



MISSION MATTERS

monthly



No. 2 Vol. 4 | December 6, 2021 | Student Edition

QUOTE OF THE MONTH

“Humor is the universal solvent against the abrasive elements of life. Hatred corrodes the container it's carried in”

-Alan Simpson

CATHOLIC Q&A

How should we celebrate Christmas?

click [here](#) for the answer

INTERFAITH CALENDAR

Click [here](#) for more information

- 12/06: St. Nicholas Day -*Christian*
- 12/08: Bodhi Day (Rohatsu) -*Buddhism*
- 12/08: Immaculate Conception of Mary -*Catholic Christian*
- 12/12: Our Lady of Guadalupe -*Catholic Christian*
- 12/16-25: Posadas Navidenas -*Hispanic Christian*
- 12/22: Yule/Winter Solstice -*Pagan*
- 12/25: Christmas -*Christian*
- 12/26: Zarathosht -*Zoroastrian*
- 12/28: Holy Innocents -*Christian*
- 12/30: Holy Family -*Catholic Christian*



HOLIDAY SEASON HIGHLIGHTS!

What is the real meaning of Christmas? Click [here](#) to learn more.



Chanukah/Hanukkah began on November 28 and ends today, December 6. Click [here](#) to learn more.



Kwanzaa is an African American and Pan-African holiday which celebrates family, community and culture. It begins December 26, 2021 and ends on January 1, 2022. Click [here](#) to learn more.



Come to the annual Blessing of Brains to help prepare for finals. Monday, December 13 3PM Library lobby, FREE PIZZA & MORE!! ALL ARE WELCOME!



SPIRITUAL OR RELIGIOUS? WHY NOT BOTH (part III)

By Matthew J. Kessler & Joe Baumgarten

Why Have Faith?

Katie Patrizio, a director of religious formation at St. Cecilia Church in Ames, Iowa, and Fr. Jim Secora of Ames, a retired parish pastor, offer some insight on his crucial question. This conversation outlines the importance of faith and can help us discern our own response as it applies to our individual faith life and the life of those we encounter who may be questioning their faith.

What have you gained from your faith?

KATIE: Everything! This is true for me theologically, but also experientially. My dignity comes from God; my virtue comes from God; anything good in or around me is a gift from God. It is, therefore, a gift of faith. What gives a gift its meaning? The love of the giver that the gift conveys. With faith, I can pull back the curtain on the good things in my life and recognize they are signs of God, who loves me.

FR. JIM: I know that I am loved not for what I can do but as a unique creature formed in the image and likeness of God. But it isn't just me. All humanity is loved collectively as this image of God in the world. I want to live a good life not only for myself but also so that others can experience the love of God through me.

Where would you be without your faith?

KATIE: Lost. Without faith, I am convinced that I would be wandering through life in a daze of my own echo chamber. Perhaps I'd have some semblance of natural happiness, but I know it would be fleeting because only God can provide lasting happiness. Even in times of suffering, God gives meaning to my life!

FR. JIM: Without my faith, I'd be floundering from one spiritual path to the next, searching for something that would give my life meaning and purpose. If I did not have my Christian faith, I would not have the framework to organize my life according to a larger reality beyond myself.

To be continued...

OUR CORE VALUES

Justice and Peace



Transformation



RESPECT FOR HUMAN DIGNITY



Compassion



Solidarity with the Poor

2021-2022 Focus

A "Respect for Human Dignity" Reflection:

Orphanage trafficking refers to children who are deliberately recruited into orphanages and exploited for profit.

Some are sexually abused, forced into labor or begging, or used for their organs, while others may be sold for illegal adoption. Running an orphanage can be a lucrative trade. Vulnerable 'orphans' attract funding, donations, and international volunteers.

It is estimated that up to 80 percent of the more than eight million children in orphanages have at least one living parent. Most of these children are in an orphanage because they have been displaced, are disabled, or have lived in a family that cannot care for them due to poverty. In some cases, "child finders" are sent by orphanage owners to local villages or those impacted by war, natural disaster, or societal discrimination. If they go and live in an orphanage, the "finder" promises a better life for the children, education, food security, safety, and healthcare.

Instead of fulfilling those promises, many orphanages use the children to raise funds by forcing them to perform shows or interact and play with potential donors to encourage more donations. Orphanages have also kept children in poor health to elicit more sympathy and money from donors. In addition, documents are created to make it look like the child has no family.

Children in institutional care, including government-run facilities, can be easy targets for traffickers. Moreover, orphanages facilitate child trafficking rings by using false promises to recruit children and exploit them to profit from donations. This practice has been well-documented in several countries, including Nepal, Cambodia, and Haiti. The ongoing institutionalization of children in orphanages is contrary to the child's best interests and their right to a family under the Convention of the Rights of the Child. The physical and psychological effects of staying in residential institutions, combined with societal isolation and often inadequate regulatory oversight by governments, place these children in situations of heightened vulnerability to human trafficking. Even at their best, residential institutions cannot meet a child's need for emotional support that family members or consistent caretakers provide. Children are especially vulnerable when traffickers recognize and take advantage of this need for emotional bonding stemming from the absence of stable parental figures. Click [here](#) to learn more and what you can do to help.



U.S. Catholic Sisters Against Human Trafficking

MERRY CHRISTMAS FROM AROUND THE WORLD!



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