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Winter 12-1-2020

## Hand in Hand, Winter 2020

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### Repository Citation

"Hand in Hand, Winter 2020" (2020). *Hand in Hand*. 69.

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ARCHDIOCESE  
of MILWAUKEE

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## FR. CK CORNER: CHRISTMAS IS NOT ONE DAY!

By Fr. Christopher Klusman



Welcome to the second half of the newsletter. I hope you did not peek nor opened this second half until at least after 3 p.m. on December 24?!

Merry Christmas! "O come, let us adore Him, O come, let us adore Him, O come, let us adore Him, Christ the Lord!" What a joyous time of the year!

The Christmas decorations and tree was just put up, ornaments placed on the tree, Christmas desserts newly made, presents recently wrapped, Christmas shows that I can start watching on DVD, and so many exciting things to do in celebration!!! Usually, Christmas begins at 4 p.m. on December 24, but due to the Covid-19 pandemic, Archbishop ListECKI gave permission for the Christmas Masses to start as early as 3 p.m. (due to time needed in between Masses for cleaning, etc.)! Wouldn't you say that is an unusual, yet rare, Christmas present that we have been given to have the Christmas season begin one hour earlier than before!? Joy!

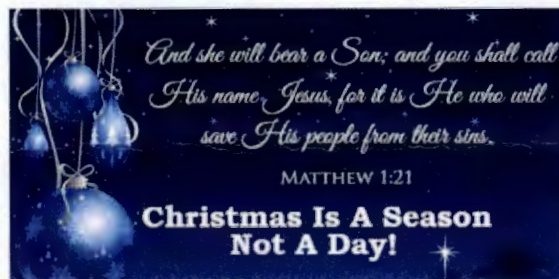
Christmas has finally started today on December 24 at 3 p.m. I remembered

growing up that Christmas is a special season. It is truly one of my most favorite holidays in the year. There is nothing like Christmas! The anticipation of waking up on Christmas morning after thinking all night (a sleepless night, I would add) as to what is under the Christmas tree. Waking up as early as 3 a.m. or even 4 a.m., waking Mom and Dad only to be told that we have to wait until 7 a.m. to finally be able to open the Christmas presents! I have to add that it was a good exercise on the virtue of

patience, patience, and patience! And then, after the fun day of Christmas on December 25 ends and December 26 arrives, I remember seeing stripped Christmas trees

already out on the front lawns to be collected by the city. I even remembered an end of Christmas programs and songs. I was so confused, "Christmas is over? Already? It doesn't make any sense!"

Imagine when I found out that Christmas actually begins at sunset on Christmas Eve and that Christmas is not over in one day?! Christmas is so GOOD that it can't be one day, for it is actually a season!?! Much like a winter season! Wouldn't you say that is another Christmas present from God to all of us that we can actually enjoy Christmas in



► FR. CK'S CORNER - Continued on Page 2.

## MISSION STATEMENT - DEAF APOSTOLATE

The Deaf Apostolate in the Archdiocese of Milwaukee exists to enable all Catholic Deaf and Hard of Hearing people to participate fully in the liturgical, educational, pastoral, spiritual, and human concerns ministries in the Church.

## ► FR. CK'S CORNER - Continued from Page 1.

more than one day, but instead, in several weeks?! God is SO good!

This year, Christmas goes from Thursday, December 24, 2020, to Sunday, January 10, 2021, which is the Solemnity of Our Lord's Baptism. During this Christmas season, there are many great celebrations. We will celebrate: St. Stephen (Dec. 26), the Holy Family (Sun. Dec. 27), the Holy Innocents (a sad day to remember those who made sacrifices for baby Jesus' safety on Dec. 28), St. Thomas Becket (Dec. 29), the Solemnity of Mary, Mother of God (Jan. 1), Saints Basil the Great and Gregory Nazianzen (Jan. 2), the Epiphany of the Lord/Three Wise Men (Sun. Jan. 3), St. Elizabeth Ann Seton (Jan. 4), St. John Neumann of Philadelphia (Jan. 5), and finally, Our Lord's Baptism (Sun. Jan. 10). Then, the Christmas season (sadly) closes and we begin anew the Ordinary Time season. Then, that is when I would begin to put away my Christmas tree, decorations, and etc. **Not** December 26.

One of my favorite shows to watch during the Christmas season is "A Charlie Brown Christmas" that I have watched every year since I was born. One of my favorite scenes is at the end when everyone does a beautiful deed of fixing up Charlie Brown's tree. Then they all sing together a powerful song, "Hark! The Herald Angels Sing." The words are truly amazing:

*Hark! the herald angels sing,  
"Glory to the newborn King;  
Peace on earth, and mercy mild  
God and sinners reconciled!"  
Joyful, all you nations, rise,  
Join the triumph of the skies;  
With the angelic host proclaim,  
"Christ is born in Bethlehem!"  
Hark! the herald angels sing,  
"Glory to the newborn King!"*

*Christ, by highest heaven adored,  
Christ the everlasting Lord:  
Late in time behold him come,  
Offspring of the Virgin's womb.  
Veiled in flesh the Godhead see:  
Hail the incarnate Deity,  
Pleased as man with us to dwell,  
Jesus, our Emmanuel.  
Hark! the herald angels sing,  
"Glory to the newborn King!"*

Glory to the newborn King, indeed! Please know that you all will be remembered when I offer the Masses during



the Christmas season, as well as remembering you in my Christmas prayers. Please remember me in your Christmas prayers too.

I hope you will also enjoy this second half of the Newsletter with more wonderful articles, news, and various fun things that will keep you busy over the winter season. May the Christmas blessings from the newborn King be with you during the Christmas season and into the winter months of 2021!



Since early December 2020, Mary Mother of the Church Pastoral Center had a beautiful new Nativity scene in front alongside South Lake Drive.



## St. Andrew Parish DEAF RELIGIOUS EDUCATION MINISTRY SHARING THE GOOD NEWS

### FROM THE DELAVAN CORNER: BE MERRY WITH YOUR PRESENT!



By Jennifer Paul,  
Coordinator  
Deaf Religious  
Education  
& Deaf Ministry  
St. Andrew Parish,  
Delavan

I hope you resisted the temptation to read the “After December 24” pages until now? If you have not read the previous article from the Delavan’s Corner, go back to page 3. In the previous article about Advent, we talked about how it is our spiritual responsibility to participate in the holy preparation of Advent. Preparing for the Coming of Christ is a spiritual process to remember the gift of Jesus for us. He is coming and he died for our sins so that we could have eternal life with our Heavenly Father.

It is not only spiritually responsible, but it is also healthier. As Fr. Christopher Klusman said at the end of the Introductory Vlog in the Catholic That! Series for Advent, if we prepared well, it would be impossible to feel “fed up” with Christmas on Christmas Day. If you find yourself feeling “fed up” and even anxious and overwhelmed by this time, you need to pray more and learn how not to let that happen again. Stop, pray, and learn, or else you become one of the statistics.



Research shows that the number of people feeling anxious, depressed, or experiencing different mental health issues spike during the holidays. It is devastating that it could happen and had happened. It is devastating because that is not what Christmas is about. It is not who God is.

God is love. God is joy. God is peace. God loves us. God is Immanuel, meaning “God with us.” Most important of all, God does not want us to feel that way surrounding his only Son:

The angel said to [the shepherds], “Do not be afraid; for behold, I proclaim to you good news of great joy that will be for all the people. For today in the city of David, a savior has been born for you who is Messiah and Lord. And

this will be a sign for you: you will find an infant wrapped in swaddling clothes and lying in a manger.” And suddenly there was a multitude of the

heavenly host with the angel, praising God and saying: “Glory to God in the highest and on earth peace to those on whom his favor rests” (Luke 2:10-14).

That is the true meaning of Christmas. God loves us so much that “a savior has been born for you who is Messiah and Lord. The Advent leading up to and finally Christmas Day should not be viewed as something that we are condemned to do. Instead, we should feel the way children do leading up to and on Christmas morning when they open the gifts.

Think about it. Honestly, do we jump up and down, whoop in excitement, and run to hug the givers after opening our gifts? If you do, God bless you! I think that reacting in this way every year leading up to and on Christmas Day would be the pinnacle of our spiritual journey!

► FROM THE DELAVAN CORNER -  
Continued on Page 7.

## BETWEEN THE CHRISTMAS MASSES

*Here is a beautiful story borrowed from Our Young People: The Friend of the Deaf, Dec. 1957 issue.*

“Thank God for all that,” murmured Father Van to himself, as he began to prepare for bed. The impression of his Midnight Mass was still on him, and there was a warm glow of happiness around his heart. He ran over again in his mind the wonderful moments of the Mass. His emotion at the Consecration, when he seemed to be really transported to Bethlehem, his joy in giving so many of his people their Lord on His birthday. Indeed he would not have been surprised to see the angelic host in his tiny church – of their presence there he had no sort of doubt.

Still meditating on the wonder of it all, he crossed the room, drew back the curtains, and looked out on the stars glittering in the frosty night. In that innumerable host Father Van seemed suddenly to see all his religion. The might of the creative power that formed the universe, the incomprehensible love of the Incarnation, and his own hope of immortality.

“My Lord,” he murmured, “You who created these far-off worlds, became man for us, and Your tiny hands could not even touch the great heads of the cattle in Your stable.”

Just then the clock on the stairs struck half past one. Father Van dropped the curtain; he must get some sleep for he had his two Masses to say tomorrow morning, and a busy Christmas Day, so with a final prayer he got into bed and was asleep almost at once.

He was awakened by a golden glow which seemed to fill the room. Was it a fire? Had he thrown down a cigarette end somewhere, or was it a burglar? He sat up in bed, and then he saw to his



### TO A *Special Priest* AT CHRISTMAS



amazement the figure of a priest, vested for Christmas Mass, standing at the foot of his bed. “Dear me,” said Father Van to himself, “I must be feverish.” He felt his pulse, and was surprised to find it quite regular.

“Good morning, Father,” said the visitor, “don’t be nervous. I am Richard Bagnall, your Catholic predecessor. It is nearly 300 years ago since I was hanged, drawn, and quartered at Chichester for refusing to conform to the ‘New Religion.’ We have watched you with loving interest, and now our divine Master, whom you have served so faithfully, has allowed me to come to see you. Now listen, Father. There has never been a moment when you have been left alone; always His loving Heart has seen your discouragements, your hopes and your loving charity. He has seen you

Sunday after Sunday drive your poor people home when you were weary and ill. You want to build a church worthy of Him in Henfield. Take courage, this shall be done, but the foundation must first be the love and charity of my people. In confirmation of this promise you will receive a little help in the morning, but remember always, dear Father, that all things are possible with our almighty Saviour.” And raising his hand in blessing the priest disappeared and the light faded.

Father Van knew nothing more until the cheerful voice of Mrs. Kenny, his housekeeper, roused him. “Eight o’clock, Father, and a lovely Christmas morning.”

Father Van got up quickly, and was soon on his way across the frosty fields to his church. HE did not at first remember what he thought was his dream, and wondered to find himself so refreshed and light-hearted. Then it all came back to him. Yes, of course, a lovely dream, he would pray more to the English martyrs for his new church.

His little church was already well filled when he got there, mostly with people who had not been able to get to Midnight Mass, and he had several confessions to hear before Mass. At the end of the Masses, before making his thanksgiving, he stood at the door of the church, inviting all the children to his Christmas Tree, shaking hands, and talking to everyone. At last they were all gone, and then, after swallowing the contents of a thermos bottle and munching a sandwich, he packed his car with several poor people and drove them to their homes in a neighboring village.

► THE KING’S CUPBEARER -  
Continued on Page 5.

► **THE KING'S CUPBEARER - Continued from Page 4.**

He was feeling very tired and very happy when at last he got back to his own house. He was still thinking of his three Masses; and just a little of his beautiful "dream." As he entered the house, wonderful smells from the kitchen proclaimed the fact that Mrs. Kenny was busy with the Christmas dinner, but she came bustling out and bustled back again as quickly, calling out as she went: "Dinner will be at half past one, Father."

*The Fasting and Prayer Conference includes meals.*

*The sermon this morning: 'Jesus Walks on the Water.'  
The sermon tonight: 'Searching for Jesus.'*



*Ladies, don't forget the rummage sale. It's a chance to get rid of those things not worth keeping around the house. Bring your husbands.*

*Remember in prayer the many who are sick of our community. Smile at someone who is hard to love. Say 'Hell' to someone who doesn't care much about you.*

*Don't let worry kill you off - let the Church help.*

*Miss Charlene Mason sang 'I will not pass this way again,' giving obvious pleasure to the congregation.*

*For those of you who have children and don't know it, we have a nursery downstairs.*

*Next Thursday there will be tryouts for the choir. They need all the help they can get.*

*Irving Benson and Jessie Carter were married on October 24 in the church. So ends a friendship that began in their school days.*

*At the evening service tonight, the sermon topic will be 'What Is Hell?' Come early and listen to our choir practice.*

*Eight new choir robes are currently needed due to the addition of several new members and to the deterioration of some older ones.*

*Scouts are saving aluminum cans, bottles and other items to be recycled. Proceeds will be used to cripple children.*

"All right," replied Father Van, "and since it is Christmas Day we will all have a glass of wine together before dinner – tell the boys."

And off went Father Van to read his Christmas mail.

But a few moments later he came rushing down the stairs calling: "Mrs. Kenny, Mrs. Kenny," on every stair. Mrs. Kenny, leaving her mystic operations, came rushing out of the kitchen, firmly convinced that the chimney was on fire at least. "Read this, Mrs. Kenny," gasped Father Van, thrusting a letter into her hand, and Mrs. Kenny read aloud:

"Dear Father Langendonck,

We are instructed by one of our clients who wishes to remain anonymous to send you the enclosed check for £1,000 in aid of the church you contemplate building in Henfield. HE hopes this contribution will enable you to put the work in hand.

Yours faithfully,

(Signed) Bright & Oldroyd."

"Well, of course," said Mrs. Kenny, "didn't you pray for it?" and bustled back to her kitchen, but with tears in her eyes and joy in her heart.

## TRIP DOWN MEMORY LANE



Robert Zweber shared this photo of many memories of St. John's School for the Deaf students and staff gathering and praying at this Nativity scene.

## CATHOLIC THAT! IN EARLY 2021

Due to our Deaf Apostolate Pastoral Plan, one of our goals is faith formation that is accessible in American Sign Language (ASL). The *Catholic That!* series



is one of the faith formation opportunities that continues to fulfill this goal. We enjoyed the livestreamed Catholic That! sessions last Advent season on learning about the fundamentals and meaning of Advent with Tom Meitner.

Here is our planned schedule for the upcoming presentations offered virtually in the early part of 2021.

**January:** "Our Lady of Guadalupe" by Fr. Bill Key

**February:** "Why We're Catholic: Part I" by Deacon David Sommers

**March:** "Lent: The Meaning of Fasting" by Fr. Christopher Klusman

Please email at: [deafapostolate@archmil.org](mailto:deafapostolate@archmil.org) to receive the link(s) for these presentations. All presentations will expire by the last day of its assigned months.

**Professor:** "Give the chemical formula for water."

**Student:** "HIJKLMNO."

**Professor:** "Are you trying to be funny young man?"

**Student:** "No. That's what you told us: 'Water is H to O.'"



## TRIP DOWN MEMORY LANE



Faithful Jos. Frederick with our snow plow.

### CHRISTMAS EVE IN PURGATORY

" 'Tis Christmas Eve — yes, for all of us. The fire in the grate has burned low, and a soft and solemn light fills the room. But something — or someone is missing. We mourn the loss of some dear one, perhaps. Within the last few months someone has gone from the fireside, some sweet voice has been stilled. A kind father, a tender, beloved mother has gone to rest with God — perhaps they still wait in purgatory to be reunited with God. 'Tis Christmas Eve in purgatory too. We will not forget those loved ones there. On the morrow we will receive the newborn King into our hearts and beseech Him to release them from prison. On the morrow — ah! 'tis the morrow now. The clock has already struck twelve. Happy Christmas! Only a few short hours, and He will come within our hearts. We will receive Him with joy and love. He will be our Guest to remain with us always, to guide us through this vale of tears, until one day we too shall kneel before His face in the glory of the Beatific Vision, there to love and enjoy Him for ages to come."



## CATHOLIC QUIZ (CHRISTMAS)

1. Who was the prophet that foretold a virgin shall give birth to a son called Immanuel?  
(a) Jeremiah (b) Ezekiel (c) Isaiah (d) Elijah
2. True or False: Mary and St. Joseph went to Bethlehem for the birth of Jesus because they were following a star.
3. Only these two of the four Gospels mentions the birth of Christ. Which two?  
(a) Matthew and John (b) Mark and Luke  
(c) Luke and John (d) Matthew and Luke
4. What are the three gifts which are mentioned being given by the wise men?  
(a) Lamb, gold and frankincense (b) food, silver and frankincense  
(c) scrolls, candles and gold (d) gold, myrrh and frankincense
5. Due to King Herod's threat, to where did Jesus' family flee from Bethlehem?  
(a) Nazareth (b) Egypt (c) Turkey (d) Samaria



(Answers on page 19.)

### ► FROM THE DELAVAN CORNER - Continued from Page 3.

But seriously, we can have deep joy and deep peace – rather than anxiety and depression - knowing that our eternal life is a gift to us. We cannot be “fed up” about joy and peace. It does not need to be complicated. Just believe it as wholeheartedly as a child-like Jesus said:

Amen, I say to you, whoever does not accept the kingdom of God like a child will not enter it. (Luke 18:17)

That is why in the previous article, we said it was important to remind our family and friends about the true meaning of Christmas when they tell us how stressed-out they are feeling during the holidays. Like God loves us, we love our family and friends and we do not want to forget about the joy that comes through practicing our faith in Jesus through the holidays. We want them to feel peaceful and happy. So, if we love them, we help and steer them in the right direction for the sake of their spiritual well-being and their mental health. We advise them to go easy and stay with what is important i.e. gift-giving, spending time together, and praying.

On the flip side, it is also important that we watch what we say. We need to watch our thoughts and pray for positive “self-talk” about Christmas. We need to pray for help every time we find our thoughts veering off track and lose the spiritual meaning of Christmas. Take joy in the gifts – big or small – by loved ones, be present at the moment with family and friends, and pray. Be vigilant so that we do not fall victim to the hyperbole surrounding the holidays. We need to be ‘simple’ as a child and remember that Christmas Day is about the arrival of Christ so that we could have eternal life with our Heavenly Father.

Merry Christmas! Indeed, it is! It is a merry day because Christ has arrived!

## Merry Christmas

The spiritual joy that shall be measured out to us on the birthday of the Infant Jesus will depend in no small degree on the previous preparation that we shall have made for the great feast. The Church in her ancient discipline required the faithful to fast and to do penance during the four weeks of Advent. Although this rigid discipline has long since been mitigated, the spirit of penance still remains. This the ordinary Catholic will observe by the violet color of the vestments worn by the priest at the Sunday Mass. The faithful are exhorted to stay away from dances and other purely secular amusements, to practice mortification, and to spend some time in the reading of spiritual books. It is also recommended to be more faithful

in reciting one's daily prayers, in attending week-day Mass, and in receiving Holy Communion more frequently. These, with devout prayer, enable us to make giant strides towards perfection.

Thus, renewed in spirit, we wait with eagerness and almost impatience for the festival of the Nativity. The church with its crib, the Midnight Mass with its many lights and sacred music, the remembrance of the birth of the Infant Saviour at the solemn hour, then His birth in the heart at Holy Communion, all tend to fill one with a happiness not of earth, a happiness that only the devout Catholic can experience. Overflowing with joy, we greet our friends with a cheerful and heartfelt “Merry Christmas!”



## ST. THÉRÈSE OF LISIEUX: MODEL SAINT FOR THE MEANING OF CHRISTMAS

By Fr. Christopher Klusman

St. Thérèse is one of the most popular saints of all time. She is a great saint for us, that in thinking about her, she enables us to think more deeply about what it means to truly follow Our Lord, Jesus Christ. In this article, I'd like us to focus on one thing that St. Thérèse can teach us: the true reason for the Christmas season.

St. Thérèse is a Carmelite, which is the same religious order that is responsible for our Basilica at Holy Hill. Her vocation is being a nun. You may have learned about some saints who have as part of their religious names a place where they lived or came from, or about an important part of



Jesus, such as “St. Teresa *of Ávila*” (from she was from) and St. John *of the Cross*” (his life embracing the Cross, same as Jesus did). What about St. Thérèse? She is often referred to as the “Little Flower” and “St. Thérèse of Lisieux. In reality, her full religious name is “St. Thérèse of the Infant Child and the Holy Face.” Isn't that beautiful?

Before we go deeper into why she chose those characteristics of Jesus as part of her religious name, I'll emphasize the importance of the reason for the Christmas season: “The Greatest Gift of all is Jesus Christ!” Now, let's look at an important event in the life of St. Thérèse before she entered the Carmelite convent. What St. Thérèse would tell you is that she was very spoiled growing up. But, something happened at Christmas (when she was almost 14 years old) that forever changed who she is. She said, “*It was December 25, 1886, that I received the grace of leaving my childhood, in a word, the grace of my complete conversion . . . I felt charity enter into my soul, the need to forget myself and to please others; since then I've been happy!*” I think that this grace-filled event should be shown in its entirety written by St. Thérèse in her spiritual classic, *Story of a Soul*:

*It was December 25, 1886, that I received the grace of leaving my childhood, in a word, the grace of my complete conversion. We had come back from Midnight Mass where I had the happiness of receiving the strong and powerful God [through Holy Communion]. Upon arriving at [home at] Les Buissonnets, I used to love to take my shoes from the*



*chimney-corner and examine the presents in them; this old custom had given us so much joy in our youth that Céline wanted to continue treating me as a baby since I was the youngest in the family. Papa had always loved to see my happiness and listen to my cries of delight as I drew each surprise from the magic shoes, and my dear King's gaiety increased my own happiness very much.*

*However, Jesus desired to show me that I was to give up the defects of my childhood and so He withdrew its innocent pleasures. He permitted Papa, tired out after the Midnight Mass, to experience annoyance when seeing my shoes at the fireplace, and that he speak those words which pierced my heart: “Well, fortunately, this will be the last year!”*

*I was going upstairs, at the time, to remove my hat, and Céline, knowing how sensitive I was and seeing the tears already glistening in my eyes, wanted to cry too, for she loved me very much and understood my grief. She said, “Oh, Thérèse, don't go downstairs; it would cause you too much grief to look at your slippers right now!”*

But Thérèse was no longer the same; Jesus had changed her heart! Forcing back my tears, I descended the stairs rapidly; controlling the poundings of my heart, I took my slippers and placed them in front of Papa, and withdrew all the objects joyfully. I had the happy appearance of a Queen. Having regained his own cheerfulness, Papa was laughing; Céline believed it was all a dream! Fortunately, it was a sweet reality; Thérèse had discovered once again the strength of soul which she had lost at the age of four and a half, and she was to preserve it forever!

St. Thérèse, even when she was almost 14 years old, looked forward to getting Christmas presents, in which, in her tradition, was placed into shoes/slippers. While it was an accident that as she went upstairs, she overheard her father show frustration that she was “too old” for this and that it had better be the last year because it was supposed to be an activity for little children (which St. Thérèse didn't want to give up).

► ST. THÉRÈSE OF LISIEUX - Continued on Page 9.

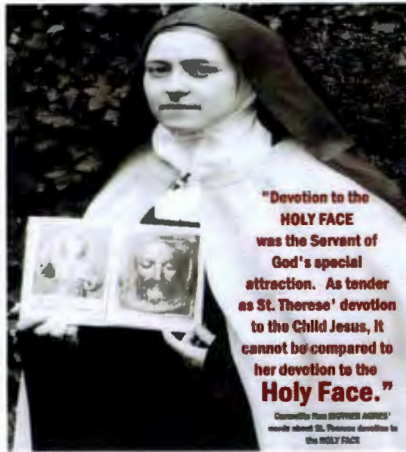
► ST. THÉRÈSE OF LISIEUX - Continued from Page 8.

When it was discovered that she accidentally overheard her father's comment, St. Thérèse, known for her high sensitive outbursts and tearful tantrums, totally shocked her father and older sister, Céline, at showing a whole different response! An important part of this is that when it mentioned how St. Thérèse lost her "strength of soul" at the age of 4 and a half, it was because of the unexpected death of her beloved mother to breast cancer. How did St. Thérèse completely change? It was grace that poured completely into her at that moment after she heard her father's comments and before she descended the stairs...

Imagine if she had never had that powerful experience? Would she be St. Thérèse we know of today? She could've continued to receive

Christmas presents in her shoes/slippers which makes us think about presents. It is safe to say that St. Thérèse received a better Christmas present, the gift of a powerful inner conversion that, from that moment on, her family said that she was never the same, in which she never thought of herself, but only of others. She, from that moment, wanted to imitate the "Greatest Gift of them all," Jesus, the One who gave of His entire mind, soul, heart, body, will, and everything to God and others. St. Thérèse wanted to do the same thing and she did every single second to the moment of her death. All she ever wanted to do was to please Jesus and to show Him proof in every single thing that she said and done. Is this something that you would be willing to pray for? That you prefer a deeper conversion as a Christmas present than a new shirt, new device, new, etc.? It is not too late to start asking that as the better present...

Let's return to St. Thérèse's religious name. While the first part is "of the Infant Child," this also has a very rich Christmas meaning. While Jesus was born in the human flesh from the Blessed Virgin Mary, which is a huge reason for Christmas, and how we see images of the Blessed Virgin Mary and St. Joseph holding the infant Jesus. Jesus is Emmanuel, meaning "God with us." What is shocking is that baby Jesus, also fully God, is vulnerable and in total dependence on the Blessed Virgin Mary and St. Joseph. We all can remember the experience of seeing a baby. How many of us would love an opportunity to



hold a baby? A baby is so innocent, trusting, and vulnerable. St. Thérèse had a great devotion to the infant Jesus and her spirituality was a childlike and innocent simplicity and trust in God's love. This is not the same as perpetual immaturity and childishness, but rather perpetual love, trust, and childlikeness. A child trusts his or her mother and father completely, so much that he or she can enjoy the present moment and the graces therein with complete joy, without worry. She always remembered to be like the infant/child Jesus, to be like Him in the arms of God, Blessed Virgin Mary, and St. Joseph like a child, especially to be trusting, dependent and embraced by them. Do you trust that God the Son (Jesus) and Our Mother Mary have everything under control?

Also, St. Thérèse would continue to grow in greater intimacy with Jesus, as she holds Him, feeds Him, loves Him, hugs Him, kisses Him, and talks with Him as the Infant Child. How can you do this today and every day? A few examples are that you can talk to baby Jesus through prayer and after you receive Holy Communion, as well as loving Him by giving Him your daily sacrifices. One beautiful tradition from Advent is that at the beginning of Advent, an empty manger can be placed for all to see at home. Any prayer and sacrifices that you can do for another person allow you to put one straw of hay (or one strip of paper) in the manger so that when Christmas arrives, baby Jesus can have a comfortable bed to lay inside. Aren't those beautiful ways to connect with Our Lord? What's stopping you?

Also, another powerful title to St. Thérèse's religious name is "of the Holy Face." For thousands of years, the Jewish people waited and couldn't see the Face of God. But, with the arrival of Jesus, the Second Person of the Triune God, the Blessed Virgin Mary, and St. Joseph became the first people to see the holy face of God! Imagine that?! We often take for granted the precious face of God through Jesus. While we may find solace, security, and peace as a child when our parents come to our aid, how could we not find solace, security, and peace when we look face-to-face at the Holy Face of Jesus?

At her Carmelite convent in Lisieux, France, the Carmelite community had a great devotion to the face of Jesus that was on the veil of St. Veronica. Remember the Stations of the Cross



▶ **ST. ANNA SCHÄFFER - Continued from Page 9.**

when St. Veronica wiped the holy face of Jesus? This brings a whole new understanding of the Holy Face, as it also reminds us of how the beautiful and Holy Face of God was so horribly beaten, spat upon, and tortured because of all our sins. St. Thérèse wrote such beautiful words in her “Canticle (Song) to the Holy Face” which I will include here:

*Jesus, Your ineffable image  
Is the star which guides my steps.  
Ah, You know, Your sweet Face  
Is for me Heaven on earth.  
My love discovers the charms  
Of Your Face adorned with tears.  
I smile through my own tears  
When I contemplate Your sorrows.*

*Oh! To console You I want  
To live unknown on earth!  
Your beauty, which You know how to veil,  
Discloses for me all its mystery.  
I would like to fly away to You!*

*Your Face is my only homeland.  
It's my Kingdom of love.  
It's my cheerful meadow.  
Each day, my sweet sun.  
It's the Lily of the Valley  
Whose mysterious perfume  
Consoles my exiled soul,  
Making it taste the peace of Heaven.*

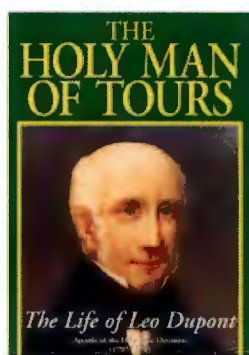
*It's my Rest, my Sweetness  
And my melodious Lyre  
Your Face, O my Sweet Savior,  
Is the Divine Bouquet of Myrrh  
I want to keep on my heart!*

*Your Face is my only wealth.  
I ask for nothing more.  
Hiding myself in it unceasingly,  
I will resemble You, Jesus  
Leave in me, the Divine Impress  
Of Your features filled with sweetness,  
And soon I'll become holy.  
I shall draw hearts to You.*

*So that I may gather  
A beautiful golden harvest,  
Deign to set me aflame with Your Fire.  
With Your adorned mouth,  
Give me soon the Eternal Kiss!*

Such breathtaking love St. Thérèse had for Jesus, especially to His Holy Face! Do we ever realize how precious any image of the Holy Face is to us and do we give the utmost respect whenever to the Holy Face whenever we see it?

What people don't realize is that there have been many miracles (documented) due to people's devotion to the Holy Face of Jesus. One famous ministry to the Holy Face is by the Venerable Leo Dupont of Tours in France, who is often called the “Apostle to the Holy Face.” He

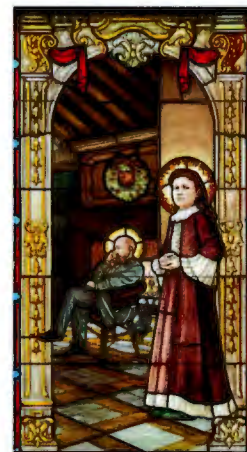


often had people come to his home to the oratory in which he had the image of the Holy Face of Jesus. He would pray with the visitors to the Holy Face and many, many, many prayers and miracles have been answered!

St. Thérèse had this to say about the Holy Face: “I desire that, like the Face of Jesus, my face be truly hidden that no one on earth would know me. I thirsted after suffering and I longed to

be forgotten.” She only wanted her face to show the Holy Face, meaning that when people see her, she had only wanted to see Jesus' Face, not her own face.

In conclusion, St. Thérèse of the Infant Child and the Holy Face is truly a model saint for the meaning of Christmas. She reminds us beautifully by the way she lived her saintly life, even cloistered inside a convent, that the reason for the Christmas season is what she lived by every day of her life. She became one of the Doctors of the Catholic Church. Jesus is the GREATEST gift of all time. No other gifts are worthy of Jesus Himself. During this Christmas season, let's continually pray for that inner conversion so that we can always love Jesus as an Infant Jesus that we hold, look, and love. At the same time, that we become like the baby Jesus in His innocent and trusting dependence on God, the Blessed Virgin Mary, and St. Joseph. At the same time, that we always cherish and highly respect all the images that show the Holy Face of Jesus, no matter what age Jesus is. Because with Jesus, He is the Gift that we only want and always want, in all the days of our lives!



## ST. JOHN'S INSTITUTE FOR DEAF MUTES, ST. FRANCIS, WIS.

Since our Summer 2019's Special 175th Anniversary Commemorative Hand in Hand Newsletter, we are proud to continue the tradition of including articles related to the history of St. John's School for the Deaf. This historical article was taken from an historical book, *The Catholic Church in Wisconsin*, pages 911-918, published in 1898!

The reason it is included in the Christmas section is that our Catholic Church, even at the end of the 1800s, still recognized the importance of the deaf people's rights to be educated in a school, but most importantly to have access in learning the truths of God and His Catholic Church. Keep in mind that this article was published here exactly as it was in 1898, even though some outdated phrases and concepts are not what we would use today in the 21st century. Still, much valuable historical information is included in this article.

The Catholic Church has always been a friend and champion of the unfortunate and oppressed. No class escapes her notice, and in the face of incomprehensible difficulties, she has made provision for the poverty-stricken, the blind, the insane, the feeble-minded, the deaf and dumb, and, in short, all those who through misfortune become the objects of charity.

It was the Roman Catholic Church and the acts of her ministers that changed all the existing notions regarding the status of the deaf mute in society. The Roman and anti-Christian notion was, that the deaf mute could not be educated, and, consequently, the treatment received by him was harsh in the extreme. From the dawn of Christianity, we find examples of deaf mutes educated by the bishops and priests of the Church. Finally, the work was taken up systematically by the Fathers Pedro Ponce and Abbe De'l'Pee.

Their efforts led to the organization of schools throughout Europe, and in the course of time, both lay and clerical educators became interested in the work. It was, too, from the school of Abbe De'l'Pee that the first American deaf mute educator acquired the method of obtaining the knowledge which has made the school that bears his name famous.

The Catholic Church has not only been the forerunner and disseminator of deaf mute education, but continues still with



St. John's Deaf Mute Institute, St. Francis, Wis.

all her powerful influence to educate and elevate the poor unfortunate mute. With this purpose in view, the St. John's Institute for deaf mutes was organized. Less than thirty years after the admission of Wisconsin into the Union, and in the thirty-second year after the establishment of the bishopric in Milwaukee, this institute came into existence. It was organized in the year 1876, by the Rev. Theodore

Bruenner, and has consequently passed the twenty-first year of its existence. Through this period, the institute has been successfully presided over by the Rev. Theodore Bruenner, the Rev. John Friedl, the Rev. Charles Fessler, and the present rector, the Rev. M. M. Gerend, who has presided since 1889. It has gone on from its humble beginnings in rooms above the gymnasium of the Pio Nono College, until it has reached the finished and fully equipped structure of to-day. During the past few years, the chapel has been finished, the building renovated and the grounds improved and ornamented. All this has been accomplished with no little difficulty. Extraordinary efforts had to be made both to secure funds for the improvement of the buildings and the sustenance of the school. Several times it appeared as if these difficulties would close the institution, yet, through the goodness of God, they have been met thus far, and the home stands to-day a refuge for all those unfortunates who stand in need of its beneficent influences.

The institute is a three-story building of cream-colored brick, situated at the village of St. Francis, just south of the Catholic Normal School and the Pio Nono College. It is heated by furnaces, provided with ample ventilation and has kept in touch with all the modern improvements. In a wing south of the main building, is the chapel, dedicated to the memory of the late Most Rev. Archbishop Heiss, one of the warmest friends of the deaf mute. This chapel is most neatly finished and furnished. A neat little altar, statuettes, sculpture, pews, and ornamentations, the work of the deaf mutes, bears evidence to the skill they have acquired while attending St. John's Institute; for it is the policy of the institute, so far as possible, to have the young mutes acquire

## ▶ ST. JOHN'S - Continued from Page 11.

*Deaf Mutes in the Class Room.*

some trade which may be a means of sustenance to them in after life.

The grounds have been beautified and made attractive by the deaf mutes, under the supervision of their rector. To the east side, a little lake has been constructed, which is adorned with little islands and rustic bridges connecting them. The lawn has been embellished with numerous beds of flowers, trees and mounds. A large cage has been placed in the center of the lawn, in which is a happy family, consisting of a variety of animals. It is a delight to see the mutes watching these animals and feeding them through the wire, with grass, leaves and nuts, which they gather in the neighboring wood. A shrine of the Blessed Virgin has also been constructed there.

Through their misfortune the deaf mutes are unable to enjoy their homes as other children, but it is the aim of St. John's Institute, by its motherly care and pleasant surroundings, to supply as far as may be the pleasures and delights of other children. Here they are a happy family, bound together by the common bonds of sympathy and misfortune. Under well-directed intelligent guides, they develop in understanding, until the misfortune, so far as human agency can make it, is at a minimum.

The school curriculum includes not only the secular branches, reading, writing, geography, arithmetic, etc., but also the truths of religion. This is very helpful, for the deaf mute usually is headstrong and obstinate, and the knowledge of God and His religion aids materially in governing them and building up their character. The child's case is studied upon his arrival at the institute, and that method of instruction adopted which is deemed most advantageous in the individual case. So far as practicable, the articulation method is used. In cases where the

children have been long at schools elsewhere, and taught in the sign method, their religious instruction must be continued in the method, for these children can remain but a short time in school. It is used also in the case of defective vocal organs. In other cases the articulation method is used.

The school is supplied with charts, maps, and such objects as are necessary in elementary work in school. In addition to school work, the girls are taught housework, baking, cooking, etc., needle-work, plain and fancy, and also painting. The boys are taught carving and shoemaking, and, by frequent use, attain dexterity in the use of tools. Thus the education is elementary, religious and industrial at the same time.

The girls' department is at present in charge of Sister Patricia, of the Order of St. Francis. With a devotion to her pupils characteristic of the Sisters, she seeks to bring these poor souls who know not God to a knowledge of their Redeemer, and to give them such instruction as will enable them to succeed among their fellows. How well she succeeds, the bright girls that have been, and are now in her care, testify. She is assisted in her work by Miss Anna Condon, a graduate of the school teachers of the articulation system.

Professor L. W. Mihm, a graduate of the Catholic Normal School, who has been in charge of the boys' department for nineteen years, is a striking example of a patient and devoted interest in a good work. His is a remarkable instance of the impression of the teacher upon the pupil. His stamp is left upon the pupils, in their hand writing, ways of thinking and action. He is their ideal, and when it comes to the problems of life, they look back to Professor Mihm and the rector of the institute for counsel and advice.

*Deaf Mutes at Work.*

## ► ST. JOHN'S - Continued from Page 12.

*Deaf Mutes in the Carving Shop.*

Professor Mihm is now assisted in his work by Professor Stettner, who takes charge of the articulation work. Professor Stettner was the first teacher at the school, which is known as the Phonological Institute, or School for the Deaf in Milwaukee.

Many of the children who attend the school are entirely unable to pay tuition and board. But no one is refused admission on this account. In the case of the poor, the child is received with the only condition, that the parents pay as much toward its support as they feel able to. The support of these children, and the expenses necessary for the management of the house, throws a considerable burden upon the shoulders of the rector. Means must be had, and for these means he must appeal to the charitable. The rector has published several books, and conducts a quarterly in order to bring funds. Bazaars and other entertainments are given, from time to time, and these, through the kindness of the friends of the institution, have furnished the necessary requisite to make it self-supporting. These friends and benefactors are remembered daily in Holy Mass, and in the prayers of the mutes. No worthier charity may be found, as a visit to the institute will convince.

Of the wonderful amount of good accomplished by such an institution as this, no easier estimate, perhaps, can be formed than by referring partially to an address delivered by the Rev. M. M. Gerend, president and rector of St. John's Institute, in which much valuable and interesting data is given. He first refers to the name "deaf and dumb" as a misnomer, or at least misleading, on account of the definition generally accepted wherever it is applied. As regards this, he says: "A deaf mute person who can neither hear nor speak. A person who was born deaf, or who loses his hearing at a very early age, is mute or dumb, also. The primary defect is deafness, dumbness, as a rule, being only the consequence of it. This we can readily understand if we watch a little child that is learning to speak. The child hears the sound and tries to imitate it, and, as it

advances in age, it learns to imitate sounds, and finally succeeds in speaking words and sentences. It is thus that everyone of us has learned to speak. Now, the deaf mute cannot hear, and consequently cannot imitate sounds, and must, as a matter of course, remain mute, or dumb. You see, then, that the term 'deaf and dumb' is somewhat unfortunate, because it conveys a wrong idea. The affliction of the deaf and dumb is not twofold; it affects two organs, certainly, but only in the way of cause and effect. The ear is the guide and directress of the tongue, and if the ear is doomed to perpetual silence, the tongue is included in the same ban. Now, in order to correct this error, some of the authorities have adopted the term 'deaf mute,' which is now generally used in this country. The poor unfortunates whom we signify by this term have joyfully indorsed the use of it in preference to that of 'deaf and dumb,' because, as they say, this term is also used when speaking of an irrational beast. Thus we, for instance, say, 'the dumb animal, the dumb beast.' The deafness is either inherited or caused by sickness or accident. Deafness, when inherited, is called congenital. When caused by sickness or accident, it is called adventitious. It is estimated that ten per cent. of all the deaf in the United States spring from kindred parents in the following proportions, namely: when only one parent is congenitally deaf, i.e., born deaf, one child out of every one hundred and thirty children will be deaf, and when both parents are congenitally deaf, one in ten of the offspring will be deaf. The children of such as are adventitiously deaf, i.e., through sickness or accident, do not seem to be affected by the deafness of parents. Among the causes of adventitious deafness, scarlet fever is the most fruitful in the United States, this disease alone causing from twenty to twenty-five per cent. of all cases. Next to scarlet fever, comes brain fever.

*Deaf Mute Girls at Play.*

## ▶ ST. JOHN'S - Continued from Page 13.

*Deaf Mute Boys at Play.*

Deafness is much more common than it was formerly supposed to be. It was only when the schools for the deaf now in existence began their useful work, that the actual numbers of those unfortunates began to appear. Wherever schools were established, inquiries were made and inducements were handed out, and thus it was ascertained that the number of deaf mutes was alarming. Statistics show that in this country about one in every one thousand five hundred inhabitants is a deaf mute, which, when estimating the population of the United States at sixty millions, would show a result of forty thousand deaf mutes.

For these forty thousand deaf mutes we have in our country, which so well boasts of its humane character, about eighty schools, taught by almost seven hundred teachers and attended by about ten thousand pupils. Of these eighty schools, according to substantial authority, twelve are Catholic. These schools are as follows: St. Joseph's Institute at New York, eighty-nine pupils; branch of the same in West Chester County, in New York, one hundred and forty-five pupils; another branch at Brooklyn, New York, sixty-two pupils; Le Colteaux St. Mary's Institute at Buffalo, New York, one hundred and fifty-four pupils; Epheta School, at Chicago, sixty-eight pupils; School for the Deaf and Dumb, at New Orleans, twenty-six pupils; the Sunday School for Deaf and Dumb, Philadelphia, fifty-nine pupils; a mission school for deaf and dumb, also at Philadelphia, fifty-one pupils; Deaf and Dumb Institute, at St. Louis, Missouri, thirty-one pupils; St. John's Institute, St. Francis, Wisconsin, Archdiocese of Milwaukee, about forty-five pupils—a total of seven hundred and twenty-five pupils.

From further statistics furnished, and taking as a basis for our supposition the fact that there are at least ten million Catholics in the United States, we learn, by adopting the

same principle as heretofore applied, that seven thousand of these are deaf mutes. Of this number, it will be seen from the foregoing statement, less than one thousand are attending Catholic institutions provided for the care of those who are thus afflicted. This is certainly not as it should be, for while, as some may be led to believe, there are State Institutions thoroughly competent of caring for them in a material way, they are, when so instructed, as it were, placed outside the pale of the Church, and far removed from its better and strengthening influences. As previously remarked, stubbornness is one of the marked peculiarities and characteristics of deaf mutes. First impressions having a radical effect upon them, it has been found in a majority of cases to be a fact that this condition can best be overcome by appealing to and enlarging their faculties for reasoning. For this unhappy condition of theirs is not to be charged to a state of mental laxity or incapacity, but simply to the fact that the affliction to which they have been born, unfortunately limits them to a very narrow scope of ideas, as a result of which they attain that peculiar state of mind which in those not bereft of the powers of hearing and speech would be designated as dogmatical and absurd. In overcoming this undesirable attribute, those who have made a study of the disease are unanimous in the belief that it is to be better and more successfully handled through the medium of religious influence, than any other power which could be brought to bear upon it. For this reason, then, it is most desirable that these poor creatures, as far as possible, should be educated in schools or institutions which are able also to direct their moral forces and imbue their minds with such valuable accessories as are afforded by an earlier Christian training.

*Chapel at St. John's Institute, St. Francis, Wis.*

▶ ST. JOHN'S - Continued on Page 15.

► **ST. JOHN'S - Continued from Page 14.**

The work that is carried on at St. John's Institute is at another time very touchingly referred to by Father Gerend in the following language: "It is the work of Him who has declared, 'let the little ones come unto Me, and prevent them not, for theirs is the kingdom of Heaven.' It is the work that Jesus performed, when, during his sojourn upon earth, he laid his hands upon the sick and suffering, and by a word or touch restored them to health and sight and speech. On many occasions Scripture tells us He met the deaf mutes, but on none did He pass them by. Invariably He helped them. We call ourselves Christians, and, in order that we may lay due claim to this title, we must do as Christ has done—be Christians, followers of Christ, not only in name, but, above all, in deed. Our benefactors do this by contributing their mite in coin, and otherwise toward supporting a school where deaf mutes are taught, not only secular branches, but where they are made familiar with the teachings of Jesus and the doctrines of His Church, where they are shown the way that leads to Heaven and the means that will enable them to walk upon it. Were it not for our benefactors, this good work would be crippled and limited only to children of means, to the temporal and eternal ruin of the poor.

"Our benefactors are like so many apostles, indirectly preach the Gospel to the poor, expel that gloom and uncertainty from their minds which makes them miserable and disconsolate, fill them with hope and courage and love of God; like good shepherds, they lead back to the fold the lost sheep, extricate them from sin and peril, and make Heaven rejoice; they are angels who hover over suffering humanity, feeding the hungry, giving drink to the thirsty, clothing to the naked, sheltering the homeless, soothing the weary, instructing the ignorant, warning the sinner, ever performing the most sublime work possible here below.

"The poor deaf mute who, six years ago, came to school ignorant, half-witted and silly, a fit object of pity and compassion, and a burden to his family, now leaves it well instructed, a good Christian and citizen, and a useful member of society. He was sullen and mum, now is cheerful, conversing with his hearing brethren by hand or mouth; he who was in the way is now seen side by side with others in the workshop or office, competing with them for an honest living; he who knew naught about God and eternity is now found on his knees in the church, at the feet of the priest or at the sacred rails, repenting

for his sins, praising God, and devoutly praying for his benefactors.

"Allow me to remove, as it were, the curtain that separates this world from the next. Take a glance at the beautiful beyond, the place prepared for all the children of God; behold in the midst of the chorus of the angels and saints the deaf mutes made happy by our efforts; yes, behold these mouths, which were silent here below, chanting the praises of God forever! What greater satisfaction or reward can we work for? The thought that our feeble efforts have been instrumental in bringing about this happy result; the thought that we have assisted them in reaching their eternal destination—this thought, I say, must inspire us to do even more in the future, must encourage us to work till every deaf mute of Catholic birth can attend a Catholic school."



*Rev. M. M. Gerend*

The Rev. M. M. Gerend, president of St. John's Institute, was born on June 17, 1858, at Sheboygan, Wisconsin. He studied for the priesthood at St. Francis' Seminary, near Milwaukee, and was ordained there on June 26, 1881, saying his first Mass on the Feast of the Most Precious Blood, July 3d of that year, in Holy Name Church at Sheboygan. From that time until 1889, he was pastor of Westport and Waunakee

congregations. During his stay there he built a new church at Waunakee, and later one at Middleton, Dane County. He was president and procurator of the Catholic Normal School, Pio Nono College and St. John's Institute for Deaf Mutes from 1889-1895. In 1895, feeling unable to do justice to so many charges, he resigned as rector of the Catholic Normal School and Pio Nono College, and at present has charge only of St. John's Institute, attending, also, to the spiritual wants of two missions, i. e., St. Frederick's, at Cudahy, Wisconsin, and St. Bernard's Church, at Middleton, Wisconsin.

Father Gerend has devoted much time in behalf of the inmates of St. John's, for which institute he has published a number of books. He is also at the present time editor of the "Deaf Mutes' Friend Family Library," a Catholic quarterly, which is published for the benefit of poor deaf mutes.



## DEAF APOSTOLATE INTERVIEWS ROBERT ZWEBER

By Fr. Christopher Klusman



Robert Zweber

**1. Where were you born? Where did you grow up?** I was born in Rice Lake, Wisconsin. My family and I lived there until I was about 12 or 13 years old. Since the house was becoming too small with the birth of my baby sister, we moved to White Bear Lake, Minnesota, which is about 15 minutes north of the Twin Cities, Minnesota. I am the middle child of my family, with one brother who is the

oldest and one sister, who is the youngest.

I had an uncle who was a priest. His name was Fr. Raymond Zweber. He was my father's brother. He served in the Archdiocese of St. Paul & Minneapolis. My father and mother both had many sisters who became nuns. On my father's side, several of my aunts' religious names were: Sr. Mary Aimee, Sr. Agnes Therese, and Sr. Mary John. On my mother's side, several of my aunts' religious names were: Sr. Mary Nora, Sr. Mary Fidelis, and Sr. Mary Neal. There are many more religious relatives in my family tree.



Here is young Robert with Santa Claus.

**2. Were you born deaf? If not, when did you become deaf? How did your parents find out you were deaf?**

I was born hearing, but around the age of 3 months, I became sick with a very high fever of about 105 degrees. My mother was worried and called the doctor, who advised that we had better go to a famous hospital (Mayo Clinic) in Rochester, Minnesota. My Aunt, Sr. Nora (my mother's sister), prayed. They said that I could die anytime. The doctor did more tests. I ended up staying there for about a week. Soon after, the doctor told something to my parents that shocked them, "I'm sorry that your son is deaf." They thought, "What am I supposed to do?" By Divine Providence, the doctor told my parents that there is a good Catholic School for the Deaf in Milwaukee! Since my parents wanted me to go to

a Catholic school, that was how I ended up going there.

**3. When (how old and what grade) did you first go to St. John's School for the Deaf?** Again, my parents wanted me to go to a Catholic school as that was very important to them. I first arrived at St. John's during the year 1952. I was three years old. I still remembered when we arrived there and looked around the school. Then my parents tried to tell me (which I couldn't understand) that they had to go "Bye-bye." It was so confusing. They were trying to tell me to sleep in that room (dormitory). After seeing so many beds,



Robert Zweber's Parents.

I remembered thinking, "Where are my brother and baby sister going to sleep?" Then, I happened to fall asleep. When I woke up, I couldn't find my parents since they had already left. I was so scared that I ran downstairs. One Sister tried chasing me and eventually caught me. I remembered feeling so scared thinking maybe I would never see my parents again! I cried and cried... Sister tried to calm me. Eventually, up to around the age of 5 is when I began to really understand that this is a dormitory and that I could still go home to my family during breaks.

My first teacher was Sr. Bertrand. I remembered at that time, through Fr. Gehl, that we all were required speech training so I can't remember exactly when they allowed us to communicate through American Sign Language (ASL).



Left: Mr. Mervil Buss, Engineer  
Middle: Michael Walter, General Maintenance, Boy's Dorm III Supervisor, and Boy Scout Troop 307 Assistant Leader  
Right: Mr. Robert Zweber, General Maintenance

**4. Who were your favorite staff people at St. John's School for the Deaf? Why?** I loved the four Sisters: Sr. Mary Claude Telderer, OSF, Sr. Mary Reynildis Frederick, OSF,

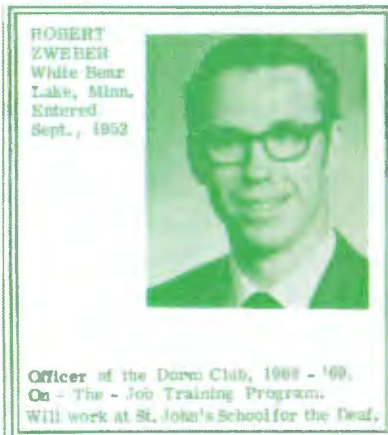
► ROBERT ZWEBER - Continued on Page 17.

► **ROBERT ZWEBER - Continued from Page 16.**

Sr. Mary Walter (later known as Sr. Margaret Peter), OSF, and Sr. Mary Henriella, OSF. They all did a great job explaining stuff to me. They taught me a lot through reading (English), mathematics, and history.

5. **What was your favorite subject/class? Why?** My favorite subjects were mathematics, English (reading), and art. Those were subjects that I enjoyed.

6. **What year did you graduate?** I graduated from St. John's School for the Deaf in eighth grade during the year 1965. I remembered when I was graduating, I was worried because I didn't want to leave St. John's School for the Deaf. The hard thing was that my parents



wanted me to go to the Minnesota State Academy for the Deaf. I remembered going there on tour with my parents, in which their words to me were: "Next year, you will go there." I felt torn and didn't know what to do for I still didn't want to say no to be disrespectful to my parents. What I did was I prayed and cried for I really wanted to go to St. John's School for the Deaf as they will start a new high school just when I graduate from the eighth grade. I remembered telling Fr. Murphy how I was hoping to stay for high school. Then, I remembered one day when my parents said they had a surprise for me. A surprise? I wondered and wondered what the surprise was? Then they finally told me that I will be able to go to St. John's School for the Deaf for high school!!! I was SO happy! So I began there in 1965 and am part of their first graduating high school class in 1969.

7. **What job(s) did you do after you graduated?** When I was a Junior, I remembered two students worked part-time during the summer, so I asked Fr. Murphy if I could, and they accepted me for the Summer of 1967. Since they said that the work I did was good, I was able to do it again for the Summer of 1968. It was nice that I was allowed to finish work a few weeks before school started in the fall, in which I was able to go home for a few weeks to be with family. After I graduated from St. John's School

for the Deaf In 1969 as a 16-year-old, I worked full-time there for 14 years on the maintenance staff until the school closed in 1983. I worked on staff with Mr. Joseph Frederick, Engineer, and Mr. Mervil Buss, Custodian. I did work for a short time as a boys dormitory supervisor and stopped doing that right before I got married in 1972 as that job required me to stay at the dorm and that I didn't want to be apart from my wife. I also remembered when Mr. Joseph Frederick became ill with cancer in 1971 and passed away in 1974, I had told Fr. Murphy to hire Mike Walter, which they did. Mike Walter worked from 1974-1983. When St. John's School for the Deaf closed, I was really sad for I didn't want it to close. They allowed me to stay in what then became St. John's Center (1983-1993) for 10 more years before it was sold. I then worked at various archdiocesan facilities (which included the central offices and St. Francis de Sales Seminary). In 2012, I was assigned full-time at the central offices until my retirement in 2015. When I retired, my wife, Patricia, and I had dreams to do things together. But, due to my wife's unexpected illness and death, the Archdiocese of Milwaukee's central offices asked me to return part-time, to which I gladly accepted. It was so nice when they said that they missed me and my good work.

8. **Please tell us about your wife?** My wife's name is Patricia. During 1970, I went to the Holiday Inn Hotel on South 13th Street because I had to give a presentation to about 50 to 100 people. I remembered seeing Patricia sitting over in one area with her friends. I went over to talk with her. At that time, Patricia didn't really know much sign language because her parents wanted her to learn and use speech. So I had tried my best to use my speech too from



*Here is a picture of me newly married with my new wife, Patricia, as we cut our wedding cake together.*

what I learned at St. John's School for the Deaf. From that moment on, we became friends. I taught her some sign language and I would write notes to her parents to see if we could get together, so I would drive to pick her up and

► **ROBERT ZWEBER - Continued on Page 18.**

► **ROBERT ZWEBER - Continued from Page 17.**

enjoy time together. She still was shy at that time. I also remembered that I would give my written notes to Evelyn Zola who would give them to Patricia since Evelyn meets with her on Wednesday evenings. What is cool is that Patricia would write written notes too to give to Evelyn to give to me.

I remembered when Patricia told me how she and her parents would travel to Delavan a few times. Patricia would often say that she wanted to go to Wisconsin School for the Deaf, but her parents said no. She had even tried asking her parents to go to St. John's School for the Deaf, but her parents still refused. Her parents had wanted her to continue learning and communicating in speech only at her school.

As our dating got serious, I asked Patricia if she was Catholic and she said she wasn't. But, somehow, I was thankful that Patricia said that she was willing to study to become Catholic before our wedding. Also, during our marriage preparation, they seemed brief. I had wished we had the resources for preparation now than we had during our time for we both still had to learn more things after she became Catholic, as well as what our marriage meant. We got married in the chapel at St. John's School for the Deaf on August 5, 1972. It was a beautiful sunny day! The funny thing was we went on our honeymoon afterward and the weather was mostly rainy.

- 9. Tell me about your children? Do you have grandchildren?** We have two sons. We had lost one by miscarriage. Our oldest son is Bert, while the youngest is Perry. My wife liked having two children so we stayed with that.
- 10. How many years have you and Patricia been married?** For 43 and a half years. We were excited about our 45th-anniversary celebration and blessing, but, sadly, she passed away at the age of 67. She had a brain tumor. It was a difficult journey, but when she had to be in a nursing home for 6 months, I visited her every day and stayed with her, talking with her and playing games with her. Every morning before I went to visit her, I would pray the rosary. I was always with her and helping her in every way I can. Our marriage is to be there for each other "in sickness and in health." She passed peacefully on May 10, 2016.
- 11. How did you feel about Mark Hansen (alumnus of St. John's School for the Deaf) at last year's St. John's Alumni event in Oct. 2019 about you being the last**

**Deaf custodian at St. John's, while the first Deaf custodian was Bernard McGrane (1876-1938)?** Oh, it was very nice and thoughtful. It was good to be part of history.



*Mark Hansen surprised me by sharing my place in history at St. John's during our alumni gathering in October 2019.*

- 12. What are your favorite hobbies?** I love to read and to go out and visit places. I always love visiting my son Perry in Arizona to see them and my 3 grandchildren. I also enjoy our socials after our Masses. I enjoy attending ICDA picnics and Christmas parties. I also enjoy going to Deaf Clubs.
- 13. What do you like about being Catholic?** I have many great memories such as going to Mass every morning at St. John's School for the Deaf. I remembered helping to clean the church and remembering the Bible and wanting to know more about it. I often wondered about many questions such as how we got the Bible. Because of that, I enjoy our Bible Study sessions to know more about it these past several years. I still love going to Mass.



*Fr. Zerkel with me and my classmates at St. John's Alumni Reunion last Oct. 2019.*

I remembered going to Masses when I was young, especially when I was home with my family, and I was so frustrated that I didn't know what the priest was saying as he wasn't using Sign Language. My parents have always taught me that I have to go to Mass every Sunday and Holy Day of

Obligations. So it is really nice now to have a priest who communicates in Sign Language. I hope someday to go to a Deaf Cursillo as I heard many things about it.

- 14. What do you hope for the future for Catholic Deaf ministry?** I always hope for our Masses to be accessible in American Sign Language. I remembered when I went to Mass with my parents with no accessibility in

► **ROBERT ZWEBER - Continued on Page 19.**

In St. John's School for the Deaf's publications of the "Our Young People," there is a section that has their current news. I hope you will enjoy these various news clippings:

# News of St. John's



The two groups of first graders gave a first class pageant depicting the Nativity scene. Three-year-old Colleen Evanstad from the Nursery very sweetly took the part of the Infant of Bethlehem. Karen Hansen made a lovely Blessed Mother, while Douglas Brockman did a fine job of being St. Joseph. Husky Billy Perry enjoyed playing the part of the donkey who carried Mother Mary to Bethlehem. Jerry Jelinski thought it was fun pretending to be the ox near the Infant's crib. Danny Kelly, Jimmy

Van Der Hagen, Jordan Koëppel and Bobby Cave took the parts of the hard hearted inn keepers, and were later converted into the shepherds who came to adore. Francine Perry, Linda Chasser, Kathy Thompson, Didi Lara and Mary Deffry were angelic little angels. The Wise Men who followed the star were Bob Kamasky, Roy Duket and David Riggle. Joey Daniels proved his oratory powers by being the narrator. All who saw the pageant agree that it was a splendid presentation.

May the Divine Infant shower His blessings on all who helped to make the Christmas season at St. John's such a happy one. The many gifts, cards and letters and donations were deeply appreciated.

Bobby Zweber's aunt, who is a Medical Missionary and doctor, is stationed at a leper colony on the Gold Coast in West Africa. Her generosity in volunteering for this noble work has aroused the generosity of the children at St. John's. They are saving money for this mission.

Robert Zweber is Sister's little helper both in school and in the dormitory. Robert's neatness and exactness are outstanding characteristics.

Sales lady in a hat shop: "That's a darling hat.



Really, it makes you look ten years younger."

Customer: "Then I don't want it. I can't afford to put on ten years every time I take off my hat!"

### Quiz Answers:

1c; 2 False; 3d; 4d; 5b

"Bobby," asked the teacher, "where is the English channel?"



"I don't know, teacher," was the reply; "we can't get it on our TV."

### ► ST. JOHN'S - Continued from Page 18.

my language, one priest who was giving the homily was pounding several times on the podium. I was not sure why he was doing that so I asked my mom what that was all about. My mom said to wait until after Mass. I still can't forget the day when attending Masses at St. John's School for the Deaf when the priest was able to turn around to face us. I still remembered the day when Fr. Murphy was able to turn around for the 1st time to face us during the entire Mass. I hope for more faith formation opportunities, such as learning more about our Bible and evangelization in our language. I always want to know how to talk to other people about the Catholic faith. I hope that our Deaf community can still be allowed to

communicate in our language because I was young and if we were caught signing in Fr. Gehl's time, I would have to go and stand in the corner as punishment. I wished I had learned all these things about our Catholic faith that I'm learning now when I was young at even like 10 years old. I also hope that our Catholic Deaf community can still keep growing.

### 15. Anything you would like to share with the readers?

It is so important that we do what God wants us to do. Because when I die and face Jesus, He will ask me, "Did you teach my people?" I want to tell Him that I did in the best way that I can. I hope you will study and learn more about our Catholic faith so you know more about it and how to share it with others. God bless you!



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