



# Reflections

Word of Life  
Catholic Charismatic Renewal Center

December 2015

## Why Was There No Room in the Inn?

By Kathy Wilcox

*In those days Caesar Augustus issued a decree that a census should be taken of the entire Roman world. And everyone went to his own town to register. So Joseph also went up from the town of Nazareth in Galilee to Judea, to Bethlehem the town of David, because he belonged to the house and line of David. (Luke 2: 1-4)*

The man leading the donkey walked slowly into Bethlehem, not only because he was exhausted from the week long journey of over 80 miles, but because his very pregnant wife was riding on a donkey -- not a comfortable ride, but in her condition a painful ordeal. The town was already crowded and the hour late, where would they find lodging, and with their limited income, could they afford what was available? In spite of multiple inquires, nothing was available, and finally Joseph pleaded with an *innkeeper* for any kind of lodging and he offered the stable. The stable, thought Joseph in alarm, How could it

be? The angel had told Mary, and reassured Joseph, that they would be the parents of a special child: the Messiah promised to the Jewish people for so many years. Yet here they were in a stable.

*While they were there, the time came for the baby to be born, and she gave birth to her firstborn, a son. She wrapped him in cloths and placed him in a manger, because there was no room for them in the inn. (Luke 2: 6-7)*

So why was there no room in the inn? The angel came from God declaring that the child was the promised Messiah. The expectation would be that God, who is in charge, would have arranged a different way to bring the Messiah to His people. In the book *Bishop Sheen Catechism* Sheen explains that the inns during this period of history were the gathering places of the worldly, where the popular and successful gathered to share public opinions and political positions. The stables, Sheen tells

us, was the place for outcasts, not just animals. The ignored and forgotten often found shelter in the stables.

*God chose the lowly things of this world and the despised things... to nullify the things that are... (1 Corinthians 1:28)*

The Son of God in a stable -- who would expect to find Him there? The powerful who feared the prophecies of the Messiah would not look for Him there, so for the time being He was safe. God chose the most humble but devoted of parents to protect the child until the moment came to reveal to the world who He was. But most importantly, the lesson to us all is that "divinity is always where you least expect to find it." (Fulton Sheen, *Advent and Christmas*)

How will we celebrate Christmas this year? Looking for gifts or looking for Christ? Jesus wants us to seek and find Him in the lost, the outcasts, the lonely, and the forgotten.

## Centering In

By Jack Heintzel

### Congratulations

We want to recognize the writing talent of three people who are connected with the Center. All have authored books with a Catholic theme.

#### • **Dan Arndt**

With a strong background as an educator, Dan has written a book entitled *Angels and Bullies of St. Aelred High*. It sheds light on the problems of bullying in schools. Much of the content is based on Dan's experience teaching 7<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup> grades in a Catholic school. He saw first-hand how rapidly bullying behaviors changed due to misconceptions. His whole goal in writing the book is to help students who may be experiencing these struggles. Dan is an Erie resident.

#### • **Amy Mosbacher**

A resident of the Meadville area, Amy has written a book entitled *Through the Seasons with Jesus and Mary*. It covers all the liturgical seasons in the Church year. Inspiring and reflective, the book invites readers to surrender to the transforming fire of God's love, season by season, and be changed as a result. Even the smallest event in our lives can be infused with the Holy Spirit if we are open to God's working.

#### • **Amy Dalessandro**

This local author has written a book entitled *Step 2, 3, 4* about ballroom dancing and a man's test of faith. Its primary focus is on how his faith helps him overcome the tragic death of his wife, with whom he had

competed in ballroom dancing. He has to push through his sorrow to face life's challenges. A return to dancing, encouraged by his daughter, helps him do that. The setting of this novel is northwestern Pennsylvania.

These books are in paperback, available from Amazon.com and other sources.

### ----- End-of-Year Calendar

Here are the days of liturgical celebration coming up:

- Tuesday 12/8 – Feast of the Immaculate Conception.
- Friday 12/25 – Christmas
- Thursday 12/31 – New Year's Eve.
- Friday 1/1 – Solemnity of Mary, the Mother of God

### ----- Hours of Operation

St. Mark Catholic Center will be closed on Tuesday, December 8<sup>th</sup>. The building will also be closed on December 24<sup>th</sup> and 25<sup>th</sup> for Christmas, and December 31<sup>st</sup> and January 1<sup>st</sup> for the celebration of the New Year. You can still call WOL at 814-824-1286.

### ----- Newsletter Support

We hope you profit from reading the Reflections newsletter each month. If so, please pray about supporting it with a contribution. You can send it in the envelope provided in this newsletter. Make your check payable to the Word of Life Renewal Center. Cash donations are also welcome. Just include a note that your donation is for the newsletter.

## Pledge Appeal

This is a reminder that you have another opportunity to support the Center financially in 2016. Once again we will have an annual appeal. Please consider using the new pledge drive as a method of planned giving to benefit the Center. All financial contributions are appreciated, but we urge you to pray about a form of monthly pledge. This gives the Center a way to better budget income and expenses. We ask you to include the Word of Life Center in your tithing activities. Pray for the Lord to be on control of your personal finances as well as the needs of the Center. Your generous response to this appeal is vitally important to the financial stability of the Renewal Center. Please use the printed form and envelope inserted in this issue.

### ----- Merry Christmas

We extend our best wishes to you for a Merry Christmas and Happy New Year. May this holy season be filled with joy for you and your family! May the Trinity – Father, Son, and Holy Spirit – be a special focus for you as this month unfolds.



## Remain in Him

By Amy Mosbacher

Sometimes when we're reading a scripture passage, a word sticks with us. In my case, the past couple of weeks I've been meditating on the word "remain," from John 15:4, "Remain in me as I remain in you." Sometimes a word in the original language is much richer than a translation. The Greek μένω also implies not only to stay put and remain in the presence of, but to abide in, a permanence of relationship, to live or make one's dwelling in.

In my own thoughts, I like to think of living in Jesus's heart as a burrowing down into, a nestling down in, much like a baby nestles into his mother's arms. Imagine the baby Jesus being pressed gently to Mary's heart as she nestles Him in her arms. To be so close!

Then there are other times as well, often coinciding with the above image, when the thought isn't as warm and fuzzy. Sometimes as I lay on my Savior's heart I'm conscious of the wound in His Sacred Heart, the darkness and thorns that surround it, and how pierced and torn are the arms that hold me. Then I cry out in sorrow, lamenting so many things: how I've brought this about, the state of so many hearts that are far away from Him, or I simply share in His anguish. I try not to struggle but simply accept His arms pressing me closer to Him, and I find joy in our hearts beating as one.

On the other side, how do we let Jesus nestle into our hearts?

Do we keep Him in the center of our lives? In the spirit of St. Catherine of Siena, we can keep a cell, or room, just for Jesus in our heart. That way in the middle of our day, when we're harried from all the busyness and trials, we can retreat to be with Jesus in silence and repose with Him in the midst of our outside life. From there Jesus teaches us silence and we gather strength and refreshment to deal with the day. But being consciously aware of His presence all the time isn't what "remain" means. μένω implies a way of life. It's difficult to keep our attention focused entirely on Jesus when we're in the middle of dealing with people around us, but if we keep Him in our heart and live from that frame of reference, then our thoughts and lives begin to change. Then instead of thinking, "I need to do this," we think "Let *us* do this," or "*we*," meaning God and ourselves. Then our lives will revolve more and more around God and less around us. In the back of our minds we'll also realize that we are never alone.

Perhaps a good Christmas meditation for us can be a consideration of the word "remain." How do we remain in Jesus, and He in us?

Blessed and praised be God forever!

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*Ed. note: a synonym for "remain" is "abide." The following hymn was written in England long ago. It is still popular, and you may be able to find a recording of it. The music is beautiful.*

## Abide with Me

Composer: Henry Lyte, 1847

Abide with me; fast falls the eventide;  
The darkness deepens; Lord, with me abide.  
When other helpers fail and comforts flee,  
Help of the helpless, O abide with me.

Swift to its close ebbs out life's little day;  
Earth's joys grow dim, its glories pass away.  
Change and decay in all around I see.  
O Lord who changes not, abide with me.

I need your presence every passing hour.  
What but your grace can foil the tempter's power?  
Who like yourself my guide and strength can be?  
Through cloud and sunshine, O abide with me.

I fear no foe with you at hand to bless,  
Though ills have weight, and tears their bitterness.  
Where is death's sting? Where, grave your victory?  
I triumph still, if you abide with me.

Hold now your Word before my closing eyes.  
Shine through the gloom and point me to the skies.  
Heaven's morning breaks and earth's vain shadows flee;  
In life, in death, O Lord abide with me.

*General Ref: John 15: 4f*

**Healing Mass**

Our Lady of Peace Church

2401 W. 38<sup>th</sup> St. 7:30 PM

First Wednesday of the month

**Contemporary Mass**

St. Joseph Church

Bread of Life Community

11:00 AM every Sunday

Children's Liturgy of the Word

**Perpetual Adoration**

Bread of Life Chapel

St. Joseph Community Center

**Chaplet of Mercy**

Every day at 3:00 PM in Bread of Life Chapel

**St. Joseph Novena**

St. Joseph Church/Bread of Life

Community

Every Wednesday 7:00 PM

Memorials

In memory of

Requested by

No memorial gifts this month

Contributions have been made for the spread of the Gospel of Jesus Christ. Prayers will be offered for the comfort and support of the families.

**[Paul exhorts the Romans,]**

**Word hard and do not be lazy. Serve the Lord with a heart full of devotion. Let your hope keep you joyful.**

*Romans 12:11-12 (Today's English Version)*

All Scripture quotes in this newsletter are from the New International Version unless noted otherwise

**PRAYER GROUPS**

† **Sunday**

**Shalom in Jesus Prayer Group**

In home 6:30 PM

Rick Kenawell (814) 375-0328

DuBois, PA

**Acts II Community**

St. Julia Church 6:30 PM

West 8<sup>th</sup> & Powell Ave.

Jack Heintzel 838-1325

† **Monday:**

**Disciples of the Holy Spirit**

St. Mary's Church Annex 6:00 PM

139 Church St., St. Marys, PA

Mary Ellen Frank (814) 781-3904

**Leopold Center**

1017 West 8<sup>th</sup> St.

Mary Lou Peterson 866-5678

Chaplet of Divine Mercy and Rosary

At 3:00 PM (before Mass)

**River of Life PG**

2nd & 4th Monday evenings

7:00PM

St. Bridget Ch., Rm. 4, Meadville, PA

Amy Mosbacher (814) 724-6104

† **Tuesday:**

**Son of God Prayer Group**

Holy Rosary Church

2701 East Ave. 7:00 PM

Pat Montefiori 823-3968

**Chosen Prayer Group**

St. Theresa Church,

Shinglehouse, PA 10 AM – 12 Noon

Mary Kuhn (814) 697-7519

† **Wednesday:**

**St. Mark's Prayer Group**

St. Mark Church 7:00 PM

Religious Education Center

Emporium, PA

† **Thursday:**

**Wildfire Prayer Meeting**

2<sup>nd</sup> Thursday of month 4:30 PM

5031 W. Ridge Rd..

S.S.J. Living Center

Sr. Gerry Olon 836-4165

**St. Boniface PG**

7615 Wattsburg Rd. 7:00 PM

John Griebel 825-3588

† **Friday:**

**Light of the World Community**

In Home Prayer Meeting – Call for

Location 7:30 PM

T.A. Walkiewicz 833-9717



## Life's Seasons

By Agnes D. Helsley

As pointed out in Ecclesiastes "There is an appointed time for everything." This month is a time for rejoicing in the birth of our Savior and the love of the Father for His children. It's a time to give thanks for the Holy Spirit who walks daily with us, directing our steps as we seek His guidance.

I am now looking at the seasons of writing for this newsletter. When those seasons began "lo those many years ago" it was as a column called "Prayer Corner" with book reviews also included from time to time. Then life's adventures became subjects for articles. My special needs grandson was born in 2003 and he became a great source of inspiration.

He no longer is the little toddler sparking cute stories. He is 12 and still is so much fun. When he visits us at Parkside we share our love of books and examine and re-examine his enormous collection of miniature cars, of which 400 reside with my husband Ed and me.

My most recent articles have been on prayer again. It seems to have come full circle! I would attribute the recent prayer focus to the dangerous world we live in and our need to cry out for our nation's healing. We are straining our ears to hear the trumpet call "Come up here!"

Still we have light moments here as when the fire alarm goes off because a resident's over-sensitive alarm detected an egg being prepared in a fry-

ing pan. As concerned people rushed to aid the new resident her supposedly old dog escaped to chase merrily up and down the long halls evading all pursuers. Thankfully "Diggie" decided it was time to come back and had not taken an elevator ride to another floor.

We also have the Church across the street which has taken Senior Living Parkside residents under their wing. They provide pizza and games once a month and to anyone here who does not have a Thanksgiving invitation they provide a complete turkey dinner. I have never been a fan of Halloween but the preschool classes (about 23 children) prepared a program of songs with hand motions and entertained us with doughnuts and cider. We had a great time admiring their costumes (not a witch or devil to trouble us) and passing out candy. We did wonder about how the sugar high would affect the rest of their morning, but they put a new face on an old enemy.

Life is a gift and we show our gratefulness by living each season in the presence of our God whose lovingkindness is forever.

### The Holy Spirit

We have given too much attention to methods and to machinery and to resources, and too little to the Source of Power, the filling with the Holy Spirit.

*J. Hudson Taylor*

## Anointing Mass

The Holy Rosary prayer group announces an anointing Mass.

Saturday, December 5, 2015  
at 4 PM

Presider: Fr. John Jacquel

Location: Holy Rosary Church  
East 28<sup>th</sup> and East Avenue  
Erie, PA

**All are invited**

## Advent

Advent was one week away, so we thought we'd see what the children remembered from our family devotions the year before. "Who can tell me what the four candles in Advent wreath represent?" I asked.

Luke jumped in with seven-year-old wisdom and exuberance. "There's love, joy, peace, and ... and..."

I know! Six-year-old Elise interrupted to finish her brother's sentence: "Peace and quiet!"

*Michelle L. Hardie*

## Body of Christ

Alone I cannot serve the Lord effectively, and He will spare no pains to teach me this. He will bring things to an end, allowing doors to close and leaving me ineffectively knocking my head against a wall until I realize that I need the help of the body as well as of the Lord.

*Watchman Nee*

Anyone can love the ideal church. The challenge is to love the real church.

*Bishop Joseph McKinney*

## PREPARING FOR THE MESSIAH

By Jack Heintzel

*"...the people living in darkness have seen a great light..." Matt. 4:16*

At the beginning of His earthly ministry, Jesus quoted the prophet Isaiah in preparing the people for the gospel message He would declare to them over three years. His coming thus fulfilled the prophecy of Isaiah 9:1-2, which states that the Messiah will be a light to the land of Zebulun and Naphtali, two of the original tribes of Israel. In this territory, where the town of Capernaum was located, Jesus spoke these words to the people of Galilee and all of Israel.

The deliverer of which Isaiah spoke is the Messiah that the Jews had been expecting, Jesus Himself. An article in *God's Word Today* reminds us that "Christ" is not Jesus' last name. It is the Greek word which translates the Hebrew *mashiah* from which we derive the word "Messiah." There were many male Jews in Israel named Jesus, which means savior (derived from Yeshua or Joshua). But Our Savior was called "Jesus, the Christ," shortened to Jesus Christ. So when we speak of "Jesus Christ" we are asserting that we believe that Jesus is the Messiah.

So what does the term "Messiah" mean? The GWT article says a literal translation of the Hebrew is "the anointed." Both kings and high priests were anointed with oil as they began their ministries. But Jesus Christ was truly the "anointed one" who would fulfill all God's promises. It was the anticipation of the kingdom of God together with the resurrection of Jesus which led the early Church to claim Him as the Messiah. The Jews never expected their Messiah to suffer and die. But Jews consistently connected resurrection and the kingdom, and that connection overrode what was unexpected and gave the apostles a clear message and an obvious Messiah.

Isaiah 9:6 says the expected Messiah, the child to be born, is named Wonderful Counselor (exceptional, without peer, giving us right advice), Mighty God (God Himself), Everlasting Father (timeless), and Prince of Peace (head of a government of justice and peace).

In a *Renewal Ministries Newsletter*, Peter Herbeck gives us something to consider. The Church asks us this question during the Advent season: What do you want, darkness or light? Are you living for the present time, or is your gaze set on eternity? What does your way of life, your use of your wealth, say about what you

### Membership Meeting

The Board of Directors, also known as the Word of Life Center's Pastoral Team, would like to thank all who came to the Center's Membership Dinner Meeting on November 15<sup>th</sup>. Our by-laws stipulate that we are to have an annual meeting to conduct Center business, such as a financial report, our vision for next year, and voting for any new business transactions. There was no new business voted on this year. We know that not everyone is able to attend, and we missed those who were unable to come. Hope to see you next year.

truly value? Advent calls us back to the light. The Lord requires real decisiveness from each of us: "You will die in your sins unless you believe that I am he." (John 8:24 NRSV)

Many people today are living in darkness; there seems to be darkness everywhere we look. God wants His message of love to lift the darkness from so many in the world who don't know Him. This Christmas, may we open our hearts to see clearly the great light that Jesus the Messiah has shined into our world. May we faithfully walk in this light, and pray for those who need Him.

## **The Prince of Peace**

By Shirley Dovichow/Erie

Long ago on a silent, starry night  
In a lonely stable far away,  
A little baby boy was born  
And in a manger lay.

The animals that grazed about  
Were all that kept Him warm,  
Except for a little piece of cloth  
From His mother's skirt was torn.

They knew that He was special,  
They knew that He was love,  
For light shone all around Him  
And soft, sweet music was heard  
from above.

Shepherds tending their sheep  
that night  
Saw a bright, bright star,  
They felt that they must follow  
As did wise men from afar.

They were guided to the manger  
Where the little baby lay,  
"Who is this little one?"  
Is all that they could say.  
"Who makes us bow before Him,  
What makes us feel this way?"

A little blind boy stood before  
Him  
Playing his little drum,  
He saw the little babe smile  
And knew a miracle had been  
done.

"Who is this little one?"  
They all exclaimed with awe.  
"How is it the little blind boy  
Was made to see before us all?"

The mother gazed at all of them  
And this is what she said,  
"Unto you this night  
A Savior has been born,  
And more miracles you will see,  
He is Hope,  
He is Love,  
He is the Prince of Peace."

## **The Bridge Builder**

By Will Dromgoole

An old man, going a lone  
highway, Came, at the even-  
ing, cold and gray,  
To a chasm, vast, and deep,  
and wide, Through which was  
flowing a sullen tide.

The old man crossed in the  
twilight dim; The sullen stream  
had no fear for him;  
But he turned, when safe on  
the other side, And built a  
bridge to span the tide.

"Old man," said a fellow pil-  
grim, near, "You are wasting  
strength with building here;  
Your journey will end with the  
ending day;  
You never again will pass this  
way; You've passed the  
chasm, deep and wide;  
Why build you this bridge at  
the evening tide?"

The builder lifted his old gray  
head; "Good friend, in the path  
I have come," he said,  
"There followeth after me  
today, A youth, whose feet  
must pass this way.

This chasm, that has been  
naught to me, To that fair-  
haired youth may a pitfall be.  
He, too must cross in the twi-  
light dim; Good friend, I am  
building this bridge for him."

-----  
*This poem was written about  
1900, and is used by many to  
promote the idea of building  
for future generations. Can we  
use it as a tool to pass the  
torch to the next generation of  
Charismatics?*

## **Words from Brothers at the Albion Prison**

The inmates at SCI – Albion  
presented these words of ap-  
preciation to the team of vol-  
unteers in May 2015. These  
are a few samples out of many.

- We sense they have a calling  
on their lives to come into  
prisons to minister. *Gene*
- They take time to come to  
instruct us in God's Word.  
They cheer up our spirit. *Jake*
- It is truly amazing that people  
would take the time to "come  
to prison" to visit with people  
they do not even know and  
spread the good news that God  
has given us. It is always a  
highlight of the day to interact  
with us. We are very blessed,  
and I hope in return we can  
also help them. It truly is a joy  
beyond description to see these  
people week after week.  
Thank you so much for all of  
the volunteers. You make a  
dismal place more tolerable.

*Shawn*

- Society sees inmates in a bad  
light, that we don't deserve a  
second chance and we are not  
thought of as "human." Our  
volunteers see us for who we  
are, people who made a mis-  
take. They come as strangers  
and quickly become friends.  
They go out of their way to  
come share with us every  
week. *Chris*

- They give us encouragement  
and they let us know that we  
are not alone in this world, not  
forgotten. *Moose*

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*As one of the volunteers, I look  
forward to my visits to Albion;  
I get so much in return. Jack*

**DIOCESE OF ERIE**  
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The purpose of this newsletter is to proclaim the Gospel of Jesus Christ, and to provide teaching, news and calendar of events, which help to foster Catholic Charismatic Renewal throughout the Diocese of Erie.

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Amy Mosbacher

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