
Yes, Christmas is about the Good News, the Gospel of Jesus Christ. Jesus loves us so much, that He came to this earth as a child. He grew, taught us to love, died on the cross to take away our sins, and rose from the dead to open the gates of heaven. Salvation in Jesus – that is Good News!

The cast of "A Charlie Brown Christmas" concludes with the exhortation: “Merry Christmas, Charlie Brown!”, then they sing “Hark! The Herald Angels Sing." I conclude similarly: "Merry Christmas, faithful of the Diocese!" May we open our hearts to receive Baby Jesus’ joyful message!

Merry Christmas, faithful of the Diocese!
Sister Diane Leary, former SMPC professor, coach, dies

Sister Diane (Marianne) Leary, SSIJ, 85, who served as a professor, coach and athletic director at St. Mary of the Plains College, died Dec. 10, 2019. The Mass of Christian burial was celebrated at Resurrection Chapel at Mt. St. Mary’s Convent Dec. 18. Interment was in the sisters’ cemetery. 

Sister Diane was born in Newton, Mass., April 28, 1934, the daughter of Louis and Isabelle Griffin Leary. 

After graduating high school, she was accepted and spent two years at Sargent College of Physical Education and Physical Therapy at Boston University, then another two years continuing her studies at B.U. while working as a technical librarian and writer at Sylvania Missile Systems Laboratory. She entered the Sisters of St. Joseph of Wichita in September 1956, received the habit in March 1957, followed by First and Final Professions in 1959 and 1962.

Her bachelor’s degree was completed at St. Mary of the Plains College in Dodge City with a degree in history and physical education, all while teaching and coaching in elementary and junior high schools in Wichita, Chanute and Pittsburg in Kansas. After completing a master’s degree in European and Russian history with a minor in counseling from Creighton University, she continued her teaching and coaching career at the high school level.

Sister Diane was instrumental in establishing girls’ athletic programs at Bishop Carroll High School in Wichita and St. Thomas Aquinas High School in Kansas City, Kansas. In 1979 she was appointed Assistant Professor of History and head coach of women’s athletics at St. Mary of the Plains in Dodge City. A milestone in Kansas college athletics occurred in 1983 when Sister Diane became the state’s first woman to be head athletic director at a college.

Following the closing of St. Mary of the Plains in 1992, Sister Diane accepted a position at Newman University in Wichita where she served at various times as Associate Professor of history, girls’ volleyball coach and Director of Athletics. Upon completing her ministry at Newman University in 2005 she pursued a two-year intercultural ministry in Malawi, Central Africa, to teach and provide academic and personal counseling for young women of high school age.

After returning from Malawi she resided at Catholic Care Center in Wichita then moved to the Congregation Center at Mt. St. Mary’s Convent. She was preceded in death by her parents. In addition to members of her religious congregation, she is survived by two cousins, Edward Hettinger of Marblehead, Mass., and Louis Hettinger of Ashburn, Va. Memorial in her name may be made to Dear Neighbor Ministry or the Sisters of St. Joseph Retirement Fund.

Mary did you know that your baby boy will one day walk on water? Mary did you know that your baby boy will save our sons and daughters? Did you know that your baby boy has come to make you new? This child that you’ve delivered, will soon deliver you...

Lyrics by Buddy Greene, Mark Lowry

The one thing

To celebrate Christmas properly, the single thing we really need is “Faith.” But Faith is hard to come by when our normal reasons for believing crumble. Those who helped us to believe in the first place, they may themselves fail. Most of the Catholics we know may fall short of how they should act. The Church herself may seem to go fuzzy on the essential revealed Truths, and all that they imply for our living in Christ.

These things happen. That is why it is important to understand that all our secondary reasons for believing are helpful, to be sure, but they are not crucial to the act of Faith. They are not finally the decisive reason why we believe. That is to be found in the invisible Spirit, and in His secret work within us.

We believe because God himself reveals that He loves us into existence, that He loves us in the unfolding of our Redemption, and that He will love us forever in Heaven. That broke upon us when He walked among us. We caught a glimpse of it before we blinked. It is His Word that is utterly reliable ... not the word of your parents, not the word of your teachers, not the word of your priests. It is His Promise that you can take to the bank.

So, if you find your Faith fraying after this hard year, accept it as a penance, but do not give it up. In Baptism, Faith was poured over you like the waters, without your doing anything. It was the seed planted in you, and it has grown, we hope, to become your habitual way of looking at the world. Faith is the open door through which you begin your return to God. In Faith, you gather up the best that is in you, and you give it away to the God who made you, and who redeems you.

“The Kingdom of God is near, repent, and believe this Good News.” Especially now, in this blessed Christmas Season.
‘I remember El Salvador’

Archbishop Romero paid the ultimate price for condemning injustice

BY CHARLENE SCOTT MYERS
Southwest Kansas Catholic

Several years ago, I worked as director of the Peace and Justice office located on the grounds of the University of Tulsa in the state of Oklahoma. I had a board of eight persons who helped me with our very challenging mission of seeking justice for the suffering and underprivileged. One of my board members was an Episcopal priest.

The country of El Salvador was very much in the news at that time. We were frustrated by all of the horror stories coming out of that small nation, and we felt compelled to do something about it. El Salvador translates into “The Savior.” I and my board members were all Christians; myself and some others were Catholics. But what could we do besides pray for those suffering people?

On Dec. 2, 1980, four Catholic missionaries from the United States working in El Salvador were raped and murdered by five members of the El Salvador National Guard. They were Maryknoll Sisters Maura Clarke and Ita Ford, Ursuline Sister Dorothy Kazel, and lay missionary Jean Donovan.

While I was visiting El Salvador, I was driven down the road to the area where the Sisters were savagely raped, brutalized, and murdered. It was a sad and tearful day to actually see where they became martyrs. Archbishop Oscar Romero of El Salvador was outraged and deeply sorrowful after the murders. He began preaching at the pulpit of the cathedral and on the radio about the horrors taking place in his country. People, especially youth, were being “disappeared,” and panic was seizing the populace.

So the Peace and Justice Center sent me to El Salvador, where fear hung in the air like a putrid heavy mist. College and high school students had protested in the streets, and Archbishop Romero protested at the pulpit and on the radio.

I met with mothers of the “disappeared,” and one mother tearfully showed me a photo of her beautiful missing daughter. Teenagers and college students had marched in protest to the harsh government officials who had taken over El Salvador. Those students were arrested and “disappeared.” (Their brutalized bodies later were found dumped into a nearby volcano.)

By the time I stepped off the plane in San Salvador, Archbishop Romero also had been murdered, shot in the head during Holy Mass while lifting the chalice. The people of El Salvador could not bring themselves to bury him, and his casket was placed in front of the cathedral so the poor and the rich could visit and honor him in his casket.

I visited the casket twice, and cried along with the Salvadorians, as I am crying now, remembering that sad day.

The thugs of El Salvador followed us everywhere. One man in particular seemed to be stalking me. He was a huge brutal looking fellow whose right hand had been chopped off, the penalty for thievery in El Salvador! Everywhere I went, he went. I was eating at the hotel diner, and when I finished my meal and left for the elevator, he followed me into the lift. I began to pray “Please protect me, Lord! Surround me with your love and angels.” And so He did!

“Why did you save me, Lord, when so many others have died?” I later asked during my prayers. Because He wants me to write about His beloved people suffering in El Salvador, I thought. And so I have done since that day.

I later interviewed the six Jesuit priests who would be murdered in El Salvador on Nov. 15, 1989. They were marched out of their rectory and ordered to lie on the ground. They then were shot in the head.

The priests, Father Aloysius Ellaucuria, rector of the university, Father Ignacio Martin-Baro, vice rector who had studied at the University of Tulsa, the city where I grew up, and Father Segundo Montes, dean of the department of social sciences, were murdered by a Private Grimaldi, while Fathers Amondo Lopez and Juan Ramón Moreno were killed by Deputy Sergeant Antonio Ramiro Avalos Vargas.

The soldiers later discovered Father Joaquín López y López in the priests’ home, and murdered him as well.

The housekeeper for the priests, Julia Elba Ramos, and her 16-year-old daughter, Celina Mariceth Ramos, also were slaughtered by the butchers Deputy Sergeant Tomas Zarpate Castillo and Private Jose Alberto Sierra Ascencio, who shot both of the women twice to be certain they were dead.

The New York Times described the murdered priests as “leftist intellectuals” in March 1991, but Archbishop Dom John R. Quinn of San Francisco objected to those words “without qualification or nuance.”

Archbishop Quinn offered the newspaper the words of the saintly Archbishop Helder Camara, whom I also once had the blessing to interview: “When I feed the hungry, they call me a saint.” Archbishop Helder had said. “When I ask why they have no food, they call me a Communist!”

“…”

See a related story on Page 17, highlighting a Wisconsin farm boy who became a Christian Brother, was martyred in Guatemala, and was recently beatified.
A detective story

I was sitting in my office on 57th Street in midtown Bethlehem when they came walking in. There were three of them and they were dressed like a living room – all purple drapes and throw rugs.

Each wore a crown, gold by the looks of it, inlaid with gems. The sparkly kind. The kind my wife, Charshaba, keeps begging for. It was late. I was tired and wanted to go home. Charshaba had lamb kabobs waiting.

“Nice begonia,” said the man with the grey beard. He said his name was Melchior. “That’s not a begonia,” I said. “That’s my secretary, Celia. She just had her hair done.” I invited them to have a seat. My name’s Friday, son of Wednesday; nephew of Pugly. I’m a private eye.

They took a seat. I heard the bleating of their camels parked outside. They asked if I validate. I didn’t.

“So what can a lovely private eye such as myself help three kings with, if you don’t mind my asking?”

They said they didn’t – mind, I mean. “We’ve been charged by God to follow a star, a star that will lead us to the King of all kings, a babe, a savior, the Christ-child.”

“Come again?”

His name was Casper. He was as big as a water buffalo. He had a bushy, black beard and wore a look as serious as a final exam.

“I said we’ve been charged by God to follow –”

“No – I heard what you said. I just don’t get it. Called by God?”

“Don’t you ever read the Post?” This was Balthasar, the third king. “It’s right there in the prophesy section…. You never read Isaiah? … Micah? Oh, come on! Jeremiah? Surely you’ve read Jeremiah! It’s right there on papyrus for all to read: ‘Messiah coming. Star to lead way. No RSVP necessary.’”

“Tell me when you saw your advertisement in the Post.”

Hmmm. I pulled open a drawer and took out a large map of the greater Bethlehem metropolitan area.

The five of us stood around my desk peering down at the map. Celia asked from what direction they came.

“Afar, very far away,” Melchior chortled. “Really afar! We’re talkin’ days, here. But to answer your question, east.”

“East? That’s it? East!”

“Really afar east!”

I felt bad for the kings, I really did. I wanted the good news to come true as much as any one. I wanted to believe our Savior was soon to be born. But we had to face facts. If Moses could part the Red Sea, surely God could clear a few clouds. But He hadn’t. It was a sign. It was late. I was hungry. I wanted to go home to Charshaba and have lamb kabobs.

“I’m sorry,” I said. “I truly am.”

I began to roll up the map when suddenly a light as bright as the sun shown in my window. The three kings shot out the door and down the stairs. I watched them run out of the building. I could hear them start their camels.

And with a star as bright as a midnight sun shining a shaft of light downward in the distance, the three went quickly on their way, only Casper turning to wave goodbye.

I locked up and stepped out into the clear night, wondering what they would find. I stopped then, and looked at that strange beam of light shining down from a star.

I felt a chill, followed by a warm embrace, and then I had a thought. God never promised days without clouds, laughter without tears, joy without sorrow.

But with the Christ child, he brought light to show the way through the darkness.

I smiled and walked home under the star-lit sky.

“Here’s what happened. So, I just could not envision the newborn King, the Messiah, wanting God’s help, or that Frankenstein. I mean, what newborn would? So… so I talked the guys into taking a detour. Just a little one! What could happen?”

“And?” I asked impatiently. My stomach wanted its lamb kabobs.

“See, there’s this toy store on 38th. Hanging in the window was a Noah’s Ark mobile. It was perfect. Is that too much to ask?”

“So, what do you need me for?” I asked.

“We came out of the store,” Balthasar said, “and the star? Total cloud cover! We’re like, ‘What do we do now?’ God takes the time to send down an angel from Heaven—which doesn’t happen every day—to tell us to go see the newborn King, and we get hopelessly lost!”

“God’s gonna think we’re total losers,” Casper whispered, shaking his head.

“Yeah, when we saw your advertisement in the Post.”

“Yeah, when we saw your advertisement in the Post.”

I smiled and walked home under the star-lit sky.

By Dave Myers Editor

Motherhood and Mary

By MARY JO PEDERSEN

For many, Mary, the mother of Jesus, seemed to be inaccessible to many women: without sin, perfect in every way, saying “yes” to God’s will. How could most mothers relate to that image?

Honor Mary, yes. Pray through her powerful intercession, certainly. Look up to her with admiration, of course. But imitate her in the daily hectic pace of mothering? Is it possible?

Reflections on Mary in the Christmas season can help us to understand how Mary’s response to parenthood and the will of God was both extraordinary and ordinary.

Mary had the privilege of bringing Christ into the world, and every parent who brings or adopts a child also has the privilege of birthing a new “image” of Christ in their children as they clean up, cook, carpool and instruct their kids.

Though there is no historical record of Mary’s mothering, the Scriptures give us profound insights into how she was able to parent in line with God’s will.

Luke tells us that at two critical parenting moments, Mary “kept all these things… in her heart.” One time was when the shepherds announced that Jesus would be the Messiah, and another time was when Jesus wandered away from his family at age 12 and was found teaching in the Jerusalem temple (2:19, 51).

Any mother can relate to Mary’s maternal struggle to figure out a child’s behavior, and most would not take such experiences so calmly.

In a very ordinary, human way, Mary’s wise response of keeping these life events made the Incarnation possible.

Perhaps this is where Mary’s birthing of Jesus into the world and our minor role can meet.

In the midst of busy days, we can learn to ponder and be still when we face improbable or disturbing circumstances instead of reacting with anxiety or anger or defensiveness.

Parenting for Mary and for us is part of the faith journey. In pondering all these things, i.e., reflecting deeply, Mary created openness to the Holy Spirit in her heart. Instead of immediately reacting, she teaches us to ponder the anxieties and challenges of daily life.

No parent will find this posture of pondering easy. Most of us want to quickly control the situation surrounding our lives and our children, and it is wise for us to do that to some extent for their safety.

At the same time, however, taking time to be still and reflect openly with God about our children, our future and daily worries is a prerequisite to doing what Mary did so well: allowing God to be birthed into our lives.

Mary was both a mother and a disciple of Jesus. We too are both parents and disciples. Today, as in first-century Palestine, God’s will is mysteriously unfolding in our lives. Jesus reveals himself to us gradually, in very ordinary and sometimes disturbing circumstances: the diagnosis of an illness, a job loss or the unexpected news of trouble in the family.

Nothing that happens to us is outside of the love of God, and we always have the opportunity of allowing divine wisdom to guide and comfort us.

Mary’s example shows us that. Maybe that is why we call her the Queen of Peace, and perhaps keeping things in our heart and pondering them is a way to bring peace into our lives and into the world.

Inherit the Mirth

By Cuyler Black (culyerblack.com)

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Reflections on Mary in the Christmas season can help us to understand how Mary’s response to parenthood and the will of God was both extraordinary and ordinary. Mary had the privilege of bringing Christ into the world, and every parent who brings or adopts a child also has the privilege of birthing a new “image” of Christ in their children as they clean up, cook, carpool and instruct their kids. Though there is no historical record of Mary’s mothering, the Scriptures give us profound insights into how she was able to parent in line with God’s will. Luke tells us that at two critical parenting moments, Mary “kept all these things… in her heart.” One time was when the shepherds announced that Jesus would be the Messiah, and another time was when Jesus wandered away from his family at age 12 and was found teaching in the Jerusalem temple (2:19, 51). Any mother can relate to Mary’s maternal struggle to figure out a child’s behavior, and most would not take such experiences so calmly. In a very ordinary, human way, Mary’s wise response of keeping these life events made the Incarnation possible. Perhaps this is where Mary’s birthing of Jesus into the world and our minor role can meet. In the midst of busy days, we can learn to ponder and be still when we face improbable or disturbing circumstances instead of reacting with anxiety or anger or defensiveness. Parenting for Mary and for us is part of the faith journey. In pondering all these things, i.e., reflecting deeply, Mary created openness to the Holy Spirit in her heart. Instead of immediately reacting, she teaches us to ponder the anxieties and challenges of daily life. No parent will find this posture of pondering easy. Most of us want to quickly control the situation surrounding our lives and our children, and it is wise for us to do that to some extent for their safety. At the same time, however, taking time to be still and reflect openly with God about our children, our future and daily worries is a prerequisite to doing what Mary did so well: allowing God to be birthed into our lives. Mary was both a mother and a disciple of Jesus. We too are both parents and disciples. Today, as in first-century Palestine, God’s will is mysteriously unfolding in our lives. Jesus reveals himself to us gradually, in very ordinary and sometimes disturbing circumstances: the diagnosis of an illness, a job loss or the unexpected news of trouble in the family. Nothing that happens to us is outside of the love of God, and we always have the opportunity of allowing divine wisdom to guide and comfort us. Mary’s example shows us that. Maybe that is why we call her the Queen of Peace, and perhaps keeping things in our heart and pondering them is a way to bring peace into our lives and into the world.
My Norman Rockwell moment

I grew up in Kansas City in the 1960s in a neighborhood filled with children. Our house was on a street at the top of a long and winding hill.

The location of our house had little benefit until it snowed. Then the beginning of the greatest sled ride lay just beyond the curb.

This hill was a Godsend to all the neighborhood mothers. During the Christmas break from school, any child old enough to pull a sled was outside sledding from after breakfast until noon. After a short break to warm up at lunch, we’d return to the hill until fathers started returning from work in the evening.

From the top of the hill, we’d descend three blocks, passing 10 houses on the left, two intersecting side streets to the right and ending at an intersection. At the bottom, if you didn’t steer either left or right, you’d hit a bank of snow pushed up by the snowplow at the curb. After a couple of days, the bank would be knocked down, and you could hit it straight on and take a short airborne ride, coming to rest in a yard.

My younger brother and I shared a small sled. But one Christmas we got a second sled – a Flexible Flyer, probably five feet long. Christ was busy with opening presents, going to Mass and visiting grandparents. We didn’t get around to trying out the new sled. It appeared to be too much sled for me, anyway. But my dad hadn’t forgotten about it.

After supper, he said, “How about trying out that new sled?” It was dark outside, and we looked at him strangely. “Let’s go. The street lights will give us plenty of light,” he said.

So my brother and I bundled up and headed out the door with our father and the new sled. I asked about bringing the other sled. “Oh, I think we’ll all fit on this one,” my dad said, lighting his pipe.

All I could think of was how awkward it would be, the three of us sitting on this long sled.

“We’ll stack like pancakes,” Dad said.

Still smoking his pipe, Dad laid down on the sled. I lay on top of him, my brother on top of me. There we were, stacked three high at the top of a long hill.

My dad used his hands, pawing the snow, to get us going. Our combined weight provided a little more thrust as we passed houses and other sledgers faster than ever before.

I was excited and a little scared, but what was there to be afraid of? We were with our dad.

My brother and I held on tightly: me to my dad, my brother to me. The breeze made my eyes water, but my dad steered effortlessly as we passed the first intersecting street, then the second. Suddenly, my dad and brother simultaneously caught sight of headlights approaching the T-intersection from the right. “Here comes a car!” my brother yelled.

In an instant, my dad pulled up on the right side of the sled, flipping us over.

When my dad slid to a stop with the sled on his chest and my brother and I stopped rolling, we were a safe distance from the intersection and the oncoming car, and somewhat dazed by the seriousness of the moment. Dad broke the silence.

“Now, where’s my pipe?”

My brother spotted it where it had landed after flying about six feet into a neighbor’s yard.

“It’s over there,” my brother said. Sure enough, there it was, the stem stuck in the snow, and smoke still coming from the bowl.

My dad retrieved the pipe, and my brother and I argued over who would pull the sled up the hill.

More three-tiered descents followed, and we had some nice evening sled rides with our dad over the years. Sometimes the greatest gifts are those you don’t ask for.
Sister Maria Elena Martínez-Sifuentes, MCMi, recently left the diocese after serving here for nearly two decades. The Southwest Kansas Catholic asked her to reflect on her time in the heartland as she prepared to head back to Mexico, the land of her birth.

Where did you grow up?
I grew up in Cerritos, San Luis Potosí, Mexico, until I went to the Congregation of the Missionaries of Charity of Mary Immaculate at 17 years of age.

What did your parents do?
My father was a fruit and grocery merchant. Each year he would also come to the United States for a few months. My mother worked at home, with all her children.

When and how did you first hear the call to consider becoming a Religious Sister?
Almost at 17 years; in my hometown, there were Religious in the school which my siblings attended, and they invited the youth for a walk. A few days later, they invited the youth to a retreat, and shortly, they invited us to religious profession where I felt God was calling me. From there I only returned home to speak with my parents for permission to enter the congregation; they told me that it was my decision.

How long have you been in the Diocese of Dodge City, and where did you serve here?
In total I was in the Diocese of Dodge City for 17 years; 10 years at St. Mary Church in Garden City, and seven years at St. Alphonsus in Satanta.

Where did you serve before coming to Kansas?
Before coming to Kansas, I was in the Archdiocese of Denver, Colorado, in the Commission of Catechesis and before coming to Denver, I was in a mission in the State of Hidalgo, Mexico.

Where are you going now?
Now I am going to the Diocese of Merida in Yucatan, Mexico, as superior of the local community and coordinator of the spiritual life for women who are in residence, in asylum.

Can you describe your ministry while serving in Kansas?
My presence as a religious was to support and encourage the leaders of the different parish ministries. In Satanta I assisted with the administration of the parish and supported Hispanic ministry. In Garden City, I worked and supported the Arcoiris movement and the Cursillo movement. I also helped with the diocesan RCIA events.

Please share some of your fond memories.
Many things were a great joy for me: seeing entire families come to Mass on Sundays—father, mother, and the children, and sometimes the grandmother; witnessing the enthusiasm, the joy and the service to the youth of Arcoiris at their encuentros and meetings; knowing so many people who are committed to their faith and their Church, in the living of the sacraments, in prayer, and service to our brothers and sisters.

What have been some of the rewards of serving here?
The rewards of serving here are many and countless: knowing and dealing with persons of diverse cultures; knowing better and valuing the American culture; treating many people of good heart, who are generous and welcoming and who support, understand, and pray for religious. The Catholic Diocese of Dodge City is a mission that is open to evangelization.

What have been some of your challenges?
The English language was my greatest challenge, and at the beginning the [travel] distances [were challenging].

Any other thoughts?
That we may live life as a pilgrimage guided by our God, who is a good Father and that He only wishes that we live this way as His true and good sons and daughters.
Spearville Parish Mission:  
Our culture is ‘losing its sense of sin’

On relationships:  ‘We need each other’

O n the final night of the St. John the Baptist Parish Mission, Father Simeon Gallagher, referring to the high divorce rate, said that “problems shouldn’t blow relationships out of the water. Instead, we should recommit ourselves to each other at a deeper level.”

If you think that your marriage should be like a story out of a fairy tale, remember this: “There’s something in each of us that taxes and taxes other people to the edge. It’s a relentless insensitivity that drains the very life out of our relationships.”

In other words, it’s perfectly normal for us to annoy the heck out of each other from time to time—whether it’s a spouse or a friend.

“These are great gifts, these relationships, but they’re not easy.”

Father Simeon spoke of three things that contribute to destroying relationships:

A) Alienation. ... “Nothing that God has created has been created to stand on its own,” he said. “Outside the church, you don’t see one tree, you see an ecosystem.” When you look to the sky, you don’t see one star, you see a solar system. We’re all joined together.

B) Materialism. “Nothing is wrong with being successful. Nothing is wrong with praying for prosperity. But [quoting Shakespeare] ‘when arrows of outrageous fortune strike...’ we go to the mall and buy this and that, hoping it will take the sting out of our loneliness. We are prisoners in the kingdom of thingdom. We put things before people.”

C) Defeatism. “In the face of the slightest problem with your relationships, the first thing you think is to wash your hands of it and walk away. People throw in the towel as if the water stops being brought to the garden, everything in the garden dies.” Cardinal Newman said that the nation that does not work together and pray together falls apart.

Meanwhile, she wipes the dandruff off of his shoulder and pulls a few pieces of lint from his jacket. Why? “Not because it’s their anniversary, but because he was going to explode.”

Father Gallagher told the story of an 85-year-old woman he helped at a Christmas party. At the reception, he described a couple married 75 years. At the reception, the principal pulled him out of class to tell him. Even his teacher told him as much.

And on that third night, when the discussion was about sin, Father Simeon’s passion arose steadily as he addressed the sin and sadness of racism and sexism, as well as the many ways that our sins affect those around us.

“There’s been a shift in attitude in the last 40 years on the topic of sin,” he said. “The lines for confession have become shorter and shorter, while the lines for Communion have become longer and longer.”

He told the story of a priest who opened the confessional every Saturday morning for two hours, instead of those brief moments before Mass. He didn’t want confession to be “like a car wash before Mass.” He wanted people to sit in quiet contemplation—to pray before rushing off to Mass without having given enough care to the sacrament they had just received. The priest joked to Father Simeon that he spent so much time alone during those two hours that he often would catch up on his Sports Illustrated.

“We have to enlarge our understanding of sin,” Father Simeon explained. It goes far beyond the classic idea of what is sin, such as telling lies, harming someone physically, or stealing. There are sins that we often don’t acknowledge we are committing, such as the sins of sexism, materialism, ageism, clericalism, racism.

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A) Alienation. ... “Nothing that God has created has been created to stand on its own,” he said. “Outside the church, you don’t see one tree, you see an ecosystem.” When you look to the sky, you don’t see one star, you see a solar system. We’re all joined together.

B) Materialism. “Nothing is wrong with being successful. Nothing is wrong with praying for prosperity. But [quoting Shakespeare] ‘when arrows of outrageous fortune strike...’ we go to the mall and buy this and that, hoping it will take the sting out of our loneliness. We are prisoners in the kingdom of thingdom. We put things before people.”

C) Defeatism. “In the face of the slightest problem with your relationships, the first thing you think is to wash your hands of it and walk away. People throw in the towel as if the water stops being brought to the garden, everything in the garden dies.” Cardinal Newman said that the nation that does not work together and pray together falls apart.

Meanwhile, she wipes the dandruff off of his shoulder and pulls a few pieces of lint from his jacket. Why? “Not because it’s their anniversary, but because he was going to explode.”

Father Gallagher told the story of an 85-year-old woman he helped at a Christmas party. At the reception, he described a couple married 75 years. At the reception, the principal pulled him out of class to tell him. Even his teacher told him as much.

And on that third night, when the discussion was about sin, Father Simeon’s passion arose steadily as he addressed the sin and sadness of racism and sexism, as well as the many ways that our sins affect those around us.

“There’s been a shift in attitude in the last 40 years on the topic of sin,” he said. “The lines for confession have become shorter and shorter, while the lines for Communion have become longer and longer.”

He told the story of a priest who opened the confessional every Saturday morning for two hours, instead of those brief moments before Mass. He didn’t want confession to be “like a car wash before Mass.” He wanted people to sit in quiet contemplation—to pray before rushing off to Mass without having given enough care to the sacrament they had just received. The priest joked to Father Simeon that he spent so much time alone during those two hours that he often would catch up on his Sports Illustrated.

“We have to enlarge our understanding of sin,” Father Simeon explained. It goes far beyond the classic idea of what is sin, such as telling lies, harming someone physically, or stealing. There are sins that we often don’t acknowledge we are committing, such as the sins of sexism, materialism, ageism, clericalism, racism.

“Forty years ago, our Catholic bishops wrote a letter saying that racism is a serious, serious sin.”

Father Simeon explained. It goes far beyond the classic idea of what is sin, such as telling lies, harming someone physically, or stealing. There are sins that we often don’t acknowledge we are committing, such as the sins of sexism, materialism, ageism, clericalism, racism.

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Meanwhile, she wipes the dandruff off of his shoulder and pulls a few pieces of lint from his jacket. Why? “Not because to her, no matter how long they’ve been married, he’s still the best looking dude at the party,” Father said.

2) Grace of an open mind. Nothing will shut a marriage down faster than if one ignores the other, suggesting the other is being “stupid,” or not worth listening to. “We must listen and learn and grow together.”

3) Grace of the imaginative spirit. All relationships are subject to gravitational pull. We slide toward predictability. “If the water stops being brought to the garden, everything in the garden dies.” Cardinal Newman said that the only evidence of life is growth. We have to bring water to the garden to fight monotony. Push back the gravitational pull with an imaginative spirit.

Father Simeon told the story of an 85-year-old woman whose husband had recently died. Instead of sitting at home alone, she applied to a college and took classes to study German.

“Many people die years and years and years before the family wheels their coffin down the aisle,” Father Simeon said. “I don’t want to die before it’s my time. I want to be alive until the moment I die.”

Father Simeon Gallagher presents a November parish mission at St. John the Baptist Church in Spearville. Photo by Dave Myers.
After crafting 50 Tissue Box Turkeys in a haphazard but creative assembly line, the members of DOTS (Disciples of the Savior) Youth Group of Mary Queen of Peace Parish in Ulysses, spent the evening of Sunday, Nov. 24, delivering their handcrafted gifts to the residents of the local care home, to show their gratitude for the contributions the elderly have made to their community.

In addition to the much-needed tissues, new cozy socks were also given to each resident.

While the residents were glad to receive the gifts, the joy they received from the personal visits was clearly the best part. There were 22 caring youth members available to visit the 43 residents. One of the teen girls sang for a woman who had difficulty communicating and who, we were told, hadn’t spoken all day. At the sound of the song, she chimed right in and sang along in her own beautiful style! An hour after arriving, many of the youth still weren’t ready to leave.

Several of the young people mentioned that they were impressed by the stories the residents shared with them. This gave them an opportunity to gain better insight into ways we are all connected, and how not-so-different we are, one generation to another.

At the request of several residents, the youth group returned a couple of weeks after Thanksgiving and sang Christmas carols for them. Serving others, especially those in need—what a beautiful way to prepare for the coming of our Savior!

DOTS Youth Group was coordinated by the lead adult team, consisting of Dona Loeven, Flor and Pedro Galindo, Maureen Meierhoff and many other adults of the parish.

“A joyful heart is the normal result of a heart burning with love. She gives most who gives with joy.”

—Mother Teresa
That illusive Christmas magic

By DAVE MYERS
Southwest Kansas Catholic

Does the Christmas season sometimes seem to ask too much of us? At Christmas time, we’re urged, pressured, grabbed by the scruff of the neck and all but forced—to be filled with Christmas spirit, the ingredients for which are a mixture of joy, youthful delight, and wonder.

Problem is, for many of us, the Christmas spirit can be a bit illusive. For many of us, life is, or can be, very difficult—like trying to feel our way through a dark room. For these people, any season designed to deliver a sense of joy may... well, it may instead ignite the blues in a not-so-small way.

For all of you who struggle—for all of you who are fighting depression, addiction, illness, serious financial problems, loss of a loved one, bitterness over bad choices made, loneliness—for all of you for whom that Christmas magic seems a million miles away, I bid you welcome:

Welcome to the Island of Misfit Toys—the planet Earth—a land brimming with a multitude like you (though they may be hard to see, be assured, they’re here)—the first stop for a bearded visitor sent from above to heal what ails us.

When I was a child, it was impossible not to experience Christmas magic. The world was an open book waiting to have the pages filled.

I met Santa, you know.

Yep. Met him in a hardware store back in ’67. Even with his busy schedule, he took time to stop at Hugh’s Nuts and Bolts in downtown Casper, Wyo. I’ll never forget it—Santa on the left, a bathroom plumbing display on the right. I remember actually wondering, ‘If he could magically fit through a chimney, could Santa fit through one of those pipes, too?’ Then I figured he’d probably rather emerge from a chimney than a toilet.

When I was a child, I heard reindeer hooves gallop across my rooftop on Christmas Eve, and even though they sounded suspiciously like they were coming from the next room, Santa was up there, all right; I knew this to be true just as surely as I knew I’d fail my next spelling test.

Continued on Page 17

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O
n Dec. 9, 1531, St. Juan Diego was on his way to morning Mass, when the Blessed Mother — Our Lady of Guadalupe—appeared to him on Tepeyac Hill near what is now Mexico City. She asked Juan to request that his bishop build a shrine at the site of her appearance. When the bishop refused, the Blessed Mother told Juan to gather several roses, even though it was wintertime. The Holy Mother placed them in his tilma [cloak] and told Juan to deliver them to the bishop as proof of her appearance. When Juan Diego dropped the flowers to the floor at the feet of his bishop, there was revealed on Juan’s tilma an image of the Blessed Mother.

The event described at left was one of the defining moments which gave birth to the spread of Catholicism in Mexico. Nearly 430 years later, the faithful of the Catholic Diocese of Dodge City gathered in their own corners of the diocese to celebrate this momentous event.

At parishes across the diocese, thongs of faithful celebrated the Feast of Our Lady of Guadalupe on Thursday, Dec. 12—or near to that day—to honor the Holy Mother and her appearance to a peasant farmer, Juan Diego, nearly a half century ago.
In Dodge City, the powerful sounds of drums announcing one of several groups of danzantes, large troops of boys and girls, men and women, donned in colorful Aztec dress, bamboo beads jangling, large headdresses defying the laws of gravity, turned the gathering area of the cathedral into a celebration of culture and spirituality.

The dancers, including those in Belpre, Elkhart, and other parishes, were not dancing to entertain—although entertain they did—but as a prayer of thanksgiving.

A Q and A with Father Reggie Urban

A look at the Pope Pius XII encyclical, ‘Inspired by the Holy Spirit’

**Editor’s Note:** This is the first in a series of questions and answers about the Bible posited to Father Reggie Urban, a retired priest of the Catholic Diocese of Dodge City.

**QUESTION:** Tell us about Divino Afflante Spiritu (Inspired by the Divine Spirit), the important encyclical about the Bible written by Pope Pius XII in 1943. Also, tell us what Vatican II, our most recent Council, said about the Scriptures 57 years ago?

**ANSWER:** Inspired by The Holy Spirit inaugurated the greatest renewal of interest in the Bible that the Roman Catholic Church has ever seen. It provided the biblical foundation for all the documents of Vatican II 20 years before it was convened. It emphasized the great importance of “textual criticism”, that is, looking at the texts of the Bible through the lenses of the language and the historical context in which they were written.

It concluded that “the supreme rule of interpretation is to discover and define what the writers intended to express”. Father Raymond Brown said that “Probably the greatest single contribution... is that it offered the Catholic scholar an intelligent and honest way of facing up to the obvious historical problems in the Bible. Formerly, too many books of the Bible were thought to be history in the strict sense; now it could be shown that many of these books were not history at all, or were history in a broader and less technical sense”.

The main document of Vatican II about the Scriptures is Dei Verbum (The Word of God) which expresses a positive attitude toward modern biblical scholarship. It also stated that “Access to Sacred Scripture ought to be widely available to the Christian faithful”.

Another document, Sacrosanctum Concilium (This Sacred Council, named in honor of the opening words of Vatican II), called the Scriptures one of two “tables” along with Consecration and Communion by which we can be spiritually nourished. It also directed that all the sacraments be revised so that the Scriptures would be an essential element in their celebration. For example, a passage from the Bible is to be proclaimed when we celebrate the Sacrament of Reconciliation both communally and individually.

Finally, after Vatican II the Liturgy was revised so that more of the Bible would be proclaimed at Sunday and weekday liturgies.

**Dioese hosting road trip to hear Abby Johnson in Wichita**

**Join the Catholic Diocese of Dodge City on a pilgrimage to Wichita to hear Abby Johnson speak at the Knights of Columbus State Convention on May 2, 2020.**

**A b b y i s t h e f o r m e r Planned Parenthood director and accomplished author who inspired the movie “Unplanned”**.

The bus will depart at 6:30 a.m. from the parking lot at the Cathedral of Our Lady of Guadalupe, with a stop in Stafford for additional passengers.

The group will pray at Planned Parenthood and Trust Women Abortion Clinic followed by lunch at Larkspur prior to heading to Century II Convention Center to hear Abby’s testimony. The group will then have time for reflection, Mass and dinner at the Spiritual Life Center before heading back to Dodge City. Cost is $25 for 12 and under and $35 for 12 and up. Cost includes transportation, meals and the ticket to Abby Johnson. Seating is limited. Go to: https://www.dcdiocese.org/respect-life for more information and registration forms. Contact Gayla Kirmer, Respect Life/Social Justice ministry at (620) 227-1525 for additional information.

The pilgrimage is open to all ages. Those 18 and under must be accompanied by a parent, guardian or a youth sponsor who has been certified in Protecting God’s Children training.

**Sister Rose Mary Stein continues mission to offer ‘spiritual refreshment’ across the western part of the diocese**

By DAVE MYERS

W hen she resigned her position at the Cathedral of Our Lady of Guadalupe in Dodge City in 2018, Sister Rose Mary Stein, OP, embarked on a personal ministry to bring a few hours of spiritual respite to people across the western part of the diocese. A year later, having presented numerous retreats, including for those of other religious traditions, Sister Rose Mary wanted to offer a reminder to parishes that the ministry is available — and valuable.

The Saturday morning retreats, which include noon lunch and conclude at 1:30 p.m., are designed to empower laypeople through the offering of a “few short hours where they can feel refreshed.”

“This is the first in a series of events in protecting God’s Children. The group enlists the help of the玫瑰.[not pictured] Rose Mary Stein (not pictured) enlists the help of the participating church to present the Saturday afternoon retreat.

Continued on Page 19

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Guadalupe festival is a way of saying ‘We love you, too’

At left, dancers honored Our Lady of Guadalupe in a dance of thanksgiving at the Cathedral of Our Lady of Guadalupe. At center, Matachines dancers celebrated Our Lady’s feast day at St. Joan of Arc Parish in Elkhart with Father Francis Nguyen. Above, right, this child was one of several dressed as Juan Diego at the cathedral. At right, Father Bernard Felix celebrates Mass at St. Bernard Parish in Belpre. Servers are Jonathan Wheaton and Jacquelin Galan.

Photo by Eleen Duncan

Download these and other color photos for free at dcdioce.se.org/swkscatholic.

St. Catherine Hospital
+ Centura Health.
Garden City, Kansas

Dodge City Medical Center
+ Centura Health Physician Group.
Dodge City, Kansas

Bob Wilson Memorial Hospital
+ Centura Health.
Ulysses, Kansas

For a child is born to us, a son is given us; They name him Wonder-Counselor, God-Hero, Father-Forever, Prince of Peace. His dominion is vast And forever peaceful. . .

Isaiah 9: 5-6
The hundreds of people who filtered in and out of the Heartland Center in Great Bend Nov. 9 for the Dominican Sisters of Peace Mission Bazaar, probably weren’t aware that their purchases went toward helping a multitude of people half a world away receive health-care.

A few weeks after the annual Christmas craft sale and auction, the Dominican Sisters of St. Catherine of Gusau opened a new hospital in rural Zuru, Nigeria. The Gusau Sisters are one of the major beneficiaries of the Great Bend bazaar, which was supported through the people of Southwest Kansas and beyond.

Sister Bridget Yabo OP, a Nigerian-trained physician, is serving as Medical Director for the new Haske Dominican Hospital, which will provide much-needed medical care for the people of this remote area.

“This hospital has been under construction for a number of years,” said Sister Gemma Doll, a member of Dominican Sister of Peace leadership and the Congregation’s liaison to the Nigerian Ministry. “We are so blessed to have even a small part in what will be a life-changing addition to the community of Zuru.”

The Dominican Sisters of St. Catherine of Gusau plan to add additional diagnostic and health care services in the future. The Dominican Sisters of St. Catherine of Gusau and the Dominican Sisters of Peace are grateful for the prayers and support of the people of Great Bend and the Catholic Diocese of Dodge City.

Columbus, OH – The Dominican Sisters of St. Catherine of Siena were founded by the Dominican Sisters of Great Bend, now the Dominican Sisters of Peace, in 1956 at the request of the Apostolic Delegate to West Africa, Archbishop Matthew.

The Dominicans were the first congregation of religious women to come to Northwest Nigeria. Their main tasks were to provide health care and education, and to promote a Catholic presence in Nigeria. Unlike many religious, the Dominican Sisters remained in Nigeria during the Biafran Civil war. They continued their established ministries, but also made the establishment of a congregation of indigenous Sisters a priority. They welcomed their first Postulate in 1973, and in 1977, the first two novices, Sisters Anne Ekennia and Josephine Ottah, made First Profession.

The Dominican Sisters of St. Catherine of Siena, Gusau, have continued to serve the poor and marginalized of Nigeria with health, social services, and educational ministries, touching more than 120,000 persons per year. The Dominican Sisters of Peace have continued to partner with their Dominican Sisters in Nigeria, offering advice, counsel, and financial assistance, especially through the proceeds of the Congregation’s annual Great Bend Mission Bazaar.

About the Dominican Sisters of Peace:
Dominican Sisters of Peace, members of the Order of Preachers, are vowed Catholic women who strive to spread the Gospel of Christ and advance the Kingdom of God through lives of service and peace-making. The Dominican Sisters of Peace are present in 22 states, Nigeria and Peru. The Sisters serve God’s people in many ways, including education, health care, spirituality, pastoral care, prison ministry, the arts, and care of creation. There are 431 sisters and more than 700 lay associates affiliated with the congregation.

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I knew as a child that the three kings came from a place called “Orient R.” I knew that at the birth of Christ, the animals were given the gift of speech, and that a donkey said to a sheep: “Nobody stole your bongos! You just misplaced them.”

And though we never read about it in catechism class, I knew it to be Biblical fact that at our Lord’s birth, there was a little drummer boy who really knew how to rum pa pum pum....

I also knew that Christmas TV specials were an early gift of Christmas magic bestowed by God. I loved “Rudolph the Red-Nosed Reindeer,” “The Grinch Who Stole Christmas,” and “Frosty the Snowman” (although when Frosty melted, it always grossed me out for some reason).

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Christmas at Windthorst

Dodge City Community College vocal music department presented a Holiday Choral Concert at Immaculate Heart of Mary Church at Windthorst Dec. 8.

The concert, conducted by music professor Kerry Kuplic, was as much a gift from the college as it was from Windthorst Heritage, Inc., which has worked tirelessly to keep the historic church open to venues such as this since it was closed as a diocesan church in 1997.

Surrounded on the outside by a sea of Kansas prairie, inside the church exquisite stained glass windows and historic pre-Vatican II decor provided a magical backdrop for the school’s concert choir and choral union.

The concert always provides a welcomed and joyful respite as the season of Advent harkens the coming of the newborn King.

Immaculate Heart of Mary, which is on the National Register of Historic Places, is located about a 15-minute drive southeast of Spearville, standing like a jewel along the Kansas prairie.

The Heritage association is made up primarily of graduates from Windthorst High School. For more information about the church, visit http://www.windthorsteritage.org/index.cfm.

That illusive Christmas magic

From Page 9

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And I knew Christmas was about family. On Christmas Eve our little family of six would sit around singing Christmas carols, the proof of which can be found in several reel-to-reel audio tapes that are like a time machine to my five-year-old self.

Then we grow up. And we grow old. And not always at the same time. Sometimes life does that. Life becomes like Mom or Dad’s shoes we once tried on as a child; we walk around, clumsily trying to fit in, but as much as we try, we just can’t get our footing.

We hear the Christmas carols, we see the excited children, we drive by the lit up yards, and yet, we may wonder where the magic went. We may even wonder what’s wrong with us that we can’t feel the Christmas spirit like we once did.

Which is sad, because here’s the irony: You, my misfit companions, are why Christmas was invented. You are the reason Christ was born. Though we may not always feel it, it’s there – the spirit of Christmas installed and uploaded into our soul, always alive and well, in love with us and within us, without condition.

Christ never meant for Christmas to be just one day, or even a season. Waiting for a song or a bunch of colored lights to ignite the spirit of Christmas is like waiting for Thanksgiving to feel thankful.

Look and listen for the Christmas magic all the year long. The blind shall see, the deaf shall hear, and we, the occupants of the Island of Misfit Toys, will discover that the spirit of Christmas that once seemed so illusive has been right here in our hearts all along.

Where is the Christmas spirit? Through the gift of the Holy Spirit—the gift of a child born 2,000 years ago—you are the Christmas spirit!
¡Noticias de gran alegría!

«El ángel les dijo: “No teman. Miren, les doy una Buena Noticia, una gran alegría para todo el pueblo: Hoy les ha nacido en la ciudad de David el Salvador, el Mesías y Señor». 

(Lucas 2, 10-11)


Sí, la Navidad es la Buena Noticia, el Evangelio de Jesucristo. Jesús nos ama tanto, que vino a esta tierra como un niño. Él creció, nos enseñó a amar, murió en la cruz para quitar nuestros pecados, y resucitó de entre los muertos para abrir las puertas del cielo. La salvación en Jesús: ¡eso es la Buena Noticia! Sí, la Navidad es sobre la gran alegría, este amor del Niño Jesús por nosotros. La paz, la felicidad y la alegría que tan desesperadamente buscamos se encuentran en este niño. Jesús es nuestro hermano, nuestro amigo, nuestro Salvador. Él es nuestro refugio en tiempos de enfermedad, sufrimiento o tentación. Jesús, ¡él nos trae la alegría!

La película «La Navidad de Charlie Brown» concluye con la exhortación: «¡Feliz Navidad, Charlie Brown!», y luego la canción «¡Oíd! Los ángeles mensajeros cantan». Concluyo de manera similar: «¡Feliz Navidad, fieles de la diócesis!». Que abramos nuestros corazones para recibir el alegre mensaje del Niño Jesús!

+ Monseñor John, Obispo

Fiesta de Nuestra Señora de Guadalupe es una carta de amor a María

La Palabra se hizo carne y habitó entre nosotros. 

FELIZ NAVIDAD

Nuestro deseo para ti es la paz - hoy y siempre

Casi 430 años después de que la Santa Madre se le apareció al campesino Juan Diego, los fieles de la Diócesis Católica de Dodge City se reunieron en sus propios rincones de la diócesis para celebrar este acontecimiento trascendental.

En las parroquias de la diócesis, multitudes de fieles celebraron la fiesta de Nuestra Señora de Guadalupe el jueves 12 de diciembre, o aproximadamente ese día, para honrar a la Santa Madre, y su aparición ante los campesinos hace casi medio siglo.

En Dodge City, los poderosos sonidos de los tambores que anunciaron uno de varios grupos de bailarines, grandes tropas de niños y niñas, hombres y mujeres, vestidos con coloridos trajes aztecas, perlas de bambú, tocados que desafiaban las leyes de la gravedad, regresaron a la reunión, en un área de la catedral en una celebración de cultura y espiritualidad.

Los bailarines no bailaron para entretener, aunque lo hicieron, sino como una oración de acción de gracias.

En medio del baile y la canción llegó la misa, celebrando el aniversario del día en que la Madre de Jesús eligió presentarse ante un indio mexicano, cambiando la dirección de la fe a partir de ese momento.
La única cosa

Para celebrar la Navidad correctamente, lo único que realmente necesitamos es «Fe». Pero la Fe es difícil de encontrar cuando nuestras razones normales para creer se desmoronan. Aquellos que nos ayudaron a creer en primer lugar, pueden fracasar. La mayoría de los católicos que conocemos pueden no estar a la altura de cómo deben actuar. La Iglesia misma puede parecer confusa sobre las verdades reveladas esenciales, y todo lo que éstas implican para nuestra vida en Cristo. Estas cosas pasan. Por eso es importante entender que todas nuestras razones secundarias para creer son útiles, sin duda, pero no son cruciales para el acto de Fe. Ellas no son finalmente la razón decisiva por la que creemos. Eso se encuentra en el Espíritu invisible, y en su obra secreta dentro de nosotros. Creemos porque Dios mismo revela que nos amó en la existencia, que nos ama en el desarrollo de nuestra Redención, y que nos amará para siempre en el Cielo. Eso se nos reveló cuando caminó entre nosotros. Lo vimos por un brevisimo instante. Es su Palabra la que es totalmente digna de confianza... no la palabra de tus padres, no la palabra de tus maestros, no la palabra de tus sacerdotes. Es en su Promesa lo que puedes confiar.

Así que, si encuentras que tu Fe se deshilacha después de este duro año, aceptala como una penitencia, pero no la abandones. En el Bautismo, la Fe fue derramada sobre ti como las aguas, sin que hicieras nada. Fue la semilla plantada en ti, y ha crecido, esperamos, para convertirse en tu forma habitual de ver el mundo. La Fe es la puerta abierta a través de la cual comienzas tu regreso a Dios. En la Fe, recoges lo mejor que hay en ti, y se lo das al Dios que te hizo y que te redimió.

«El Reino de Dios está cerca, arrepiéntanse y crean en esta Buena Nueva». Especialmente ahora, en este bendito tiempo de Navidad.

La Fe es la puerta abierta a través de la cual comienzas tu regreso a Dios.

Rev. RONALD M. GILMORE,
Obispo Emérito de la Diócesis Católica de Dodge City

Va con Dios, Hermana María Elena

Hermana María Elena Martínez-Sifuentes, MCMI recientemente dejó la diócesis después de servir aquí por casi dos décadas. La católica del suroeste de Kansas le pidió que reflexionara sobre su tiempo en el corazón mientras se preparaba para regresar a México, la tierra de su nacimiento.

¿Dónde creciste?
Yo crecí en Cerritos, SLP. Mx. Hasta que me fui a la Congregación a los 17 años.

¿Qué hacia tu papá y tu mamá?
Mi papá era comerciante de frutas y abarrotos y también venía a Estados Unidos cada año unos meses y más que he trabajado de la casa, con todos los hijos.

¿Cuándo y cómo primero escuchaste el llamado a considerar ser una Hermana Religiosa?
Casi a los 17; en mi pueblo había religiosas en la escuela donde asistían mis hermanos y ellas hicieron una invitación a las jóvenes a un paseo, a los pocos días a un retiro y en poco tiempo nos invitaron para asistir a una profesión religiosa que fue donde Dios me tomó y de allí solo regresé a hablar con mis papás para el permiso, ellos me dijeron que era mi decisión.

¿Cuánto tiempo ha estado en la Diócesis de Dodge City, y dónde sirviste?
¿Qué hacia tu papá y tu mamá?
Toque de confianza... no la palabra de tus padres, no la palabra de tus maestros, no la palabra de tus sacerdotes. Es en su Promesa lo que puedes confiar.

¿Dónde sirviste antes de venir a Kansas?
Estuve en la Arquidiócesis de Denver, Co. En la Comisión de catequesis y antes de venir a Denver, en una misión en el Estado de Hidalgo, Mx.

¿Al dónde vas ahora? (tu misión?)
Ahora voy a la Diócesis de Mérida, Yuc. Mx. Como superiora de la comunidad, coordinadora de la vida espiritual de mujeres en una residencia, asilo.

¿Qué hizo de tus recursos?
Me encantaba ver que los domingos llegaban a misa las familias completas: el papá, la mamá y los hijos, a veces la abuela; el entusiasmo, la alegría y el servicio de los jóvenes de Arco Iris en los encuentros y reuniones; conocer a tantas personas comprometidas con su fe y su Iglesia, en la vivencia de los sacramentos, en la oración y en el servicio a los hermanos.

¿Cuáles han sido algunas de las recompensas de servir aquí en la Diócesis de Dodge City?
Son Muchas e incontables: conocer y tratar a personas de diversas culturas, conocer más y valorar la cultura americana, traté muchas personas de un corazón bueno, generoso y acogedor que apoyan, comprenden y oran por las religiosas, que la Diócesis es misionera y tiene un campo grande y abierto para la evangelización.

¿Qué han sido algunos de tus desafíos o retos?
El idioma Inglés fue mi mayor reto y al principio las dificultades.

¿Algunos otros pensamientos?
Que vivamos la vida como una peregrinación donde nos guía nuestro Dios que es un buen Padre y que sólo espera que vivamos este camino como sus verdaderos y buenos hijos.

Correo electrónico a clergyabuse@kbi.ks.gov.

El Southwest Kansas Catholic December 22, 2019  Page 15

Protegiendo a los Niños de Dios

La Diócesis requiere a todos los empleados y voluntarios que trabajen con menores a asistir a las sesiones de concientización de Proteger a los Niños de Dios. Estas sesiones de concientización están disponibles en ambos inglés y español. Son conducidos por gente de nuestra Diócesis especialmente entrenadas como facilitadores. Las sesiones se publicarán en las parroquias, escuelas, el periódico Southwest Kansas Catholic y la página electrónica de la Diócesis. www.dcdiocesis.org/protectingchildren.

Si usted sospecha abuso o descuido de un menor en Kansas y el menor está en un peligro inmediato hable al 911 o al departamento de policía local.

Si usted tiene alguna sospecha de que un menor está siendo abusado o descuidado haga un reporte confidencial al Departamento de Protección de Niños de Familias, 800-922-5330 o al KBI, Hotline, 800-KSBKRM (800-572-7463), o mandando un correo electrónico a clergyabuse@kbi.ks.gov.

Si usted sospecha abuso por parte del personal de la iglesia, por favor comuníquese con el Señor Charles Befort, un representante del Consejo de Revisión que recibe y da seguimiento a los reportes. Su información de contacto es cbeafort@cox.net, 620-285-3219. También, el Señor Befort ofrecerá la ayuda del Ministro de Asistencia cuya meta es de ser alguien que escuche y fomente la sanación.

El Consejo de Revisión está compuesto por católicos laicos y un sacerdote que aconsejan al Obispo en su evaluación de cada acusación de abuso sexual, revisan la política diocesana para tratar con el abuso sexual de menores y ofrecen asesoramiento sobre todos aspectos que involucran casos de abuso sexual tanto retrospectivo como prospectivamente.

Un Ministro de Asistencia ayuda con el cuidado pastoral de las personas que afirmar que haber sido abusados sexualmente cuando eran menores de edad por un miembro del clero u otro miembro del personal de la iglesia sin importar que el abuso haya ocurrido recientemente o muchos años atrás.

Todas las acusaciones son consideradas hincapié de buena fe. Una acusación verosímil es definida como una acusación que, basada en los hechos de la acusación, cumple uno o más de los siguientes puntos: No es específicamente negada o es aceptada/admitida por el acusado; es corroborada con otra evidencia o por otra fuente y/o; involucra múltiples acusaciones. Los hechos y las circunstancias que hacen que una acusación sea verosímil pueden variar de caso a caso. La determinación de que una acusación es verosímil no es equivalente a la determinación de culpabilidad en un procedimiento criminal o de responsabilidad en un procedimiento civil.
Catholic Charities of SW Kansas

Why should you help with their Appeal?

I mean, besides the fact that they offer help and hope to a multitude of struggling people across the diocese and beyond...

By DAVE MYERS

Southwest Kansas Catholic

Just how involved in people’s lives should the Catholic Church be? Offering financial guidance? Classes for teenage moms? What about helping provide a road to citizenship for undocumented immigrants? For more than half a century, “Thousands of lives have been positively impacted here in southwest Kansas as a result of Catholic Charities and its staff, board members, volunteers and donors,” said Debbie Snapp, Executive Director of Catholic Charities of Southwest Kansas.

The work of Catholic Charities depends in great part on the kindness of strangers, people who, through their financial donations, offer as much help as if they, themselves, were out there helping families one-on-one.

Your donations go directly to helping those who are in greatest need in Southwest Kansas.

“Because of the work and foresight of those who helped to initiate this agency and its activities half a century ago, children have grown up in loving adoptive ‘forever’ homes, the hungry have been fed, the homeless have found shelter, individuals and families caught in the grip of addictions have been healed, and those facing a lifetime of poverty have achieved goals and self-sufficiency,” Snapp said.

In other words, there can’t be too much involvement in the lives of people in need.

Over the years, Catholic Charities has employed social workers who are given the daunting task of guiding, evaluating, and helping individuals and families through a mountain of emotional, physical, and bureaucratic issues. It’s not a job for the timid.

Snapp, like the other social workers employed by Catholic Charities, can be found serving as a representative of the Catholic Church in unexpected places.

Soon after the violent tornado struck Greensburg and the surrounding region in May 4, 2007, Catholic Charities began working with other agencies to provide needed help.

“We primarily distributed the donations that were received through Catholic Charities and the diocese to help individuals build or repair homes when they had no other resources to do that,” commented Snapp. “We worked with the South Central Kansas Tornado Recovery Organization (a part of the Kiowa Ministerial Alliance) to determine eligibility. We also used some of that money to help with emergency needs – replacing eye glasses, prescriptions, etc.”

Among Falcon’s ministries is pregnancy counseling, in which an often young – and often frightened -- parent, or parents, will come to her looking for alternatives to abortion.

“The counseling helps them to truly consider each of their options and helps them to feel good about their decision, whether it is to make an adoption plan or a parenting plan,” Falcon said in an earlier interview.

She recalls the occasion when she helped two scared high school students: “They were both high school seniors and were involved in sports/cheerleading, etc… They decided that they wanted to make an adoption plan and were able to select a family from our program.”

Falcon only works with open adoptions, in which the birth parent continues to have a relationship with their child, even after they’ve been adopted.

“They met the family and started forming a relationship with them. They and their families became very close to this adoptive family, the birth mom even went to college in the town they lived in. I continued providing counseling to this birth mom for a year and a half after the birth of her child.”

“I know that this birth mom struggled with her emotions for quite a while after the birth and relinquishment of her child. It takes approximately a year for them to really go through the grieving process. I think that the counseling helped her to get through those difficult times.”

The Teen Moms program, which was... Continued on Page 19

They cannot do this alone! Your support helps make a difference in the lives of those in need in southwest Kansas.

Please give generously to the Catholic Charities Annual Appeal. Thank You!

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M-F 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. CST

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906 Central Ave
Dodge City KS 67801

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Go to https://catholiccharitiesks.org/ways-to-help and click on “Donate Money”
Archbishop Sheen’s beatification

Continued from Page 9

further study and deliberation, while also acknowledging the competency of the Congregation for the Causes of Saints to render its decision. The Holy See ultimately decided to postpone the beatification, “the diocese said.

The statement came one day after CNA’s first reported Dec. 4 that Bishop Salvatore Matano of Rochester had asked the apostolic nuncio to the United States to delay the beatification, citing concerns about an ongoing state attorney general’s investigation into the dioceses of New York state.

Sources told CNA that Matano was especially concerned that the attorney general could time the release of an announcement concerning Sheen to coincide with the beatification, potentially marring the celebration.

The Dec. 5 Rochester statement said the diocese had requested a delay “prior to any announcements of the beatification.”

The diocese said it had “provided the Diocese of Peoria and the Congregation for the Causes of Saints through the Office of the Apostolic Nuncio with documentation that expressed concerns about the cause of St. Arnold J. D. Bessette before Brother Miller’s murder. Father Rother was beatified in September 2017 in Oklahoma City. Both men are remembered for their courage, zeal to serve the children of Central America. He is the first member of his order in the United States to be beatified.

Brother Miller’s story strongly echoes that of Blessed Father Stanley Rother, another son of American farmers (this time from Oklahoma) who was murdered in Guatemala at his Santiago Atitlan mission in 1981, which provided the inspiration for Brother Miller’s murder. Father Rother was beatified in September 2017 in Oklahoma City. Both men are remembered for their courage, zeal to serve the children of Central America. He is the first member of his order in the United States to be beatified.

Brother Miller James Miller, FSC, the son of Wisconsin farmers, was beatified Dec. 7 in Guatemala.

After just more than a year at the mission, on February 13, 1982, Miller had returned from taking students on a picnic and was shot in the back three times while repairing a wall at the school, the Post Bulletin reported. Miller died instantly, and his attackers were never identified. He was 37 years old.

Christian Brothers. Though he had also considered being a priest, Miller joined the order of brothers in September 1959, drawn to their apostolate in education.

Three years later in the novitiate program, he chose the religious name Brother Leo William, but eventually went back to using his baptismal name, which had become common among the brothers.

After teaching high school in Minnesota for three years, Miller made perpetual vows in 1970 and was sent to Bluefields, Nicaragua, fulfilling his desire to work in the missions in Central America. In 1974, he was transferred to Puerto Cabezas, Nicaragua, where he became the director of a school.

Using the name Brother Santiago while in Central America, Miller more than doubled the enrollment at the school during his five years there and headed the building of 10 additional schools in the area.

In 1979, he was called back to the U.S. by his superiors, who feared for his life after the Sandinista revolution that overthrew the Somoza government, for which Miller had worked. Prior to his return to the U.S., Miller acknowledged in a letter that he was aware of the growing violence around him, but he was not afraid.

"Are you kidding? I never thought I could pray with such fervor when I go to bed," he wrote in a letter home, according to his order.

In January 1981, Miller was again sent back to Central America to a mission in Huehuetenango, Guatemala, where he taught at the Casa Indigena School and worked at a center teaching experimental agricultural techniques to indigenous Mayans. The skills were useful for the indigenous poor people, who had been bought out of their land by rich corporations in prior years, and were attempting to scrape by on farming in the mountains.

After just more than a year at the mission, on February 13, 1982, Miller had returned from taking students on a picnic and was shot in the back three times while repairing a wall at the school, the Post Bulletin reported. Miller died instantly, and his attackers were never identified. He was 37 years old.

Just seven months prior, on July 28, 1981, Father Stanley Rother had been shot and killed in the middle of the night at his mission in Santiago Atitlan, 100 miles to the south of Huehuetenango.

Continued on Page 18

Sainthood cause advances for religious sister, educator who fought racism

Mother Mary Lange

Baltimore, Md. (CNA) - In the race to see who will become the first canonized black American saint, one candidate’s cause has advanced: Mother Mary Lange, a renowned educator and founder of the Oblate Sisters of Providence, the first community of religious sisters in the United States for women of color.

In an announcement recently from the Archdiocese of Baltimore, where Mother Mary Lange lived and served, Archbishop William Lori said that “I’m happy to say her cause is moving along.”

After meeting with Vatican officials about Lange’s cause in mid-December, Lori reported

Continued on Page 23
he added. “I am personally weary of violence, but I continue to feel a strong commitment to the suffering poor of Central America… the Church is being persecuted because of its option for the poor. Aware of numerous dangers and difficulties, we continue working with faith and hope and trusting in God’s Providence.

“I have been a Brother of the Christian Schools for nearly 20 years now, and commitment to my vocation grows steadily stronger in my work in Central America. I pray to God for the grace and strength to serve Him faithfully among the poor and oppressed in Guatemala. I place my life in His Providence. I place my trust in Him,” he added.

Those who knew Brother Miller remember him for his kindness, his generosity and his joyful spirit. Brother Francis Carr, who roomed with Miller while they attended St. Mary’s University, told Winona Daily News that he remembers him as “a common, good guy.”

One of his former professors remembered Miller as “attractive with an open and sociable personality, likeable, completely genuine; people were captivated by his simplicity: he was very intelligent and also very simple.” Another fellow brother recalled Miller as “an intelligent person, although not an intellectual, jovial, easy to relate with, preferring physical work to sports, with a deep faith and love for his religious vocation, but with a certain tendency to come late to class and community prayers.”

Conway remembered his fellow brother as “big and boisterous” and “very human.”

“What’s cool about him being beatified is that he was human,” Conway told the Post Bulletin. “The fact that someone so human would farm with these kids and taught them the skills to break the cycle of poverty. It speaks volumes about him.”

After his death, Miller’s body was sent back to the United States for burial in Wisconsin. Miller arrived in a dirty white robe, Conway told the Post Bulletin, because of all of the farmers who attended his funeral in Guatemala and wanted to touch his robes as they paid their respects.

Relics gathered during the exhumation of Miller’s body were at the beatification in Guatemala, Dec. 7 in Huehuetenango.

Miller’s cause for canonization opened in 2009. Because Miller was officially declared a martyr by the Church, the typical requirement for proof of a miracle through his intercession in order to proceed with his beatification is waived. A miracle through his intercession will be needed before he can be canonized.

Representatives from St. Mary’s University will be present at the beatification in Guatemala, and a special concurrent commemoration ceremony will be taking place on campus.

“I think, particularly in the Catholic Church, in our faith, we highlight those who give their lives for the sake of the kingdom, the gospel, but also, in this case, as the gospel says, no one has greater love than to lay down his life for his friend,” SMU president Father James Burns told Winona Daily News.

“And so in following the example of Christ, this is what Brother James Miller did, laying down his life,” Burns added. “It’s a great honor for us to have someone from our local community being raised to this honor by the Church. I think people are instinctively drawn to goodness, that kind of goodness, even when it causes great sacrifice and we have to suffer. People are inspired by that.”

Road to Santa Fe: A Trail of Holy Faith

The Santa Fe Trail, also called the Santa Fe Road, was named for its destination. The official name of the town, formerly in Mexico, now New Mexico, was La Villa Real de la Santa Fe de San Francisco de Asis, Spanish for The Royal Town of the Holy Faith of Saint Francis of Assisi. Merchants, settlers, and missionaries traveled the Santa Fe Trail. One of the more notable travelers was the Most Reverend Jean Baptiste Lamy of Santa Fe. Archbishop Lamy crossed over the Santa Fe Trail approximately 11 times between 1850 and 1880. He made use of the roadway for recruiting tours in search of priests and religious to serve in the Vicariate of New Mexico and/or the Archdiocese of Santa Fe.

The Santa Fe Trail was 775 miles long, 550 miles course through Kansas. The trail entered the state in Johnson County and progressed through Douglas, Osage and Lyon counties to Council Grove. A road from Westport, Mo., joined the main trail where Olathe now stands, and another road from Fort Leavenworth united the trail at Wilmington, in the southeast corner of Wabaunsee County. Over these various roads came small trading parties which met at Council Grove and formed a caravan for crossing the Great Plains.

From Council Grove, still pursuing a southwesterly direction, the trail ran through the present counties of Morris, Marion, McPherson, Rice and Barton, striking the Arkansas River near the site of the present city of Great Bend. From this point the trail followed the north bank of the Arkansas (through the counties of Pawnee, Edwards and Ford) to what is now the town of Cimarron in Gray County. Here the trail divided, one branch crossing that stream and running southwest through Gray, Haskell, Grant, Stevens and Morton counties, crossing the western boundary of Kansas near the southwest corner of the state. The Mountain route followed the Arkansas River through Gray, Finney, Kearny and Hamilton counties exiting the state and continuing in Colorado to Bents Fort before taking a southerly descent.

Representatives from St. Mary’s University will be present at the beatification in Guatemala, and a special concurrent commemoration ceremony will be taking place on campus.

“I think people are instinctively drawn to goodness, that kind of goodness, even when it causes great sacrifice and we have to suffer. People are inspired by that.”

Archbishop Jean Baptiste Lamy

Red granite markers were placed in significant locations along the route of the Santa Fe Trail through Kansas by the Daughters of the American Revolution.
The Diocese of Dodge City Catholic Committee on Scouting is accepting letters of nomination for adults who have provided exceptional service as an adult leader in Catholic Scouting ministry or other groups serving youth that have contributed to the spiritual development of Catholic young people. Although these awards are given by the Catholic Church, the recipients do not have to be a member of that faith to be considered. The deadline for submitting nominations is Jan. 18, 2020. All nominations, except for the St. George Emblem, may be in the form of a letter submitted to the Diocese Catholic Committee on Scouting, Diocese of Dodge City, P.O. Box 137, Dodge City, KS 67801. The recognition and presentation of the awards will occur at the conclusion of the Diocese of Dodge City’s Scout QUEST 2019 retreat Feb. 16, at the Sacred Heart Cathedral, Dodge City. The following is a summary of the adult awards that can be awarded by the Diocese of Dodge City. 1. The Saint Elizabeth Ann Seton Award - This award recognizes the meritorious contributions of adults who serve youth through girl’s organizations on a parish or unit level. The applicant must have at least three years active service to youth as an adult to be considered for this award. 2. The Saint Anne Medal - This medal honors the outstanding service of adults contributing to the spiritual development of Catholic members in the Girl Scout movement and to further, promote adult leadership in youth ministry. The applicant must have a minimum of seven years active service to youth as an adult member to be considered for this award. 3. The Bronze Pelican - This award recognizes the contributions of adults who serve Boy Scouting organizations on the parish or unit level. The recipient must have demonstrated good example as a Christian and influenced boys to live a good Christian life. 4. The Saint George Emblem - This emblem is the highest national recognition for adults who have made a significant contribution to the spiritual development of Catholic youth involved in Cub/Boy Scouting organizations at the diocesan level. The Diocese of Dodge City is permitted to present one emblem per year. An application for this emblem is also required. For further information about the awards or to obtain an applications for the St. George Emblem, contact Dave Geist, Chairperson for the Diocese Catholic Committee on Scouting at (620) 430-2123, or email at davegeist.dcks@gmail.com

Catholic Charities appeal

From Page 16

Introduction to the Diocese of Dodge City by Falcon in 2000, is designed to restore the promise, possibilities, and, not to mention, the sense of fun into the life of a teenager who is a parent.

Part of our ministry – of all the ministries of Catholic Social Service – is to be there for people in need, for any person, including a pregnant teen who doesn’t have a neutral place to go. As a church, we are supposed to help and serve in any way we can.”

Like Falcon, Lori Titsworth, who works out of the Great Bend office, has the joy of bringing children into the lives of adoptive parents, and helping someone who is struggling with an unplanned or unwanted pregnancy to find an adoptive family. As Falcon explained, the birth parent no longer has to go through the traumatic experience of handing their child to an adoptive family, never to see them again.

“They know their child will be placed in a faith-based family,” Titsworth explained. “I believe so many times that people are interested in adoption but believe it is too expensive, there is a long waiting list, or they have a misunderstanding of adoption, let alone an ‘open adoption. We provide a lot of education not only to the mother, but to the adoptive families. Other organizations, even dioceses, offer online education, but we spend a great deal of personal time with the families about adoption, which makes them more prepared.”

John STANG, Austin HABASH: St. John Vianney Theological Seminary 1300 S. Steele St. Denver, CO 80210 Erich FRIEB, Carson HAUPT, Jonathan LEMUS: Conception Seminary College P.O. Box 502 Conception, MO 6443 Theological Seminary Conception, MO 6443 Got a minute? Send a letter of support to our seminarians!

The people of the Catholic Diocese of Dodge City are awesome! Back a few years ago when Father Mark Brantley was in seminary, he had several letters from well-wishers pinned to his bulletin board. Other seminarians from much larger dioceses and archdioceses noted how lucky he was to have the prayers and support of the people back home. Please take a moment to send a letter of support to our seminarians who, if it be God’s plan, will one day serve as a priest for the Catholic Diocese of Dodge City! The seminarians have said on many occasions how much these letters mean to them!

Your prayers and well-wishes are deeply appreciated!
Dr. Leonardo "Len" B. Mabugat, 81, of Sacred Heart Parish, Larned, died Nov. 30, 2019. Len was born on Nov. 6, 1938 in Manila, Philippines. He had a Bachelor of Science degree in Psychology and attended the University of Santo Tomas where he obtained his medical degree. He married Sonia Cuebas on Sept. 28, 1968. He was a physician at Larned State Hospital and a Medical Director at Mitchell County Hospital, Beloit. He is survived by Sonia, his wife of 51 years; two daughters, Sonia M. Eaton and Elena M. Rios; his brother, Querubin Mabugat Jr.; sister, Zenaida Magboo; and three grandchildren.

RonalD ANTHONY JASPER, 51, of St. Joseph Parish, Ellinwood, died Nov. 25, 2019. A lifetime Barton County resident, Ronald worked for CPI as a computer programmer. Survivors include his mother, Viona Harris; his wife, Marlene Dewey; one brother, Mark; two sisters, Donna Robinson and Crystal Jasper; grandmother; Mary Jasper; one uncle, Steve Huschka; three sisters-in-law, Janis Chase, Catherine Horner and Vivian Watkins; one brother-in-law, Jeff Dewey; and four nephews and two nieces. Father Terrance Kresse presided.

Cecilia A (Penka) Hall, 94, of Sacred Heart Parish, Larned, died Dec. 8, 2019. A lifetime area resident, she attended Zook and Larned area schools, graduating in 1943. She moved to Wichita where she worked for Boeing as a riveter on the B-29s. She later worked as a psychiatric aid at Larned State Hospital, Larned. On Aug. 7, 1947 she married Eugene W. Hall at Larned; he preceded her in death on Aug. 1, 2002. She was a member of the Altar Society. Survivors include four daughters, Annette Buehler, Mary Norris, Cindy Cline, and Karen Stacey; a son, Steven Hall; 11 grandchildren; 15 great-grandchildren; and five great-great-grandchildren. Father Bernard Felix presided.

Ricky Dean Wilcox, 56, died Dec. 8, 2019 in Larned. He was born March 12, 1963 in Larned, the son of LaVerne Wilcox and Ann Greathouse Wilcox. A Larned area resident since 2017, he worked as a foundry plant manager and was the current owner of Scooters Diner in Larned. Survivors include his mother, Ann Wilcox; and two sons, Stiles and Stormie.

Benjamin J. Shaffer, 94, of Prince of Peace Parish at St. Rose Church, Great Bend, died Dec. 12, 2019. He married Florence Louise Bahr on Nov. 26, 1952, at Omitz. She died May 7, 2016. Survivors include three sons, Kenneth, Tom, and Dan; six daughters, Linda Elliott, Patsy Giangrosso, Treva Goodman, Cathy Shaffer, Laurie Logan, and Sharon Denney; 16 grandchildren; 19 great-grandchildren, with one on the way; one sister-in-law, Dorothy Shaffer; and many nieces and nephews. Father Louis Dinh Hoang presided.

Louis G. Guetters, 83, of St. Aloysius Parish, Ransom, died Dec. 11, 2019. On Nov. 22, 1960 he married Marcile Andreas. Louis was a cattleman and enjoyed working with livestock. He was a member and past president of the Ransom Farmers Co-Op, a member of St. Aloysius Catholic a 3rd degree Ransom council 2352 Knights of Columbus member. Louis also served his country in the U.S. Army for two years. He is survived by his wife, Marcile; three sons, David, Duane, and Daniel; three brothers, John, Gene, and Jerome; four sisters, Rozanne Veeder, Janice Houdshell, Carolyn Masa, and Linda Hess; seven grandchildren; and five great-grandchildren.

Adeline E. Hesselman, 90, died Dec. 9, 2019 at the Hodgeman County Health Center In Jetmore. She was born May 7, 1929 near Windthorst, the daughter of Henry J. and Josephine (Kehl) Hesselian. She graduated from Windthorst High School in 1947 and went on to become an RN providing loving home care in The Bronx, New York City for 30-plus years. Survivors include her sister-in-law, MaryAnn Hesseman; and eight nieces and nephews. Father John Forkuoh presided.

Obituary policy
Obituaries are listed free of charge, but must be edited for space. If you see that a listing has not been included, or there is a mistake, call Dave at (620) 227-1519, or email skregister@dcdiocese.org. Please pray for the repose of the soul of all those listed, and for their friends and loved ones.

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Scriptures Readings

Sunday, Dec. 22; Fourth Sunday of Advent IS 7:10-14 / ROM 1:3-7 / MT 1:18-24
Thursday, Dec. 26; Feast of Saint Stephen, first martyr ACTS 6:8-10; 75:49-59 / MT 10:17-22

Despair always lifts! If you are having thoughts of suicide, call the National Suicide Prevention Lifeline at 1-800-273-8255.
St. Sebastian’s Sudoku

Each Sudoku puzzle consists of a 9x9 Sudoku grid containing areas surrounded by gray or dotted lines. The object is to fill all empty squares so that the numbers 1 to 9 appear exactly once in each row, column and 3x3 box, and the sum of the numbers in each area is equal to the clue in the area's top-left corner.

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St. Martin’s Mind Teasers

TEASER THE FIRST:
(Below) Spell 4-letter words that use one letter from each row. They do not have to connect.
Score 1 point for each 4-letter word you form.
Spell one 10-letter word that begins with the top letter in the triangle and uses every letter in the triangle.
Score 5 points for this word.

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TEASER THE SECOND:
These word pairs are not in relation to each other, but if you find their synonyms, the two words will rhyme.
Example: Over-sized Feline = Fat Cat
Kiss Dog Funny Cat Movie Monster Unusual Rabbit Copper Teapot Wedding Limo Untamed Minor

TEASER THE THIRD (LEFT):
First complete the 7-letter word at the top of the diagram. Then use the last two letters of the first word as the first two letters of the second word. If you get stuck, try starting at the bottom of the diagram and working your way up, in reverse. The last five letters of the final word are given.
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Word Search

BLESSED MOTHER

C K E T A L U C A M M I S N
I J O S E P H F B E E I A
X I N W Q C R Z A T Y V A W T
W I B Z Y N J H Y E R B Q I
S X R L A Y J G L N B E E O V
S I Q T S D K K S Y Y U C D I
O R M M P B S O M R M L Y M T
R T X A H M R U A I N B A F Y
C A S V L R E S M B F R L C U
E I G A O L O D T P I C A U Q
H D I W Q R F U E A T N S P Q
T E S B E R I E N R A H J T
T M W I S X N V G O U O U I
A N O I T P E C N O C C D N U
Y D A L R U O Q C X Z H T F P

ASSUMPTION
AT THE CROSS
BLUE
CANA
CONCEPTION
IMMACULATE
JOSEPH
MARIAN
MAY
OUR LADY
ROSEMARY
SEVEN SORROWS

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ANSWERS

FIRST:
DROP, PANG, PAPA, POND, PONG,
PROD, PROP; PROPAGANDA

SECOND:
SMOOCH POOCH
FEATURE CREATURE
RARE HARE
METAL KETTLE
MARRIAGE CARRO

THIRD:
SCREECH, CHARADE, DENTIST,
STEPPLE, LEPROSY, SYRINGE,
GEOLOGY
That the paper arguing for her life of heroic virtue was nearly finished, and that the “positio,” another document arguing for her cause for canonization, was complete and being sent to the Congregation for the Causes of Saints. If approved, the document will be forwarded to Pope Francis, who will then be able to grant the title of “Venerable” to Mother Mary Lange.

Mother Lange was born Elizabeth Clarisse Lange sometime around 1784, most likely in a French-speaking area of Santiago, Cuba. Her parents were reportedly refugees who fled to Cuba from a revolution in their native Saint Domingue (present-day Haiti).

In the early 1800s, Lange emigrated to the United States from Cuba and settled in Baltimore, Maryland. She arrived in the U.S. well-educated and with some money to her name, indicating that her parents were also educated and well-off.

According to the Mother Lange Guild, Lange was living in Baltimore by 1813, and soon after realized that the children of her fellow refugees were in desperate need of education, something that was hard to come by for black children in pre-Civil War America.

Together with a friend, Marie Magdelaine Balas, Lange began offering free education to children of color from her home. In 1828, Lange was approached by a priest, Reverend James Hector Joubert, S.S., about officially founding a Catholic school for girls of color. Lange told the priest that she had been wanting to dedicate her life to God, and that she wanted to start not only the school but also a religious order of sisters for women of color. Permission was granted, and in 1829, Lange and three other women (including Balas) took their first vows as Oblate Sisters of Providence. Lange, who became the superior of the order, took the religious name of Mary, and became known as Mother Mary Lange.

The first paragraph of their order’s rule spelled out their vocation and mission: “The Oblate Sisters of Providence are a religious society of virgins and widows of color. Their end is to consecrate themselves to God in a special manner not only to sanctify themselves and thereby secure the greater glory of God, but also to work for the Christian education of colored children.”

“Our sole wish is to do the will of God,” Mother Lange once said of her order, according to the Oblate Sisters. The school founded by the sisters, St. Frances Academy, is the oldest, continuously running school for black Catholics in the United States, and remains open today. By 1860, all children of color attending Catholic school in Baltimore were educated in schools run by the Oblate Sisters.

In 1843, the sisters suffered a blow at the death of Fr. Joubert, who had been their biggest supporter since the founding of the order. Combating poverty and racism, the sisters scrambled to shore up their order as some members left, and the Sulpician priests, the order to which Joubert had belonged, were no longer able to support the sisters.

“There was a sense of abandonment at the dwindling number of pupils and defections of her closest companions and co-workers,” the Mother Lange Guild states in her biography. “Yet, through it all Mother Mary never lost faith in Providence.”

Lange and her sisters not only educated children of color, but they housed orphans and vulnerable elderly, and took in extra washing and mending and begged on the streets to support those in their care. In 1832, the sisters also cared for the terminally ill during the cholera epidemic. After the Civil War, the sisters cared for dozens of black orphans who were living in Baltimore. On Febr. 3, 1882, after a long life of service to others, Mother Mary Lange died.

“Mother Mary Lange practiced faith to an extraordinary degree,” the Guild wrote of her. “In fact, it was her deep faith which enabled her to persevere against all odds. To her black brothers and sisters she gave of herself and her material possessions until she was empty of all but Jesus, whom she shared generously with all by being a living witness to his teaching.”

Lori added that Mother Lange was “a person who was in every way a pioneer” who “stood head and shoulders above the racism of her era.”

Should Lange be declared Venerable, the next step in her cause for canonization would be for a miracle through her intercession to occur and be approved by the Vatican.
Cathedral native receives the Franciscan habit

Cathedral of Our Lady of Guadalupe parishioner Jesus Osornio (back row, far left) was vested with the Franciscan habit on Oct. 16 at the historic Mission Santa Barbara in Santa Barbara, Calif. Traveling from the headquarters of the Our Lady of Guadalupe Province in Albuquerque, NM, Osornio was one of 11 novices—representing the six Franciscan provinces—who were vested with the Franciscan habit as friends and family looked on. More will be presented on Brother Osornio in an upcoming issue of the SKC.

Dr. Noreen Carrocci, Ph.D. retires as president of Newman University

WICHITA — Newman University in Wichita recently honored Dr. Noreen Carrocci, Ph.D., upon her retirement as president. Dr. Carrocci became the fourth female and first lay woman to hold the presidential office at Newman University when she was inaugurated in 2007.

During her tenure, numerous campus improvements and additions have been completed, including the construction of two residence halls, one of which was named Carrocci Hall in 2016 at the request of a major donor.

Another project completed during her tenure was the Dugan Library and Campus Center, as well as outdoor gathering spaces like Founders Plaza, a beautiful outdoor monument which honors Newman’s sponsoring order, the Adorers of the Blood of Christ, and their foundress St. Maria De Mattias.

Dr. Carrocci also led a $30 million capital campaign to build a new 51,400 square foot science center named the Bishop Gerber Science Center in honor of the Most Rev. Eugene J. Gerber, Bishop Emeritus of the diocese’s of Dodge City and Wichita.

The Diocese of Dodge City and Newman University have been Church in Partnership since 1998, offering Pastoral Ministry Formation courses in the Diocese of Dodge City and the Diocese of Salina.

St. Nick Day

Visiting Sacred Heart Cathedral School in Dodge City on “St. Nick Day” are Father Juan Salas, Father Wesley Schawe, and Bishop John B. Brungardt, and of course, St. Nick himself.

Happy Holidays!

Thank you for your business and friendship throughout the year.