesan happenings and promulgating official regulations and decrees. It also plays a teaching role by reporting notable events of a religious and secular nature, and interpreting them in the light of Christian principles."

— Bishop Joseph M. Marling C.P.P.S., July 7, 1957

Bishop W. Shawn McKnight
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Correction

A notice in the Dec. 10 edition of *The Catholic Missourian* contained a misstatement about Saturday Vigil Mass times in Brunswick and Salisbury.

The correct Saturday Mass times are: 4:15 p.m. in St. Joseph Church in Salisbury, and 6 p.m. in St. Boniface in Brunswick.

We regret and apologize for the error.

Chancery Closing

The Chancery offices in the Alphonse J. Schwartz Memorial Catholic Center will be closed for the following holy days and holidays: **Dec. 24 and 27** for Christmas, and **Dec. 31 and Jan. 3** for New Years.

Newspaper schedule

The first print edition of *The Catholic Missourian* in 2022 will be dated Jan. 7. Publication dates for all of 2022 are as follows:

January 7	May 13	September 2
January 21	May 27	September 16
		September 30
February 4	June 10	October 14
February 18	June 24	October 28
		November 11
March 4	July 8	November 25
March 18	July 22	
		August 5
April 1	August 19	December 9
April 15		December 16
April 29		

The deadline for article submissions, photos and names for the "People Page," is 15 days prior to the issue date. Submissions can be sent to Jay Nies, Editor, at editor@diojeffcity.org.

Advertising requests for events can be made by completing the form at diojeffcity.org/event-listing. The deadline for requesting a display ad is 10 business days in advance of the issue. Any questions regarding advertising can be directed to Kelly Martin at advertize@diojeffcity.org.

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MAKING CONNECTIONS

Bishop McKnight



Ongoing pastoral planning reveals strengths, challenges

With a year under our belt of the diocesan pastoral plan, and even more time for some parishes to be using a parish pastoral plan, the reviews indicate we're making progress, even with challenges such as a global pandemic.

The numbers are, quite frankly, phenomenal: 97 of the 106 parishes and missions in the diocese are actively participating in the pastoral planning process.

As part of the diocesan pastoral planning process, parishes were asked to review their parish plans and provide that review to the Chancery.

The 55 reviews we've received have been provided to the Diocesan Pastoral Council, the deans and Chancery leadership.

This feedback is enabling us to update and renew the diocesan pastoral plan, especially the items listed for the second year of the diocesan plan. (See dio.jeffcity.org/pastoral-plan/).

We also need to read the signs of the times as we plan for 2022 and beyond. Those signs tell us it is essential we build on the good cooperation happening already.

Each year, we ask parishes

to report on average attendance at Sunday Masses, during the month of October. We didn't conduct the "October Mass Count" last year, as we were in the middle of quarantining to mitigate the pandemic.

Mass attendance for 2021 is at an all-time low for our diocese. We saw a decline of 24% overall from 2019.

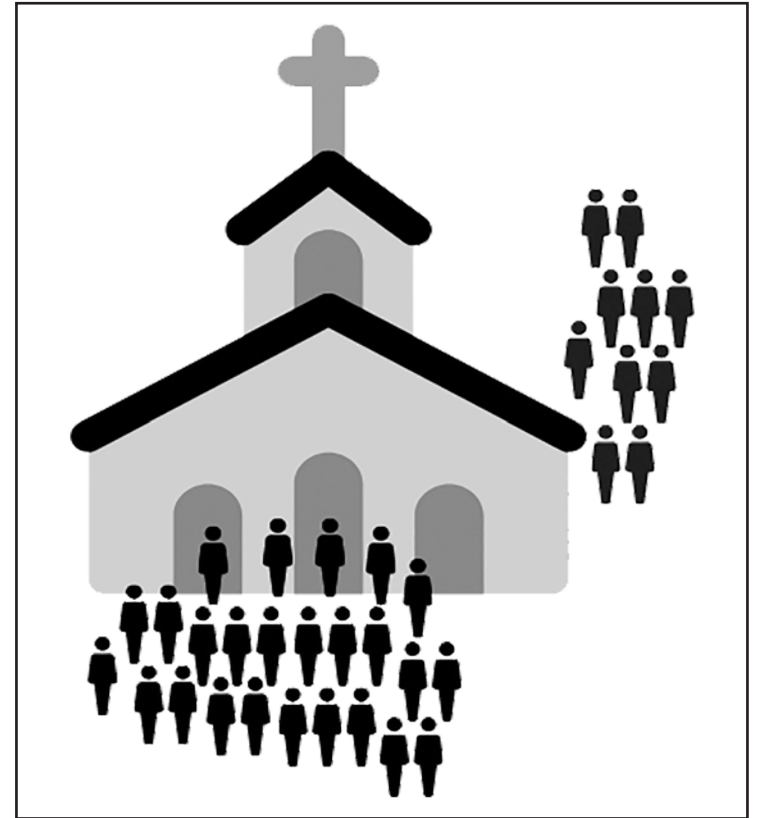
This decline mirrors what is being reported anecdotally in other U.S. dioceses and even other churches.

Knowing one out of every four Catholics who had been coming to Mass just two years ago is now staying home is of great concern.

It's not a cause for despair, however, especially since there are indicators that those who aren't coming to Mass haven't rejected the faith (see the related article, "Study: Young adult Catholics actively engage in faith — just not in a parish" on Page 5).

Understanding the best ways to welcome and invite people back to our parishes should form how we implement our parish and diocesan pastoral plans.

We can build on what is already happening in our par-



GRAPHIC: Approximately one out of every four Catholics who had been attending Mass in 2019 are no longer coming to church, according to data compiled by the 106 parishes and missions in the Diocese of Jefferson City. Parishes count the people attending the first four weekends of Masses in October, then average the four weekends to arrive at the "October Mass Count," which has been taken in the diocese since at least 2000 — except for in 2020, at the height of the COVID-19 pandemic. From 2001-2019, the diocese saw a 29% decline in Mass attendance; the 24% decline from 2019-2021 represents almost 10,000 individuals.

ishes.

Here's what we learned by reading the reviews our parishes provided:

- Recognizing communication is essential for outreach, parishes are investing in digi-

tal communications, such as websites, emails and texting.

Some parishes are reconsidering the primary purpose of the printed bulletin. Instead

See CONNECTIONS, page 5



Bishop McKnight's Calendar

DECEMBER

Dec 19 St. Andrew Dinner for Men Considering Seminary, 5 pm, Bishop's Residence

Dec 21 Holy Hour and Vespers with Seminarians (open to the public), 5 pm, Cathedral of St. Joseph; Bishop's Reception for priests and seminarians, 6pm, Chancery, Jefferson City

Dec 24 Christmas Vigil Mass, Cathedral of St. Joseph, 4:30 pm, Jefferson City

JANUARY

Jan 2 Epiphany Mass, Cathedral of St. Joseph, 8 am, Jefferson City


Jan 6 Mass, SSM Health St. Mary's Hospital, noon, Jefferson City

Bishop McKnight's December prayer intention for our Local Church

For our children and youth: that the example of parents and other adults of the parish may foster a sense of openness to the Holy Spirit in their lives.

Intención del mes de diciembre del Obispo McKnight por nuestra Iglesia Local

Para nuestros niños y jóvenes: que el ejemplo de los padres de familia y otros adultos de la parroquia pueda fomentar un sentido de apertura al Espíritu Santo en sus vidas.



Please be so kind as to make this a part of your group and private prayer.

Diocesan Pastoral Plan

	Strengthening participation (Stewardship)	Strengthening co-responsibility	Strengthening charity and mercy
Year 1	Launch stewardship renewal process with seven pilot parishes. Use the pillars of stewardship -- hospitality, prayer, formation and service -- to inform support from diocesan offices to parishes Provide to parishes small group program that focuses on spirituality of stewardship	Provide formation for parish pastoral and finance councils Provide formation and education for pastors and heads of schools regarding spirituality of stewardship Encourage the laity to assume their role in strengthening our family of parishes through appropriate and active participation in decision-making regarding structural reconfiguration of parishes	Assist parishes in surveying the unmet needs of the people in the parish's territory Develop an assessment tool for parishes to review how they foster the personal experience of mercy. This tool would include sacramental encounters (e.g. funerals, weddings, baptisms), physical settings at the parish, pastoral approaches and office processes.
Improve communications for personal engagement in parishes by using unified digital information and communication systems			
Year 2	Launch second pilot cohort of parishes for stewardship renewal program Establish a diocesan Stewardship Council Develop a plan to move from Catholic Stewardship Appeal to Catholic Stewardship Renewal	Assist with the formation of parish stewardship councils Provide formation and education for pastors and heads of schools regarding spirituality of stewardship Provide formation of lay ministry leaders in the parishes to empower works of charity and mercy Ongoing consultation of laity regarding opportunities for better collaboration of clergy, lay ecclesial ministers and other resources to strengthen parish life	Develop a network of Catholic Charities Ambassadors, allowing parishes resources to provide for unmet needs within their parish territory Support parishes in their efforts to foster personal experiences of mercy, based on their assessments.
Year 3	Implement diocesan-wide Catholic Stewardship Renewal	Ongoing consultation of laity regarding opportunities for better collaboration of clergy, lay ecclesial ministers and other resources to strengthen parish life	Network with neighboring parishes and/or not-for-profits within the wider area to ensure all unmet needs are met

Sr. Anne Boessen living in peace, joy with fellow SSNDs near St. Louis

By Jay Nies

Sister Anne Boessen of the School Sisters of Notre Dame (SSND) had a clear vision of what her golden years of reli-

gious life would be like.

The St. Thomas native dreamed of gazing at the Mississippi River from her favorite porch swing at the SSNDs' old Villa Jesu retirement home north of St. Louis.

"I cried the day we closed the Villa," she recently recalled from her room in the Sarah Community in Bridgeton.

"But you know, this is better," she said.

After spending many of the happiest years of her religious life in her home diocese, Sr. Anne moved to the community for retired SSNDs and other religious sisters on Oct. 1.

"I knew it was time," she said.

The Sarah Community is located on the grounds of DePaul Hospital.

Sr. Anne's neighbors are all fellow SSNDs, many of whom she served with in past assignments.

"It's fun getting to know them again," she said.

Epiphany concert in Columbia

DATE: January 8
TIME: 7 pm

After a year off for COVID, the Our Lady of Lourdes Contemporary Group will present a "Farewell to Christmas" concert and Christmas carol sing-along on Saturday, Jan. 8, at 7 p.m. (following 5:30 Mass) in Our Lady of Lourdes Church, 905 Bernadette Drive, near Stadium Boulevard and I-70 in Columbia.

A free-will offering will be taken up to help Catholic Charities of Central and Northern Missouri's work resettling refugees from Afghanistan.



Sister Anne Boessen SSND, seated, and Sister Celly Ann Amparano, now deceased, enjoy a laugh in this file photo from the Jefferson City Diocese's 2014 World Day of Consecrated Life celebration. — Photo by Jay Nies

Her room on the second floor of the Veronica House is sparingly decorated with mementos of her years of teaching and serving in parish ministry.

A painted winter landscape is from a friend from her days of serving in the Alaska tundra.

A small, glass statue of Our Lady of Lourdes near her window was a gift from Monsignor Francis Gilgannon, now deceased, who was pastor while she was serving as a pastoral minister at Annunciation Parish in California.

An SSND classmate from Nicaragua gave Sr. Anne and each of her classmates a simple, hand-carved wooden fish when they reached their 25th year in religious life.

It now sits on a table next to a bust of a "feisty little nun" in a habit, a gift from a friend in Wardsville.

Sr. Anne tried to give it back to him before she moved to St. Louis.

"He said I needed to keep it, so whenever I see it, I remember to pray for him," she said.

She smiled upon catching sight of a photo of her younger self in a frame next to her bed.

Tucked into the frame is a black-and-white photo of her in full habit, the customary garb for her congregation when she entered religious life some seven decades ago.

"It doesn't seem that long

ago," she said with a laugh.

In good time

Sr. Anne was living in an apartment near St. Stanislaus Church in Wardsville when her energy started to fade in February of this year.

She talked to her doctor. He did some bloodwork.

Her cancer was back.

Actually, this was a different kind of cancer.

She held up four fingers.

"I've had it four times. All different," she said with a mixture of awe and resignation.

Aware that she could no longer live at the pace she had been living, she called one of her fellow SSNDs in St. Louis who helps the sisters on mission.

"I think it's time for me to move up there," she said.

There was a room available in the Sarah Community.

Sr. Anne's religious superiors were pleased that she made the decision for herself.

Some of her family drove her to the Sarah Community in June to look around and sign some papers. Her nephew was amazed at how clean and well-kept the building and rooms are.

The hard part would be leaving her massive extended family in and around Cole and Miller counties.

Then there were the fellow SSNDs who were on mission

with her in the Jefferson City area, whose company she loved keeping.

She thought of her brother, David Boessen, who died on May 14 of this year after a short battle with cancer.

She remembered the group photo his family hastily arranged to have taken in St. Thomas, with the family farm in the background.

His neighbors — some of whom he had grown up with, others who had married into the family — all lined up to shake his hand or give him a hug.

"It was hard," Sr. Anne noted. "But you know, it was really good."

The management of the retirement home where she was living suggested that she could have her own gathering with a few members of her family.

"What about 300?" she asked, referring to just the tip of the Boessen iceberg.

Not during the COVID pandemic, they told her.

"I really wanted to say goodbye to everyone, but I just didn't have the energy," she said. "I was so very tired when I left."

This is home now

Sr. Anne gave almost everything away before moving.

While clearing out a cabinet, she found a handful of travelers' checks from a trip she had taken many years ago.

They had no expiration date. A friend in the banking business helped her redeem them.

"The first bank teller I talked to, I don't think he had ever seen a traveler's check before!" she said with a laugh.

Moving day finally came.

Sr. Anne cried when she left Wardsville, as did friends and family members, many of whom have known her all their life.

"I really miss them," she said. "I love it when they come to visit. I love when they send photos."

"But this is where I need to be now," she stated.

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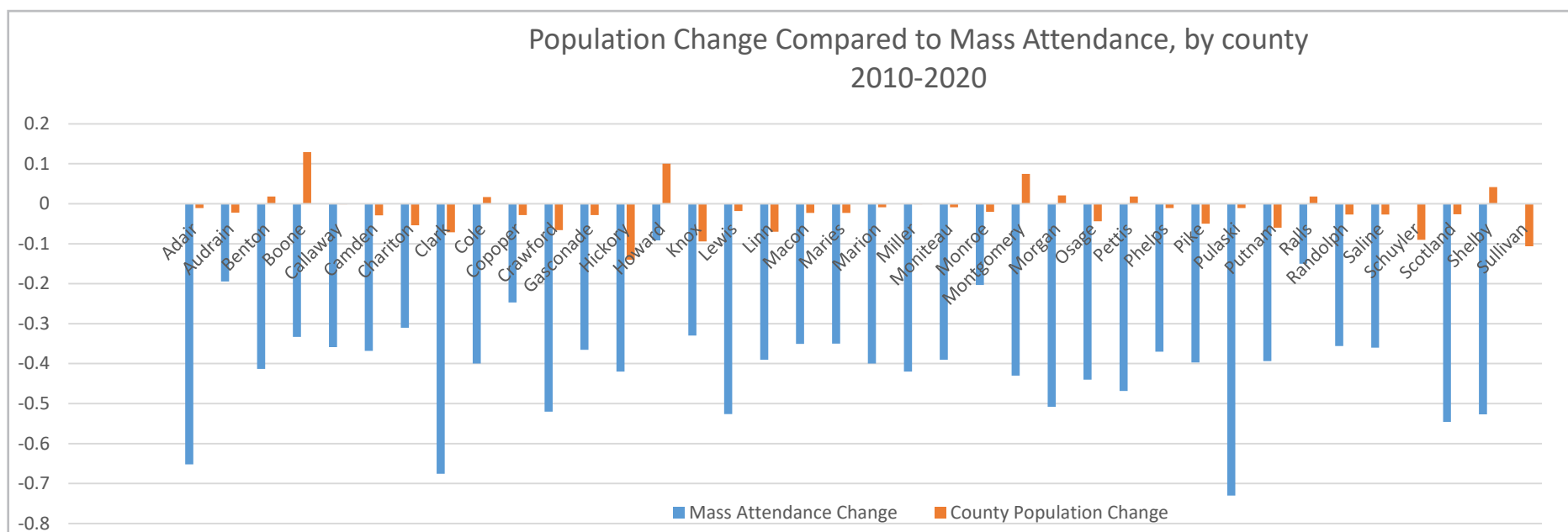


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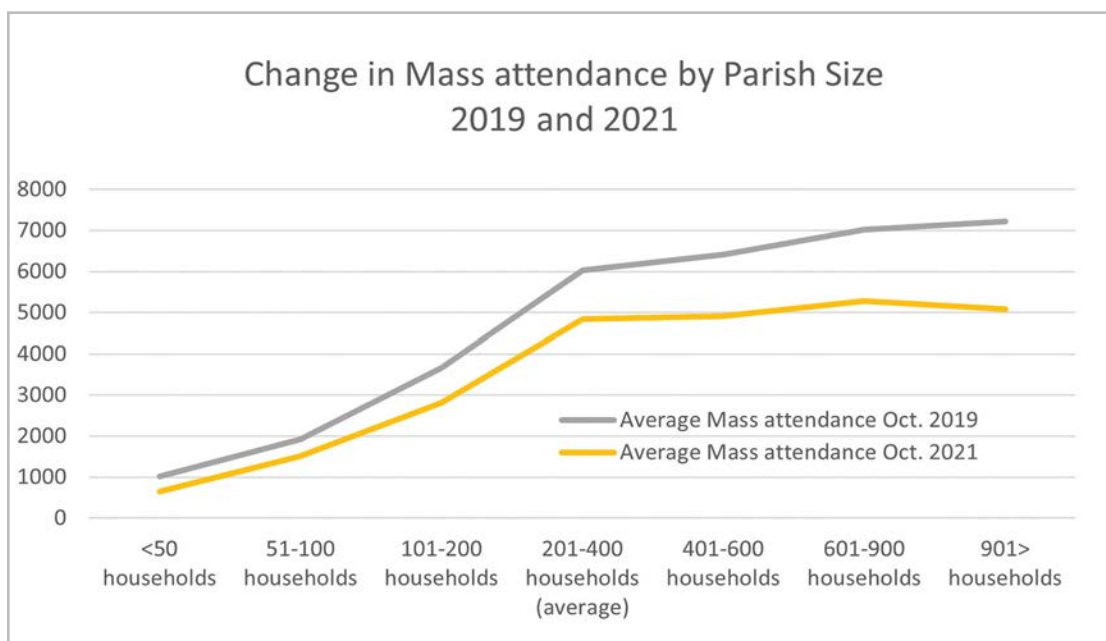
Member SIPC

See SR. ANNE, page 18



ABOVE: Most counties in the Diocese of Jefferson City saw a loss in the overall population from 2010 to 2020, one factor that affected a decline in the number of people attending Mass during the October weekends. This graph lists the 38 counties of the diocese alphabetically, and shows the change in the overall population and the change in the “October Mass Count,” or the average number of people attending weekend Masses in October.

RIGHT: Regardless of a parish’s total number of households, Mass attendance has dropped significantly in the last two years. The diocese did not measure Mass attendance in 2020, during the height of the COVID-19 pandemic and before vaccines were available. While Mass attendance has been steadily declining in the past 20 years, the shift from 2019 to 2021 is the most dramatic for most parishes. On average, the number of people attending Mass in October 2021 was 24% less than October 2019. Spanish language Masses saw a 16% decrease.



CONNECTIONS

From page 3

of listing events or other announcements, bulletins can carry information on pastoral plan progress, catechetical or formation articles, reports on the work of councils and other groups, explanation of new initiatives, etc.

Along with other parish communications, bulletins are being considered as one way to illustrate a parish’s stewardship

and to allow its members to exercise co-responsibility.

- Many parishes acknowledged more can be done to reinvigorate their roles as centers of charity and sanctuaries of mercy.

These methods of outreach have been highlighted in numerous studies, and the study previously mentioned suggests this

aspect of the Catholic faith is appealing to younger Catholics.

- The parish reviews indicate interest in engaging with Catholic Charities of Central and Northern Missouri.

Some are finding participation in ministerial alliances and other community-wide efforts to be fruitful.

Others recognize the need to do more for couples experiencing difficulties in their marriages, those who are grieving, for the elderly and for young people, among others.

- A strong theme throughout the reviews was a request for formation of parish councils, especially pastoral and finance

councils. This is an important aspect of the diocesan pastoral plan, as we deepen our spirituality of stewardship.

Overall, the reviews provide a good report on what is happening now in our parishes.

Can we stretch to think about what we are being called to do?

Study: Young adult Catholics actively engage in faith — just not in a parish

By Mark Pattison
Catholic News Service

Washington, D.C.

A new study suggests that young adult Catholics ages 18-35 engage in practices to bolster their faith, but tend to do so outside their parish.

Those activities often take the form of small Christian communities, according to the study, issued in November by the Center for Applied Research in the Apostolate (CARA) based at Georgetown University in Washington, D.C.

“Most of the people who are involved in faith groups are not involved in a known national organization” such as Cursillo, the Knights of Columbus and similar outfits, said Mark Gray, one of three co-au-

thors of the study, “Faith and Spiritual Life of Catholics in the United States.”

Rather, he added, “it’s a collection of friends, it might be in a neighborhood community, it might be on a dorm floor.”

“The biggest surprise is how boldly young adult Catholics are participating in their faith life outside the parish,” Gray said. “Most research and commentary outside of data collection is that young adults are so inactive. In one way, that’s right. They’re disconnected from their parish ... but they’re finding ways to practice it (their faith) in groups.”

The coronavirus pandemic may have done little to deter young adults from their established spiritual routine.

“It was much easier for Catholics to carry on these practices — their faith outside the parish,” Gray told Catholic News Service in a Dec. 1 phone interview. “It was something they were doing before, and we assume they’ll continue to do it in the future.”

“Overall, 60% of Catholic young adults, ages 18 to 35, in the United States indicated that they participate in a faith-related group outside of attending Mass at their parish,” the 181-page study said.

“Prior to the pandemic, 55% of those participating in a Catholic community or group were active in it at least once a month. About one in 10 were active more than once a week,” it said, adding that among this

Meta hilltop Nativity scene is a community's labor of love

By Jay Nies

Members of St. Cecilia Parish in Meta pitched in on the First Weekend of Advent to keep a community tradition going for yet another year.

They gathered on a hill overlooking the highway through town to put up the larger-than-life figures of the Holy Family, shepherds, kings, camels and sheep.

Then came the lights and music.

"As a kid, I can remember going through Meta. I always thought it was cool," said St. Cecilia parishioner Darin Even, who's been in charge of the Citizen's Civic League's Christmas display for the past decade.

"They started it in 1957," he stated. "The Civic League was looking for something to do for Christmas. Someone saw a big Nativity scene in Branson, and they patterned this one after it."

Since then, Meta's Nativity display has spent each Christmas season atop the hill across the valley facing St. Cecilia church.

"It's a beautiful thing to walk out of church and see it there," said Mr. Even.

Members of the parish's Catholic Youth Organization cut out and painted new plywood figures about 20 years ago, after most of the originals had deteriorated.

This year, two new shepherds were created to take the place of two very old ones that had deteriorated and were not part of the CYO project.

"It's really a community thing," Mr. Even said. "The Civic League is an organization in town. People in this community started it as a community organization."

The organization is made up of people of various religions and backgrounds. Its goal is to make Meta a bigger and better place to live and work.

St. Cecilia parishioner Don Wansing was in charge of the Nativity display for many years.

Happy memories helped



LEFT: Meta residents place the manger in the center of the hilltop Nativity scene on Dec. 3. **RIGHT:** Children help secure one of the sheep in place. **BELOW:** Adults assemble the background for the scene.

Mr. Even accept the baton when Mr. Wansing was ready to hand it off.

"It's a neat tradition," said Mr. Even. "A group of us gets together to put it up. We put the date in the bulletin and on social media. Everyone's sched-

years, gets the process started each fall by taking mowing equipment up the lonely road to the Nativity's secluded location to clear some of the brush. He cuts the rest down with a mower.

"We have a core group of volunteers that are very dedicated to making sure that this tradition will live on," he said. "Hopefully someday, a new group will take our places with the same love and dedication for it that we have."

The figures and Star of Bethlehem are stored through the year in a new building that sits directly behind the stable.

"We have started making some improvements and have more in the works, hopefully sooner than

later," said Mr. Even.

A page from a parish history book notes that more than 400 people gathered on Dec. 8, 1957, to witness the first lighting ceremony.

Col. E.I. Hockaday of the Missouri State Highway Patrol pressed the switch, and the scene flooded with light.

Father A.J. Hoegen, who was pastor of St. Cecilia Parish, led the prayer.

Many years ago, before Mr. Even started taking care of the display, he overheard a conversation in a Jefferson City grocery store.

"They were talking about their holiday plans," he said. "They planned on driving to



The sun has not completely set as the lights on the Meta Community Betterment Association's hilltop Nativity scene turn on.

Meta to see the Nativity display."

Since then, he's heard many people make the same comments.

"People from all over drive to see it every year and sit and listen to the Christmas music playing from the site," he said.

It's also a favorite on social media, especially for people formerly from the area who can't make the trip to see it in

person.

"They may have grown up and moved away, but they still bring their kids and grandkids back each year just to see it," he said.

The lights and music are on timers. The music plays from about 5 p.m. to 9:30 p.m. The lights are on from about 5 p.m. until 1 a.m.

"As a community, Meta is very proud of it," he said.

More photos from this event have been posted in *The Catholic Missourian's* online edition, cathmo.com. Select "Photo Galleries" from the "Multimedia" tab on the menu bar.

maintains the display largely through volunteer labor and donations.

Mr. Even, who has been the league's president for several

Family donates priest's Nativity scene to Starkenburg shrine

By Jay Nies

Bob Simon did not know that his pastor's beautiful Nativity set was a priceless gift from the priest's parents in Heppenheim, Germany.

He only knew that it was beautiful and that he liked it.

So much so that as a young altar server, Bob asked Father (later Monsignor) Martin Hellriegel during Confession if he could have the little set.

Young Bob and his brothers lived a few doors away from Holy Cross Church in the Baden neighborhood of St. Louis.

That soaring gothic edifice looked even more breathtaking in those days when fully dressed in its Christmas finery.

A definitive answer to Bob's request came years later when he was getting ready to settle down and have a family, and Msgr. Hellriegel was looking toward retirement.

The young man mentioned to the priest that he was shopping for a Nativity scene like the one he had grown up seeing in church.

"Hold off on that," the priest advised.

From the old country

Msgr. Hellriegel came to the United States as a seminarian in the early 1900s.

He often regaled his parishioners with stories of assisting the pastor of the bustling rural community of Starkenburg, which at that time was part of the St. Louis archdiocese, while preparing for priestly ordination.

The pastor, Father George Hoehn, mentored him and many other future priests from Germany while ministering to the people of what was then St. Martin Parish and cultivating devotion to the Blessed Mother under her title Our Lady of Sorrows.

Many of the seminarians stayed in the massive former Franciscan monastery that served as the parish rectory.

That's where the future Fr. Hellriegel first displayed the hand-painted Nativity set his



parents gave him when he left home on mission to the United States.

He offered his First Solemn Mass in 1914 in the stone chapel of the Shrine of Our Lady of Sorrows on the Starkenburg parish grounds.

Msgr. Hellriegel left part of

to the Second Vatican Council.

As his beloved German homeland descended into turmoil and Hitler's *reich* was held up as a state religion, Msgr. Hellriegel wrote the strident lyrics to "To Jesus Christ, Our Sovereign King."

"Christ Jesus Victor! Christ Jesus Ruler! Christ Jesus, Lord and Redeemer!"

The hymn remains a Catholic favorite.

Precious gift

The Simon boys grew up in the shadow of the Holy Cross Church steeple in North St. Louis and went to Holy Cross School.

With their parents' encouragement, they helped out at church whenever they could, cutting grass and serving at Mass.

The caretaker gave them tours of the church, including the catwalks through the attic and the dizzying heights of the bell tower.

"The bells are huge," said John Simon, Bob's older brother.

Msgr. Hellriegel was known as a good priest who expected the best from everyone.

"I really liked him," said John, "He was strict. You didn't pull anything over on him."

This Nativity scene from the early 1900s was originally given to Monsignor Martin Hellriegel by his parents. He later gave it Bob Simon, a friend and parishioner at Holy Cross Parish in St. Louis. Mr. Simon recently donated it to the Shrine of Our Lady of Sorrows in Starkenburg, where Msgr. Hellriegel offered his First Solemn Mass in 1914. — Photo by Jay Nies

Bob was shocked.

"No. I can't take it from you!" he said. "I just want to know where you got it so I can get one to share with my family."

But those who knew Msgr. Hellriegel knew that once he made up his mind, he seldom changed it.

So, Bob accepted the gift and displayed it with reverence and relish each year on a living-room end table in the old family home.

"It took him days to set it up each year," Denise recalled. "He put Christmas blue lights behind it, and added fresh greenery."

The Simon children knew they were allowed to look but never touch the priceless heirloom.

"It was always part of our Christmas," said Denise. "We always knew where it came from, and the stories of Msgr. Hellriegel. But mostly, we remember it as just a big part of our family Christmas."

Bob kept the lights around the Nativity on all the time, even when the rest of the house was dark.

"I remember when I was a

See NATIVITY, page 23



Bob Simon presents the Nativity scene to representatives of the Shrine of Our Lady of Sorrows in Starkenburg this year. — Photo by Cindi Engemann

his heart in Montgomery County when he moved on to his own priestly assignments throughout the archdiocese.

Along the way, he also became a nationally influential liturgist, encouraging the people to participate actively in the Mass in the decades leading up

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QUESTION CORNER

The Sabbath: Saturday or Sunday?/ Catholic view of 'the rapture'

By Father Kenneth Doyle
Catholic News Service



Q. Why do some religions say that the Sabbath day is Saturday while others — including Catholics — say it's on Sunday? (Eldon, Missouri)

A. No, Catholics do not say that the Sabbath is on Sunday. The Sabbath is on Saturday, as it was in the Old Testament when God rested from all the work he had done in creation (Gn. 2:2-3) and as it is observed by Jews today.

Christians, though, celebrate Sunday instead, because that is the day on which Jesus rose from the dead and the day on which the Holy Spirit came upon the apostles.

As the *Catechism of the Catholic Church* explains: "Sunday is expressly distinguished from the Sabbath which it follows chronologically every week; for Christians its ceremonial observance replaces that of the Sabbath. In Christ's Passover, Sunday fulfills the spiritual truth of the Jewish Sabbath and announces man's eternal rest in God" (No. 2175).

What Christians are celebrating instead of the sabbath is "the Lord's Day," and that has been happening since the first century. As the Acts of the Apostles relates: "On the first day of the week, when we gathered to break bread, Paul spoke to them" (20:7).

So for Christians, Sunday is the preeminent holy day of the week, the day on which we refrain from servile work, devote ourselves to the Eucharist, to prayer and family gatherings.

Around 110, St. Ignatius, bishop of Antioch and disciple of the Apostle John, proclaimed: "Let every friend of Christ keep the Lord's Day as a festival, the resurrection day, the queen and chief of all the days."

Q. Protestants believe in the rapture, and this was never really discussed in Catholic school. What is the Catholic Church's belief? It would be wonderful to know that we will not have to live through the tribulation. (Connersville, Indiana)

A. If, by the "rapture" one understands that, at the second coming of Jesus, all the faithful, living and dead, will undergo a bodily assumption into heaven — then, yes, I would say that Catholics do believe this.

But there are other elements in what is sometimes understood as "rapture theology" that are not consistent with Catholic teaching — especially the notion that there will be a "secret" coming of Christ where He will snatch believers up to heaven and leave others behind to experience a period of severe tribulation.

Supporters of this view point to the passage in Paul's First Letter to the Thessalonians, which says, "For the Lord Himself ... will come down from heaven, and the dead in Christ will rise first. Then we who are alive, who are left, will be caught up together with them in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air" (4:16-17).

The Catholic understanding of this passage is simply that those believers who are alive at Christ's second coming will not experience death but will be transformed in glory and join the saints already with the Lord. Catholic theology finds no evidence to support a belief in a subsequent period of tribulation and chaos.

Questions may be sent to Father Kenneth Doyle at askfatherdoyle@gmail.com and 30 Columbia Circle Dr., Albany, New York 12203.



Papal Audience December 15, 2021

Dear Brothers and Sisters:
In our continuing catechesis on St. Joseph, we now consider Joseph as a "man of silence." The Gospels report none of his spoken words, yet they present Joseph as a model of attentive hearing of God's Word and acting upon it. Indeed, Joseph's

silence was the sign of a contemplative heart, confirming St. Augustine's observation that, "when the Word of God increases, human words fail" (Sermon 288:5). Joseph's quiet humility teaches us to make room in our hearts for Christ, and thus to discern the Father's will for our lives. Jesus learned the importance of silence from the example of Joseph and Mary, and in turn taught His disciples to cultivate it. We too are called to exercise interior silence and attentive listening to God's Word, lest our daily worries, temptations and fears lead our spoken words astray and cause hurt to others. Though not easy, fostering contemplative silence is a sure path to authentic self-knowledge and spiritual growth. May we learn from St. Joseph's example of silence to let the Lord fill our hearts and guide our words in the service of His truth and in charity towards all our brothers and sisters.

I greet the English-speaking pilgrims and visitors, especially the groups from Nigeria and the United States of America. I pray that each of you, and your families, may experience these final days of Advent as a fruitful preparation for the coming of the newborn Savior of the world. May God bless you!

Prepare the way!

By Joe Bertsch

In the Gospel of Luke (3:1-6), we hear of how John, the son of Zechariah, received the word of God.

He went throughout the region of the Jordan, "proclaiming a baptism of repentance for the forgiveness of sins."

John the Baptist was sent by God as an "advent" to Jesus. The word advent means "coming," and John was very clear that One would come greater than he.

We need to heed the voice of John the Baptist and repent from our sins. We should take advantage of the great healing of the Sacrament of Reconciliation to make room for Jesus

to more powerfully enter our hearts and be Lord of our lives.

The passing of an old neighbor was cause for some reflection in my own life. I grew up about a mile away from this lady and her husband. They owned the farm right across the road from our house, and every Sunday during my growing up, her husband would stop in to visit after he finished chores.

They were both very nice and hard workers. She loved to tell stories from years past and they were always interesting.

As I was reading her obituary, I noticed her most important accomplishments and what she will be remembered by is

the legacy she leaves with her children, grandchildren ... and the good she did for her parish and the broader community.

I think this is a good conversation for the season of Advent to help us sort out what is important in our lives and what we need to change in order to grow closer to God.

When we leave this life and go to particular judgement, our legacy will be how we treated our neighbors and what we did or did not do to help those in need.

The excitement of awards and recognition we received through the years will fade

See PREPARE!, page 17

It must be St. Nick!

Father Joby Thomas, pastor of St. Pius X Parish in Moberly, takes time to greet the North Pole's most famous resident.



Bread, wine and a Norway spruce: the sacramental life

By Christina Capecchi



Before there were any buildings in Rockefeller Center, there was a Christmas tree.

At the peak of the Great Depression, construction workers hungering for holiday cheer pooled their money to buy a 20-foot balsam fir and placed it in the center of the construction site. They decorated the tree with whatever they could find: strings of cranberry their wives made, paper garlands, tin cans, even foil gum wrappers.

The men lined up at the tree to receive their paychecks. Their spirits were buoyed — and, unbeknownst to them, a tradition was born. Ninety years later, it endures.

Each tree brings a story. In 1951, it drew national attention when NBC televised the Rockefeller Center Christmas Tree lighting for the first time. In 1969, it was given 12 metal wire angels made by an immigrant woman. After the Sept. 11 attacks, it was adorned in red, white and blue.

Last year it carried a tiny owl from upstate New York on a 170-mile ride to New York City. The stowaway was named Rocky, short for Rockefeller, wrapped in an orange blanket and

nursed by veterinarians before being released. In the process, she became an internet sensation and the subject of a new children's book, *The Christmas Owl*.

This year the Rockefeller tree makes history as the first one from Maryland. The 79-foot Norway Spruce was wrapped with more than 50,000 multi-colored lights on five miles of wire and then topped with a 900-pound Swarovski star.

But my favorite part of the story is what happens when the star is removed and the lights are unplugged. When Christmas ends, the tree's story is just beginning. Its trunk is milled into two-by-fours and used by Habit for

Humanity to build a house. The one-time Christmas icon becomes a forever home.

This speaks to me as a Catholic surrounded by sacramentals — physical objects that take on spiritual significance. They are blessed by prayer and priests and patterns. Rosary beads handled every morning. Candles burning at night. Medals dangling from the neck. And at the source and summit of our faith, bread and wine consecrated.

Sacramentals are hopeful. They see not just what is but what can be. They reflect Jesus' promise: "Behold, I make all things new." They assure us that, like

See CAPECCHI, page 19

'Tis the season to wait

By Laura Kelly Fanucci
Catholic News Service



"Wait for me!" Our 4-year-old runs after his big brothers, coat flapping and boots thumping. As I watch the kids race through the yard, his words echo memories of Decem-

bers past when I waited for a new baby.

"Wait for me this time," each one seemed to whisper as I prayed through pregnancy. "Wait for me."

Families begin with waiting. For those who have experienced infertility or miscarriage, waiting can be one of the most painful parts of life. But through pregnancy, adoption or foster parenting, whether babies were unexpected or long-hoped-for, every parent has waited for their child to arrive.

What's more, birth is only the beginning of our waiting.

We wait for kids to reach milestones or to get ready each morning. We wait to see the doctor or to get test results. We wait to pick them up from school or sports practice. We wait to hear if they made the team or got the job. We wait for kids to leave the nest, and then we wait for them to return.

Families are waiting for each other all the time — and not just for toddlers to potty train, teenagers to come home by curfew or adult children to call back and check in. We're waiting for longer, slower movements of change to come, too.

Waiting for healing. Or forgiveness. Or acceptance.

This Advent, what if we tried to anticipate Christ's coming like expectant parents? Eager with excitement. Preparing for joy to arrive. Imagining each day what the next might bring.

Waiting trains our hearts, tempers

our impatience and teaches us to savor what is good because it took longer to get there. Anything wonderful — most of all, the coming of our God among us in the Incarnation — is worth waiting for.

So how can we wait this Advent, especially in a consumerist culture where anything can be bought with one click and Christmas has been on sale since September?

The Letter of James speaks to waiting — the everyday and the ultimate — as preparation for what is to come:

"Be patient, therefore, brothers, until the coming of the Lord. See how the farmer waits for the precious fruit of the earth, being patient with it until it receives the early and the late rains. You too must be patient. Make your hearts firm, because the coming of the Lord is at hand" (Jas. 5:7-8).

In Advent we prepare for the coming of Christ, as solemn purples inside our parishes stand in contrast to Christmas colors already splashed across the stores. But our sacred practice of preparation also reminds us how waiting takes up a huge part of living — and how God meets us each time in our waiting.

Amid this December's supply chain delays, crowded checkout lines and calendars crunched with extra to-do's, we have plenty of opportunities to practice waiting. If we grow impatient in this season of preparation, we can turn to the children among us to remember how to wait in hope.

Our children, grandchildren, nieces or nephews for whom we once waited with great joy give us a taste of Advent in our own families. They count down to Christmas with eager anticipation, knowing the delights that await. They ask us to wait for them and their needs all year long.

Waiting starts with slowing down, becoming mindful of God's presence in each moment. Only if we prepare to

receive the Christ Child will we notice each day's opportunities to open our hearts to His love.

Wait for Me, He calls to us, now and always. Wait for Me.

Fanucci is a writer, speaker, and author of several books including "Everyday Sacrament: The Messy Grace of Parenting." Her work can be found at laurakellyfanucci.com.

REFLECTION

Through the cracks

By Mark Saucier

Have you ever tried to map your thoughts?

Sometimes they flow like a stream of logic, at other times, they're more a grasshopper on steroids.

The other day, I experienced what appeared to be the latter. I was thinking about Christmas gifts, jumped to Japanese art, leaped to Jesus, sprang to others, and then came back to Christmas.

For a reason the Spirit may or may not be aware of, when I was mentally checking my gift list, I remembered this multi-hued blue bowl I once saw. What was most striking about it was the thin arteries of gold that ran through it.

It was a piece of *kintsugi*, a pottery technique that goes back to the 15th century. In legend, it began with the repair of a shogun's favorite vase, but it developed into an art form and a philosophy.

In *kintsugi*, pieces of pottery are fused back together with molten gold. The artist sees beauty in the brokenness of an object.

Rather than trying to hide the imperfections, the gold highlights them and makes the piece stronger because of the broken places.

I imagined the *kintsugi* artist applying a precious metal to shards of pottery and suddenly, the bearded face of the Zen monk-like artisan became that of Jesus.

It was a higher form of *kintsugi* that Jesus practiced. Rather than vases and bowls, He dealt in in the brokenness of life.

Manhandled and condemned by a righteous crowd, fearing a painful stoning death, that woman caught in adultery probably saw her life in shattered pieces.

And the Gadarene demoniacs living in tombs — feared and hated by all. The paralytic at the pool of Bethesda, immobile for 38 years and totally alone. Or the Roman centurion, desperate at the thought of losing his daughter.

For each of these, life had imploded, leaving behind only fragments of memory and hope. But Jesus made them whole again, fusing the broken pieces of their lives with the golden bonds of love, making them stronger and even more beautiful than before.

Then I understood that we might all be called to practice *kintsugi*, to see the beauty in the jagged fractures of others and do the little things, of which we are all capable, to help them towards healing and wholeness.

This *kintsugi* is forgiveness, acceptance, appreciation, understanding, and oftentimes, just prayer or a silent presence.

And now we're back at Christmas, because any one of those would make a great gift.

Father-son duo to perform in band director band at Rose Parade

By Jay Nies

One of Helias Catholic High School's band directors will be marching in this year's Pasadena Tournament of Roses Rose Parade on New Year's Day.

So will his dad.

"We hope to march side-by-side," said T.J. Higgins, one of two band directors for Helias Catholic, who also teaches music at St. Martin School in St. Martins.

His father, Tom Higgins, was the band director at Linn High School in Linn for 31 years and now directs the band at St. George School in Linn in retirement.

T.J. and Tom have been chosen to march in a group of band directors from all over the United States.

The 300-member band of high school marching band directors will accompany a custom-designed, animated float with the theme, "We teach music. We teach life."

Also marching in the parade will be T.J.'s brother, Chris Higgins, as a member of the Combined Air Force Band.

Dianne Higgins — Tom's wife and T.J.'s and Chris's mom — will be in Pasadena, cheering them on.

T.J.'s and Chris's brother,

Alex Higgins, is band director at North Callaway High School. He'll be watching the event on TV, his wife and he having recently welcomed a new baby into the world.

Tom taught T.J. and his brothers when they were students at Linn High School.

One day in middle school, T.J. told his dad he wanted to be a band director.

His dad said, "No, you don't."

But a few weeks later, he reconsidered, saying, "If that's what you really want to do, I will help you prepare to be a band director."

"So that's what I decided to do for my career," said T.J. "I really enjoy making a difference and teaching students about music and also helping them develop life skills."

He emphasized that music builds competencies that pay lifelong dividends.

"We do a lot of teamwork in band," he noted. "We're around each other so much, doing early morning practices and giving performances on the weekends, we consider ourselves kind of a family."

Band members work hard together and develop close



Tom Higgins and T.J. Higgins sport tuxedos during the Helias Catholic High School Music Department's Christmas Concert on Dec. 14 at the Miller Performing Arts Center in Jefferson City. T.J. Higgins, band director for Helias Catholic and music teacher at St. Martin School in St. Martins, and his father, Tom Higgins, retired band director at Linn High School and current band director at St. George School in Linn, will march in a band of 300 band directors from all over the United States on Jan. 1 in the Rose Parade in Pasadena, California.

friendships and lasting bonds.

"Even now, we have some alumni who are off at different colleges, and when they're back home on break, they want to get together with their old friends from band," he noted.

Tom pointed out that band members also learn good decision-making skills and responsibility.

"I think it's important for everyone to incorporate values into teaching," said Tom. "As band directors, we have some more latitude with that. We have a good rapport with the kids. We're able to help build that camaraderie with them."

It often boils down to asking students outright: "What's the right thing to do?" he said.

Come blow your horn

This is T.J.'s seventh year co-directing the Helias Catholic band with Tom Smyth while teaching at St. Martin School.

Tom has been retired from Linn High School and directing band at St. George School since 2012.

Avid football fans, they were having a discussion when the Rose Parade tangentially came up.

"T.J. made an offhanded comment like, 'Will Michigan make the Rose Bowl? By the way, there's going to be a band director band marching in the Rose Bowl Parade,'" Tom recalled.

Tom said, "Stop everything! I want to sign up for that!"

T.J. said, "Great! I'm going with you! That will be fun."

The band-director band is named in honor of the late Michael D. Sewell of Pickerington, Ohio, who led high school bands that performed in the parade several times during his 38-year career.

The group was supposed to march in the 2021 year's parade, which got cancelled due to COVID-19.

The organizers opened the nominations back up this year, hoping to get 300 participants and representation from every state in the country.

Tom and T.J. Higgins will play marching bar-

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tone horns in the parade.

"There's a funny story about that," said Tom. "I can play several instruments well, but I'm primarily a percussionist. So I said, 'I want to march and play a snare drum.'"

His sons said, "No, you're not going to do that."

The parade is five-and-a-half miles long, plus the half-mile going into it and the half-

mile going out.

"And you have to play the whole time," Tom acknowledged. "And the percussion gives cadence during breaks, so you don't get one."

He relented.

"My kids are smart," he said. "They have a smart mother who taught them."

Marching orders

The band members received their music in August and have been rehearsing on their own since then.

They'll rehearse together as a group for the first time on Dec. 29.

They'll give their first public performance the following afternoon during an event called Bandfest at Pasadena City College.

"I've got some friends who performed there in the past and said it was really fun," said T.J., whose brother Chris once got to play at Bandfest as a member of the U.S. Air Force Band.

The band will rehearse some more on Dec. 30, then will perform during the judging of floats on Dec. 31.

They will play a custom arrangement of "76 Trombones" from "Music Man" as they approach the famous TV corner during the parade.

They'll also play John Philip Sousa's "Stars and Stripes Forever," official march of the United States, and "Strike Up the Band" by George and Ira Gershwin.

They'll perform a swinging rendition of "Sing, Sing, Sing" by the Benny Goodman Orchestra at Bandfest.

Both men know they're up for the challenge.

T.J. ran a half-marathon at the end of October and runs "a few miles" two times per week to stay in shape.

"Also, my passion for teaching the kids keeps me going," he said.

"It's rewarding," Tom added. "You know you're making a difference. That gives you a lot of energy."

Both asked for prayers for safety and stamina as they prepare to head out to California.

"And for everyone to be able to say healthy so we can have a good trip," T.J. added.



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Free dinners on Christmas Eve in Sedalia, Christmas Day in Mexico

Volunteers, donations still being sought

Several communities throughout the Jefferson City diocese serve special meals to people in need at Christmastime.

•**SEDALIA:** One of Sacred Heart High School's National Honor Society's greatest traditions is its annual Christmas Eve Dinner, going back over 40 years.

This dinner provides meals on Christmas Eve for the underemployed, unemployed, and residents of Pettis County who have fallen on hard times.

In 2020, the Sacred Heart NHS served over 500 meals to people in the Sedalia community.

"We expect to serve a significantly higher number of people this year due to limited COVID restrictions within the community," the event's organizers stated.

Free will donations are appreciated for this holiday tradition and should be sent to the school office.

All donations will be used to cover the cost of the meal.

•**MEXICO:** St. Brendan Parish's annual Christmas Day Dinner will be eat-in, carry-out and delivery to homes within Mexico city limits.

Meals will be available from 11 a.m. to 2 p.m. on Dec. 25.

"We are looking for volunteers to help cook, pack meals, work the carry-out and deliver meals to the homebound," the event's organizer's stated.

To volunteer, contact Amy Fisher at 816-510-7900.

All volunteers must complete the diocese's Safe Environment Training.

To request a meal, please call 573-253-8316. Orders must be placed by noon on Thursday, Dec. 23.

Monetary donations to help pay for the event can be made to St. Brendan Parish.

White House task force on Afghan resettlement visits Missouri

By Ashley Wiskirchen

Missouri's efforts to partner with local communities and organizations to resettle a wave of refugees from Afghanistan is garnering national attention.

On Thursday, Dec. 2, the Missouri Office of Refugee Administration hosted former Delaware Governor Jack Markell, the White House coordinator for Operation Allies Welcome, a

federal task force responsible for the effort to resettle 125,000 Afghan refugees in 200 communities across the nation.

Additional members of the task force included representatives from the U.S. State Department, the National Security Council, and the operational chief of staff.

Local resettlement agencies, including Catholic Charities

of Central and Northern Missouri (CCCNMO), were invited to visit with the task force, covering a range of topics surrounding Afghan refugee resettlement.

"We're here today to learn about the processes on the ground," Gov. Markell stated as the meeting surrounding Community Sponsorships kicked off at the Kansas City Public Library in Kansas City, Missouri.

Samantha Moog, Director of Catholic Charities Refugee Services, opened the discussion by introducing the community sponsorship program CCCNMO is relying on to help settle Afghan refugee family groups in Columbia, Fulton and Jefferson City.

"The twin goals of community sponsorships are to enhance our agency capacity to resettle more refugees, and to ensure that the community integration for refugees is successful long-term," Ms. Moog shared.

Within community sponsorships, Catholic Charities Refugee Services can delegate many resettlement tasks to the sponsor group. Community sponsors then take on the responsibility of securing affordable housing, collecting furniture and other household items, and helping refugees access additional public benefits when eligible.

Sponsors are committed to accompanying refugees integrating into the community, by working alongside case managers to enroll children in school, aid in job searches, and provide transportation to appointments and shopping trips.

In mid-Missouri, churches and non-faith-based community groups alike have stepped up to answer the call to help

refugees resettle into local communities.

In early November, the Fulton Rotary Club of Fulton, Missouri, was the first fully onboarded community sponsor in Central Missouri, working within the greater Fulton community to prepare for a refugee family of 13.

More recently, Missouri United Methodist Church in Columbia was matched with two refugee families.

"We have trained, vetted, and fully onboarded the two community sponsorship groups so far in Fulton and Columbia, with plans to onboard three more Catholic parishes as community sponsors in the Central Missouri area before the end of this week," Ms. Moog reported to the task force.

"For context," CCCNMO Executive Director Dan Lester reminded the group, "our agency's previous record resettlement efforts took place in 2016, having resettled 229 refugees over a 12-month period."

"This year, we have resettled 217 Afghan refugee families, including four newborn babies, in an 8-week period."

Task force member and National Security Council Director of Refugees, Jacqui Pilch, complimented Catholic Charities Refugee Services' efforts to include community sponsor-

ships as an avenue to expand the capacity of resettlement agencies.

"I can see that the work you're doing, in figuring this piece out, is not only going to help the cohort of Afghan refugees coming now," she said, "but also lay the foundation that allows us to grow the resettlement system to the scale we need it to be."

"You are on the forefront of making that happen," Ms. Pilch said.

Governor Markell agreed.

"It's really exciting to hear about the work that you're doing," he stated. "This is the work we talk a lot about, and to meet the people in this room who are essentially doing the work is really quite remarkable."

CCCNMO, an entity of the Diocese of Jefferson City, responds to the needs of people in 38 counties regardless of faith, culture, or situation.

This includes services for refugees and immigrants, those with food insecurity, mental health needs, health and nutrition education, basic household, and shelter needs.

For more information, visit cccnmo.diojeffcity.org.

Mrs. Wiskirchen is director of communications for Catholic Charities of Central and Northern Missouri.

"Deus Lo Vult"



Bishop W. Shawn McKnight, a member of the Equestrian Order of the Holy Sepulchre of Jerusalem, invests Father Jason Doke, pastor of St. Martin Parish in St. Martins and moderator of the curia for the Jefferson City diocese, in the order during a ceremony in St. Stanislaus Church in Wardsville. Looking on from the pews are other members of the order from the diocese. Dating from the Middle Ages, the Equestrian Order is a Catholic order of knighthood under the protection of the Holy See. Its members help maintain ministries and holy sites in the Holy Land. — Photo by Monsignor David Cox

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Catholic Charities taking donations for tornado relief

Want to help victims of the tornadoes that hit six states? Catholic Charities USA is accepting donations at catholiccharitiesusa.org. The site has a button to hit to donate for tornado relief.

The tornadoes swept across the South and Midwest Dec. 10. On Dec. 14, authorities said at least 70 people were dead in Kentucky; six died when a tornado hit an Amazon warehouse in Illinois; four were dead in Tennessee; two in Arkansas; and one in Missouri. Mississippi also got hit. Towns were leveled and tens of thousands of people remained without power.

Batten down the hatches!



Members and friends of Knights of Columbus Council 876 in Marshall stand beside their illuminated replica of Christopher Columbus's Santa Maria ship, which won first place in the float category of this year's Marshall Christmas Parade on Dec. 3. — Photo by Shannon Johnson

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• Knowing that you will help Catholics in need in our diocese	75-79	5.4-6.2%
	80-84	6.5-7.4%
	85-89	7.6-8.4%
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Pope to meet Canadian Indigenous leaders

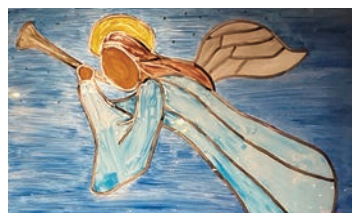
Catholic News Service

Vatican City

A meeting, originally scheduled in December, between Pope Francis and representatives of Indigenous communities in Canada should be held in the spring, said the president of the Canadian bishops' conference.

Bishop Raymond Poisson of Saint-Jérôme and of Mont-Laurier, Quebec, president of the Canadian Conference of Catholic Bishops, told Vatican News Dec. 10 that the suffering of the Indigenous people of Canada, particularly in residential schools run by Catholic dioceses and religious orders, was the primary topic when leaders of the conference met Pope Francis Dec. 9.

The Canadian bishops spoke with the pope about his possible visit to Canada as a continuation of the process of healing and reconciliation, Bishop Poisson said.




Students and staff of the Vogelweid Learning Center at St. Peter Interparish School in Jefferson City painted these Journey to Bethlehem images on their classroom windows on Dec. 10, in lieu of their annual acting-out of the Nativity story for visitors. "We have been unable to present our live Journey production for two years now because of COVID but wanted to use our opportune location to depict the Journey," stated Paula Wekenborg, the center's director. "We illuminate the scenes at night for passersby to see. They almost look like stained glass."

— Photos by Paula Wekenborg

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Bishop institutes Hoffman as acolyte, Novotny as lector at the Pontifical College Josephinum

Preaches on Mary's Immaculate Conception and the mystery of the Church

By Jay Nies

Several men in particular stages of priestly discernment and formation at the Pontifical College Josephinum in Worthington, Ohio, received important new roles in the Church on Dec. 8, the Solemnity of the Immaculate Conception.

Bishop W. Shawn McKnight, an alumnus and a former professor and vice-president at the Josephinum, instituted several men as lectors and acolytes during Mass in the seminary's St. Turibius Chapel.

Among those instituted as lector were Christopher Hoffmann of the Jefferson City diocese. Phillip Novotny, also of this diocese, was instituted as a lector.

Lectors are commissioned to proclaim the Word of God in the liturgical assembly and to instruct the faith.

Acolytes are entrusted with attending to the altar, assisting the deacon and priest at Mass, and distributing Holy Communion.

Bishop McKnight pointed out that lectors bring the message of salvation to those who have not yet received it.

"Thus, with your help, men and women will come to know God our Father and His Son, Jesus Christ, Whom He sent, and so be able to reach eternal life," the bishop said.

He noted that acolytes assist the bishop, priests and deacons in carrying-out their ministry, and give Holy Communion to the faithful during the liturgy and to the sick.

"Because you are specially called to this ministry, you should strive to live more fully by the Lord's sacrifice and example of charity," Bishop McKnight stated.

He noted that being instituted as lector or acolyte is permanent, regardless of whether



LEFT: Bishop W. Shawn McKnight presents a Book of the Gospels to seminarian Phillip Novotny, as part of the rite of installing him as a lector of the Church. **RIGHT:** Bishop McKnight presents a ciborium of unconsecrated bread to seminarian Christopher Hoffmann as part of the rite of installing him as an acolyte of the Church. **BELOW:** Bishop McKnight preaches the homily at Mass on Dec. 8, the Solemnity of the Immaculate Conception of the Blessed Virgin Mary, in the St. Turibius Chapel at the Pontifical College Josephinum in Worthington, Ohio.

or not further discernment leads to priestly ordination.

"By virtue of the graces you received in Baptism and Confirmation, dear sons of holy Mother Church, you are eli-

gible for these liturgical ministries that were once associated with the Sacrament of Holy Orders," he told the candidates for lector and acolyte.

"Your baptism makes you eligible, but the fact that you are on the path to ordination to the Sacred Priesthood is why Holy Mother Church has chosen you to perform these ministries as a means of discerning and preparing you for the sacred ministry to be carried out in the Person of Christ, the Head of the Church."



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"She was chosen"

Bishop McKnight preached about the relevance of Jesus's mother — who is also mother of the Church — being free

from the stain of original sin from the moment of her conception.

Her Immaculate Conception foreshadowed the gift of sanctifying grace that would be given to all the baptized.

"Her unique role in the history of salvation, as ordained in God's providence, came with a unique, prevenient grace, won by the foreseen merits of her Son on the cross," the bishop noted.

That special grace meant that she was free from sin throughout her life.

Likewise, he stated, "with the graces of the baptismal font, we were washed clean from sin, original and actual, as we were immersed into and participated spiritually in the death and resurrection of our Lord, and made temples of the Holy Spirit."

All who are baptized receive the call to live the fullness of grace, "by offering ourselves in gratitude to the Father, through the Son, and in the Holy Spirit," he noted.

Bishop McKnight emphasized that Mary's unique role, ordained by God, did not make her a goddess.

"No, she was a woman, of flesh and blood, human as we are human, and so we neither worship nor adore her," the bishop stated.

Rather, Christians rightly

celebrate and give thanks for Mary, and honor, love and venerate her.

"For she was chosen," he noted, "in God's providence, to accept her role in the history of salvation with freedom."

Namely, she was completely free to say "yes" to the Angel Gabriel when he announced to her that she would be the mother of the Savior.

Her "yes" was a manifestation of her abiding faith. But she was more than just another disciple.

"For she — whose Only Begotten Son, as He hung upon the cross, chose her, His Mother, to be our Mother also — helps the Church to be more fruitful, day by day," Bishop McKnight stated.

Stewardship, co-responsibility

Bishop McKnight urged the men who were being called to serve at the altar as acolytes and to proclaim the Word of God as lectors to recognize the diversity of charisms given by God to His Church through its many members.

He pointed out that those who share in the ministerial Priesthood of Jesus Christ are called through their role as leaders to foster, promote and exercise the common priesthood of the faithful.

"It is the whole people of God, in a co-responsible fashion, that carries-out the most supreme action of the Church — the celebration of the Eucharistic Mystery," he stated.

Likewise, all people are summoned to offer themselves

in sacrifice to the Father by the invocation of the Holy Spirit and through, with and in the perfect sacrifice of the Sacred Heart of the Son.

"All are called to offer their gifts and talents, laid at the feet of the successors to the Apostles, to carry-out the mission of the Church," Bishop McKnight stated.

"And all are called to give thanks to the Father for the spiritual blessings we have received," he said.

Bishop McKnight emphasized that Mary, having given herself entirely, wholly and completely to God, stands as the ultimate model of discipleship.

He pointed out that in Mary, the Church revives the gift of a mother's love — "a mother who nurtures, intercedes for and loves with an unconditional and unflinching love."

"There is no day in which we ought not to seek her intercession," the bishop noted. "But on this day, especially may her prayers for us help us to be more faithful and holy members of the Body of Christ as we partake in the Sacrament of Eucharist."

Keep them in prayer

Mr. Hoffmann and Mr. Novotny are second-year theologians at the Josephinum.

Bryce Smith, a seminarian of the Jefferson City diocese, is enrolled in the college's undergraduate pre-theology program.

Please pray for them and for all who are discerning a possible calling to the Priesthood.

St. Patrick Parish in Rolla celebrates of Our Lady of Guadalupe

On Saturday Dec. 11, St. Patrick Parish in Rolla hosted a prayer service and celebration of Our Lady of Guadalupe.

Members of the local Hispanic community, along with fellow parishioners, St. Patrick Catholic School families, Rolla Newman Center students of Missouri S&T, and other Rolla area residents came together for this meaningful and pow-

erful celebration of Catholic Hispanic spirituality culture.

The celebration marked the anniversary of a series of apparitions made by the Blessed Virgin Mary made to St. Juan Diego, an indigenous convert to Christianity, at Mount Tepeyac in present-day Mexico.

She left him with an image of herself imprinted upon his *tilma* (cloak).

Devotion to Mary under

the title Our Lady of Guadalupe continues to increase, and today she is venerated as patroness of the Americas. Millions of conversions to the Catholic faith are attributed to Our Lady's 1531 apparitions and continued intercession.

Pope St. John Paul II in 2001 canonized St. Juan Diego, the man to whom the Blessed Virgin Mary appeared.

The Shrine of Our Lady of Guadalupe near Mexico City is the most celebrated place of pilgrimage in the Americas.

Traditionally, a three-hour vigil is held in honor of the Virgin. The vigil concludes at midnight, followed by food, drinks, music and dancing.

The event in the St. Patrick Parish Hall began at 9 p.m. with a prayer service led by Father Gregory Meystrik, pastor, with the meal and music beginning within the hour.

As midnight ap-

proached, the mariachi band continued to play as attendees formed a line to visit the shrine of Mother Mary and lay a carnation at her feet.

Many local families and businesses made the event pos-

sible.

Portions of this article were originally published in *emeraldpress.org*, the student news site for St. Patrick School in Rolla. Visit the site to see a large gallery of photos from this event.

Many, many thanks!



Dressed in festive fall garb, mothers of eighth-graders at Our Lady of Lourdes Interparish School in Columbia gather outside the church and Our Lady of Lourdes Church to greet students on Spirit Day the week of Thanksgiving.

— Photo by Tricia Sexauer

YOUNG ADULTS

From page 5

cohort, 65% engaged in prayer during their meetings, the only activity that registered a majority of responses.

Other activities, in descending order of frequency, were socializing (36%), reading and discussing Scripture (30%), faith sharing (29%), group silence (23%), discussing spirituality (19%), raising money or collecting donations (18%), recreational group activities (15%), directly serving others (15%) or the Eucharist (14%).

The study found there are more young adults who participate in a faith group outside of the parish regularly than go to Mass at their parish church regularly. When asked why, top reasons they cited, according to Gray, were: "Older generations have too much influence in the parish. They also express discontent as to the roles of women available in the Church. Those are things they're not comfortable with."

Other reasons cited by about a third of respondents, if not more, included the clerical sexual abuse scandal, the Church's teachings on homosexuality and on birth control, "a feeling that the Church is not open to dialogue with other religious faiths," and Church teachings on divorce and remarriage.

Prior to the pandemic, 13% of Catholic young adults attended Mass at least once a week, the study said, while 21% attend Mass less than weekly but at least once a month, 31% attended Mass a few times a year, and 36% say they rarely or never attend Mass.

In addition 73% of respondents agree "somewhat" or "strongly" that they can be a good Catholic without going to Mass every Sunday, while 55% said they do not consider it a sin to miss Mass on Sunday. The latter figure came in second to "busy schedule" as the top reason for not going to weekly Mass.

"Interviewees feel strongly that the successful engagement of young people in SCCs (small Christian communities) requires that the Church listens to these young people, supports them and gives them agency. The Church needs to listen to young people, both on the institutional level and human level," the study reported.

"The Church needs to meet them where they are — rather than waiting for them in the parish — reach out to them — rather than wait for them to make the contact — give them space to talk about things important to them, accompany them in their suffering and struggles, make them feel accepted, affirm them (and) encourage them."

CARA conducted a national survey of 2,214 Catholics ages 18-35 July-August 2020. The margin of error for survey results is plus or minus 3.59%.

Of the respondents, 44% were white non-Hispanic, 43% were Hispanic, 6% were Asian, 4% were Black or African American, and 3% were some other race or ethnicity. Fifty-three percent were female and 47% were male.

The full study can be found online at cara.george.town.edu/youngadults2020.pdf.



— Photos from The Emerald Press (<https://emeraldpress.org>)

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ACROSS the Diocese

By Father Don Antweiler

ACROSS

1. "We ____ Kings of Orient are..." —Christmas carol written in 1857, based on Matthew 2:1.
6. The prophet Daniel described the coming Messiah as "One like a son of man coming on the clouds of heaven. He received ____, glory, and kingship," (Daniel 7: 13,14).
11. "Hark the ____ Angels Sing," —Christmas carol, first appeared in 1739, based on Luke 2:14.
13. Lancaster Co. in this State is known as Amish country (abbr.).
14. 52 wks. make a ____.
15. Only eight days ' ____ Christmas!
16. We know what time the angels filled the skies, according to the Christmas carol "It came upon a ____ clear..."
20. A section of a hospital.

22. Commander of King Saul's army; or Lil ____, Daisy Mae's boyfriend.
23. Three in Caesar's Rome.
24. Our parish's 24 hr. ____ chapel is so warmly decorated for Christmas.
27. What are you getting ____?
29. Winnebago, for ex.
30. "A ____ is born in Bethlehem," —18th cen. Christmas hymn.
31. Eight parishes in our diocese are named for this Marian dogma (abbr.).
33. This punch usually means the bout is over.
35. Christmas month.
39. Making really nice personal Christmas tree ornaments is a real ____.
41. Each of our parish's Church doors has a Christmas ____ with a big bright bow.
42. Traditional entry and egress for Santa into the homes to bring toys.
44. Follows #35 DOWN.
45. This river starts in the Swiss Alps, flows through Germany and empties into the North Sea. A river cruise on this river is a popular vacation destination for Americans.
48. Often called pop outside the Midwest.
49. Santa suit color.
51. Dir. the Magi came from.
53. Letters for Reorganized Church of Latter Day Saints (since 2001, called Community of Christ); based in Independence, Mo.
55. "The angel of the Lord appeared to Joseph in a ____..." (Matthew 1:20).
57. Parent/school org.
58. Flying formation of migrating geese.
59. Mt. Rushmore face wearing glasses (abbr.).

61. Federal airport screening Agency.
63. Animal in the crèche, according to the Christmas carol, "Good Christian Men Rejoice..."
64. Jesus had no ____ for a bed, only the hay of the manger, acc. to the Christmas carol "Away in a Manger."
67. Traditional animal included in the crèche scene, at least by the feast of the Epiphany.
69. Though the Magi rode to the stable, the shepherds arrived on ____.
71. Philistine who betrayed Samson (Judges 16:4-22).
72. He had a very shiny nose.

DOWN

1. "...and blessed is the fruit of ____ womb Jesus."
2. The king of Judea who sought to kill the child Jesus (Matthew 2:3, 16+).
3. The Missouri-Kansas-Texas Railway ("Katy ____") began operating in Sedalia in 1873. The restored depot is now part of the Katy Trail State park featuring Sedalia souvenirs & heritage exhibits.
4. With all the feasting and sweets to ____, Christmas time is a special treat.
5. Who Mary went to visit after the Annunciation (Luke 1:41).
6. Disney's flying elephant with the flapping ears.
7. Though Christmas toys or their boxes often have brand names, we all know they were really ____ by elves.
8. Letters for New York Islanders hockey team.
9. Source of Solomon's gold (1 Kings 10:11).
10. Francis of Assisi is not only the Father of Christmas Caroling, he created the first ____ scene (live!) in 1223 A.D.
12. In football, defensive lineman.
17. There was no room for Jesus here (Luke 2:7).

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
11				12					13
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			59	60			61	62	
64	65		66		67	68			69
71							72		

18. Gun club.
19. WW II soldier.
21. "Any man or institution that tries to ____ me of my dignity will lose," —Nelson Mandela.
22. Artificial intelligence.
24. "You can only grow if you're willing to feel ____ and uncomfortable when you try something new," —Brian Tracy.
25. My little son feared that Santa might accidentally get shot down. I reassured him that Santa flies under the ____.
26. Since he put GPS on his sleigh, Santa has become a real ____!
28. Musical note.
32. Mom put a Christmas ____ shining bright in every window of our house.
34. "Out of ____," gaveled the Judge as Santa tried to explain how his presence in the house did not legally constitute a break-in.
36. Precedes #43 ACROSS.
37. I, er, ____ don't have a clue.
38. Letters for Refugee & Immigration Services, Cath. Charities of Cen. & Northern Mo., Dio. of Jeff. City.
40. Every Christmas Eve, her parents would ____ to her the Gospel Christmas stories before they went to Christmas Eve Mass.
43. You want ____ out of life? Pray!
46. "And mamma in her 'ker-

- chief, and I in my cap, had just settled our brains for a long winter's ____..." —*A Visit from St. Nicholas* (later, *The Night Before Christmas*) by Clement Clarke Moore.
47. Superlative ending.
50. St. Michael's opponent.
52. ____ tots.
54. Mary conceived in the ____ month (Luke 2:26).
56. The story of the Magi comes from this Gospel (abbr.).
58. Fed. Dept. for veterans.
60. Old record label.
62. Letters for Saint Louis University; among the top (& second oldest) of the Jesuit universities in the country; est. in 1818, oldest univ. west of the Mississippi; 270-acre campus in midtown St. Louis; 13,000 students.
63. Comic strip caveman.
64. All my favorite Christmas music is on one ____.
65. Prefix for move or treat.
66. Santa annually has to renegotiate jurisdictional ____-lateral agreements & permissions for his annual Christmas flight.
68. Satisfaction sound.
69. Fee-fi-____-fum; from fairy tale "Jack & the Beanstalk."
70. "____' Man River"; song from the musical "Showboat."

ANSWERS on page 19

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PREPARE!

From page 8

away, but everyone will remember what we did for them.

Sometimes it is the simplest gesture that makes the most difference in the lives of others.

We might not feel like we did much, but to the other person it might feel as though we changed their life.

The best obituary can be summed up as he/she was a simple man/woman who lived a simple life with a heart full of Love.

We can all make the world a better place one heart at a time, starting with our own. St. John the Baptist, pray

for us! *St. Mary of the Angels Parish in Mr. Bertch is a member of Wien.*

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Fundraisers & Social Events

Dec. 17

Jefferson City, Fr. Helias K of C #1054 Christmas chili supper, 4-7 pm, K of C Hall, Tanner Bridge Rd.; **Laurie**, Festival of Lights lighting, with caroling & music, hot chocolate & s'mores, campfire and gift shop, 5:30-8 pm, National Shrine of Mary, Mother of the Church

Dec. 17-Jan. 9

Laurie, Festival of Lights, 5-10 pm, National Shrine of Mary, Mother of the Church

Dec. 19

Linn, K of C breakfast, 7-11 am

Dec. 31

Wien, St. Mary of the Angels Parish New Year's Eve dance, 8:30 pm-12:30 am

Jan. 2

Vienna, K of C breakfast, 7:30-11 am

Jan. 8

Columbia, Our Lady of Lourdes Parish Contemporary Group "Farewell to Christmas" Epiphany concert, 7-8:30 pm

Jan. 12

Sedalia, K of C family buffet dinner, 4-7 pm

Jan. 15

Linn, St. George Home & School Taste of Italy dinner & auction, 4-8 pm

Jan. 22

Fulton, K of C Ladies Auxiliary candlelight lasagna dinner, 6-8 pm

Meetings & Conferences

Dec. 18

VIRTUAL, Couple to Couple League natural family planning introductory session, 8-9 am, to RSVP email MidMoNFP@gmail.com

Jan. 3

VIRTUAL, Couple to Couple League natural family planning introductory session, 8-9 pm, to RSVP email MidMoNFP@gmail.com

Jan. 15

VIRTUAL, Couple to Couple League natural family planning introductory session, 8-9 am, to RSVP email MidMoNFP@gmail.com

Retreats & Spiritual Renewal

Jan. 7-9

Moberly, Engaged Encounter weekend, St. Pius X Parish, to register visit diojeffcity.org/marriage-preparation/engaged-encounter

Health & Wellness

Jan. 3

Rich Fountain, Blood drive, 2-6 pm, Sacred Heart cafeteria

SR. ANNE

From page 4

"You never know"

Three large trees in the Veronica House courtyard were still covered with leaves when Sr. Anne arrived.

She gazed out into the landscaped courtyard and smiled.

Before long, the trees were filled with autumn colors before ultimately giving them up until spring.

"I'm not fooling myself," she said with characteristic candor. "I know I came here to die."

She pointed out how the Veronica House is for sisters whose health allows them to be more independent.

The other side, known as Anna House, is for sisters in weaker health.

"I'll start on this side and eventually go to the other side," she said, "and that will be okay."

It doesn't sound like anything she plans on doing soon.

"But you never know," she stated.

Open heart and hands

Sr. Anne, a daughter of the late Anton and Alma (Lueckenotto) Boessen, grew up on a farm near St. Thomas.

From her days at St. Thomas as the Apostle School and at St. Peter High School in Jefferson City, she had wonderful experiences with the School Sisters of Notre Dame who taught her.

She felt called to join them and eventually did so.

When she and her classmates professed final vows, the priest in the pulpit shed light on the day's significance:

"Today, you give your gifts to God; tomorrow, you'll use those gifts."

Almost 65 years of tomorrows have elapsed since then, but Sr. Anne continues to ponder what God needs from her, this day, for His work to be accomplished.

"God calls us and gives us talents, enables us to do things, and we don't always know what they're going to be," she said. "But we can stand with open heart and open hands and let God move in and take what He wants from us."

"It's difficult sometimes, but it's a peaceful way to live," she

said. "We try to do what He wants us to do and be what He wants us to be."

Her work in the field ranged from teaching high school, to pro-life advocacy, parish min-



Sister Anne Boessen SSND

istry, and outreach to people who are grieving.

Prior to the COVID pandemic, she occasionally filled in for the receptionist at the Alphonse J. Schwartze Memorial Catholic Center in Jefferson City.

Her present apostolate is a daily mix of prayer, presence and empathy with people who are facing illness and infirmity.

Full days

Sr. Anne can't get back to Jefferson City anymore. The car ride is too hard on her.

"Not that I don't love having visitors!" she said. "And I love talking to people on the phone."

She has some relatives in the St. Charles area. They had her over on Thanksgiving Day and plan to do the same on Christmas.

Not having to keep house, do laundry or prepare her meals anymore leaves her more energy for praying, socializing and making sure her affairs are in order.

She doesn't have to drive anywhere. All of her doctor's appointments are taken care of. She doesn't have to fill out her Medicaid papers.

"That's all done by someone who knows what they're doing," she said.

The Most Blessed Sacra-

ment is reposed in a chapel on her floor. She enjoys stopping there to pray each day before breakfast.

She also likes heading down to the big chapel for daily Mass on most days, when her health permits.

Her days are filled with activities whenever she has the energy.

There are doctor's appointments and occasional shopping trips and pilgrimages to nearby churches.

She hopes to be able to see the Christmas light display this year at the National Shrine of Our Lady of the Snows in Belleville, Illinois.

"We'll see how that goes," she said.

Her voice-activated internet porthole helps her remember to take her medication on time.

It also plays show tunes from her favorite Broadway musicals.

A niece came to the community Christmas party on Dec. 13 and helped decorate her room in seasonal fashion.

The way to pray

Sr. Anne perked up while recalling the priests and parishioners she had gotten to know through her years as a pastoral minister, first in California, then in St. Thomas.

She laughed out loud while sharing stories of some of the lovable but always human priests whose ministries she had been sent to help bolster.

She noted that time seems to go by a lot more quickly while she's visiting, and she has a lot more energy when people are there.

She's confident that people won't stop praying for her, especially as she faces future ambiguities of health.

She remembers a sign that hung on her hospital room wall when she was in St. Louis for treatment back in 2005: "Don't pray for what you want or what you don't want. Pray that you can endure what God gives you."

"That's pretty much what I need right now," she said.

Then she headed down the hall for a meal and fellowship with her fellow School Sisters of Notre Dame.



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Anniversaries

Camdenton, St. Anthony
Jerry & Joyce Robins, 59 years
Bob & Judy Raeth, 51 years
John & Vicki DeHahn, 31 years
Brian & Beth Miller, 23 years

Dixon, St. Theresa
Jim & Shirley Wodohodsky, 60 years

Edina, St. Joseph
Bill & Dorothy Killday, 50 years

Jefferson City, St. Peter
Ed & Mary Rackers, 69 years

Marshall, St. Peter
Albert & Alice Markes, 68 years

Taos, St. Francis Xavier
Rick & Martha Wallis, 54 years

Baptisms

Boonville, Ss. Peter & Paul — **Ava Smith**, daughter of Alex & Robyn Smith

Jefferson City, Immaculate Conception — **Gabrielle Ann Brunnert**, daughter of Matthew Burton & Abby Brunnert

Martinsburg, St. Joseph — **Analynn Marie** and **Judy Mae Wieberg**, daughters of Aaron & Stephanie Wieberg

Rhineland, Church of the Risen Savior — **Lenora Faust**, daughter of Joshua & Linsey Faust

Salisbury, St. Joseph — **Rosella Rice**, daughter of Brad & Danell Rice

Wardsville, St. Stanislaus — **Chase Anthony Sterling**, son of Samuel & Leslie Sterling

Marriages

Hermann, St. George — **Mikayla Engemann & Mark Thomas**

Jefferson City, Immaculate Conception — **Abby Shepard & Dylan Gaines**

Elections

Jefferson City, Immaculate Conception — **Jeff Earl, Susan Pitera, Kevin Wisch**, to the Parish Pastoral Council

Names for the People Page

Information for the People Page comes from parish correspondents and individual parishioners, as well as bulletins and newspapers. Submissions for anniversaries (10 years or more), birthdays (90 years or more), and baptisms, deaths, marriages and initiations of local parishioners may be e-mailed to editor@di-jeffcity.org or mailed to *The Catholic Missourian*, 2207 West Main Street, Jefferson City, MO 65109-0914.

Deaths

Josephina Montenegro — mother of Deacon Nestor Montenegro, who assists the pastors *in solidum* of St. Vincent de Paul Parish of Pettis County — on Dec. 4 in El Salvador. The Mass of Christian burial was celebrated on Dec. 7.

Canton, St. Joseph — **Georgia Richter**

Cuba, Holy Cross — **Lawrence Piazza**

Jefferson City, Cathedral of St. Joseph — **Donald O. Block**

Jefferson City, Immaculate Conception — **Lisa M. Heislen**

Jefferson City, St. Peter — **Mary E. Fischer, Nancy E. Franke, Agustin Perez Rodriguez, Charles B. Smith**

Loose Creek, Immaculate Conception — **Catherine A. Muenks, Edmund Reinsch**

Meta, St. Cecilia — **Frederick Reinkemeyer**

Monroe City, Holy Rosary — **Joe Miles**

St. Martins, St. Martin — **Jeffrey A. Brondel**

St. Patrick, Shrine of St. Patrick — **Robert Kirchner**

St. Thomas, St. Thomas the Apostle — **Shirley M. Luebbering**

Wardsville, St. Stanislaus — **Carletta S. Wilbers**

Westphalia, St. Joseph — **Emma C. Kempker**

Birthdays

Edina, St. Joseph — **Dorothy Killday**, her 90th on Dec. 15

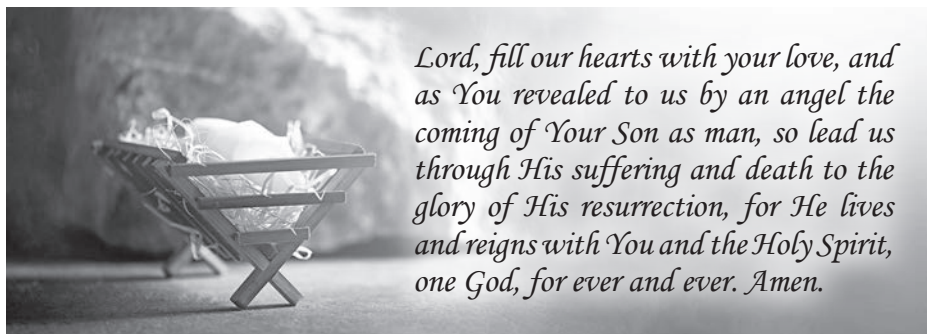
Ewing, Queen of Peace — **Goldie Smith**, her 90th on Dec. 23

Macon, Immaculate Conception — **Bill Stark**, his 90th on Dec. 8

No crib for a bed



Father Alexander Gabriel, pastor of St. Andrew Parish in Tipton and Annunciation Parish in California, blesses the figures of the Baby Jesus from Nativity scenes belonging to St. Andrew parishioners at the conclusion of Mass on Saturday, Dec. 11, in St. Andrew Church. The Third Sunday of Advent, known as Gaudete Sunday, or Rejoice/Joy Sunday, is also in Italy Bambinelli (“little baby boy”) Sunday, the day when traditionally the Baby Jesus from home crèches is blessed by the Pope in St. Peter’s Square. Pope St. John Paul II started this tradition early in his papacy. — Photo by Becky Holloway



Lord, fill our hearts with your love, and as You revealed to us by an angel the coming of Your Son as man, so lead us through His suffering and death to the glory of His resurrection, for He lives and reigns with You and the Holy Spirit, one God, for ever and ever. Amen.

CAPECCHI

From page 9

the Christmas tree hauled out of Rockefeller Center, we can make of ourselves something beautiful, something lasting. Our weary bones can become a home.

Sacramentals offer a special kind of comfort in hard times, and we are marking the end of another hard year. A year of darkness and division. A year of resignations and aimlessness. A year of uncertainty. We can relate to those construction workers back in 1931 who fashioned a dreary construction site into a Christmas scene.

Yesterday I chatted with a Catholic dad who heads to the same Christmas tree farm my family visits each December. He joked about how long the tree remains perched in their house — weeks after Christmas, until his wife finally declares, “Enough!”

Then he sticks the tree in a snowbank in his yard till it’s warm enough for a bonfire.

“It’s quite fun to put a dry pine tree on fire because it crackles and explodes,” he said. “I think about the sacramentality, the resurrection of this tree: There’s this thing that has a new purpose.”

Maybe you’re feeling used up and dried out, like an old Christmas tree stuck in the snow. Maybe God is preparing your next chapter. Maybe 2022 will be your year, when people watch you and say, “There’s someone who has a new purpose.”

Christina Capecchi is a freelance writer from Inver Grove Heights, Minn.

Crossword puzzle answers

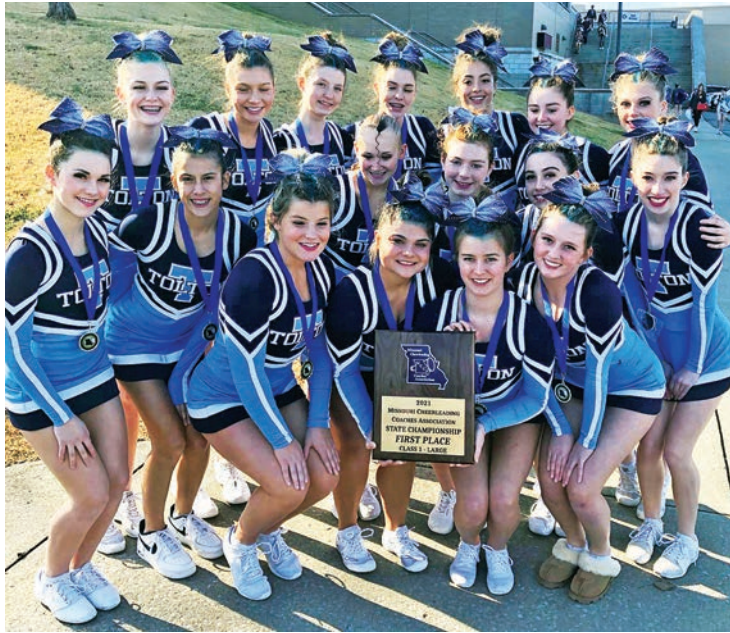
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I	E	A	V	A	M	E	V	A	R	E			
S	D	L	S	E	A								
V	D	O	S	I	N	E	H	I	A	D			
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I	C	I											
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V	A	V	U	D	T	V	R	A	R				
N	O	I	N	O	E	R	E	H	L				

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And that makes four!



Members of the Fr. Tolton Regional Catholic High School cheer team celebrate on Dec. 11 after winning the team's fourth-straight state championship.

— Photo from the Fr. Tolton Regional Catholic High School Facebook page

Fellowship divine!



Third-graders at Our Lady of Lourdes Interparish School in Columbia dress up as their favorite saints on Nov. 1, All Saints Day.

Bearing gifts for people in need



Students preparing for the Sacrament of Confirmation at St. William Parish in Perry shop to fulfill the Christmas needs of a local family — Photo by Pam Barnes, Confirmation Teacher

“Open the gates of Paradise”



Each student of St. Joseph School in Pilot Grove prepares to release a balloon adorned with the name of a deceased loved one while praying a Balloon Rosary on Nov. 2 in observance of All Souls Day.

“I was hungry and you gave Me food”



Members of Hannibal's Holy Family Kids Who Care group on Nov. 22 display some of the 2,400 pantry staples donated by students and their families during Holy Family School's canned food drive to help people in need. — Photo from the Holy Family School – Hannibal Facebook page

Comforting the sick



Members of the student council of St. Peter School in Marshall present a check for \$1,600 to Fitzgibbon Cancer Center in Marshall on Nov. 17. — Photo from the St. Peter School Facebook page

Joseph protects Jesus by fleeing to Egypt

By Jennifer Ficaglia
Catholic News Service

After the baby Jesus was born in Bethlehem, Magi from the east arrived in Jerusalem.

“Where is the newborn King of the Jews? We saw His star at its rising and have come to do Him homage,” they said as they searched for Jesus.

When King Herod heard about the Magi’s search, he became concerned. He asked the chief priests and the scribes where the Messiah was to be born.

“In Bethlehem of Judea,” they said, “for thus it has been written through the prophet: ‘And you, Bethlehem, land of Judah, are by no means least among the rulers of Judah; since from you shall come a



ruler, Who is to shepherd my people Israel.”

Herod secretly called the Magi to him and found out the date they had first seen the

star appear. He also told them they could find the Messiah in Bethlehem.

“Go and search diligently for the Child. When you have

found Him, bring me word, that I too may go and do Him homage,” the king said.

The Magi again set out on their journey. They followed the star to where it stopped, which was over the house in Bethlehem where Mary, Joseph and Jesus were staying.

The Magi were overjoyed at seeing the star. When they entered the house, they saw Jesus with Mary. They prostrated themselves and did Jesus homage, and then they offered Him gifts of gold, frankincense and myrrh.

When the Magi left Jesus, Mary and Joseph, they returned home by another route, because they were warned in a dream not to return to King Herod.

After the Magi left, an angel

of the Lord came to Joseph in a dream.

“Rise, take the Child and His mother, flee to Egypt and stay there until I tell you. Herod is going to search for the Child to destroy Him,” the angel warned.

Joseph rose and took the Child and His mother by night and departed for Egypt. He stayed there until the death of Herod, so what God had said through the prophets might be fulfilled, “Out of Egypt I called My Son.”

Read more about it...

Matthew 2

1. Who was searching for the Messiah?

2. Where did Joseph take Mary and Jesus?

Bible Accent

What happened after Joseph, Mary and Jesus fled to Egypt?

In Matthew 2:16, we read that King Herod was furious when he realized that the Magi had left for their home country without coming back to Jerusalem to tell him where he could find the Messiah.

Just as the Magi had been warned, Herod wanted to find the Messiah to destroy Him, not to do Him homage.

Herod had a backup plan. The Magi had unwittingly told him exactly when they first saw the star that was leading them

to the Messiah.

That helped Herod determine that ordering the deaths of all boys 2 years old and younger who lived in and around Bethlehem would likely kill the Messiah along with them.

When Herod ordered the deaths of those innocent children, it fulfilled a prophecy said through the prophet Jeremiah: “A voice was heard in Ramah, sobbing and loud lamentation; Rachel weeping for her children, and she would not be consoled, since they were no more.”

Trivia

In which region of Israel is Bethlehem located? (Hint: Matthew 2:1)

Answer: Judea

Puzzle

Using the hints provided, answer the questions about the Holy Family.



1. Where did Joseph take Mary and Jesus to live after Herod died? (Matthew 2:22-23)

2. Who told Joseph that it was OK to take Mary as his wife? (Matthew 1:20)

3. Why did Joseph and Mary go to Bethlehem? (Luke 2:1-5)

4. To whom did angels appear to announce Jesus’ birth in Bethlehem? (Luke 2:8-11)



Answers: 1. Nazareth; 2. an angel; 3. to be enrolled; 4. shepherds.

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Saint Spotlight

St. Marguerite Bourgeoys was born in France in 1620. As she grew up, she formed a special relationship with Our Lady. She wanted to enter a religious community, but she was turned away from two of them. She then met the founder of Montreal, Canada, when he visited his sister in France. He invited Marguerite to come to the New World to open a school. After praying to Mary, she decided to go. Her school started out in an abandoned stable and grew to include teaching women crafts and the founding of the Sisters of the Congregation of Notre Dame. Marguerite died in 1700, and she became Canada’s first female saint when she was canonized in 1982. We remember her on Jan. 12.

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New Christmas-related novels will keep readers engaged

Chasing Manhattan: A Novel, by John Gray. Paraclete Press (Brewster, Massachusetts, 2021). 284 pp., \$22.

Mr. Nicholas, by Christopher de Vinck. Paraclete Press (Brewster, Massachusetts, 2021). 160 pp., \$20.

Reviewed by Brian T. Olszewski

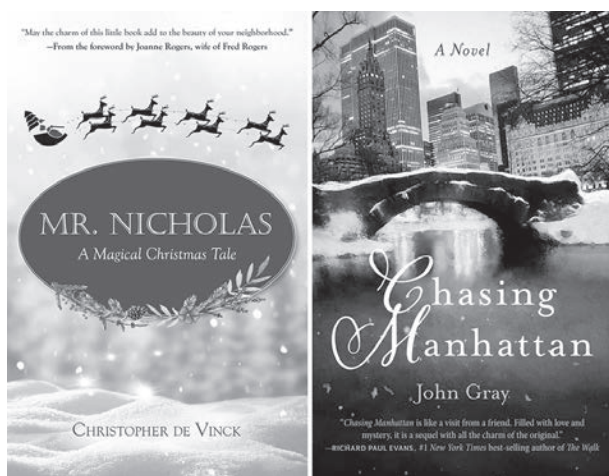
Catholic News Service

If the Hallmark Channel is in need of books on which to base Christmas movies, these two should be considered.

The sequel to *Chasing Manchester*, *Chasing Manhattan* is about writer Chase Harrington's escaping the notoriety she attained in Vermont due to looking at stained-glass windows and seeing what others did not see — people who were in trouble — and then helping them.

When she wrote a book about her experience, she was inundated with others wanting her to look at church windows and to let them know about their loved ones. Overwhelmed by the onslaught but flush with money from her best-seller, she moves to New York City.

At first, she regularly makes



quick visits to St. Patrick's Cathedral to view the windows to see if she can replicate the Vermont experience. She can't. Nonetheless, from autumn to December, with the help of her boyfriend, Gavin Bennett, she is involved in bettering the lives of multiple people and saving the lives of others.

How Gray develops the story, intertwining various characters with each other and various events, is what will keep readers engaged. Just as Chase saw things that weren't in the church windows, readers, through multiple plot twists, will see things they might not have anticipated (e.g., how Chase moves from a 900-square-foot Manhattan apartment to an estate worth millions of dollars).

These are not stand-alone

occurrences. Gray uses them as anchors and transition points as readers experience the flow of the story.

Chasing Manhattan is not overtly religious. No one attends church, clues are not found in the Bible, and only once when they make a discovery does Gavin quietly say to her,

"Jesus, Mary and Joseph."

However, early in the book during a conversation with her driver about her gift to see what others don't, Chase says, "Before Vermont, I'm not sure I even believed in God. I rarely went to church, so I keep asking myself the same question."

"Why you?" the driver responds.

"Exactly!" Chase replied. "Why me?"


Readers will be pleased with the answers.

Mr. Nicholas is a simple story that should touch even the hardest hearts. Much of the drama centers upon Anna and Jim Kelly, whose marital issues cause them to separate.

Their son JB has Down syndrome and lives with his mom during the week. He spends weekends with his dad, the story's narrator, who reluctantly loves his son but doesn't like him.

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Movie Ratings

 Adults and Adolescents	Clifford the Big Red Dog (PG) Encanto (PG)
 Adults	Being the Ricardos (R) Belfast (PG-13) Eternals (PG-13) Ghostbusters: Afterlife (PG-13) King Richard (PG-13) West Side Story (PG-13)
 Limited Adult Audience	Antlers (R) House of Gucci (R) Last Night in Soho (R) Nightmare Alley (R)
 Morally Offensive	Resident Evil: Welcome to Raccoon City (R)

Ratings are supplied by the U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops Film and Broadcasting Office. Visit www.usccb.org for current reviews.

the "small, intimate town" of Pompton Plains, New Jersey, is Mr. Nicholas, the hardware store owner who collects people's discards every Friday morning.

Townpeople, including Anna, have their doubts about Mr. Nicholas, wondering why he likes children and why he is so popular with them. Jim, an investigative reporter for *The New York Times*, looks for answers.

Mr. Nicholas is a panorama of love, estrangement, uncertainty, childlike vision, conversion and reconciliation. De Vinck blends them into a

story that evokes gratitude — an excellent Christmas gift to give and receive.

Also of interest:

• *This Thing of Darkness*, by Fiorella de Maria and K.V. Turley. Ignatius Press (San Francisco, 2021). 260 pp., \$16.95.

• *New Art: A Novel*, by Dorothy Dunn. Raymond Press (Los Angeles, 2021). 402 pp., \$17.95.

Olszewski is editor of *The Catholic Virginian*, biweekly publication of the Diocese of Richmond, Virginia.

K of C film on St. Joseph available free online

A providential renewal has come upon the Church with respect to understanding and praying to St. Joseph.

To help the faithful in continuing their devotion to St. Joseph beyond the recently concluded Year of St. Joseph, the Knights of Columbus is offering its newest film, "St. Joseph: Our Spiritual Father," for all to watch at no cost.

Since its launch, the film has received raving reviews and

is rich in inspiring testimonials, including these powerful words from Bishop James Wall of Gallup, New Mexico, "If you have a devotion to St. Joseph, strengthen that devotion. If you don't, you should have one," and these from Supreme Knight Patrick Kelly: "The example of St. Joseph teaches us that we really find ourselves when we live for others."

Visit kofc.org/stjoseph to watch the film or learn more.



A group of Bob Simon's family and relatives gathers on the lawn of the Shrine of Our Lady of Sorrows on Nov. 8, the day a Nativity set donated by Mr. Simon was displayed publicly on the grounds for the first time in over 100 years.

— Photo by Jay Nies

NATIVITY

From page 7

kid, it was all you could see at night," said Denise.

Himself an artisan, Bob eventually found another, similar Nativity scene and hand-painted the figures in the same style.

His children and grandchildren still treasure it.

A new home

Msgr. Hellriegel died in 1981.

A wealth of artifacts from his Priesthood are on display in the St. Martin Church Museum in Starkenburg, including the wooden book stand he used as a child while pretending to offer Mass.

Bob began downsizing his possessions after his wife, Frances, died four years ago.

He recently moved to a retirement community.

Everyone in the family agreed when he talked about donating Msgr. Hellriegel's Nativity set to the Shrine of Our Lady of Sorrows in Starkenburg.

"He said it's Monsignor's, and it needed to go someplace he loved," said his daughter, Denise.

"I think it's a wonderful

choice," said his older brother, John.

Lifelong Church of the Risen Savior parishioner Cindi Engemann, whose parents, the late Joseph and Shirley Koenig, were friends with Msgr. Hellriegel, was on the ground pulling weeds one weekend this spring when a car pulled up to the shrine.

It was Bob's brother, Dave Simon and his wife, Cathy.

Dave explained that Bob was having some health problems and downsizing. Would the people at the Shrine want the Nativity set from Msgr. Hellriegel?

"I immediately affirmed that we did!" said Cindi.

Bob and Denise delivered the lovingly wrapped set to Starkenburg in June.

Parishioners arranged it in a loving display in Valentine Hall near the shrine in time for this year's Church of the Risen Savior Fall Supper.

It will remain there through Advent and the Christmas Season, then will go on permanent display in the St. Martin Church Museum.

Bob's daughter, his brother John and several additional

Daily Readings

Sunday, Dec 19

FOURTH SUNDAY OF ADVENT
Mi. 5:1-4a
Ps. 80:2-3, 15-16, 18-19
Heb. 10:5-10
Lk. 1:39-45

Monday, Dec 20

Is. 7:10-14
Ps. 24:1-2, 3-4ab, 5-6
Lk. 1:26-38

Tuesday, Dec 21

St. Peter Canisius, priest and doctor of the Church
Sg. 2:8-14 or Zep. 3:14-18a
Ps. 33:2-3, 11-12, 20-21
Lk. 1:39-45

Wednesday, Dec 22

1 Sm. 1:24-28
(Ps.) 1 Sm. 2:1, 4-8abcd
Lk. 1:46-56

Thursday, Dec 23

St. John of Kanty, priest
Mal. 3:1-4, 23-24
Ps. 25:4-5ab, 8-10, 14
Lk. 1:57-66

Friday, Dec 24

Morning:
2 Sm. 7:1-5, 8b-12, 14a, 16
Ps. 89:2-3, 4-5, 27, 29
Lk. 1:67-79

Saturday, Dec 25

THE NATIVITY OF THE LORD (Christmas) Holyday of Obligation
Vigil:
Is. 62:1-5
Ps. 89:4-5, 16-17, 27, 29
Acts 13:16-17, 22-25
Mt. 1:1-25 or 1:18-25

Night:

Is. 9:1-6
Ps. 96: 1-3, 11-13
Ti. 2:11-14
Lk. 2:1-14

Dawn:

Is. 62:11-12
Ps. 97:1, 6, 11-12
Ti. 3:4-7
Lk. 2:15-20

Day:

Is. 52:7-10
Ps. 98:1, 2-3, 3-4, 5-6
Heb. 1:1-6
Jn. 1:1-18 or 1:1-5, 9-14

Sunday, Dec 26

THE HOLY FAMILY OF JESUS, MARY AND JOSEPH
Sir. 3:2-6, 12-14
Ps. 128:1-5
Col. 3:12-21 or 3:12-17
Lk. 2:41-52

Monday, Dec 27

St. John, Apostle and evangelist
1 Jn. 1:1-4
Ps. 97:1-2, 5-6, 11-12
Jn. 20:1a, 2-8

Tuesday, Dec 28

The Holy Innocents, martyrs
1 Jn. 1:5-2:2
Ps. 124:2-5, 7cd-8
Mt. 2:13-18

Wednesday, Dec 29

St. Thomas Becket, bishop and martyr
1 Jn. 2:3-11
Ps. 96:1-2a, 2b-3, 5b-6
Lk. 2:22-35

Thursday, Dec 30

1 Jn. 2:12-17
Ps. 96:7-10
Lk. 2:36-40

Friday, Dec 31

St. Sylvester I, Pope
1 Jn. 2:18-21
Ps. 96:1-2, 11-13
Jn. 1:1-18

Saturday, Jan 1

SOLEMNITY OF MARY, THE HOLY MOTHER OF GOD (not a Holyday of Obligation this year)
Nm. 6:22-27
Ps. 67:2-3, 5, 6, 8
Gal. 4:4-7
Lk. 2:16-21

Sunday, Jan 2

THE EPIPHANY OF THE LORD
Is. 60:1-6
Ps. 72:1-2, 7-8, 10-11, 12-13
Eph. 3:2-3a, 5-6
Mt. 2:1-12

Monday, Jan 3

The Most Holy Name of Jesus
1 Jn. 3:22-4:6
Ps. 2:7bc-8, 10-12a
Mt. 4:12-17, 23-25

Tuesday, Jan 4

St. Elizabeth Ann Seton, religious (USA)
1 Jn. 4:7-10
Ps. 72:1-4, 7-8
Mk. 6:34-44

Wednesday, Jan 5

St. John Neumann, bishop (USA)
1 Jn. 4:11-18
Ps. 72:1-2, 10, 12-13
Mk. 6:45-52

Thursday, Jan 6

St. André Bessette, religious (USA)
1 Jn. 4:19-5:4
Ps. 72:1-2, 14, 15bc, 17
Lk. 4:14-22a

Friday, Jan 7

St. Raymond of Penyafort, priest
1 Jn. 5:5-13
Ps. 147:12-15, 19-20
Lk. 5:12-16

Saturday, Jan 8

1 Jn. 5:14-21
Ps. 149:1-6a, 9b
Jn. 3:22-30

The Holy Father's prayer intentions for December:

Let us pray for the catechists, summoned to announce the Word of God: may they be its witnesses, with courage and creativity and in the power of the Holy Spirit.

The Holy Father's prayer intentions for January:

We pray for all those suffering from religious discrimination and persecution; may their own rights and dignity be recognized, which originate from being brothers and sisters in the human family.

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family members traveled to Starkenburg on Fall Supper Day to see the Nativity scene in its new home and reminisce.

Bob was recovering from a fall and could not make it, but

he sent his highest regards.

"Dad just wants it to be displayed somewhere with people who are going to take good care of it for future generations," said Denise.

She believes her mother is

also happy about the gift.

"Oh, yes, if there are two things they definitely agreed on, it was Catholicism and the Nativity," she said. "He'll love having it here, and so will she."



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Thank you for your prayerful support this year

Your meaningful gifts of time, talents and treasure have supported our seminarians this year spiritually and provided for many of their needs. The Vocations Office is grateful for your continued support during the second collection for Seminarians at your parish's Christmas Masses.

WITH HEARTFELT GRATITUDE,

Most Reverend W. Shawn McKnight, Bishop of Jefferson City

Father Paul Clark, Director of Vocations



Christopher Hoffmann
St. Vincent de Paul, Sedalia

Shane Kliethermes
Immaculate Conception, Jefferson City

Phillip Novotny
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