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SETON PARISH REACHES OUT
TO PICKERINGTON COMMUNITY

The Editor's Notebook

The Winter of My Discontent

By David Garick, Editor



It's cold outside. I mean really cold. As I write this week's column, I am pouring down copious amounts of hot coffee. It's Monday morning, and I find Mondays hard enough to shift my body into gear anyway. But when the temperature is plunging below zero, my blood feels as sluggish as motor oil that has been left in the crankcase a few thousand miles too long. I wonder if I can rig up an intravenous device to deliver that coffee directly into my veins.

It's just the first week of January. The worst of winter is still ahead of us. If all of the snow we received in December and this week's plunge into the deep freeze is any indication, the next two months will be a huge trial. I don't handle winter well. Unlike Robert Frost, I am not inclined to stop by woods on a snowy evening to reflect on them filling with snow. Just get me to a warm fire.

I live out in the country, and the thing that strikes me most about the countryside in winter is that the vibrant Technicolor landscape that I am accustomed to the rest of the year shifts into stark black and white, like an old Frank Capra film. The only relief comes with the fleeting sight of a bright red cardinal landing on a gray fencepost, shining like a beacon against the white expanse of an empty wheat field.

On days like this, I can understand why the population of Florida is about to surpass that of New York. There is something to be said for living in a climate where winter means you occasionally need to wear long pants. Of course, living in a place like Florida also means dealing with frequent hurricanes, oppressive humidity that requires a new

stick of deodorant daily, alligators, large snakes, and insects the size of starlings.

I guess that as much as I dislike winter, I have come to accept it as part of the change that God builds into our lives. If every day was like every other, if every experience was the same as the one before it, if every person we met, every meal we ate, every book we read were just the same, life would be devastatingly dull. God places challenges before us to sharpen our senses and to keep us keenly aware of the magnificence of his created order and our place within it.

As John Steinbeck wrote in his novel *The Winter of Our Discontent*: "A day, a livelong day, is not one thing but many. It changes not only in growing light toward zenith and decline again, but in texture and mood, in tone and meaning, warped by a thousand factors of season, of heat or cold, of still or multi winds, torqued by odors, tastes, and the fabrics of ice or grass, of bud or leaf or black-drawn naked limbs. And as a day changes, so do its subjects, bugs and birds, cats, dogs, butterflies and people."

God calls us to experience his creation and to interact with it in line with his charge to us to live in his likeness and to continue his work on earth. This issue of *Catholic Times* takes a look at how that is being accomplished at St. Elizabeth Ann Seton Parish in Pickerington.

So as I pour another cup of hot coffee, I will focus on the line of poet Percy Bysshe Shelley: "O, wind, if winter comes, can spring be far behind?"



CANDIDATES FOR HOLY ORDERS

Sixteen Pontifical College Josephinum seminarians were admitted to candidacy for Holy Orders at a Mass in the college's St. Turibius Chapel on Sunday, Dec. 9, the Solemnity of the Immaculate Conception, by Auxiliary Bishop Eduardo Nevares of Phoenix. The group included four seminarians from the Diocese of Columbus: Jeremiah Guappone, Timothy Lynch, Stephen Smith, and Daniel Swartz.

The rite of admission to candidacy for Holy Orders is celebrated when a seminarian has reached a maturity of purpose in his formation

and has demonstrated the necessary qualifications for ordination. In the presence of the bishop, he publicly expresses his intention to complete his preparation for Holy Orders and his resolve to fully invest himself to that end so that he will serve Christ and the Church faithfully.

Photo: Newly admitted candidates for Holy Orders (from left) Daniel Swartz, Stephen Smith, Timothy Lynch, and Jeremiah Guappone, with Msgr. Christopher Schreck, rector-president of the Pontifical College Josephinum (third from left) and Auxiliary Bishop Eduardo Nevares of Phoenix. Photo by seminarian Joshua Altonji

RESPECT LIFE MASS IS JANUARY 22

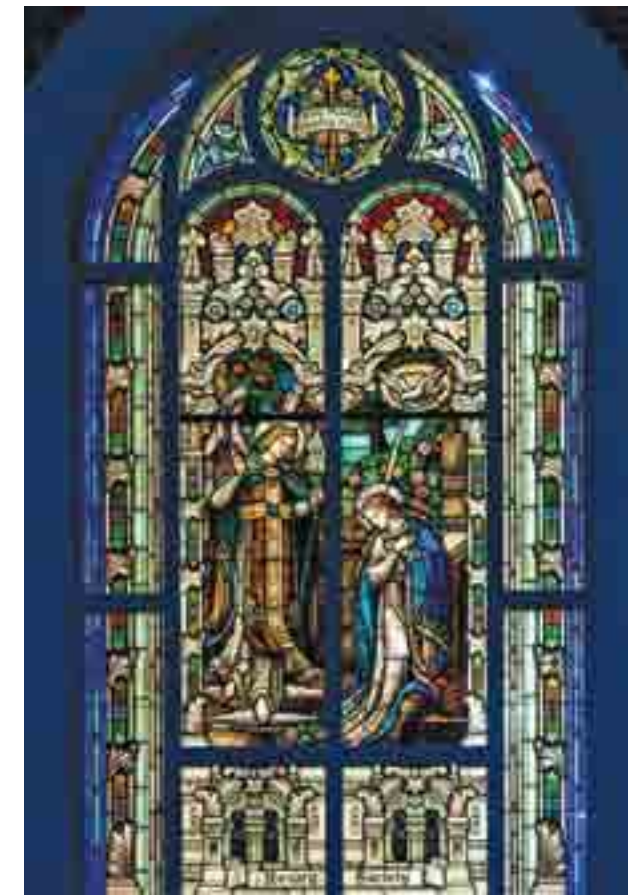
The annual diocesan Respect Life Mass will take place at 10:30 a.m. Wednesday, Jan. 22 in Columbus St. Joseph Cathedral, 212 E. Broad St. Bishop Frederick Campbell will be the principal celebrant. On this day of the anniversary of the U.S. Supreme Court's *Roe v. Wade* decision, the diocese will join all dioceses of the United States in observing a day of prayer for the legal protection of unborn children.

A Rally for Life will take place following the Mass at noon at the Ohio Statehouse.

For those who plan to attend activities in Washington related to the

anniversary of *Roe v. Wade*, visit the U.S. Catholic bishops' national prayer vigil for life website at www.usccb.org/about/pro-life-activities/january-roe-events.

The diocesan Respect Life Conference will take place Saturday, March 15 at Columbus Immaculate Conception Church, 414 E. North Broadway. The featured speaker will be Dr. Marie Hilliard, director of bioethics and public policy of the National Catholic Bioethics Center. She will speak on the current status of health care and religious liberty, as well as the hazards of public policy initiatives in end-of-life care.



MASS DEDICATES ST. JOHN NEUMANN EXPANSION

More than 1,000 members of the parish community, along with 15 priests and 11 deacons, gathered at Sunbury St. John Neumann Parish on Wednesday, Dec. 18 for a Mass dedicating the expanded, beautified church building.

The evening began with a greeting by Bishop Frederick Campbell, followed by a traditional procession to the church.

Architectural plans were presented to the bishop by Nikki Wildman of M+A Architects on behalf of the parish for the diocesan records. Keys to the building were presented by project manager Greg Keener of Elford Construction on behalf of those who labored to build the church. Business manager Bob Scott represented the parish in the presentation to the bishop. Father David Sizemore, pastor, unlocked the church as Bishop Campbell invited the congregation to enter.

The parish choir, led by Chip Stalter and accompanied by pianist Pam Hamann, a brass quartet, and a flute, sang as the people entered, followed by fourth-degree Knights of Columbus and ministers of the Mass.

As a sign and remembrance of baptism, the people were blessed with holy water. Scripture readings from Nehemiah, the Psalms, Hebrews, and John were the inspiration for Bishop Campbell's homily. "The church is not a building, but its people", the bishop said, adding that "Jesus is always the future of the church."

Following the profession of faith and the litany of the saints, the bishop anointed the new walls of the church and the Eucharistic Adoration chapel, assisted by Father Sizemore and Fathers Pat Toner, James Walter, and Michael Gribble, who previously served the parish. Building committee chair Sherry Whitacre, with her husband, Shane, and their four children

presented the bread and wine for Communion.

After Mass, Father Sizemore shared his gratitude for all those who were involved in the project, including, but not limited to the long-range planning committee, capital campaign, liturgy committee, and parish staff. He also acknowledged the building committee, which has met weekly and sometimes daily over the past couple of years. The intention for the Mass was for diocesan building superintendent Patrick Davis, who died three days before the dedication.

"Not only did we expand and beautify our church for our current parishioners, we also want to provide space for all the people who live in our neighborhoods who have yet to meet Jesus, who have forgotten him and stopped coming to church, or for those who will move into this area," Father Sizemore said.

"As a staff and parish, we will now begin strategic spiritual planning. Together, the parish will determine ways to build the kingdom of God, bringing more souls to him through our multiyear focus of building Eucharistic Adoration, small faith-sharing groups, strengthening marriage and family life, focusing on youth and young adults, and growing opportunities for outreach ... both to the materially poor and the poor in spirit. The Lord has great plans for this parish."

Transepts have been added to the structure, originally built in 2004, which will now seat more than 1,100 people to accommodate the growing parish, founded in 1977. The interior of the church has been transformed to depict the beauty of the Catholic faith. The focal point is Our Lord in the tabernacle on an ornate carved wood altar of repose, obtained from Father Kevin Lutz at the Holy Family Jubilee Museum in Columbus. Beautiful stained-glass windows, murals, stations of

the cross, and statues feature the lives of Jesus, Mary, Joseph, and the saints. Visitors will be able to learn the story of Christianity through Biblical pictures and symbols throughout the fully renovated church. An immersion baptismal font has been added and awaits the parish's largest RCIA class as it prepares for the Easter Vigil. A cloister walkway now connects the church, Eucharistic Adoration chapel, faith and family center, and parish office buildings.

All are welcome to visit the new church for Mass at 4 p.m. Saturday, 9 and 11 a.m. and 5 p.m. Sunday, 6 p.m. Tuesdays and Thursdays, and 11 a.m. Wednesdays and Fridays. There will be an open house from 1 to 3 p.m. Sunday, Feb. 16 for anyone interesting in viewing and learning more about the building's art and symbols of the faith.

Photos, clockwise from top left: A stained-glass window in the expanded Sunbury St. John Neumann Church which came from a closed church in Cleveland; Bishop Frederick Campbell and diocesan clergy at the church's Dec. 18 dedication Mass; the parish Eucharistic Adoration chapel. CT photos by Ken Snow



Front Page photo: Pickerington St. Elizabeth Seton Parish has served its community since 1978. Photo courtesy Seton Parish

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Bishop Frederick F. Campbell, D.D., Ph.D. ~ President & Publisher
 David Garick ~ Editor (dgarick@coldsdioc.org)
 Tim Puet ~ Reporter (tput@coldsdioc.org)
 Alexandra Keves ~ Graphic Design Manager (akeves@coldsdioc.org)
 Deacon Steve DeMers ~ Business Manager (sdemers@coldsdioc.org)
 Jodie Sfreddo ~ Bookkeeper/Circulation Coordinator (jsfreddo@coldsdioc.org)

Mailing Address: 197 E. Gay St., Columbus OH 43215
 Editorial Staff Telephone (614) 224-5195 FAX (614) 241-2518
 Business Staff Telephone (614) 224-6530 FAX (614) 241-2518

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PRACTICAL STEWARDSHIP

By Rick Jeric

Concerns

Have you prayed and meditated with the Prayer of St. Francis often over the past few weeks? It is such a straightforward and practical prayer, and it tells us exactly how we should live our lives as peaceful, loving, and humble stewards. No wonder our Pope Francis chose this name. The Christmas season extends the joy and celebration into the new year, and that wish of "Peace on Earth" is to be carried forward through each and every day. What better transformation in our hearts and lives than hatred to love, injury to pardon, doubt to faith, despair to hope, darkness to light, and sadness to joy. We have just been through the greatest season of giving that we know. May we continue to give, confident in our faith and knowing that eternal life awaits.

This is also a good time of year to give some serious consideration to those in need, in a variety of ways. Beginning with ourselves, we may have resolved to get in better shape, to work on those addictions, or hopefully to pray more, in both quantity and quality. It is also a good thing for us to resolve to help with the many concerns that remain for so many in our diocese who are in need. Our diocesan Office for Social Concerns addresses these needs each day, and while many people receive great help, the needs continue to grow. There are so many good and easy ways for us to help, so I will communicate some of them that are prominent in the month of January. These are selected from the December "Latest Updates" from the Office for Social Concerns. January is Poverty in America Awareness Month. In the United States today, more than 46 million Americans live in poverty. That is simply embarrassing and hard to imagine. For more details on this issue and how you can help, visit www.povertyusa.org. Jan. 1 was the World Day of Peace. Pope Francis has urged all of us to open our hearts to our brothers and sisters affected by poverty, hunger, conflicts, migrations, pollution, inequalities, underdevelopment, and injustice. To read the pope's World Day of Peace message, visit www.usccb.org/issues. Jan. 5 to 11 is National Migration Week. The most vulnerable migrants, such as children and victims of human trafficking, find themselves often in situations where their lives are severely limited and harmed. Jan. 15 to 22 is Stand Against Violence Week. Our parishes and dioceses across the nation focus on peace and policies against violence, from the birthday of Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. through the anniversary of the awful Roe vs. Wade decision legalizing the violence of abortion. On Wednesday, Jan. 22, Bishop Campbell will be the celebrant at the Respect Life Mass at 10:30 a.m. at Columbus St. Joseph Cathedral. We will join the rest of the nation in observing a day of prayer for the legal protection of unborn children. The annual Rally for Life will take place on the west plaza of the Statehouse at noon the same day.

Our practical challenge this week is to pray earnestly for all of these concerns. These are all right in our own backyard, in our neighborhoods, and in the Diocese of Columbus. Beyond prayer, be informed and educated about the status of these issues. These are our brothers and sisters in need, and all are a part of the Body of Christ. And finally, actively participate in as many of these events as you can. Let us live our faith in 2014, and be doers of the Word.

Jeric is director of development and planning for the Columbus Diocese.



Catholic Youth Center celebrating 50 Years

Zanesville Bishop Rosecrans High School will celebrate the 50th anniversary of the laying of the cornerstone of its athletic wing at 2 p.m. Sunday, Jan. 12, when Father Martin Ralko, pastor of Zanesville St. Nicholas Church, blesses the building. An open house will take place from 2 to 4 p.m.

Ground was broken in 1963 for what then was known as the Catholic Youth Center. It consisted of Rogge Gym, an Olympic-size pool, locker rooms, a chaperone room, five classrooms, an all-purpose room, a lobby area, a concession stand, and a storage area.

The cornerstone of the building was laid on Dec. 6, 1963. Cora Rogge financed the gymnasium in memory of her late husband, Albert.

At the time of the center's construction, Bishop Rosecrans High School was housed on the top and basement floors of the Zanesville St. Nicholas School building, along with the entire St. Nicholas Elementary School. Approximately 900 students attending grades one to 2 were housed in the building. The youth center was built to ease crowded conditions and provide athletic facilities.

The current library and music room at Rosecrans originally housed the St. Nicholas seventh and eighth grades. When the academic wing was built in 1970, the classrooms were converted into the library, conference and music room. The chaperone room was made into Our Lady of the Rosary Chapel, the all-purpose room became Dury Hall, and a storage area was converted to a teachers' lounge and work area.

The Rosecrans pool is the only Olympic-size indoor pool in Muskingum County and is open to the public for swimming, water aerobics, and other activities. It is also the practice and home pool of eight swim teams.

Dury Hall served for many years as the bingo room until bingo no was longer played at Rosecrans. It currently serves as the lunch room for high school students and the site of other high school activities. Rogge Gym has been the home court of the Bishops since its dedication in 1965.

The 20-year dream of Rosecrans having its own academic facility was realized when the academic wing of the school was dedicated on May 23, 1971.

Catholic Record Society seeking new members

The Catholic Record Society, founded in 1974, is dedicated to preserving the history and bringing into better light the heroism of those who laid the foundation of today's Diocese of Columbus. The accomplishments of those early pioneers, despite tremendous hardships, are part of an inspiring and encouraging story for today's Catholic.

The society also supports the diocesan archives, which preserve the official records of the diocese. It maintains a variety of materials and records and responds to individuals seeking genealogical or historical information on diocesan parishes, institutions, religious orders, and clergy.

Meetings take place quarterly. Society members receive a calendar year subscription to the organization's monthly bulletin, the *Barquilla de la Santa Maria*, which contains records and excellently written accounts and illuminations of the historic people and events of the diocese.

Basic membership is \$12 with the digital bulletin or \$25 with the paper bulletin. An institutional subscription is \$35. For a full year's membership, send a check or money order before Friday, Jan. 31 to Catholic Record Society, 197 E. Gay St., Columbus OH 43215. The society may be contacted by phone at (614) 241-2571 or by email at rsomail@colsdioec.org.



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CUM CHRISTO CELEBRATING 50 YEARS

Throughout 2014, the Cum Christo movement is celebrating the 50th anniversary of its beginnings in Columbus. Cum Christo is an outgrowth of the Cursillo movement to serve candidates for faith renewal. The founders of Cursillo wanted to explore how Christianity could survive in, and penetrate, a secular culture and how it could grow within that culture. The three-day retreat asks participants to transform the world in which they live. Cum Christo proposes a method to develop one's spirituality and strengthen the leadership of the laity in the work of the church. More than 9,000 men and women have taken part in the Columbus weekends since they were introduced in 1964 at the former Holy Cross School.

A Cum Christo weekend begins on a Thursday evening and ends the following Sunday evening. During this time, the candidates live and work together, listening to talks given by clergy and laypeople. The clergy, spiritual directors, and laypeople who make up the Cum Christo team spend weeks praying and working together in preparation. Cum Christo differs greatly from the typical solitude of a religious retreat. The exercises take the teachings of Christ and present them in a climate of joy.

When the weekend is over, the candidates begin a journey of perseverance and are given a means to do so through weekly reunions. Smaller groups of men and women are also encouraged to meet weekly and are given a proven format of piety, study, and action.

The Cum Christo movement is an encounter with Christ. This encounter reaches the minds and hearts of the

participants, and they are changed forever. This change becomes the catalyst and heart of a true evangelization within their families and in their workplaces and communities. The aim is to concentrate closely on the person and teaching of Jesus Christ. Those who attend a weekend receive a living, deeper understanding of basic Christian truths, as well as a means to continue their formation and spiritual journey.

Keeping in mind that all Christians are part of a larger universal church, the Columbus Cursillo became ecumenical and chose the name Cum Christo to stress that all participants are followers of Christ. Therefore, the 50th anniversary celebrations will include activities at both Protestant and Catholic churches in the area. The commemoration began with a Mass at Columbus Holy Cross Church on Jan. 5. The second event will be a satellite *ultreya*, a Cum Christo gathering, at 7:30 p.m. Wednesday, Jan. 15, at All Saints Lutheran Church, 6770 N. High St., Worthington. More satellite *ultreyas* at area churches will be scheduled during the year for the convenience of Cursillistas, or participants, who live in the suburbs.

A highlight of the 50th anniversary year will be a concelebrated Mass of thanksgiving in October with Bishop Frederick Campbell presiding. Bishop Campbell describes the movement as "an exemplary faith renewal program that ... has trained and motivated Christians in central Ohio to draw nearer to Jesus Christ and to go out and live their faith more fully in their church and beyond."

For information call the organization at 614.221.1809, or www.cumchristo.org.

Director of Religious Education

Our Lady of Mt. Carmel Church, Buckeye Lake, Ohio

This is a part-time position (20 hours per week) and does not offer insurance/health benefits.

Responsibilities for this position include coordination of the PSR program (Pre-K through Grade 12), Vacation Bible School Program, Sacramental preparation, Children's Liturgy of the Word, and assist with the Youth Ministry program.

Applicant must have either a Bachelor's Degree in Theology or equivalent catechist's certification. Position effective July 1, 2014. Resumé deadline is January 17, 2014. Applicants may submit their resúmes to:

Father William Ferguson/Our Lady of Mt. Carmel Church
PO Box 45 • 5133 Walnut Rd., Buckeye Lake, Ohio 43008
e-mail: olmc@midohio.twcbc.com



Lady Hawks Softball Players Christmas Visit to the Villas at St. Therese

More than 20 members of the Columbus Bishop Hartley High school softball team spent time bringing Christmas cheer to residents of The Villas at St. Therese in Columbus during the holidays. They sang carols and delivered goodie bags full of cookies, chocolates, and candy canes. This annual service project has been a Hartley tradition under coach Meghan Zuercher for seven years. "Each year, I am so proud of the smiles they bring to the residents' faces," she said. "The girls are always compassionate, engaging the residents in conversations about their life and loved ones as well as their favorite Christmas traditions and songs."

Photo courtesy Bishop Hartley High School



ST. ANN'S EXPANSION CEREMONY

Mount Carmel St. Ann's Hospital in Westerville conducted a grand opening ceremony in December for its \$110 million expansion project. Bishop Frederick Campbell blessed the new facilities and Westerville Mayor Diane Fosselman presented hospital officials with a commendation honoring the work. Pictured are (from left) Don Lafollette, chief nursing officer, Mount Carmel St. Ann's; Erin Stitzel, senior development officer, Mount Carmel Foundation; Chris Lagana, owner representative and planning consultant for design and construction, Mount Carmel Health System; Janet Meeks, president and chief operating officer, Mount Carmel St. Ann's; Mayor Fosselman; Mike Ronau, imaging services director, Mount Carmel Health; Dr. Martha Reigel, vice president of medical affairs, Mount Carmel Health; and Nicole Fischer, director of physician services, Mount Carmel St. Ann's. The expansion includes a patient tower with 60 beds, a cardiovascular center of excellence, a general surgery, orthopedic and spine unit, a new main entrance, and a new three-level garage and road enhancements. Patients will begin using the tower in mid-January. The hospital will reach another important milestone in April when it begins offering open-heart surgery.

Photo by the Jacksons Photography



LET US PRAY

by: MICHELLE LEMIESZ

Director, Office for Divine Worship

Music is the soul of culture

Music is the soul of culture. The words and melodies of a song have the ability to transport us to another time and place, evoking memories and emotions. Unlike many forms of art, music is universal.

The Old Testament texts give us a glimpse into the role music played in worship. The Psalms themselves were written as songs of praise, thanksgiving, and lament. We hear about the musical celebration when the Ark of the Covenant was brought to Jerusalem “while David and all the Israelites made merry before the Lord with all their strength, with singing and with citharas, harps, tambourines, sistrums and cymbals” (2 Samuel 6:5). It was this tradition that Jesus and his disciples were immersed in, and we see references to this in passages such as Matthew 26:30, which notes that the Last Supper ended with Jesus and the Apostles “singing a hymn ... (before going) to the Mount of Olives.”

In various letters, St. Paul passes this tradition on to the early church. An example is seen in his enjoining the Gentiles in the letter to the Romans to “glorify God for his mercy, as it is written: ‘Therefore, I will praise you among the Gentiles and sing praises to your name’”(Romans 15:9). Pictures found in the Roman catacombs illustrate men and women playing the flute or the lyre. As time passed, music became a part of the Christian Church’s way of worship and prayer.

Fast-forwarding to the ninth and 10th centuries, we are introduced to the development of Gregorian chant. While history has long credited Pope St. Gregory the Great with the invention of this form of music, scholars now believe that it came from the Carolingian synthesis of Roman chant and Galician chant. In time, Gregorian chant became the standard form of music utilized in Catholic liturgy until the mid-18th century. At that time, the Church allowed the music of composers such as Bach and Mozart to be played and sung for the Ordinary of the Mass. This rich history became the legacy of Catholic liturgical music, promoted and acknowledged by the Second Vatican Council in Sacrosanctum Concilium (Chapter 6, No. 112).

Growing up during the time that Sacrosanctum Concilium was being implemented in parishes, the use of guitars, tambourines, and other musical instruments was commonplace to me. While the organ was used in our parish, a folk Mass with the songs of the St. Louis Jesuits, Carey Landry, and others was the norm. Looking back, I can see how this music was a radical change from what was heard in the church by my parents and grandparents. I must admit that today, I view some of the songs as “cheesy.” However, in both the good and the not-so-good, they played a part in forming me in the Catholic faith and claiming it as my own.

Sacrosanctum Concilium has opened the door to new musical styles, compositions, and interpretations. Additionally, it has facilitated the integration of ethnic and cultural music into liturgical music. The council fathers noted 50 years ago that it was important to “produce compositions which have the qualities proper to genuine sacred music, not confining themselves to works which can be sung only by large choirs, but providing also for the needs of small choirs and for the active participation of the entire assembly of the faithful.” (SC 121). This remains just as important a goal for the Church today. Johann Sebastian Bach is quoted as saying “Where there is devotional music, God is always at hand with His gracious presence.” May we render to God acceptable prayer and worship through the words we sing and the melodies we play.

Next: *Music and the Liturgy*

Rules for Catholics; Listening to non-Catholic preachers



QUESTION & ANSWER

by: FATHER KENNETH DOYLE
Catholic News Service

Q. I follow your column weekly and am fascinated by how often you quote a rule from our catechism, numbered into the thousands. Is everything Catholics do covered by a rule, and how is the ordinary person supposed to know every rule? Didn’t Jesus say there are two commandments: Love God above all things and love your neighbor as yourself? (Bradenton, Fla.)

A. The *Catechism of the Catholic Church* serves as a handy summary of the church’s basic teachings. True, there are 2,865 “sections” (each of them normally a single paragraph).

The vast majority, though, are not “rules,” but explanations of Scriptural passages and of church teaching over the centuries. (Most religions, by the way, have multiple “rules” as a helpful guide to life’s varied situations. The Jewish Talmudic law had 613 precepts.)

I do, as you state, frequently quote the catechism as a handy way of responding to readers’ queries. I have referenced it in response to questions as diverse as the morality of artificial insemination and whether blessed articles can be resold.

To answer your question as to how ordinary Catholics can know “every rule” of the church, the answer is that they can’t, which is the reason for a column like this. (Even easier than reading a column, though, is simply to ask a local priest or religious educator.)

Your appeal to Jesus’ quote on loving God and neighbor is important. To be fair, Christ did not say that these two were the only commandments. His answer (in Matthew 22:34-40) came in response to a lawyer’s question as to which was “the greatest” of the commandments. Jesus said, “The whole law and the prophets depend on these two commandments.”

He did not say that this was all you needed to know.

Finally, as to whether everything Catholics do is “covered by a rule,” the answer is “Absolutely not.” It would be far easier if that were so, if we could simply turn to a page in a book for clear-cut answers to

every challenge of daily living.

Most of our moral issues are complex: how to be a good parent, how to get along with people at work, how to use to the fullest the talents God has given us. On these things, a manual of behavior doesn’t always help – only daily reflection, guided by prayer.

Q. Is a Catholic allowed to listen to and heed the advice of preachers from other religions? (I find sermons from people like Joel Osteen and Joyce Meyer seem to hit home more often than the lofty thoughts of some Catholic priests.) (Albany, N.Y.)

A. First, for the reader who may not know: Joel Osteen is a Christian televangelist and pastor of Lakewood Church in Houston who is seen weekly by viewers in more than 100 nations; Joyce Meyer is a charismatic Christian author and speaker who appears regularly on television in a program called “Enjoying Everyday Life.”

The Second Vatican Council’s declaration *Nostra Aetate* addresses your question about reflecting on the insights offered by other religions. It states that “the Catholic Church rejects nothing that is true and holy in these religions ... (and) regards with sincere reverence those ways of conduct and life, those precepts and teachings which, though differing in many aspects from the ones she holds and sets forth, nonetheless often reflect a ray of that Truth which enlightens all.”

So the answer to your question is a clear “Yes.” It can be beneficial to listen to preachers of other faiths and to take value from what they say.

In my experience, Protestant pastors often devote more time each week to the preparation of their Sunday sermon than Catholic priests. This is due, in part, to the reality that Catholic parishes are generally far larger, with more pastoral demands on the priest’s time.

But it’s also because the sermon is the center of many Protestant services, while the focus in the Catholic Church is always on celebrating the Eucharist, which was the particular way Jesus asked his followers to keep his memory alive.

Pope Francis, though, in his November 2013 pastoral exhortation *Evangelii Gaudium*, urged priests to give increased attention to the quality of their homilies.

Questions may be sent to Father Kenneth Doyle at askfatherdoyle@gmail.com and 40 Hopewell St., Albany, N.Y. 12208.

PRESCHOOLERS PITCH IN TO HELP POOR AT CHRISTMAS

By Ronna Coventry

When my students in preschool and pre-kindergarten classes at Dennison St. Mary School (pictured above) put their minds to something, there is no stopping them. The class service project for Christmas was to decorate the classroom Christmas tree with items to help keep less-fortunate people warm this winter. We talked about what kind of things we wanted for the tree, and the compassion and concern the children displayed was heartwarming.

They wanted to know why the mommies of the people they were helping didn’t just go out and buy them what they needed, or why Santa didn’t bring it to them. We talked about how some people may have lost their homes because of a fire, storm, or other reasons. They took this project very seriously, explaining to all classroom visitors why we had a tree with “odd” things hanging on it.

The children asked for help from their family and friends, and help they got! Every day, someone came in with something for the tree. Students, teachers, and staff members from the school also donated items for the tree. I mentioned the tree on Facebook and the class received items from friends who saw it. A package of several items even came from Bridgeport, Ohio. The children loved putting the donations on the tree, and they even placed a hat on top of the tree in place of an angel.

The classes, along with Michelle Wright’s second-grade class, were scheduled to take a field trip to the Dollar Tree in New Philadelphia to purchase items for the tree, but it was canceled because of a snow day. We tried to reschedule, but were unable.

So the teachers decided to go to the store and make enough purchases for each child to be able to “shop” and pick out two items to be placed on the tree. The children had fun shopping in the pretend store and hanging items on the tree, and were so excited to see the tree fill up.

They then had the job of removing the items from the tree, counting them, and boxing them for delivery. Nearly 200 items were collected and donated to the Salvation Army for distribution to those in need. The children collected hats, gloves, socks, scarves, blankets, sweatshirts, underwear, pajamas, mittens, and toys and learned how much fun giving can be, even when you don’t see who gets your gift. The teachers are very proud of the job well done by their classes, school and home families, and friends.

When I dropped the items off to the Salvation Army, the woman work-



ing there was very appreciative of the items, even after I explained they were very simple ones. She told me to be sure and tell the children “Thank you” and let them know how much the people who will receive these things will

love and enjoy every item. When you don’t have those things, something so little is so much bigger than someone else might realize. What a great message to be able to go back and tell the children.

Josephinum’s Clergy Who Cook returns on January 31

You don’t have to be a “foodie” or a gourmet to enjoy Clergy Who Cook. You just have to like delicious food, a fun time with friends, and a chance to help future priests.

The Friends of the Josephinum will sponsor its fourth annual Clergy Who Cook event on Friday, Jan. 31 in the Jessing Center at the Pontifical College Josephinum, 7625 N. High St., Columbus. Doors open at 7 p.m. Bring your friends and your appetite and taste the samples cooked and served by members of the diocesan clergy. By the time you make the rounds of all the food stations, you’ll have enough for a full meal.

Clergy chefs will compete for the People’s Choice award. Diners will vote for their favorites, with dollars dropped in the chefs’ fish bowls at each station. Awards will be given to chefs in other culinary categories. Robin Davis, former food editor of *The Columbus Dispatch*, will judge the entries. Awards will be given by 9:30 p.m.

Clergy competing this year are: Deacon Anthony Bonacci, Plain City St. Joseph; Father Michael Mary Dosch, OP, Columbus St. Patrick; Deacon. Joseph Ciaciura, Westerville St. Paul; the team of Father David Monaco and Father Walter Oxley, Josephinum faculty; Deacon Andy Naporano, Co-

lumbus St. Margaret of Cortona; the team of Brian Seiler and Dale Meade, Josephinum seminarians; Father David Sizemore, Sunbury St. John Neumann; Father Mike Watson, Delaware St. Mary; Deacon Todd Tucky, Marion St. Mary; and Father Kevin Lutz, Columbus St. Mary.

Required reservations are being accepted until capacity is reached. The cost is \$40 per person. A cash beverage bar will be available. To reserve online, visit www.pcj.edu or call Carrie at (614) 985-2234. Clergy Who Cook has sold out for the past three years, so don’t delay to ensure a reservation for you and your friends.

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ETHICAL DIRECTIVES AND THE CARE OF PREGNANT WOMEN IN CATHOLIC HOSPITALS



MAKING SENSE Out of Bioethics

Father Tad Pacholczyk

At the beginning of December, the American Civil Liberties Union filed a sweeping federal lawsuit against the U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops over its Ethical and Religious Directives for Catholic hospitals, alleging that the directives, with their prohibition against direct abortion, resulted in negligent care of a pregnant woman named Tamesha Means. Her water broke at 18 weeks, leading to infection of the amniotic membranes, followed by spontaneous labor and delivery of her child, who lived only a few hours.

During the course of these events, Means went a Catholic hospital in Michigan several times, and, according to the lawsuit, was sent home, even as contractions were starting. The lawsuit not only suggests that she should have been given a drug to induce labor early on, but claims this wasn't possible precisely because the hospital was Catholic and bound by the directives. It further asserts that Catholic hospitals are not able to terminate a woman's pregnancy by inducing premature labor "even if necessary for her health," because to do so would be "prohibited" by the directives.

In point of fact, however, the directives would not prevent the early induction of labor for these cases. Not infrequently, labor is induced in Catholic hospitals in complete conformity with the directives. Directive 47 (never mentioned in the lawsuit) is very clear: "Operations, treatments, and medications that have as their direct purpose the cure of a proportionately serious pathological condition of a pregnant woman are permitted when they cannot be safely postponed until the unborn child is viable, even if they will result in the death of the unborn child."

Deciding about whether to induce labor involves the recognition that there are two patients involved – the mother and her in utero child – and that the interests of the two can sometimes be in conflict. In certain situations – for example, when the child is very close to the point of viability and the pregnancy is at risk – it may be recommended to delay early induction of labor in the hope that the child can grow further and the pregnancy can be safely shuttled to a point beyond viability, allowing both mother and child to be saved. Sometimes, expectant management of this kind is not possible. Each case will require its own assessment of the risks, benefits, and likely outcomes before deciding whether it would be appropriate to induce labor.

When a woman's water breaks many weeks before viability and infection arises, long-term expectant management of a pregnancy is often not possible. In such cases, induction of labor becomes medically indicated

in order to expel the infected membranes and prevent the infection from spreading and causing maternal death. Early induction in these cases is carried out with the foreseen, but unintended, consequence that the child will die following delivery because of his or her extreme prematurity.

Such early induction of labor would be allowable because the act itself, i.e., the action of inducing labor, is a good act (expelling the infected amniotic membranes), and is not directed toward harming the body-person of the child, as it would be in the case of a direct abortion, when the child is targeted for saline injection or dismemberment. The medical intervention, in other words, is directed toward the body-person of the mother, using a drug to induce contractions in her uterus. One reluctantly tolerates the unintended loss of life that occurs secondary to the primary action of treating her life-threatening infection.

On the other hand, direct killing of a human being through abortion, even if it were to provide benefit for the mother, cannot be construed as valid health care, but rather as a betrayal of the healing purposes of medicine at its most fundamental level. Such an action invariably fails to respect both the human dignity of the unborn patient and his or her human rights. It also gravely violates a mother's innate desire and duty to protect her unborn baby. If she finds herself in the unfortunate situation of having a severe uterine infection during pregnancy, she, too, would appreciate the physician's efforts to treat her without desiring to kill her child, even if the child may end up dying as an unintended consequence of treating the pathology.

The application of Catholic moral teaching to this issue is therefore directed toward two important and specific ends: first, the complete avoidance of directly killing the child, and second, the preservation of the lives of both mother and child to the extent possible under the circumstances.

Based upon these ends, the Ethical and Religious Directives of the U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops provide important ethical parameters for framing the appropriate treatment of both mother and unborn child in high-risk pregnancies, while simultaneously safeguarding the fundamental integrity of medical practice in these complex obstetrical situations.

Father Tadeusz Pacholczyk, PhD, earned his doctorate in neuroscience from Yale and did postdoctoral work at Harvard. He is a priest of the diocese of Fall River, Mass. and serves as director of education at the National Catholic Bioethics Center in Philadelphia. See www.ncbcenter.org.

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Resolving to Try



Finding Faith in Everyday Life

Sarah Reinhard

I have a love-hate relationship with New Year's resolutions. On the one hand, I love the organized feeling they give me to examine my life and to promise myself and those I love that I will improve. On the other hand, I hate failing.

And, oh, do I fail. I fail a lot. Every year, no matter how small my resolution(s), I still seem to miss the mark.

How many years have I been resolving (even if I don't word it quite that way) to get in shape or at least get myself moving? When will I give up on eating better and saying "No" and cleaning more?

Oh, wait. Maybe I already have. Just as I claim to hate Christmas (which is its own story), I also claim to not make New Year's resolutions. But I do, in a way that I can't even help. This year, I even had the audacity to tell the world they were "goals" and not "resolutions," as though the mere semantics of it could change the fact that I was giving in to the allure once again.

As I sit with a brand-new calendar in front of me, I can't help but glance at the school supplies that are halfway through their school year.

In September, breathing crisp fall air, I find myself inspired by unsharpened pencils and the possibilities of blank notebooks.

Those pencils have been sharpened a few times, and many of them have lost their erasers. The notebooks have been scribbled in, and the covers are crinkled and bent.

Our Christmas Angel

By Dennis Morrison

For some years, my sister Marge has shared her firm belief that our departed loved ones periodically send us "signs" from heaven to let us know they are still with us, sharing in our everyday experiences and helping us endure life's most difficult challenges. It is perhaps fitting that Marge's home would provide the setting for what occurred on Christmas Eve this past year.

For nearly 30 years, my wife and I and our two daughters faithfully traveled to our hometown of Buffalo, N.Y. to spend Christmas Eve with our families. On many of those occasions, we encountered brutal weather, but we always managed it to make it safely to "Nana Rita's" (my wife's mother), where she warmly greeted us, regardless of the hour, with something to eat and a cool glass of wine or a cold Canadian beer. Our annual retreats to Buffalo at Christmas ended when Nana Rita moved to Florida a few years ago for health reasons. Our extended holiday visits with family in cold, snowy Buffalo were replaced with enjoying a few days of

warm Florida sunshine with Nana. Our Florida trips at Christmas abruptly ended after we said our final goodbyes to our beloved Nana in October 2012. Thankfully, less than two months later, my wife and I greeted our first grandchild, whose timely arrival truly helped us endure our heartfelt loss.

Our plans for Christmas 2013 included a return trip to Buffalo, in large part so our Buffalo family could meet our beautiful granddaughter. Several weeks before Christmas, however, our family learned of the inexplicable passing of the son of some of our dearest friends in Columbus. Needless to say, our Christmas plans were placed on hold as we steadfastly attempted to provide comfort and support to our friends and their family while struggling to understand why God had chosen this warm, loving, and talented young man as he was about to graduate from college. My wife and I were devastated by this young man's death, and we pledged to his family members that we would pray for them and continue to provide support as they learned to live

with his loss. At his funeral, my wife calmly, but confidently told his mom and dad that our Nana Rita would be sure to look after him in heaven.

My wife and I arrived safely in Buffalo on the evening preceding Christmas Eve. In typical fashion, my sister Marge and my brother-in-law Jim enthusiastically greeted us, and soon Marge was serving us warm homemade pot pie and refreshing drinks. As we chatted with our hosts late into the evening (now Christmas Eve), we shared the tragic news of the recent passing of the son of our close friends. Before long, our conversation began to drag, as each of us began to internalize and ponder the depth of this family's despair. We all agreed that prayer would help them persevere. With that, I was reminded of my wife's special message to our friends that our own dear Nana Rita would surely be of assistance to their son.

Suddenly, Marge sprang to her feet to slice another piece of pie and pour another glass of wine, and the conversation quickly shifted. The mood in the

The pencils haven't always been used for the purpose they were purchased, and the notebooks have been filled with doodles as much as with writing. They've failed a bit in their resolutions too, haven't they?

Maybe failing isn't so bad. Maybe I need that lesson in humility, that prodding that forces me to lay my pride in my Father's hands.

Maybe, this year, I'll resolve to try ... perhaps I'll try something God's been asking of me or try to focus more on His will than on my lost desires. Maybe I'll try working out (again) or eating better (again). And it's possible I'll fail (again).

One thing's for sure: If I'm letting God lead me, my resolutions will start on the right foot.

Sarah Reinhard can be found at SnoringScholar.com and trying to keep her kids busy while she chugs another cup of coffee and snuggles in wool socks.

room lifted as my wife began to speak about how much her mom enjoyed the Christmas season and spending time with family and loved ones. We laughed aloud as we exchanged warm memories of her, including the antlers, dangling ornament earrings, and Rudolph nose she enjoyed wearing to our holiday gatherings. She was loved by all. What a gal!

As Marge was about to pour my wife a glass of wine, my wife stopped her, exclaiming, "Look at the ice in my glass!" As we examined her glass, we quickly found that the three ice cubes that Marge had randomly tossed into the glass had perfectly formed the body of a beautiful angel with broad wings and a curved body. Silently, we stared at the glass in total amazement before taking a photograph. Seconds after the photograph was taken, the ice cubes collapsed! Instinctively, our eyes moved from the glass to Marge. Intuitively, we knew just what she was thinking. Surely it was a "sign"!

Dennis Morrison is a parishioner at Hilliard St. Brendan Church.



A statue of St. Elizabeth Seton, the first native of the United States to be canonized, inside the parish named for her in Pickerington.

CT file photo by Ken Snow

Story by **TIM PUET**, *Catholic Times Reporter*

ST. ELIZABETH ANN SETON PARISH: ANSWERING THE CALL OF COMMUNITY SERVICE

A little more than eight years ago, Pope Benedict XVI wrote in his first encyclical, "God Is Love," that love of neighbor grounded in the love of God is a responsibility first of all for each individual, but also for the entire church community. He went on to say that the church cannot neglect the service of reaching out to others in charity any more than it can neglect the Sacraments or the Word.

That outreach is at the heart of Pickerington St. Elizabeth Seton Parish's vision of its role in the community. That vision is summarized in a plan adopted in 2007 which uses the words of Benedict, as well as passages from Scripture and other spiritual writing, to provide a road map for meeting the challenge posed by Jesus' words in the Gospels.

"It's what the Gospel calls us to do," said Father James Klima, who has been

pastor at Seton since mid-2003. "As Pope Francis has said, we are to be a church for the poor. We can't sit back on our laurels, but need to try and live his mandate every day. Every one of us can examine our conscience and ask 'Are we doing enough? Can we do more?' In the words of Mother Teresa, 'The eyes of the poor are the eyes of Christ.'"

Seton Parish responds to the call of service through many types of outreach. On the weekend before Christmas, the parish continued a long-standing tradition and provided nearly 1,000 food baskets for families in the Portsmouth area, in cooperation with Catholic Social Services and Portsmouth St. Mary and Holy Redeemer churches.

The effort involved hundreds of parishioners who provided food or cash donations and dozens who made the

two-hour trip to southern Ohio to unload trucks, unpack boxes of donated items, sort them, pack grocery bags, and separate and pack fresh vegetables. For many participants, it was a two- or three-day weekend which involved staying one or two nights in the former Portsmouth St. Mary School, with the parish providing and transporting two breakfasts, two lunches and a dinner for the volunteers, many of whom are members of Knights of Columbus Council 11187 or the Seton Parish Youth (SPY) group.

Another parish tradition involving service beyond central Ohio is what parishioners call the "shoe trip" to the Cranks Creek outreach center in Harlan County, Ky. Parishioners donate more than 1,200 pairs of shoes for students at three schools in the county, historically one of the most impoverished areas of Appalachia, with about 50 parishioners making the trip and the parish providing three meals. Parish religious education director Mary Jane Sobczyk said Seton has assisted the Cranks Creek center in various ways since the mid-1990s.

In addition to its activities outside the region, the parish is involved in many programs to help those in need closer to home. Every Wednesday morning, about 15 or 20 people, led by parishioners Joe and Elaine Fairchild, meet to fashion sleeping bags and blankets for the homeless out of scraps of various materials. Other parishioners, working with the In-

Left: Members of Knights of Columbus Council 11187 prepare a monthly Sunday pancake breakfast. **Center:** Parish young people at the March for Life in Washington. **Right:** Distribution of shoes at the Cranks Creek center in Harlan County, Ky.

Photos courtesy Seton Parish

Left: A summertime scene from Seton Parish, with flowers and plants in bloom next to the cross and the sign listing Mass times at the parish entrance. **Right:** The parish's worship space, which is to be renovated. The church was built in 1981 and Mass was celebrated in a multipurpose room until 1992, when the current sanctuary was completed. Photo courtesy Seton Parish (left); CT staff photo by Ken Snow



terfaith Hospitality Network, provide dinner and breakfast for homeless families at the YMCA Family Center in Columbus once every six weeks.

The K of C collects winter coats, hats, and gloves for children at St. Stephen's Community House and provides food baskets for the needy at Thanksgiving and Christmas. The parish also has an ongoing "can of the month" program to provide specific items for the Pickerington Food Pantry, the Bishop Griffin Center at Columbus Christ the King Church, or the Portsmouth food drive, depending on the time of year.

Seton Parish is a major supporter of the Griffin Center, collecting clothing and gently used household items each week and providing financial help each month. It also collected more than 1,000 new toys for the center's Santa shop.

Sobczyk said parish religious education classes collected more than 1,000 children's books for Nationwide Children's Hospital as an Easter project in 2013. The parish also has an active St. Vincent de Paul Society which collects funds monthly to provide for parishioners in immediate need.

Parish members are involved in pro-life efforts which include an annual bus trip to the March for Life in Washington, which will be taking place later this month, and support for the Pregnancy Decision Health Centers, whose newest location was opened Aug. 1 in Pickerington.

The new PDHC site and the parish itself are located near a clinic which was opened last year by physicians who have performed abortions elsewhere, though not apparently in Pickerington. In response to the clinic, a local interfaith pro-life group

known as Pick Life was formed. The group has many members from Seton and gathers near the clinic for prayer on Monday and Tuesday afternoons and Saturday mornings. It also sponsored community-wide prayer vigils in June and September.

The parish, with about 2,500 families, is one of the largest in the diocese without a parochial school. It has about 150 children attending elementary and middle school at Reynoldsburg St. Pius X, the parish from which Seton was formed, and high school students at Columbus Bishop Hartley, Columbus St. Charles, and Lancaster Fisher Catholic.

Most of its students – about 750 in kindergarten through sixth grade and 270 in the upper grades – attend Parish School of Religion classes directed by Sobczyk and youth ministry activities led by Barbara Serrano. The PSR program includes a

sacramental preparation class for special-needs students which was begun last year.

About 70 of the students in the upper grades are part of a leadership team which does evangelization work among other Catholic students and among non-Catholic peers with questions about the faith. The team also conducts the parish's annual confirmation retreat and organized recent lock-in programs at Halloween and in December, with the latter including a 24-hour fast.

Besides taking part in the Portsmouth, Cranks Creek and other service programs, organizing and providing music for youth Masses throughout the year, and going to events such as the March for Life, the National Catholic Youth Conference in Indianapolis, and diocesan youth events, members of the SPY youth program take part in adoration of the Blessed Sacrament

from 5 to 6 a.m. every Friday, followed by a preschool social time at a nearby Tim Horton's.

"We don't want our young people to think of church as just something you go to every Sunday because your parents told you, but something that's inseparable from daily life, wherever you are," Serrano said. "Our programs emphasize having the kids taking ownership of what it means to be Catholic, so that they're not just the youth group sitting in a corner, but an important part of a living, vibrant church. Many of them have come back as adults to say how important the program was to them or to talk about what they're doing in their parishes that's based on what they did here. In this way, they're helping bring the parish vision plan to others."

Part of that plan involves continuing to support Eucharistic adoration, which was started 13 years ago under the pastorate of the late Msgr. Stephen Hawkins. It has continued ever since, mainly through the efforts of parishioners Paul and Shirley Thoburn, and is intended to be a perpetual part of parish life. The parish has a Eucharistic chapel that's open 24 hours, seven days a week, except when Mass is being celebrated and during the Sacred Triduum of Holy Week.

Other spiritual activities include a Living Christ retreat for about 40 participants which includes talks, quiet reflection, conversation, meals, prayer, and celebration of the sacraments on a Friday evening and a Saturday at the parish. Four retreats have taken place so far, with a fifth scheduled in March.



SETON, continued from Page 11

The parish's adult faith formation program is showing Jeff Cavins' 20-week video series examining the Acts of the Apostles, which will continue through June, taking a Lenten hiatus to allow for presentation of Father Robert Barron's series on the New Evangelization.

A Scripture study group meets regularly on Wednesday mornings in a religious education classroom to look at the coming Sunday's Scripture readings. A women's group known as the Bible Babes, which recently was featured in the parish newsletter, gathers twice a month at a parishioner's home to see a film about a saint or participate in a program with a Marian- or Scripture-related theme. The parish also has several men's faith sharing groups which trace their origins to either the annual Columbus Catholic Men's Conference or one of the Living Christ retreats.

Besides Father Klima, the parish pastoral team includes Deacons Hector Raymond and Joseph Checca, who have been serving the parish since 2006 and 2012 respectively.

The parish's bereavement committee, which meets on the first Wednesday of each month, is adding a new role to its mission of providing support for families of deceased people through the funeral and into recovery. A bereavement ministry is being formed specifically for teens who have experienced a parent's death.

Serrano said she has learned through



A stained-glass window honoring the late Msgr. Stephen Hawkins. CT file photo by Ken Snow

her years in youth ministry that "There's a definite need for students to have a group they can turn to when a parent dies. It's something an adult can expect to have happen and to prepare for in some manner. For young people, it's often a total shock and can be devastating, so we're studying ways to provide comfort in an age-appropriate way."

Longtime parish music director Pandora Porcase can call on any of seven groups to provide instrumental and vocal support for weekend liturgies. The parish's adult choir sings at the 9:30 a.m. Mass on the first, fourth and fifth Sundays of the month and the 11:15 a.m. Mass on the second Sunday. Other musical groups and their scheduled Masses include the young people's choir, second Sunday at 9:30; guitar ensemble, 5 p.m. Saturday; brass ensemble, fourth Sunday at 11:15 and special occasions; adult handbell choir, second Sunday at 9:30 and special occasions; New Creation Singers, third Sunday at 9:30; and praise choir, third Sunday at 11:15. There also is a Resurrection Choir which provides vocal accompaniment for funerals.

Other parish organizations include the Seton Sages senior citizens group, Catholics Returning Home and RCIA programs, a mother's organization, an environment and decorating committee, a gardeners guild, and ministries to several nursing homes and the homebound.

Besides the outreach activities already mentioned, the parish serves the broader community by hosting periodic American Red Cross bloodmobile visits and weekly Weight Watchers and Al-Anon programs. The Knights of Columbus sponsor monthly Sunday pancake breakfasts and Friday fish fries during Lent that are open to all.

But the parish's best-known community event by far is its annual festival on the weekend after Labor Day, which draws thousands of people every year on the Friday, Saturday, and Sunday after Labor Day and has become the traditional closing event of the summer festival season for Columbus-area parishes. It's also one of the largest of the local festivals, with a full midway of rides and games, entertainment, a large silent auction, Monte Carlo, bake sale, and plenty of homemade food in multiple varieties.

"I've been here 17 years and it's been around at least that long, going back to



Students sort cans to be distributed in Portsmouth for Christmas. Photo courtesy Seton Parish

the early days of the parish," Deacon Raymond said. "One of our great resources is that we have sufficient land for a complete festival grounds. We use most of it, with people coming from all over northern Fairfield and eastern Franklin counties.

"We use the festival every year to raise money for parish projects, but it's more of a community-building event, with about 250 people a day playing an active role in it and getting to know other parishioners better," he said. And as Serrano pointed out, "It's also a source of evangelization, because of the goodwill it spreads in the community and the way it allows us to display the hospitality that should be part of all ministries."

Seton Parish was formed in 1978, three years after the canonization of its namesake, St. Elizabeth Ann Seton, whose feast day the parish celebrated on Saturday, Jan. 4, with a morning Mass and reception. The founding pastor, Msgr. Edward Fairchild, still lives nearby and celebrates Mass regularly on weekends at the parish. It has grown in tandem with Pickerington, a farm town of less than 700 people in 1970 whose population, because of its proximity to Columbus, increased to about 4,000 when the parish was formed and is at more than 18,000 today.

The church building was dedicated in 1981. Until 1992, Mass was celebrated in a multipurpose area which was not meant to be a permanent place for worship. The current worship area was completed in 1992 and includes several islands of space, but lacks a center to which the entire structure can relate. After 33 years, the building also has the ev-

eryday problems resulting from normal wear, such as roof leaks, water stains on the ceiling, and chipping floor tiles.

With that in mind, plans are being made for a substantial renovation. A steering committee has been formed and David Meleca of Meleca Architecture, which has designed or remodeled several churches in the Diocese of Columbus, has been hired as architect for the project.

Father Klima said there will be a new floor plan for the arrangement of pews around a newly designed sanctuary, acoustics will be improved, the church will have a new adoration chapel, and infrastructure problems will be addressed. Following diocesan guidelines, 50 percent of funds for the project must be raised and 100 percent must be committed before work can start.

"We decided to approach renovation as a whole rather than one thing at a time because it made sense," Father Klima said. "Changes are needed in the building because of its age, and once you move one piece, you have to move another, so it seemed best to look at this as something which would create a unity of design the building currently lacks.

"People who have seen the model we're working from now, which is still a work in progress, say it's really beautiful. We want to create more of a sense that this is holy ground, a place set apart, than the current worship space has, but feel we can do so without being lavish. At the same time, we will continue our concern for the poor and continue the outreach work that's part of the vision plan. That will never change because that's what's at the core of the parish, no matter what the building looks like."

ODU Physician Assistant Students Aspire to Serve Central Ohio

The United States is facing an unprecedented shortage of physicians. The Association of American Medical Colleges says the nation will need approximately 90,000 more doctors by 2020 and 130,000 by 2025. Ohio Dominican University recognized this potential health care crisis and launched Central Ohio's only master of science in physician assistant (PA) studies program in 2012.

"ODU's PA program graduates will enable the physician assistant profession to grow and meet the increased demand placed on health care providers to improve patient access to excellent medical care," said program director Shonna Riedlinger.

The demand for physician assistants is great. The federal Bureau of Labor Statistics said employment of PAs is expected to increase 30 percent from 2010 to 2020.

"The need for more physician assistants in the community, along with the job security afforded by a growing profession, was a factor in my decision to pursue a career as a PA," said ODU student Lauren Krebs of East Palestine, Ohio.

In July 2013, ODU welcomed its second group of 54 PA students, joining its first class of 45 students. The university's 27-month program is designed to educate, train, and prepare future PAs so they can begin practice immediately upon graduation. Approximately 84 percent of students in ODU's first PA group are from Ohio, and a majority of ODU's alumni choose to remain in Ohio after graduation.

Throughout the program, substantial emphasis is placed on gaining real-world experience. To be considered for ODU's PA program, a student must have completed at least 250 hours of documented direct patient-care experience. Once accepted, students' experience is enhanced significantly through a 12-month clinical rotation and 15-month didactic phase, during which students learn basic medical and clinical skills in classroom and laboratory settings.

"ODU's PA program fosters that attitude that one must learn the basics and then continue to develop knowledge through clinical experience and education," said student Kami Perdue of Lancaster.



"Being the only masters in PA program in central Ohio allows for us to have first choice in partnerships with area hospital networks," said student Keith Kriesberg of Troy. "This offers us the best experiences with our rotations and puts our program first in line for job opportunities upon graduation."

ODU's students' experiences are further enhanced through their involvement in and leadership of community health care initiatives offered throughout the year, including wellness clinics, blood drives, wellness fairs, and health screenings for at-risk individuals.

"I've had opportunities to volunteer at First English Lutheran Church and Columbus Public Health, which has allowed me to become more aware of individuals of all different backgrounds," said student Zach Clouse of Uhrichsville. "This exposure to different communities ultimately will help my own interaction with patients in the years to come."

"These volunteer experiences have helped prepare me professionally by allowing me to fully understand the difficulties and characteristics for the populations of this community that I hope to serve," Kriesberg said.

ODU also offers students newly renovated facilities in which to study, including a state-of-the-art cadaver lab—a feature that is unique to a PA program of ODU's size. Many PA students say they consider the human cadaver to be their first patient.

"The cadaver lab is invaluable," Perdue said. "No two patients are the same, so exploration of human anat-

to-OU medical school early acceptance program offers accomplished high-school seniors an opportunity to be automatically admitted into ODHCOM immediately upon completion of their undergraduate studies, as long as they meet and maintain the program's rigorous academic standards.

ODU announced a similar early acceptance program for highly qualified undergraduate students into its own PA program in October 2013, and is recruiting for the first class that will begin in the fall of 2014.

"This unique program offers outstanding and motivated students a direct path to become highly trained and well-equipped physician assistants who will use their knowledge and experience to serve those in our community," said ODU's president, Dr. Peter Cimboric.

Photo: Students in Ohio Dominican University's master of science in physician assistant studies program doing classroom work are (from left) Seth Berko, Whitney Cramer, and Krystal Foley.

Photo courtesy Ohio Dominican University

SAINT ANDREW STUDENTS MAKE BLANKETS FOR FOSTER CHILDREN



Second-grade students at Columbus St. Andrew School made blankets for the My Very Own Blanket (MVOB) organization. MVOB donates blankets to foster children in Ohio. The students chose to make these blankets as part of their Advent celebration. (Photo courtesy St. Andrew School)

The Baptism of the Lord (Cycle A)

A vehicle for making Jesus' identity clearer



Father
Lawrence L. Hummer

Isaiah 42:1-4,6-7

Acts 10:34-38

Matthew 3:13-17

The first reading is the first of four so-called “servant songs” found in Isaiah. They are poetic passages which sing of an unknown “servant” of the Lord who receives a portion of the Lord’s “spirit” in order to do the Lord’s bidding in the world. This spirit is not the same as what the New Testament calls the “Holy Spirit,” and which is spoken of as the third person of the Blessed Trinity in later theology. Many suggestions have been offered for who this “servant of the Lord” might be. They range from an unknown individual of the future to a specific person such as the prophet Isaiah himself, or the Jewish people collectively.

The Gospels found passages like this in the Old Testament and framed their portraits of Jesus around this mysterious servant. Clearly, the attributes given to the servant in Sunday’s first reading were adopted for Jesus during his public ministry. The servant was regarded as “a light for the nations.” In this, the servant shares in the work of the Creator, who made the light for the world.

In Matthew (5:14), Jesus tells his followers, “You are the light of the world.” In John 8:12, Jesus says “I am the light of the world. ... whoever follows me ... will have the light of life.” Traditionally, the light is of God and is the first thing created by the Lord God in Genesis when “darkness covered the abyss” (Gen.1:2). After that scene is set, God creates the light, which is called “the day,” which God

Ss. Augustine & Gabriel Family Day

The outreach committee of Columbus Ss. Augustine & Gabriel Church, 1550 E. Hudson St., will sponsor a Family Day Mass at 10 a.m. Sunday, Jan. 26. A potluck and fellowship will follow at 11 a.m. in the school building next to the church.

The parish had two Family Day Masses last year and hopes to make the event a regular occurrence every three or four months. Former members and people who never have attended Mass there are especially invited to join the parish family for worship. For more information, contact the parish office at (614) 268-3123.

sees as “good.”

“Opening the eyes of the blind” was another task of the “servant” of the Lord in Isaiah, which is revisited in the ministry of Jesus in the New Testament, who also gives sight to the blind. This can be taken in two ways. Sometimes it means the literal restoration of sight to those who are blind. It can also mean giving the insight of faith to those who are blind to the true identity of Jesus.

The baptism of Jesus is a vehicle for making his identity clearer. Matthew does this first by having John try to prevent Jesus from being baptized. Neither Mark (1:9-11) nor Luke (3:21-22) nor John (1:29-34) indicate any attempt by John to prevent Jesus from being baptized. In John’s Gospel, it is never really clear whether Jesus was actually baptized by John, although everything points in that direction.

So why did Matthew write that John tried to prevent Jesus from being baptized? It must revolve around the question which arose after the death of Jesus of why the sinless Jesus would come to John for a baptism for the forgiveness of sins. Jesus directs John to do it “to fulfill all righteousness.” That is an endorsement of what John is doing by baptizing. It is also at least a subtle encouragement by Jesus encouraging all people to partake of John’s baptism and the repentance it represents. Jesus thereby identifies himself with all people in their sinful state, as he will later show in his table fellowship (or “community,” as in the liturgy) with sinners.

Using a simple participle (“having been baptized”), Matthew proceeds to reveal Jesus as receiving “the Spirit of God.” More over, “a voice from heaven said” (i.e., God said): “This is my beloved son in whom I am well-pleased.” Thus, Jesus is empowered by the divine Spirit and is identified as “God’s beloved son.”

With that, the Christmas season comes to a close. In various ways, the identity of Jesus has been revealed – by his family tree where he is named as a son of David; by an angel to Joseph in a dream, as one who would save people from their sins; by magi to Herod, as the one “born king of the Jews”; and finally here as God’s son, who had the Spirit of God. What a journey!

Father Lawrence Hummer, pastor at Chillicothe St. Mary, can be reached at hummerl@stmary-chillicothe.com.



The Weekday Bible Readings

MONDAY
1 Samuel 1:1-8
Psalm 116:12-19
Mark 1:14-20

TUESDAY
1 Samuel 1:9-20
1 Samuel 2:1,4-8 (Ps)
Mark 1:21-28

WEDNESDAY
1 Samuel 3:1-10,19-20
Psalm 40:2,5,7-10
Mark 1:29-39

THURSDAY
1 Samuel 4:1-11
Psalm 44:10-11,14-15,24-25
Mark 1:40-45

FRIDAY
1 Samuel 8:4,7,10-22a
Psalm 89:16-19
Mark 2:1-12

SATURDAY
1 Samuel 9:1-4,17-19;10:1a
Psalm 21:2-7
Mark 2:13-17

DIOCESAN WEEKLY RADIO AND TELEVISION MASS SCHEDULE WEEK OF JANUARY 12, 2014

SUNDAY MASS
10:30 a.m. Mass from Columbus St. Joseph Cathedral on St. Gabriel Radio (820 AM), Columbus, and at www.stgabrielradio.com.
Mass with the Passionist Fathers at 7:30 a.m. on WWHO-TV (the CW), Channel 53, Columbus. Check local cable system for WWHO’s cable channel listing.
Mass from Our Lady of the Angels Monastery, Birmingham, Ala., at 8 a.m. on EWTN (Time Warner Channel 385, Insight Channel 382, or WOW Channel 378).
(Encores at noon, 7 p.m., and midnight).
Mass from Kenton Immaculate Conception Church at 10 a.m. on Time Warner Cable Channel 6 (Hardin County).
Mass from Portsmouth St. Mary Church at noon on Time Warner Channel 24 in Scioto County.

DAILY MASS
8 a.m., Our Lady of the Angels Monastery in Birmingham, Ala. (Encores at noon, 7 p.m. and midnight) See EWTN above; and on I-Lifetv (Channel 113 in Ada, Logan, Millersburg, Murray City and Washington C.H.; Channel 125 in Marion, Newark, Newcomerstown and New Philadelphia; and Channel 207 in Zanesville); 8 p.m., St. Gabriel Radio (820 AM), Columbus, and at www.stgabrielradio.com.

We pray Week I, Seasonal Proper of the Liturgy of the Hours

The poorest of the poor



THE CATHOLIC DIFFERENCE
George Weigel

Pope Francis has ignited a useful and necessary conversation about our responsibilities to the poorest of the poor – those who some may be tempted to write out of the script of history as hopeless cases. That conversation would be enhanced if participants in it took a close look at Paul Collier’s suggestive book *The Bottom Billion: Why the Poorest Countries Are Failing and What Can Be Done About It* (Oxford University Press).

Collier shares the Holy Father’s passion for the well-being of the poorest of the poor. As he wrote, “I have a little boy who is six. I do not want him to grow up in a world with a vast running sore – a billion people stuck in desperate conditions alongside unprecedented prosperity.” The poorest of the poor – the “bottom billion,” in Collier’s trenchant phrase – should be a challenge to everyone’s conscience.

Meeting that challenge means getting the facts straight about both our current circumstances and the best means of fostering prosperity.

As for our current circumstances, Collier’s book was published in 2007, before financial dislocations shook the world economy, but the basic picture he drew remains valid: there are seven billion people on Planet Earth; one billion or more of us enjoy unprecedented material prosperity; another five billion or so are en route to prosperity, although at different rates and to different degrees; and then there are Pope Francis’ “peripheries,” the “bottom billion,” who live in the 21st century as a matter of chronology but whose reality, Collier wrote, is “the 14th century: civil war, plague, ignorance.” On Collier’s reading of the data,

most of the world’s poor are in fact getting not-poor (think of China and India), but the poorest of the poor (think large swaths of Africa) are sliding down a slippery slope to whatever lies beyond destitution.

The question, as ever, is “Why?”

The poor who are getting not-poor have, in the main, been incorporated into global systems of production and exchange: sometimes roughly, to be sure, and often unevenly, but where economic growth lifts large numbers of people out of poverty, that growth comes from being part of a global market, not from any other source. By contrast, the poorest of the poor, the outliers of the “bottom billion,” are disconnected from the global economy and from the skills and habits necessary to participate in what has become a world market.

And why is that? Collier, who studied the varying impacts of development assistance at the World Bank before teaching economics at Oxford, lists four “traps” that hold the “bottom billion” down. There is the “natural resource trap,” in which oil, minerals, or other marketable resources make a few oligarchs and politicians rich, but deflect a country’s attention

from pursuing the human and material infrastructure of genuine economic development. There is the “conflict trap,” in which countries are destroyed economically by civil wars and/or genocides. There is the “bad governance trap,” in which corruption and misgovernance waste development aid and make it impossible for investment to flourish (given what amounts to endemic lawlessness). And there is the curse of geography, by which landlocked countries in a bad neighborhood find their commerce and communications strangled.

All of which suggests that John Paul II was right when he proposed that the poorest of the poor suffered most from marginalization – from marginalization: from being trapped outside the networks where human economic creativity flourishes, wealth is created, and the poor become not-poor.

Providing effective assistance to the “bottom billion” is neither simple nor easy, but it is morally imperative. If getting countries not-poor were just a matter of money, the vast sums that have been spent on development assistance since the era of decolonization would have done the job. But the job has manifestly not been done. That is no reason to abandon development aid. The challenge is to deploy development aid and other instruments of foreign policy more intelligently and strategically, providing immediate assistance to the desperate while helping build public cultures that can sustain productivity, exchange, and prosperity.

George Weigel is Distinguished Senior Fellow of the Ethics and Public Policy Center in Washington, D.C.

Mount Carmel College of Nursing Announces New President and Dean

Dr. Christine Wynd, dean of the Breen School of Nursing at Ursuline College in suburban Cleveland, will become president and dean of the Mount Carmel College of Nursing in Columbus on July 31. The college’s first president and dean, Dr. Ann Schiele, will retire on that date and become the institution’s president emeritus.

Wynd has been at Ursuline, which offers both undergraduate and graduate nursing programs, as dean and professor since 2007. Her experience includes directing the PhD in nursing program at the University of Akron and teaching at The Ohio State University and Case Western Reserve University.

She retired from the Army Reserve Nurse Corps with the rank of colonel in 2001. Her military experience includes serving as chief nurse for two separate combat support hospitals and as the Reserves’ representative to the office of the assistant chief, Army Nurse Corps.

“Dr. Wynd is an exceptional leader who has the vision and dedication to take nursing education to the next level, to meet the ever-changing demands and opportunities in health care and higher education now and well into the future,” said Matt Mazza, chair of the Mount Carmel College board of trustees. “Dr. Wynd will be a tremendous asset to the continued growth and sustainability of the college.”

She was selected following an extensive national search by a committee chaired by board of trustees member Brian Tierney.

Schiele is the longest-sitting president of any college or university in Ohio, having held the title since 1990, when the college transitioned from a diploma program to a degree-granting institution. It is among the largest nursing programs in Ohio, with more than 1,150 students enrolled.

“The college has been on an outstand-

ing trajectory of growth and achievement since its founding,” Schiele said. “I am confident that Dr. Wynd, with whom I have enjoyed a long professional association, will keep MCCN on a path of continual growth and excellence throughout this leadership transition and into the future.”

Commenting on the transition, Claus von Zychlin, Mount Carmel Health System president and chief executive officer, said, “We thank Dr. Schiele for the decades of dedication, growth, and success the college experienced under her leadership. Mount Carmel is proud of our strong affiliation and rich history with the Mount Carmel College of Nursing. It’s an unparalleled heritage that started 110 years ago, when the institution was founded as the School of



Nursing by the Sisters of the Holy Cross in Columbus’ Franklinton area.

“It’s a legacy of outstanding nursing education that will continue to live on in this community under the new leadership of Dr. Wynd. We congratulate Dr. Wynd and look forward to working with her

toward our mutual objective of providing the best in health care and nursing education.”

Wynd received her doctoral degree in nursing executive administration from Case Western Reserve University, a master of science degree in nursing from The Ohio State University, and a bachelor of science in nursing degree from St. John College in Cleveland. She and her husband, Charles Santose, have two grown children.



BOOK REVIEW

Children's books from area educators

BY TIM PUET

Reporter, Catholic Times

Two area educators have written a series of children's books about a pair of perky queens whose misadventures combine humor with valuable lessons about good relationships and character building.

In the first book, *My Hair*, Queen Gwyneth Geranium Gardenia has the ultimate bad hair day. Her sister, Queen Camilla Carnation Chrysanthemum, and their friends try to fix the problem, but only succeed in making it worse. Eventually, a simple act of kindness by Camilla straightens out the tangles, and everyone learns that "the tiniest aid, no matter how small, given back with love, matters most of all."

The book, written by Susie Cutler and Nancy Geruntino (pictured left to right) is available on their website, www.queensplaytime.com.

They have written 14 other books in rhyme about the queens, dealing with subjects such as being true to yourself, accepting differences in others, honesty, anti-bullying, fitness, and responsibility.

They also have created an interactive website featuring Queens Gwyneth and Camilla and their jester. The site includes coloring pages and a recipe for crown-shaped brownies, encouraging children to follow directions, improve on fine motor skills, and increase creativity. As more books are published, additional

crafts and activities related to each book will be added.

In addition, with the help of a dressmaker and a beautician, they have appeared as the two queens, wearing costumes to match the characters (pink for Gwyneth and purple for Camilla). They recently appeared at Nationwide Children's Hospital during the Christmas holidays to read their book and assist children in take-home crownmaking activities. They're available for similar visits at venues such as church events, schools, libraries, and long-term care centers to promote the book and its message.

Release of the self-published book, dedicated to Our Lady, marked the end of a six-and-a-half year project for the authors, who first met in church 20 years ago.

Both have at least one child who has followed them into teaching. Cutler is retiring in the spring after 30 years as a kindergarten teacher with the Jonathan Alder Schools in Plain City, where she attends St. Joseph Church.

Geruntino, a parishioner at Columbus St. Margaret of Cortona Church, is retired from the South-Western City Schools in Franklin County, where she was a speech and language pathologist.

They have ensured that the book meets Ohio's Common Core education standards of Ohio for language and literacy. Use of the website, in conjunction with the book, can help in-

tegrate knowledge with ideas in the teaching of skills such as rhyming, vocabulary, questioning, and following directions. Full details are available on the site.

"We started talking in the spring of 2007 about writing literature for children that would be a good learning tool and send a positive message about the values we've been trying to teach throughout our careers and at home," the authors said.

"We want to give back to the community for all the blessings we've received working with the little ones we've cared for throughout our careers. It's our hope to change the world one book at a time. We want to be the change that others hope to see."

They decided that friendship would be the subject of their first book because of the strength of their own friendship, the kind of relationship in which, when one person stops talking, the other picks up the conversational thread without a pause.

"We would do anything to help each other," they said. "With friendship comes joy. We laugh when we are together and find joy in all that we do, including writing the books. People should exhibit the qualities they wish to gain through friendship to be the best friend to another person."

"Hair became the subject for the first book because no matter where we go, my hair al-



ways seems to have a flat spot and Sue will lift it up and fix it. That's what a true friend will do," Geruntino said.

Other ideas for books followed and have been put into words, but the two admitted the writing was the easy part. "We needed to find an illustrator, and we were fortunate to discover Paul Richmond, a fabulous local artist with a colorful sense of style who thoroughly believes in us," the authors said.

"The book was designed in an 8 1/2-by-8 1/2-inch format so children can hold it. It's 36 pages, which is larger than most children's books, with the kind of colorful background and big, legible print we know, from our experiences with children that they will like," Cutler and Geruntino said. "It was hard to find a company with the capability to meet what we wanted."

"We looked at several publishers but decided on www.createspace.com because it is linked with Amazon, met our needs, and was cost-effective." The book was printed in Charleston, S.C. in August 2013.

The books are currently selling on several platforms, including www.queensplaytime.com and Amazon.com, as well

as through personal requests to the authors. The queens have a Facebook page (Queens Playtime) designed to update children on activities occurring in their kingdom and give the children opportunities to interact with them.

"The Lord and the Blessed Mother have been guiding us every step of the way," the authors said. "It seems that whenever we're looking for someone to help us, God provides."

"We feel that the people involved in our journey have played huge roles in helping to make our dream a reality and have provided constant love, encouragement and support."

"We're confident that children will enjoy and learn from what we've done, that parents will find value in it for their children, and educators will use this book as an adequate learning tool in their classrooms. As the series continues to evolve, we hope the characters will become a child's friend, as well as a parent's and educator's resource for positive themes and values."

To purchase the book, learn more about the authors, and play along with the queens, go to the book's website,

NEWS IN PHOTOS FROM AROUND THE WORLD



Men dressed as the Three Kings ride on horses in an Epiphany parade in St. Peter's Square at the Vatican on Jan. 6. CNS photo/Paul Haring

A investigator talks with a woman outside St. Bernard Church in Eureka, Calif., on Jan. 1, where Father Eric Freed, pastor, was found dead in the rectory. Eureka police were investigating his death as a murder.

CNS photo/Eric Adams, Reuters



Syrian refugees drink tea as they sit in front of their tents at Zaatari refugee camp in Mafraq, Jordan, on Dec. 31. Pope Francis will dine with Syrian refugees during his May 24 visit to Jordan on a trip that also will include Israel and the Palestinian territories.

CNS photo/Muhammad Hamed, Reuters

POPE FRANCIS: In new year, step outside your comfort zone, get involved

By Carol Glatz

Catholic News Service

The new year will be brighter only if everyone steps outside their safe havens, gets involved, and works together to solve local problems with generosity and love, Pope Francis said.

"As 2013 comes to a close, let everyone ask God for forgiveness and thank him for his patience and love," the pope said as he presided over a Dec. 31 evening prayer service in St. Peter's Basilica.

May Mary "teach us to welcome God made man so that every year, every month, every day be overflowing with his eternal love," he said on the eve of the feast honoring her as Mother of God.

Leading the annual *Te Deum* prayer service to thank God for his bless-

ings in 2013 and the gift of salvation in Christ, the pope asked people to reflect on how they have spent the past year -- the precious days, weeks, and months the Lord has given as a gift to everyone.

"Have we used it mostly for ourselves, for our own interests, or did we know to spend it for others, too? How much time did we set aside for being with God, in prayer, in silence, in adoration?" he asked.

People should also reflect on how they used their time to contribute to their communities. The quality of life in a community -- how it runs and looks -- depends on everyone, he said in his homily, which he delivered standing from a lectern.

"A city's face is like a mosaic in which the tiles are all those who live there," he said.



While public officials and other leaders certainly have more responsibility, "everyone is co-responsible for the good and bad," he said.

"Have we contributed, in our small way, to making (our communities) ... livable, orderly, and welcoming?" the pope asked.

"What will we do, how will we act in the new year to make our city a little bit better?"

As the bishop of Rome, the pope looked at the Italian capital in particular, noting its "extraordinary" spiritual and cultural riches.

"And yet, Rome also has many people marked by material and moral poverty, people who are poor, unhappy, and suffering, who prick the consciences of every citizen," he said.

"In Rome, perhaps we feel this contrast more strongly" with such a stark difference between its "majestic setting, loaded with artistic beauty" and the difficulties people struggle against, the pope said.

A city of opposites, Rome is teeming with tourists, "but is also filled with refugees. Rome is full of people who work, but also people who can't find work," are underpaid, or have jobs that

harm their dignity, he said.

"Everyone has the right to be treated with the same attitude of welcome and fairness because everyone possesses human dignity" and is part of the same human family, he said.

Pope Francis said Rome, like all communities, will be more beautiful, hospitable, welcoming, and kind "if all of us are attentive and generous toward whoever is in difficulty; if we know how to collaborate with a constructive and caring spirit for the good of all people."

Every community will be a better place "if there are no people who watch it 'from afar,' like a picture postcard, who observe its life only 'from the balcony' without getting involved" directly with the many problems of the men and women who, "whether we want it or not, are our brothers and sisters," the pope said.

He underlined the important work and duty of the church in contributing to people's lives and future, and how, with the leaven of the Gospel, the church is a sign and instrument of God's mercy.

After the prayer service, Pope Francis traveled by car to St. Peter's Square to get a close look at its Nativity scene.



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