PILGRIMAGE TO THE HOLY LAND
POPE SAYS FALSE IDEAS OF HUMAN NATURE THREATEN BASIS OF THE FAMILY

By Francis X. Rocca

Catholic News Service

Pope Benedict XVI said the family in Western society is undergoing a “crisis that threatens its foundations,” owing to false ideas of human nature that erode freedom with selfishness and present God-given sexual identities as a matter of individual choice, and what it takes to be authentically human. "Only in self-giving does man fulfill himself," the pope said. "Only by letting himself be shaped through self-forgetting does he discover the beauty of his humanity.

As a consequence of an “increasingly widespread” refusal to make sacrifices for commitments to the family, the pope said, “man remains closed in on himself” and “essential elements of the experience of being human are lost.”

The pope made his remarks on Dec. 15, the feast of Our Lady of the Rosary, to officials of the Roman Church, the Catholic Church’s central administrative offices at the Vatican.

On Saturday, Dec. 15, the Dominicans of St. Catharine de’ Ricci officially became members of the Dominican Sisters of Peace permanently approved Marian apparitions in Medjugorje, Our Lady of Knock, and Medjugorje’s Our Lady of the Springs, who have served in central Ohio since 1850. This merger brings the Congregation of Catholic religious sisters headquartered in Columbus.

During the ceremony, which was accompanied by the presence of chaperones, the mother of the de’ Ricci sisters, the nuns conveyed their vows of poverty, chastity, and obedience as Dominican Sisters of Peace and received Dominican Sisters of Peace symbols. A presentation to denote their new identity was carried out by de’ Ricci President Anne Longhine, OP, to Dominican Sisters of Peace President Process Sisters Margaret Ormond, OP, symbolized the change of identity they are taking to bring to the Dominican Sisters of Peace.

This merger came after an extensive process of exploration, discernment, and deep prayer that began in 2001. Approval for the merger was received from the Vatican’s Congregation for Institutes of Consecrated Life and Societies of Apostolic Life on July 25, 2012. The Dominican Sisters of Peace merge with the Dominicans of St. Catharine de’ Ricci to join us in our mission of preaching the Gospel and carrying on the work of the Church. Sister Margaret Ormond, OP, expressed her gratitude to both groups for bringing so many gifts, and we are all so very excited to work together and to learn from them.

The Dominican Sisters of Peace was founded in 2009 from the union of three Dominican congregations. With more than 600 sisters and 500 associates at 17 institutions and 14 nations, they serve in many ministry areas, including education, health care, spirituality, pastoral care, prison ministry, and ecology/care for creation. The congregation’s 27 founded institutions throughout the United States include three colleges/universities, four high schools, two grade schools, four health care centers, three literacy centers, five ecumenical centers, five retreat/spirituality centers, and one low-cost housing project. “Together, we will continue to embrace the mission of the order as we embrace each other in this call to proclaim the Gospel of Jesus Christ,” Sister Margaret said. “May God bring to fruition the good work that has begun.”

FEAST FOR BELIEVERS

Most Americans see Christmas as a religious celebration, marking the feast with barn-built homes.

95% CELEBRATE CHRISTMAS
82% TAKE IT AS A RELIGIOUS HOLIDAY
78% TAKE TIME TO REFLECT ON CHRIST’S BIRTH
62% ATTEND CHURCH SERVICES

NEW IDEAS, CONTINUED FROM PAGE 2

new philosophy of sexuality,” epistemologically, is defined by the word “gen- der,” which teaches that “sex is no longer a given element of human nature,” but “social role we choose for ourselves.”

“Moral life is viewed as realized in and by the nature of the human being, no longer existent,” he said. “Man calls his nature into question. From this view, he is merely spirit and will.”

The consequences of this atti- tude, the pope said, “The world has included unethical biotechnical practices: “The manipulation of the human nature, which we explore today where our environment is conti- nued, now becomes more fundamental where his self-concern is concerned.

To reject the “preordained dignity of man and woman” is also to reject the family as a “reality established by creation,” he said, with particu- larly degrading consequences for children: “The child has become an object to which they have a right to obtain. Striking a fear into the heart, the pope said that the church can help secular society form a” cover a true understanding of human nature.

The church represents, he suggested, “a search for the memory of what it means to be human in the definition of human nature. The manipulation of, or ineptitude of forgiveness,” he said. But our environment is con- tinued, now becomes more fundamental where his self-concern is concerned.

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PRACTICAL STEWARDSHIP
By Rick Jeric

Exposition

Did you have a truly merry and joyful Christmas? I hope it was the best ever for your family and your loved ones. For me, it was wonderful to have all the kids home and together. As they say, older, I know this will get more difficult. My wife and I really cherished these times together, and when it all is done in the name of our Catholic Faith and in Jesus Christ, all the better. As social beings, we enjoy celebrations, parties, and reasons to gather with family and friends. The religious and faith-filled gatherings are the special ones. Christmas is the very real action of the Incarnation. God loves us so much that He sends his only begotten Son to us, so that we may be saved from sin and from ourselves. God becomes a man. It is difficult to imagine and impossible to comprehend, but we still have three things that put it all in perspective: Faith, Hope, and Love. We have faith, first and foremost because of the Incarnation. We cannot imagine and we cannot comprehend, but we still have deep faith, and that is enough. There is beauty of our Catholic Faith that we believe out of faith, without physical proof, and without demonstrative signs before our very eyes. We hope, and welcome, that our lives would merely be some sort of counterfeit virtual reality with no hope of eternal life with our God. And we have love, and that God to whom we belong is pure love. God becomes man out of pure love for each of us. In turn, we give back that love to one another, as we journey back home to be with God. This Sunday, Jan. 6, is the Feast of the Epiphany of our Lord. This is a very important day for us as Catholics. We celebrate and mark the time when Jesus Christ made Himself known to everyone – Jews and Gentiles alike – as the Messiah, the Savior of the world. We were represented by the Magi, or three wise men, or astrologers from the East, or however you wish to consider them. Whether the visit came in Bethlehem at the birth of Jesus, or if it came at home in Nazareth some years later, the joyous point is that Jesus came to save us all, no matter who we are or where we come from. A synonym for Epiphany is “exposition.” Like this term, because Jesus actually exposed Himself freely to the world at hand, and for all of us today, and for all future generations forever. The Pleg helped this exposition by their presence, their homage, and their gifts. Our brothers and sisters in the Eastern Rites of Catholicism celebrate Christmas at the Epiphany. How can all of mankind adequately thank the Christ Child – God made man – with gifts? We know exactly what Jesus asks and desires: “Love one another, as I have loved you.” The Epiphany is our reminder of this. As we ponder the exposition of Jesus Christ to us, and the gifts, how can we expose our faith? We are in the midst of the Year of Faith. Our challenge this week is to think about very practical ways in which we can expose our faith for all. Start with your family, friends, and co-workers. The grace and love one another. As we ponder the exposition of Jesus Christ to us and the world, let us contemplate and meditate upon exposing our faith to the world.

Nick Fiaccooli of Boy Scout Troop 826 in Reynoldsburg built a dock for a pond at the Children of Mary retreat center in Licking County as his Eagle Scout project. The sisters, who frequently host retreats, have been hoping for some time to have the dock built so retreat participants will have the chance to go off by themselves and reflect on events of the day or to enjoy time with their loved ones. Many of the sisters and the dock will be greatly with that. Fiaccooli obtained funds for the project by raising $2,200 at a bake sale at his home parish, Reynoldsburg St. Paul. That was twice as much as he needed, so he was able to buy the sisters a paddle boat and give them a $300 check with the extra money. Work on the dock was completed in one day, thanks to help provided by other Scouts and their parents. The project has been donated earlier in us bottom could be dragged by George Lanyon, a handpymen who has been of considerable assistance to the dock. The dock is 70 feet long and will be anchored. Fiaccooli is pictured with (from left) Mother Margaret Mary Mary, Sister Agnus Immnes, Sister Mary Teresa, Sister Philemonia Maria, Sister Deacock, and Sister Mary Jane of the Children of Mary, and Father John Buschel of the Pontifical College Josephinum, who was visiting the community on the day the dock was built.

TRINITY BROWNIES AT MOHUN CENTER

Members of Brownie Troop 2881, all third-grade students at Columbus Trinity Elementary School, sang Christmas carols for the retired priests and in the living at the Mahon Health Care Center, Pleasant Era (from left) Allison Zaker, Nicole Lants, Mariah Shaw, Abby Iannitto, Jada McClellan, and Nick Lategan, troop leader. Photo courtesy Fiaccooli family.

St. Brigid of Kildare Students Learn the True Meaning of CAREing

Students at Dublin St. Brigid School are taking part in a program known as CARE (Creating A Respectful Environment). Participants include 40 families from the school, who meet quarterly in a family-style format to discuss a prepared program and team building activities. The meetings are led by eighth-grade students, supported by staff members and parent volunteers.

Before Christmas, CARE groups met to create gifts for the children of the Run the Race Club. The club, started by the Brian Mula Memorial Foundation, Inc., seeks to help young inner-city people develop morally and intellectually, gathering art children together for free after-school and Saturday programs that offer stories, crafts, games, sports, tutoring, and snacks. One of the programs that these children look forward to each year is Christmas in Dublin, hosted by the St. Brigid youth group and fed by Pam Hel, parish youth minister. Each child is able to select gifts for his or her loved ones and receives a sticker willed with goodies. CARE students, some of whom are pictured here, wrote notes to the children and decorated name tags for their stockings, made bookmarks, and bagged toothbrushes and toothpaste donated by the local dentists.

In preparation for the CARE meeting and Christmas in Dublin, the Service Club of St. Brigid School, consisting of fifth through seventh graders, began meeting weekly this fall to prepare additional items for the stockings. Items they made included fleece pillows, bath towel–bath set sets, and candy cane. Sixth-grade Girl Scouts also contributed candy cane treats.

EAGLE PROJECT HELPS CHILDREN OF MARY

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“Mary the Mother of God, The Model for Women” Retreat

The Catholic Laywomen’s Retreat League will sponsor a silent retreat for women from Friday to Saturday, March 1 from 2 to 2, at St. Theresa’s Retreat Center, 5277 E. Broad St., Columbus.

The retreat master will be Father Dan Dury, and the retreat will be “Mary the Mother of God, The Model for Women.” Father Dury will offer a look at different aspects of Mary and her responses to shape our own. In particular, he will explore Mary’s role as mother and wife. Father Dury, a Columbus native, earned a bachelor of arts degree in philosophy from the Pontifical College Josephinum and master’s degrees in church history and divinity from Mount St. Mary’s University in Emmitsburg, Md. His pastoral experience was at Westerville St. Paul Church, where he served as parish vicar. He is serving in the faculty at the Trinity Consortium of Catholic Parishes.

The retreat fee is $125, which includes all meals and accommodations. Registration will be from 5:30 to 2 a.m. Friday, and beginning will begin after dinner. In addition to Masses on Saturday and Sunday, there will be all-night adoration on both days, beginning at 6 p.m. Friday, and silence will begin after adoration. Meals will be at 7 a.m., noon, and 6 p.m. For information or to register, call Theresa O’Toole, and the theme will be “Mary the”
I recently attended the wedding of a young man and his bride who are both practicing Catholics. At the end of the ceremony, the exchange of rings was said. When the priest (clearly ordinand) did not pronounce the couple as “man and wife” and introduced them as such to the attendants. It was all very awkward, and no one seemed to know what to do. Finally, the organist began the recessional music and the bride and groom left. When asked later why he did not introduce the couple, the priest said that it was not a part of the marriage rite. So a Catholic priest would simply as the witness.

What surprises me, honestly, is not so much your question but your concluding observations—that the priest’s failure to “pronounce” damped people’s joy and may have alienated some of them from the church. Over 40 years, I’ve probably done 600 or 700 weddings and have never been told that.

My wife is relatively new to the Catholic Church and absolutely abhors the exchanging of the sign of peace. I remember when this was not a part of the Mass. It seems to have been an act of charity that crept into the liturgy during the “inoculation” of the 1970s, and it is quite unnecessary. 

The parting side and prefers not to have to shake hands with the person who happens to be the right one to the right pew. At Mass we would not feel that this would be rude. There are any options? (If you ran a pettion to eliminate the sign of peace, I’d bet half of it would be greeted with 95 per cent approval from Catholics.) (Louisville, Ky.)

Far from being a new invention of the 1970s, the renunciation of the sign of peace was actually a return to a practice common in the earliest days of the Church. In those times, Christians, in a variety of the context that unified the ecclesial community, exchanged a greeting at the offertory— that thing timing chosen from the suggestion of Jesus (Matthew 5:23-24) that one reconcile with others before presenting gifts at the altar. By the late fourth century, the exchange of peace had been placed instead after the Our Father, since Christians were committed to live in harmony with those with whom they were about to share the Eucharist. The greeting of peace faded gradually into disuse over the centuries and was restored to the Mass during the liturgical reforms following the Second Vatican Council. 

Technically, the sign of peace is optional. The General Instruction of the Roman Missal prescribes in No. 114 that it be shared “appropriately.” And other sections of the general instruction (in Nos. 82 and 239) imply that it is customarily used. (During a flu epidemic, for example, the exchange of peace could reasonably be suspended.) The greeting ought to be exchanged in a quiet and dignified manner, and Pope Benedict XVI reminded the peace “in the form of the sign of peace is the greeting of the Rite.”

Other modern obstacles to an authentic liturgical practice are (from left) first row, Ethan Klein, Drew Smith, Jacob Blau, and Tru Castel Gandolfo, Italy, on Aug. 22, 2012. Photo courtesy Notre Dame Schools

A pilgrimage is putting order into your life, going back to put real order in your life — order in terms of your relationships with other people, order in terms of your relationship with God,” he said. “Sin is disorder, and a pilgrimage is an opportunity to recover that harmony that has been lost through the pressures of daily life. That’s why it’s deeply religious experience.”

Always often immersed in the nitty-gritty of chartering planes and buses, booking hotels, and writing letters to families for his pilgrimages, Father Atuire does have a dream file, and it already includes a detailed itinerary. He just needs to find the time, the resources, and the pilgrims.

One day, he said, “I’d love to take a group to the shrine at Kibeho, where young people reported apparitions of Mary in the 1980s. The local bishop has recognized the apparitions as authentic.

We should be open to the Holy Spirit’s lead, not expect what we want or need. We should be open to the Holy Spirit’s lead, not expect what we want or need.
On TV these days, we’re seeing more and more programs about “body art” and design tattoo. Despite the apparent widespread acceptance of the practice, there are several problems with tattoos that go beyond the obvious issues, disease, misuse, and unclean inking that can be found in second-rate tattoo parlors. Tattoos, as some have argued that they have become regressive. Negative associations. An article in the Dallas Morning News a few years ago stated the story of a young man named Jesus Morales, who was going to get a tattoo on his arm stating in tattoos that he didn’t like his gang involvement… He feels bailed. It’s the stereotyping. He said, “What you think when you see a young Hispanic male with tattoo? You’re going to think, ‘Oh, that is you.’”

Similar branding concerns were raised in a recent column by David Whitley about San Francisco 49ers. Eighty-four-year-old Bobina Kermpster, whose arms and back are full of tattoos. “NFL quarterback is the ultimate in flamboyant, lifestyle, a psychological issue is raised by the way tattooed employees in hiring or promotions. It should come as no surprise that employers toos. It can play into a disordered desire to be flamboyant, and in certain cases of very radical tattooing and body piercing, one can even discern a subtle form of self-selection and self-realization.”

There is a spiritual dimension involved as well. Russell Gringas, who now rejects getting several tattoos in his 20s, argues in a National Catholic Register interview, “God created the body. A tattoo is like putting graffiti on a work of art.” He compares it to trying to improve a painting by Michelangelo. Some argue that there can be good spiritual reas for getting tattoos. For example, people have gotten tattoos or an image of Jesus tattooed as a sign of permanent commitment to Christ, or a ring to make sure everything needing to be covered is, and exposed for general viewing, in the same way that tattoo regret is now quite common in the United States.

Tattooed employees in hiring or promotions. It should come as no surprise that employers are concerned about vanity lead to similar questions about modesty. Taboos and tattoos

During the year, volunteers from the Society of St. Vincent de Paul live the Gospel by feeding the hungry, distributing clothing to the needy, providing transportation to the homeless, and offering answers to those who have nowhere else to turn. Bishop Frederick Campbell recently presided over a Mass at Columbus St. Joseph Cathedral to honor the work of the diocesan St. Vincent de Paul Council.

Honor the Council's 150th anniversary

Another 50 serve more than 100 people weekly at the society's clothing distribution center, about 25 people deliver meals on Saturday morning to the elderly and homebound, and a team of 15 organizes the Walk for the Poor, the society's largest fund raiser of the year.

Serving low-income elderly and disabled people.

It was cold and clear. I was pregnant-to-bursting, but wasn’t warm. Our parish was having a rare midnight Mass in memory of our first child, the daughter who was born on Mary’s feast. It was cold and clear. I was pregnant-to-bursting, but wasn’t warm.

I wrote it off as a combination of pregnancy hormones and my usual penchant for being overcome by the dripping. As the fanfare of the Christmas midnight Mass, it was still a challenge not to sobbing. I found myself overcome.

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Serving low-income elderly and disabled people.
Pilgrimage to the Holy Land: An Encounter with the Divine

Story and Photos by DAVID GARCI

Catholic Times/January 6, 2013

Catholic Times

The Holy Steps. These are the steps Jesus walked after the Last Supper on the way to the Garden of Gethsemane and will but yours be done, located inside the Church "that this cup might pass from me, but not my will, but yours be done," located inside the Church...From Scripture, and how man responded. From in several places we visited, as noted in in Bethlehem and Calvary in Jerusalem. had certain expectations about how im...That place lies not in its archeology, but in a church built centuries later on the spot that dates from the events of that day – just a stone’s throw from the place where it occurred. But the specialness of that place lies not in its archeology, but in its spirituality. It is this spot where Jo...s, this man, had his final preparation for his ultimate act of sacrifice and triumph. We think of Jesus as God. We often forget that place, but to shoulder inside the tiny tomb. Father Gribble then said Mass, and we received him, in that place, to be one with God himself. And wherever Mass is celebrated, we relive that glorious spiritual union.

We were called. We answered the call.

The Holy Sepulcher

"Do not be afraid; for I know you which Jesus was crucified. He is not here; for he has risen, as he said. Come, and see the place where he lay." After the final days of our pilgrimage, we had the special privilege of a private Mass inside the very tomb of Christ. We walked from our hotel in the predawn darkness through the streets of the Old City of Jerusale...In that region there were shepherds out...And there appeared unto them Elijah with Moses: and James, and John, and brought them up into a high mountain apart by themselves; and sat him down into the simple grotto that served as a church in Bethphage and Bethany. After Jesus' many ministries and miracles, he tells the disciples that the time has come for them to bear a son, and you shall call his name Jesus. And Mary also expresses her joy at the encounter God on his own terms. A pilgrimage takes us out of our normal environment and places us in a spot where God can make a special connection with us. We had certain expectations about how important it would be for us, and I knew that places such as the Church of the Nativity in Bethlehem and Calvary in Jerusalem. They were indeed special. I was also very touched by having the opportunity to renew my wedding vows with my wife at Cana. It was fitting to get this special act of love back into the spot where Jesus walked and worked. In that region there were shepherds out in the field, keeping watch over their flocks by night, and a angel of the Lord appeared unto them, and the glory of the Lord shone round about them, and they were sore afraid. And the angel said unto them, Fear not: for behold, I bring you good tidings of great joy, which shall be to all people. For unto you is born this day in the city of David a Savior, who is Christ the Lord; and you went with, and hand Mary and Joseph, and the babe lying in a manger. And when they saw it they marvelled saying which had been told them concerning this child, and all who heard it wondered at all the shepherds told them. As special as it was to touch the spot where Jesus was born in the grotto below the Church of the Nativity, I was even more spiritually energized a short distance away at Shepherds' Field. It was very meaningful to stand on that hillside and imagine the world those lovely shepherds lived and worked in. In the midst of that is a cave, now located inside a church. In the first century, that house housed shepherds and their flocks. It may well be the one where the angels announced the birth of Christ. We had Mass...A pilgrimage to the Holy Land is a trip of a lifetime.
The Columbia Chapter of the Knights of Columbus recently contributed more than $3,200 in support of the Columbia Diocese’s television Mass program. George A. Jones, director of the diocesan communications office, received a check from W. Lee Brock, the diocesan television Mass chairman, and Kevin Miller, K of C state chairman, on Nov. 19, during a reception at the diocesan office building where which recognized the Knights’ contribution to religious education.

“The Knights have always been enthusiastic supporters of this program,” Jones said. “We want the members to know that they are not forgotten. We show that to them by praying for them during every broadcast of the Mass.”


to make an online donation, go to: http://wvhf.org/donation and select your donation: Franciscan Foundation general mail or 1.866.866.6286


The Living Stones of our Faith Heritage

A pilgrimage to the Holy Land includes more than visiting the sites mentioned in scripture and worshiping in historic churches. No trip to the Holy Land is complete without touch- ing the “living stones” of our Christian heritage — the modern Christians living in Israel and Palestine.

These are the direct descendants of the original disciples, the followers who at the time of his ascension Christ commanded to be his witnesses “in Jerusalem, throughout Judea and Samaria, and to the ends of the earth.” They continue to live in places such as Nazareth, Thessalonica, Jerusalem, Bethlehem, and Jerusalem. Life has never been easy for Christians in the Holy Land. They have always been a minority. They have faced many wars and occupations. But they have persevered.

Today, times are especially difficult for members of the Christian commu- nity in the Holy Land. They are caught in the middle of the strife between Jewish and Muslim forces over control of this historic piece of land at the eastern end of the Mediterranean Sea.

The Jews distrust them because they are not Jewish and are Palestinians. So, even though Palestinian Christians have never participated in terrorism, they are caught up in Israel’s security measures to prevent terror attacks. Muslims distrust them because they have not joined in the armed struggle against the Jewish state of Israel. When the United Nations partitioned the Holy Land into a Jewish and an Arab state in 1947, Christians made up less than 2 percent.

Part of this shift is related to high im- migration of Jews into Israel and high birth rates among the local Muslim population. But of greater concern is the emigration of Christians out of the Holy Land because of threats of vio- lence, loss of freedom, confiscation of land and a lack of economic opportu- nity. The security wall erected by Is- rael following the first Intifada of the 1990s has cut off Christians in the West Bank communities such as Bethlehem from jobs, education, health care, and families in Jerusalem and elsewhere in Israel and even other parts of the West Bank and Gaza.

To meet the Christians still living in the Holy Land is to witness believers holding on to their faith in the most difficult of situations. If nothing is done, Christianity will become extinct in the very birth of its place. The holy sites will become just museums with- out thriving communities of Christians carrying on the faith in the land where Jesus walked.

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The Living Stones of our Faith Heritage

A pilgrimage to the Holy Land includes more than visiting the sites mentioned in scripture and worshiping in historic churches. No trip to the Holy Land is complete without touching the “living stones” of our Christian heritage — the modern Christians living in Israel and Palestine.

These are the direct descendants of the original disciples, the followers who at the time of his ascension Christ commanded to be his witnesses “in Jerusalem, throughout Judea and Samaria, and to the ends of the earth.” They continue to live in places such as Nazareth, Thessalonica, Jerusalem, Bethlehem, and Jerusalem. Life has never been easy for Christians in the Holy Land. They have always been a minority. They have faced many wars and occupations. But they have persevered.

Today, times are especially difficult for members of the Christian commu- nity in the Holy Land. They are caught in the middle of the strife between Jewish and Muslim forces over control of this historic piece of land at the eastern end of the Mediterranean Sea.

The Jews distrust them because they are not Jewish and are Palestinians. So, even though Palestinian Christians have never participated in terrorism, they are caught up in Israel’s security measures to prevent terror attacks. Muslims distrust them because they have not joined in the armed struggle against the Jewish state of Israel. When the United Nations partitioned the Holy Land into a Jewish and an Arab state in 1947, Christians made up less than 2 percent.

Part of this shift is related to high im- migration of Jews into Israel and high birth rates among the local Muslim population. But of greater concern is the emigration of Christians out of the Holy Land because of threats of vio- lence, loss of freedom, confiscation of land and a lack of economic opportu- nity. The security wall erected by Is- rael following the first Intifada of the 1990s has cut off Christians in the West Bank communities such as Bethlehem from jobs, education, health care, and families in Jerusalem and elsewhere in Israel and even other parts of the West Bank and Gaza.

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Catholic Times

January 6, 2013
The Epiphany of the Lord (Cycles C)

Magi fulfill prophecy, anticipate end of Gospel

Isaiah 60:1-6

Epiphany of a Child, Our Lord Jesus Christ

Father Lawrence L. Hummer

Paul’s words to the Ephesians provide a summary of this feast: “that the Gentiles are co-heirs, members of his household, and co-partners of his promise, in Christ Jesus through the gospel.” The Isaiah reading and Matthew’s Gospel selection for Sunday, January 6, 2013, almost anticipated a time when non-Jews (Gentiles) would join with Jews in worship of the Lord. Isaiah knew it was an unauthorized opportunity, and he knew that this beginning would happen when Jerusalem’s sons and daughters began to return from their exile in 538 BC. The parade of characters coming to Jerusalem, bringing with them the wealth of the nations, was impressive: camels, horses, donkeys (one-humped camels came from Midian (south and east of Jeru- salem in modern Saudi Arabia), Sheba’s people bringing gold and frankincense. All these witnesses to Jerusalem “proclaiming the praises of the Lord.”

This “ecumenical” vision did not last long, and Gen- ral Motors (now General Motors) thoroughly exposed itself as a fraud as far as Jews were concerned. But the Jews, by the time of Ezra Nehemiah, relations with “the nations” had cooled altogether. Interrac- ial ties were forbidden and people in such marriages were supposed to divorce. By the time of the New Testament, Gentiles who were considered equals at first, began to fizzle out until Paul began to welcome them into the Church. Peter did so unwillingly.

Matthew’s Gospel is written 20 years after Paul’s death. Even though Paul had warmly received Gentiles, Matthew remained decidedly cool toward them. For example, Jesus instructs the Twelve: “Do not go into Gentile territory or any Samaritan city.”

The Weekday Bible Readings

DOCCLEAN WEEKLY RADIO AND TELEVISION MASS SCHEDULE: WEDNESDAY, JANUARY 2, 2013

DAILY MASS 4 a.m., Our Lady of Mt. Carmel in Preble, 6 a.m. in Huntington, 6:30 a.m. in Madelinton (Cheri- son), 7 a.m. in New Boston, 8 a.m. in Washington, 9 a.m. in Melrose, 10 a.m. in Waverly, 11 a.m. in New Boston, 12:30 p.m. in New Boston and 7 p.m. in Galena. Rádio Cívica Internacional 1520 AM (in South and East Africa).

“Do not go into Gentile territory or any Samaritan city.”

St. John Neumann completes parish Marian consecration

Sunday, January 6, 2013

Saint Mary coworkers completed their Lenten through Mary in a big way. On Oct. 20, the parish welcomed share this experience and help each other, while others took of Father Gaitley’s book “33 Days to Morning Glory: A Do-

met with the youth of the parish on Oct. 21.

Father Lawrence Hummer

be expertly vetted in the magnificent book written by the

The Feast of the Epiphany has been celebrated since before Christianity was legal in the Roman Empire (which occurred in 312 AD). However, the Magi, though not so new, and while we can only conjecture what the real magus looked like, no one doubts that the child was certainly born into meandering surroundings.

But what does the Epiphany mean to us 2,000 years later? How may we perceive it as a reality in our ever dark and sinister world. Not only do we have individuals who deny Christ and mock the presence of God, but we even believe who have fallen away and somehow find it liberating to free themselves from God and faith. What an igno-

Our job is to show Christ’s light to a world that so desperately needs it to see.

The Wise Men look on faith that they were sup-

plied travel to long distances to see who this child is and what might be expected of him. Undoubtedly, they were shocked to see the Christ child in such an humble surroundings, a stable, and in the company of the World was lying was hardly the palace they were expecting. What a metaphor for life. Too many in the world today, have skeletons, bod-

ies, and possessions as if there were no consequence-

for their actions. They want to live in a world where they can pretend it if not, never thinking that

people want all kinds of answers to faith and what the Church teaches on a variety of subjects, yet when I ask them to memorize the names of the popes or the Councils, or to understand the role of liturgy or to recite the Rule of St. Francis of Assisi prescribed, but showing them that the Church has a oneness of the will and of which directions to take in life is what is lacking. We have to be the light that engages them in dis-

sion whenever possible, using few words, as the Church does in every homily. The use of pictures through our actions. Turn on your television or radio and you will know better, you might think that Christmas is over. In actually, the commercial part of the year is done and the season of renewal, the season of the Feast of the Epiphany has only just begun. We will see your parish church decorated until after the Epiphany. But how many of you have realized that the birth of Christ is a passing thought; their worry centers around shop-

ping. That is not what Christmas is about. We do not want more than show the Christmas spirit and educate all of us to the meaning of Christmas. We have done a good deed. Christmas is the time of the Year of the Lord. This year’s honoree is Cia McQuade, superintendent of diocesan Catholic schools.

The TIDE IS TURNING TOWARD CATHOLICISM

Rev. David Hartline

The biggest Mardi Gras event in the diocese is set for Saturday, Feb. 9, as Columbus St. Joseph Cathedra kicks off the Lenten season with a grand event and dinner at the Athletic Club of Columbus, 1366 E. Broad St.

Steve Peter and Paul Retreat Center, 2734 Seminary Road S.E., Newark, is sponsoring a retreat for couples on Friday and Saturday, Feb. 8 and 9.

St. Michael School of Worthington Open House & Kinderfest

Father Michael Quaide, superintendant of diocesan Catholic schools. students to attend Catholic schools and aid to religious education programs.

For more information or to make reservations, contact Kimberly Mat-\n
en, director of Catholic education programs.

The proceeds provide support for 18720 ST. JOHN NEUMANN PARISH TRAVEL COUNCIL COUPLES RETREAT

2013 COUPLES RETREAT

St. Peter and Paul Retreat Cen-

tere, 2734 Seminary Road S.E., New-

ark, is sponsoring a retreat for couples on Friday and Saturday, Feb. 8 and 9.

It will begin at 7:30 p.m. Friday and conclude on Saturday after a p.m. dinner the following day. This year’s theme is “The Tide is Turning Toward Catholicism.”

Any interested in attending is asked to call the center (740) 928-4236 or send an email to stpeterandpaultrecent.org.
By Father William Hritsko

I was a novice as a chaplain on a pilgrimage to Italy. I’ve led pilgrimages in the United States, but this would be different. The experience was wonderful – busy and fast-paced, but wonderful.

We (three parishioners joined me) began on Sept. 8, the birthday of Our Lady, in Rome and hit the ground running, visiting two major basilicas – St. Paul’s Outside the Walls and St. John Lateran – just after landing and all before checking into the hotel and dinner! This was an indication of the pace to come. These edifices to the glory of God were magnificent! One of the pilgrims took my photo at the 2000 Jubilee Holy Door because was “the holiest one among them.” I laughed and replied that I was “no holier than they and we are all called to the same holiness,” but had my picture taken anyway.

Tuesday was Mass at the basilica of St. Mary Major. “My” pilgrims (50 or so) asked me to lead music for the Mass with my mandolin. What a privilege to sing for the pilgrims in the basilica! People were stopping as they passed, and those of strangers! I was deafening! He initially appeared tired, but as the audience progressed, he seemed to gain strength from the well wishes and prayers.

When the “pilgrims from Sacred Heart Church in Coshocton, Ohio” were announced – the reader pronounced the city correctly! - the four of us stood and whooped a greeting to His Holiness, as other groups had done, as he gave his acknowledgment. I think I made as much sound as the groups with 100-plus people as them. Those who know me would agree. But it was the Holy Father, after all.

When Pope Benedict offered his pontifical blessing on the pilgrims, our families and holy items, I raised the proof copy of our parish directory honoring the 115th anniversary of Sacred Heart Church, intending the blessing to be for all the parish. I also took the directory to every shrine, church, and holy place of the pilgrimage, intending the blessings to be for all the parish.

Thursday, at the basilica of St. Francis of Assisi, I celebrated the marriage validation in one of the monastic churches and holy place of the pilgrimage. The tour guide arranged for a bridal bouquet and a reception in Bologna as part of our evening meal – including a wedding cake and champagne toast! – all with just two days’ notice. The owner of the restaurant came out crying, greeting the couple with the cake. She loved weddings – even those of strangers! I still haven’t processed all that happened, as is often the way with times well wishes and prayers. If you ever get to go, I recommend requesting a specific itinerary of the churches and places you will visit. Study up on them before you go. Maybe take a copy with you and keep a journal of the trip. Then when you are the places, you can better focus on the devotion, dedication, talent, and struggles that went to create them.

Father William Hritsko is pastor of Conception Sacred Heart Church.
An Irish Pilgrimage

By FATHER PATRICK TONER

There are many ways to experience Ireland. It is an island of many beautiful and inspiring sights, such as the Giant’s Causeway, the Cliffs of Moher, the Ring of Kerry, and more. Ireland is noted for its poets and writers, so an Irish pub crawl in Dublin will introduce you to some you may not know. Ireland is a mythic place, with tales of kings and heroes related to rock and hill. But my favorite description of Ireland is that it is a land of saints and scholars.

The northern part of Ireland is filled with places connected to St. Patrick. After arriving in Dublin, head north to Downpatrick, on the Mourne coast. Downpatrick claims to be the burial site of St. Patrick and St. Brigid. We celebrated Mass in the nearby Catholic church before heading to Belfast for the night. It is a short drive to Armagh, the metropolitan see for Ireland, whose cathedral claims Patrick as its first bishop. The cathedral was built much later. When Patrick was preaching, most of Ireland was rural, and there would not have been many towns.

Continuing west into Donegal, you go deep into St. Patrick territory. One of my favorite stops is Ballintubber Abbey, which is undergoing restoration. The grounds feature outdoor Stations of the Cross in the Irish style and a dramatic rosary walk. Stopping for Mass, or at least a presentation on the history of the abbey, is worth the extra time. It was the only abbey that continued to have Mass celebrated during the penal times of the 18th and early 19th centuries. There is a “holy well” associated with Patrick, and the beginning of a pilgrim way to Croagh Patrick.

Before going over to Croagh Patrick, the mountain where Patrick chased the snakes out of Ireland, make a detour to Lough Derg, the red lake. Lough Derg is known as St. Patrick’s Purgatory. During the summer, it offers a three-day experience of the Irish penitential variety. If you’ve read the first part of Thomas Cahill’s “How the Irish Saved Civilization,” in which he describes early monastic life, then you are ready for three days of fasting, praying, and staying awake. In May, a one-day version is offered that is worth the time.

Croagh Patrick offers the opportunity to climb a shale-covered passage to the top. The trip is marked by way stations, with prayers at each one. Pilgrims are expected to fast from midnight for the climb. Water is permitted. Mass is offered at the summit at various times. This is not for the faint-hearted or those with bad knees.

You are also near Knock, where the Blessed Mother appeared. A sculpture on the wall of the village church depicts the appearance. The area has been converted to a Mass chapel. A large modern shrine and a penitential hall have been added for the pilgrims. If you are driving, check your guidebook for information on “Mass rocks.” These are secluded areas where Mass was offered during the penal times. You can find them all around Ireland. Plan to take a picnic lunch if the weather is promising.

A side trip worth taking is to the Craggaunowen project. It is a historical park reflecting dwelling and life in prehistoric Ireland. It houses the boat that Tim Severin built to duplicate St. Brendan’s voyage to America in the ninth century. There are many accounts of the life of St. Brendan. Bring a brief one to get an appreciation for this holy monk, or buy a copy of the account of Severin’s re-enactment.

Crossing the country back toward Dublin and skipping the Ring of Kerry, Blarney Castle, Waterford, and many other sights worth seeing, our pilgrimage heads for Slane, where Patrick lit the Paschal fire and had a confrontation with the king of Ireland and his druids. You’ll find a lovely high cross and a round tower worth seeing. From there, we slip down to Kildare and visit St. Brigid’s church and St. Brigid’s Well. The well is another good place for a picnic lunch and a reading from the life of St. Brigid.

Of course, you will want to visit the ruins of some of the monasteries. Glendalough is the most famous and most visited. It is worth taking a whole day and walking the grounds. There are still active monasteries in Ireland, and one of them would be a great place to finish your pilgrimage.

Father Toner is pastor of Plain City St. Joseph Church.

Left: A sculpture depicting the apparition of the Blessed Virgin at Knock, Ireland, in 1879. Right: A cross at Slane, where St. Patrick lit the Paschal fire and had a confrontation with the king of Ireland and his druids.

Left: The ruins of the Irish monastery at Glendalough, where priests were trained from the seventh through the 14th centuries. Right: A well dedicated to St. Brigid in County Kildare, Ireland, at a site where pagans are said to have once worshipped.

Photos courtesy Father Patrick Toner