

MASS INTENTIONS

MONDAY, DECEMBER 25TH
CHRISTMAS DAY

9:00 a.m. For The Parish
11:00 a.m. Ralph Schimmele

TUESDAY, DECEMBER 26TH

8:00 a.m. Gerald & James Gavin

WEDNESDAY, DECEMBER 27TH

8:00 a.m. Tess Padrique

THURSDAY, DECEMBER 28TH

8:00 a.m. Betty Ann Carsten

FRIDAY, DECEMBER 29TH

8:00 a.m. Harry Kohrman

SATURDAY, DECEMBER 30TH

8:00 a.m. Maria Caballero

5:00 p.m. Frank Knight

SUNDAY, DECEMBER 31ST

7:15 a.m. Willard & Wilma Lenkendofer

9:00 a.m. Special Intention Nielson Family

11:00 a.m. Paul Maloney

12:45 p.m. Ginny Amstutz

6:00 p.m. For The Parish (Life Teen Mass)

*CHAPEL



SERVERS' SCHEDULE

(It is YOUR responsibility to find a replacement, especially during the holidays)

Saturday, December 30

8:00 a.m. TEAM 9: Ali Schanbacher, Robert Nicola
Mitchell Schanbacher, Olivia Fawcett
5:00 p.m. TEAM 6: Alexa Litchfield, Tony Armstrong
Matthew Melchi, Ben Evans

Sunday, December 31

7:15 a.m. TEAM 2: Spenser St. Louis, Aaron Ceckowski
Andrew Ceckowski, Justin Dials
9:00 a.m. TEAM 4: Joey Houlihan, Lindsay Kemper
Erin Grutsch, Summer Barton
11:00 a.m. TEAM 18: Logan Noll, Matt Woodrum
Molly Brunner, K. Buenconsejo
12:45 p.m. TEAM 13: Sean Meehan, Brittney Giant
Madeline Pollifrone, Kylie Stevens

WEDDING BANNERS

"Let us pray that our brother and sister in Christ, who are preparing for the sacrament of marriage, will be lead by the Holy Spirit."

III Matthew Till and Auralea Picciano



COFFEE & DONUTS

Now - January 7 No C&D
January 14 Buescher Family
January 21 Penisten Family
January 28 Huffman Family

COFFEE AND DONUTS HELP NEEDED

Wanted: Volunteers to help with the ministry of Coffee and Donuts after the 9:00 a.m. Mass. We split up the C&D weekends and need volunteers to help with the ministry. For more information, please call Cristina Cuellar 489-8160.

USHERS NEEDED

We have openings for ushers for most weekend Masses. Ushers are assigned to teams and each team serves for three months during the year. Both men and women are welcome to serve in this ministry of hospitality. Please call Ray and Toni Ohlman at 637-5377 to volunteer or for more information.

EUCCHARISTIC ADORATION

Sunday, 12:00 – 6:00 p.m.
Wednesday, 8:30 – 7:00 p.m.

"You will feel often His loving peaceful presence when you visit Him in the Blessed Sacrament." — St. John Vanney

FROM THE PASTOR:

Christmas, more than any other feast, is a special time for families. "I'll be home for Christmas" is a verse from one of the popular Christmas songs we hear at this time of the year. The story of Jesus, Mary and Joseph warms our hearts and can stir within us a deeper appreciation for our own family. May we remember in our prayers at this time those who are lonely and without family, perhaps suffering the death of a loved one or enduring the pain of separation or rejection. May our faith in a loving God sustain us. May you have a blessed and merry Christmas.
Fr. John



ST. VINCENT'S CHRISTMAS MASS SCHEDULE

Christmas Eve 4:00 and 6:30 p.m.
Our Mass at Midnight 11:00 p.m.
Christmas Day 9:00 and 11:00 a.m.



CATHOLIC CHARITIES

Catholic Charities will have their annual Christmas collection this year to support services for children and their families. Last year, Catholic Charities served over 14,000 people, providing a range of services including adoption, pregnancy services, senior services, emergency assistance, child care, refugee resettlement, immigration, and counseling for families. Your financial contribution will help us continue the tradition of caring and service that has been the hallmark of Catholic Charities.

**RECYCLE YOUR CHRISTMAS TREE
BOY SCOUT SERVICE PROJECT**

Five mile radius of church. Suggested donation of \$10 with all proceeds going to the St. Vincent de Paul Society. Pick up dates are Saturday, January 6 or Saturday, January 13. Place your tree at the end of your drive by 8:00 a.m. Your tree will be picked up by 4:00 p.m. Place a check made payable to St. Vincent de Paul Society with your name, address, phone number, subdivision name and pick-up date and return to the St. Vincent Scout Lodge, 8965 Auburn Road, 46825

**ARE YOU PREPARED FOR THE DIOCESAN 150TH
ANNIVERSARY, THE SESQUICENTENNIAL JUBILEE?**

On January 7, 2007, the Feast of the Epiphany, *Today's Catholic* newspaper will be delivered to all registered Catholic homes in the Diocese of Fort Wayne-South Bend. *Today's Catholic* will be packed with information about the jubilee year and will provide you with a calendar of activities. For information about *Today's Catholic* or to subscribe visit www.diocesefwsb.org or call 456-2824.



PROJECT 25 COLLECTION - NEXT WEEKEND

Next weekend at all the Masses, boxes will be placed near the columns in the church's Gathering Space to allow our parishioners to contribute to this project. These contributions will make it possible for our parish's St. Vincent de Paul Society to help those in need in our parish and community.

MISS VIRGINIA MISSION SUNDAY

Please remember this ministry to the needy of the inner city next weekend, December 30/31. Bags of food or paper products may be left in the Gathering Space of the church. Whatever is collected is taken to Inner City Hope Mission House that very day, so please refrain from bringing items through the week.

FREE MINISTRY TO TRAVELING CATHOLICS

For nationwide Mass times and locations: Log on to the internet www.masstimes.org.

MAKE A HAPPY CHRISTMAS

"How can you make this the happiest Christmas of your life? Simply by trying to give yourself to others. Put something of yourself into everything you give. A gift, however small, speaks its own language. And when it tells of the love of the giver, it is truly blessed."

— Norman Vincent Peale

STEWARDSHIP OF TREASURE

ST. VINCENT'S NOVEMBER 2006 COLLECTIONS

Four Weeks

Total Collection in Envelopes \$ 202,747
 Total Collection in Loose 11,320
 \$ 214,067

Average Weekly Collection \$ 53,517
 Project Solidarity for the Poor \$ 6,422
 Capital Improvement Envelope \$ 1,859



YOUTH MINISTRY CALENDAR

December 24 NO LIFE TEEN MASS OR LIFE NIGHT
 Christmas Eve
 December 27 Ministry Hour, 7:30 p.m.
 December 28 Pray at Abortion clinic
 after 8:00 a.m. Mass
 December 31 NO LIFE NIGHT
 New Year's Eve



MARK YOUR CALENDARS

- XLT
 Please plan to REJOICE with us at XLT on Tuesday, January 2, at 7:00 p.m. at St. Vincent's for Joy, Praise and Adoration in the spirit of Emmanuel.
- A Home Girls meeting is scheduled for January 1 at 7:30 p.m. in the Life House.

On behalf of myself and the entire Core Team I would like to wish everyone a very Blessed Christmas.

For information about St. Vincent Youth Ministry, contact Tracy Sines at 338-1263 or Tracy 1892@aol.com.

PROJECT SOLIDARITY

As good stewards of God's generous gifts, we pledge to commit 3% of our parish's income, off the top, to the poor and needy. This is money we could use for parish needs; however, we recognize that there are those whose needs are greater. What we give to the poor in the name of Christ will be returned to us a hundredfold. God will not be outdone in generosity. Mindful of our patron, St. Vincent de Paul, it is with joy that we help those in need.

Meetings of the Week

SHEPHERDS OF CHRIST – Tuesday, December 26, at 6:30 p.m. in the Reservation Chapel
 ADORATION OF THE BLESSED SACRAMENT – Wednesday, December 27, from 8:00 – 7:00 p.m. in the Church
 SERVERS CHRISTMAS PARTY – Thursday, December 28, at 7:00 p.m. in the Parish Hall at 6:00 p.m.
 JOHN ANGOTTI CONCERT – Friday, December 29, at 7:00 p.m. in the Church
 ADORATION OF THE BLESSED SACRAMENT – Sunday, December 31, from 12:00 – 6:00 p.m. in the Reservation Chapel

CELEBRATE THE NEW YEAR WITH

JOHN ANGOTTI AND HIS MEMPHIS BAND

See another side of John by kicking off 2007 in style, dancing to the secular music performed live by John Angotti and his band on Sunday, December 31, 2006. The event will be held at St. Vincent's cafeteria from 9:00 p.m. – 1:00 a.m. Tickets available after Masses and in the church office. See Tony.

THE LIGHTWEIGH

The Light Weigh series is beginning again at St. Vincent's. Are you tired of constantly struggling with your weight? Tired of following strict diets? Consider giving God a chance to touch your heart, your life and your eating. A Light Weigh orientation will be held Tuesday, January 2, 2007, from 9:00 – 11:00 a.m. in the back room of the Convent. Come and find out about The Light Weigh Bible study and video series, and how this program has been a blessing to others. For further information contact parishioner Nancy Simmonds at njsimmonds@verizon.net.

CHRIST RENEWS HIS PARISH CONTINUATION COMMITTEE

We will be discerning individuals for the Committee's service position of Kitchen Coordinator. If you have been on a past Christ Renews team and feel called to serve in this ministry, which includes attending Continuation monthly meetings and coordinating the meals for both the Men's and Women's weekends twice a year, please send a letter to the Church Office, Attention: Barry Lomont. In this letter, answer the following questions: How did you hear this call? What is your previous team experience and ministry? How do you feel you could best serve the committee, teams and invitees? For more information regarding this ministry, call Barry Lomont at 490-1396.

ELECTRONIC CONTRIBUTION

is an automatic transfer program which allows you to make regular contributions to the Church without writing checks or giving cash. It saves you time, work and simplifies your life. However, persons who give electronically are urged to continue to drop the empty collection envelopes in the Sunday basket as a sign of their commitment to stewardship. If you would like more information on Electronic Giving, please call the church office.



ADULT EDUCATION

A NEW OPPORTUNITY FOR YOU!

Have you noticed anything new and different in the parish gathering space? The Adult Education Committee of our parish is sponsoring an additional opportunity for adults in the parish to increase their knowledge and understanding of the faith. Wherever you have a CD player available to you, in the car or at home, you can deepen your understanding and love for the faith. Topics such as "How to Bring Fallen Away Catholics Back to the Church", "The Joy of Stewardship", "The Holy Eucharist", "How to Keep Your Kids Catholic", and others are available for a modest donation. Every few months the topics will change. We encourage you to take advantage of this wonderful opportunity and check it out!

UPDATED LIST OF ITEMS

A food box for St. Vincent de Paul Society's pantry is placed in the west wing of the Gathering Space. We will continue to regularly post items needed to supply the pantry. Our current needs are CANNED MEAT, CEREAL, JELLY, SPAGHETTI SAUCE, SOAP, TOILET PAPER, and COFFEE although any donations are appreciated. We cannot accept perishable items, e.g. fresh vegetables. Again, we wish to thank you for your support in helping us feed the poor of our community. Your response has been GREAT!

DONATE YOUR VEHICLE

TO HELP ST. VINCENT DE PAUL SOCIETY

Donate your car, truck or van for a good cause. Many people are in need of a good running vehicle. A tax write-off for you. Call the St. Vincent de Paul Store at 456-3561.

MARKET DAY – DISNEY PROMO

A Blessed and Merry Christmas to all from the Market Day staff. In January, Market Day is teaming up with Disney and having a Disney Vacation give away. Five Walt Disney World vacations for four will be given away, as well as 100 iPods and 1,000 \$25 Best Buy Gift Cards. You have to order on line or mail in an entry. No purchase is necessary. Orders entered by bringing in your order forms DO NOT QUALIFY. Place your orders on line to qualify for the drawing or mail in an entry! Only one entry per household will be permitted. Entries will be drawn daily beginning January 3, 2007. Forms can be found at the table by the church office and completed forms can be returned to the church or school offices by January 10 or filed on the internet by January 13 at www.marketday.com. Pickup date is January 18. Any questions, call Eva Vandeputte 490-9329. Good luck!

CHILDREN'S STEWARDSHIP

"I helped my mom bake cookies." Nicholas H.
"I gave my mom a hug." Jacob K.
"Helping grandma clean windows." Jacob U.
"Donated a gift to a needy cause." Morgan & Richie T.

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION NEWS

JANUARY SCHEDULE FOR RELIGIOUS ED

Wednesday classes resume on January 10, and will meet also on January 17, 24 and 31. Sunday classes resume on January 14, and will also meet on January 21 and 28.

PARENTS OF 2ND GRADE STUDENTS

The parent information meeting for sacramental preparation will be held on Sunday, January 14 from 4:00 – 5:30 p.m. in the Parish Hall or Wednesday, January 17, from 6:00 – 7:30 p.m. in the Parish Hall. Please enter through Door 10 off of the playground. Attendance at ONE of these meetings is required. A pink flyer with more information was sent home with your child the week of December 17. If you did not receive one of these flyers, please contact Chris Van Gessel at 241-5325.



50TH ANNIVERSARY OPEN HOUSE

Mark your calendars to attend the open house commemorating St. Vincent de Paul School's 50th anniversary on Sunday, January 28, 2007, from 2:00 to 4:00 p.m. Please refer to the bulletin insert for more information. And, we

are looking for school mementos such as old photos, yearbooks, sports jerseys, awards, etc. for a memorabilia display. Please call Chris Hursh in the Development Office at 489-3537 ext. 247 if you have any items to loan to the school for this celebration.

PARISH REWARDS IS GROWING

We receive more questions every day: How does the program work? Can I use it to donate money to the church? Is it possible to reduce our St. Vincent's or Bishop Dwenger tuition through Parish Rewards? Can my Parish Reward be applied to my grandchild's tuition? So far this year, the vendors participating in the program have made 36 donations to Parish Rewards. Help us to keep it growing by supporting the local businesses who are enrolled this year: orthodontists, car dealers (new and used), homebuilders, realtors, mortgage companies, carpet/flooring companies, remodelers, furniture stores, insurance agencies, cell phone companies, marinas, motorcycle/motorsports stores and more. For more details, or a full listing of this year's vendors, please pick up information from the table outside the church office. Information is also available in the school office or at www.saintv.org (click on school – links). For details on how to participate in Parish Rewards, please call the Development Office at 489-3537 ext. 247.

SCRIP HOLIDAY SCHEDULE

Scrip will not be sold over the holiday weekends. Next church scrip sales are January 6 and 7. Thank you for your support and have a blessed Christmas.

WHY DO I HAVE TO BE REGISTERED IN MY PARISH?

It is necessary that you be registered in the Parish for a number of reasons: baptism of a child, marriage, letter of recommendation for sponsors for baptism or, death, etc. We wish to encourage all who have not done so to register. We want to remind the newlyweds to register, as they are no longer included on their parent's registrations. Also, if you are moving, please phone the church office and give us that information.

WEDDING POLICY

Weddings in the parish should be scheduled at least six months in advance of the wedding day. This will allow us to do the necessary preparation as required by the diocese. Also, active membership in the parish is required for at least six months prior to setting a date for the wedding. The wedding date may be set only by contacting one of the parish priests.



ATTENTION: MEN AND WOMEN OF THE PARISH

You are invited to attend the next Christ Renews His Parish Weekend. The men's weekend is February 24-25 and the women's weekend is March 3-4. This is a wonderful renewal weekend where you can strengthen your relationship with Christ through prayer, scripture, and listening to others share their faith. Don't miss out on this great opportunity for spiritual growth and fellowship. Contact Molly Schreck 484-5303 or meschreck@netzero.net for your reservation on the women's weekend and Ed Smith 433-7831 or esmith@illumination-solutions.com for your reservation on the men's weekend.

BAPTISMAL PREPARATION CLASS

Attendance at two Baptismal Preparation Sessions is required before your child is baptized. They are Session I and Session II. You may attend Session II before Session I, if necessary. Each session will begin at 7:00 p.m. It is recommended that you attend before the birth of your child so that there will be no delay in setting a date for the baptism once the baby is born. Godparents, too, are welcome. Please call the church office to register for your sessions.

NO SESSIONS IN DECEMBER.

Session I (East Meeting Room)

January 11, 25

Session II (Church Conference Room)

January 18



RCIA

If you are interested in learning more about the Catholic Church, its teachings and traditions, you may want to consider the RCIA. For more information, please call the church office at 489-3537, and ask for Judy.

RITE OF CHRISTIAN INITIATION FOR CHILDREN (RCIC)

If your child is over the age of eight years old and not baptized or baptized in another faith and interested in the Catholic faith, please contact Cyndi Wolf at 489-3537. We welcome inquiries about the program year-round. If your child is over the age of eight and baptized Catholic, but in need of the sacraments of First Communion and/or Confirmation, we are enrolling now for next year's program.

ATTENTION: EUCHARISTIC MINISTERS

The Byron Health Center Sunday Volunteer ministry is in need of two additional Eucharistic Ministers. Service in this ministry involves taking Communion to residents who are confined to their rooms. This is done every Sunday and takes about one hour in the morning. Ministers are assigned every four to five weeks. If interested, call Dolly Passino, 489-5956, or Bob Swindler, 489-8150.



Eucharistic Ministers

CARE SACRISTAN MINISTRY

Would you like to assist in the ministry of Care Sacristan? This ministry involves taking care of our Church and, while not a demanding ministry, is a very worthwhile one. For more information, call Mary Schafer at 489-1965.

MEN WANTED

We want to issue an invitation to all eligible men of the parish to join the Knights of Columbus – St. Vincent's Council. The Knights is a service organization of Catholic men which is involved in both our church and our community by helping the less fortunate, supporting our youth programs, our seminarians, and the Right to Life effort. Knights work as volunteers when needed at St. Vincent's and on projects within our community. In addition, we relax and enjoy each other and ourselves at dances, hayrides, dinner theater and other such social events.

You can be as active in the Knights of Columbus as your time allows. You might choose to be an officer in our organization or limit your participation to flipping an occasional pancake at one of our Sunday parish breakfasts.

If you want to join us or want more information first, please call Ray Ohlman, membership director, at 637-5377. We look forward to welcoming you to our council.



...Retreats...

CHRISTMAS DIRECTED RETREAT

Spend some quiet time in prayer with direction on a one to one basis. Choose from 3 to 5 days from December 27 to January 1. Directors are Fr. Al Naseman, c.pp, from the Sorrowful Mother Shrine in Bellevue, OH, and Sr. Joetta Huelsmann, PHJC, director of John XXIII Center. Call 765-348-4008 for more information. This retreat starts on the evening of December 27, or later if coming for three days of your choice.

DOMINICAN SPIRITUALITY RETREAT

Learn more about sharing the Word and Dominican Spirituality with Larry and Mary Reichley. This retreat begins on Friday night, January 5, and ends on Sunday with lunch on the 7th. CCU's are available for Catechist Certification in the Lafayette Diocese. It can count for a spiritual retreat for those enrolled in the Lay Ministry program in the Lafayette Diocese. Call John XXIII Retreat Center in Hartford City, IN, for registration 765-348-4008.

DO THIS IN MEMORY OF ME

Reflect more on the Eucharist and its meaning with Fr. Steve Gibson, csc. Fr. Steve is a Holy Cross priest from Notre Dame, and gives retreats throughout the United States. This retreat begins Friday evening, January 12, and ends on January 15 with lunch. Call John XXIII Center for information (765) 348-4008.

BENEDICTINE LIFE WEEKEND

Wondering where God is leading you in life? Curious if monastic life might be a "fit" for you? Feeling a need to simply check it out? If so, we offer you a Benedictine Life Weekend, an opportunity for single Catholic women 19-40 to experience the Benedictine way of life. January 5 - 7, 2007, 7:00 p.m. Friday through 1:00 p.m. Sunday. For more information, contact Sister Agnes Marie Dauby or Sister Anita Louise Lowe at 800-738-9999 or vocation@thedome.org.

ROTARY YOUTH EXCHANGE

The Fort Wayne Rotary Youth Exchange is looking for a host family for a 17 year old male student from Brazil. As a host family, the Rotary Exchange provides a well-structured and established program that is both supportive and encouraging. Rotarians from the club keep in contact with the student on a regular basis, including a Club-assigned counselor. The host family should live in the Carroll High School district. There are two opportunities to host—from January through Spring Break and Spring Break until he returns to Brazil in late July. For more information, call Bruce Lehman 484-8404 or Dee Hoffman 672-1099.

LIFT CHAIR NEEDED

Disabled parishioner is in need of a lift chair and tub transfer bench (must accommodate 350 lbs.). Also needed is a 24" wheelchair. Call 490-4108.

NEW CHOIR CD

A new choir/cantor CD is now ready. Come to the church office to purchase.

OPEN YOUR HEART—OPEN YOUR HOME

2006-2007 HOSTING PROGRAM

Are you ready to make a difference in the lives of those who have so little hope? Starting around December 27th, Hands of Hope will be inviting orphans from the Ukraine to Fort Wayne for a once in a lifetime opportunity. We will bring 16 children between the ages of six and twelve to the states for a two week culture camp. These children will come to view the sites, experience the culture, but more importantly, learn what it's like to belong to a family. We are in need of families who have a heart for adoption to open their homes for these children. This is a wonderful opportunity to explore what it would be like to make one of these children yours! We are also needing host homes for the Adult Escorts/Translators as well as volunteers for our one day camp, field trips, welcome party, and donations for our one day camp supplies. If you are interested in helping in any way, please register online at www.adoptionadventure.com or call Anna Bogon at 260-704-0829.

PRAYERS FOR THOSE SERVING OUR COUNTRY

If you have a family member who is serving or working in Iraq/Afghanistan or anywhere in the military and would like prayers for their intention, let the church office know - 489-3537. Their names will be published in the bulletin weekly. Keep in your prayers:

Sgt. Amanda Smith	Ensign Brandon Brooks
Tech Sgt. Andrew Frantz	Lt. Teresa Frantz
Lance Cpl. Brian Crooks	Spc. Tony Christman
Sgt. Andrew Christman	Cpl. Jon Till
PSC Anthony G. Schuckel	1st Lt. James Mijatovich
Travis Davis	PFC Benjamin Caccamo
PFC Justin Harber	Cpl. Chad H. Pollitt
Staff Sgt. Matthew R. Stier	Staff Sgt. Thomas Putman
Staff Sgt. Thomas Pettit	Cpt. Mark Knarr
Adam Niemic	Staff Sgt. Ryan C. Puckett
PFC Matthew Clarke	Major Martin L. Fair
Sgt. Eric Derheimer	Sgt. Rob Niemeyer
Sgt. Michael Dixon	Sgt. Jason Day
Sgt. Keith Koch	Lance Cpl. Matt Vincent, Jr.
Scott Krieg, Air Guard	Kori Melvin
PO1 Jeremy Waldschmidt	Pvt. Dane R. Buuck
PFC Justin Harber	1st Lt. (LTJG) Spencer Seufert
LTJG Brandon Flores	LTJG Melissa Flores
PFC Nicholas DeDario	Staff Sgt. Nick Conner
Lance Cpl. Daniel Gloy	

FRANCISCAN CENTER COLLECTION SITE CLOSED

We have been informed by the Franciscan Center that they are closing their Clothes Closet. Therefore, we will no longer be accepting any donations of clothing, household items, toys, etc. You can share those donations with other agencies.

FRANCISCAN CENTER TO

CLOSE CLOTHES CLOSET AND TOY CHEST

The Franciscan Center has announced that it will close its Clothes Closet and Toy Chest. "This is one of our longest-running programs," explains Sally Ley, Founder and CEO of The Franciscan Center, "but we have found demand steadily declining over the past several years. The Franciscan Center has always based its programs and activities on the needs of the community, and we see the current and future need elsewhere.

Closing the program will allow the organization to focus on its existing and growing programs: the Food Pantry, Medicine Cabinet and Sack Lunch programs. "These programs, especially our Medicine Cabinet where we distribute such non-food items as over-the-counter medicine, vitamins, band-aids, toothpaste and toilet paper, are growing every week," explains Ley. Contact The Franciscan Center at 744-3977 for more information or visit the facility at 4643 Gaywood Drive.

FULL TIME EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITY

Sacred Heart Parish in Warsaw, Indiana, with 870 families and Pre-K through 6th grade school, seeks a full-time Director of Liturgy and Music for our parish and school. Degree in music or equivalent experience preferred. Position opens January 1, 2007. Direct inquiries to Sacred Heart Church, 125 N. Harrison Street, Warsaw, IN 46580, 574-267-5842, email laura-gillis@kconline.com

SENIOR AIDES PROGRAM

Part-time employment and training opportunities are available for persons age 55 and over who are low income. The Senior AIDES program, operated by Catholic Charities, will match the individual with paid temporary work assignment at local non-profit organizations such as schools, libraries, hospitals or museums. For more information, contact Terry at 422-5625 ext. 285 or John at 422-5625 ext. 256.

GOOD NEWS

Fouth Sunday of Advent Mi 5:1-4a/Heb 10:5-10/Lk 1:39-45

Paige Byrne Shortal - sundaybulletins@liguori.org

The Christmas stories from the gospels are all about finding grace in unexpected places. The elderly woman Elizabeth, past her fruitful time carries a son who leaps with joy in her womb to greet the divine child born of a virgin. The King of kings is in a manger laid, attended by animals and their shepherds.

It's Christmas again. Where do you hope to find the Christ child? We look to liturgies - glorious and solemn or simple and quiet. We look to well-lit rooms of happy children and tables laden with special foods and these are good things. Christ is in all these places and (I like to think) having a wonderful time.

That's not everybody's Christmas. It's not anybody's Christmas all the time. There is often something sad about Christmas. For some, Christmas is a lonely time when it seems that everyone else has someone special or something special to do. Even for those busy with happy Christmases, there is still an occasional sense of longing. We know the children will grow up. There may be some lovely person we miss. Perhaps everyone goes home and we have a little too much time to think sad thoughts.

Can we find grace in this unexpected place of longing? If the gospels are any indication, Christ can always be found in the dark and lonely places; in the stables of our lives. What is longing, but a desire for the infinite? a desire for good and loveliness to continue for always? a desire for connection to each other and to the divine? Longing compels us to cast our eyes heavenward and realize that we have here no lasting city, that we are made for some place else. Such longing can be rightly called homesickness. Here we are only colonists, sent to establish colonies of the motherland. At Christmas we long for home. Claim that longing and share it with other lonely people. Then, you will have created yet another little colony of heaven with heaven's law and heaven's language. That law and that language is love. Blessed Christmas to you and yours.