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December 2011

Teaching a Message of Christmas



The First Christmas and Other Stories (DVD, 54 min.) Gateway Films/Vision Video, 2005. *The First Christmas*: Tells the traditional story of the birth of Jesus, beginning with Mary and Joseph's trip from Nazareth to Bethlehem. *The Chimes*: Heartwarming Charles Dickens tale about a poor porter who takes special joy at the sound of bells. With so much misfortune around him, he feels he had "no business being born", but the chimes speak to him in a dream, offering a message of new hope for the new year. *A Christmas Gift*: Animated version of the ballad "Christmas Dinner" by Peter, Paul & Mary. (P,I,J)

A Catholic Christmas (Book) Carroll, Kathleen, St. Anthony Messenger Press, 2011. The Church's celebration of Christmas isn't just for a day but starts with the joyful waiting of Advent and lasts until the feast of the Baptism of the Lord. Fascinating stories of some favorite saints — such as Nicholas, Lucy, and Stephen — make their legends come alive, while the history and lore surrounding some of our most popular feasts — such as the Epiphany and the Immaculate Conception — will help you understand the importance of keeping the Mass in Christmas. (S,A)

24 Christmas Stories to Welcome Jesus (Book) Ignatius Press, 2011. The joy and hope of Christmas are at the heart of this book intended for the whole family. Starting with the 1st of December (like an Advent calendar) each day has a new story, leading up to Christmas. Richly illustrated, this collection includes stories based on the Gospel accounts of the birth of Christ, as well as stories about Advent and Christmas customs. Also presented are original tales about living the Christmas message. (P,I)

Jesus Grows Up/What He Said, What He Did (DVD, 38 min.) Oblate, 2000, 2001. Using Scripture, history, and imagination to tell about Jesus as a little child growing up in the Holy Land. *Jesus: What He Said, What He Did*: From the authors and illustrator of *Jesus Grows Up*, here's the rest of the greatest story ever told for young children! Following the Bible, you'll see Jesus' Baptism in the Jordan River, the parables of The Prodigal Son and The Good Samaritan, The Sermon on the Mount, Crucifixion and Resurrection. (P)

The Donkey's Tale: A Story about the Life of Jesus (DVD, 13 min.) Twenty Third Publications, 1991. Moshe is the foal that Jesus rode into Jerusalem on Palm Sunday. Moshe and his donkey family encounter the Messiah at various times in Jesus' life, from birth to resurrection. (P,I)

A Small Miracle (Book) Collington, Peter, Dragonfly Books, 2011, c1997. The figures in a nativity scene come to life to help an old woman in need at Christmas. (P,I,J)

When Jesus was Born: The Story of the Very First Christmas (Book) Kim, Magdalena, Pauline Books & Media, 2001. Little hearts and minds will delight in the simple style and soft illustrations while learning the true meaning of Christmas. (P)

Martin and the Heavenly Tree: The Message of the Christmas Tree (VHS, 23 min.) Morning Light Media, 2000. When his father becomes sick, Martin finds a creative way for his family to celebrate Christmas. Set in Germany in the early 16th century, this is the story of the imaginative young boy who brought an evergreen inside for the Christmas celebration. This beautifully illustrated tale of the "tree that points to heaven" is a sure holiday favorite. (P,I)

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HERE'S WHAT'S NEW: BOOKS & DVD

Between Heaven and Mirth: Why Joy, Humor, and Laughter are at the Heart of the Spiritual Life

(Book) Martin, James, S.J., HarperOne, 2011. Drawing on Scripture, sharing anecdotes from his experiences as a lifelong Catholic, a Jesuit for over twenty years, and a priest for more than ten, Father Martin illustrates how joy, humor, and laughter help us to live more spiritual lives, understand ourselves and others better, and more fully appreciate God's presence among us. Inviting God to lighten our hearts, we can enjoy a little heaven on earth. (S,A)

Truth for your Mind, Love for your Heart: Satisfying your Hunger for God

(Book) McBride, Alfred, Our Sunday Visitor Pub., 2010. Father McBride links doctrine with the devotional life of the ordinary Catholic. Each chapter intertwines a Catholic teaching with the witness of a saint or other exemplary person to show that faith lived daily is a most powerful way to get at the heart of God's Word. Reflections, prayers, questions, and sidebar meditations reinforce the connections made between the Church's teachings and the reader's spiritual and moral life. (A)

Jesus our Brother: The Humanity of the Lord (Book) Harrington, Wilfrid J., Paulist Press, 2010. Insightful and moving portrayal of the authentic humanity of Jesus of Nazareth that highlights Jesus characteristically human traits and sets them in their proper context: his call to mission; how he would have seen himself and been regarded by others; his concerns; his priorities; the reaction of others to his person and to his vision. This Jesus is an appealing and a challenging figure, an uncomfortable person to have around, and Harrington's portrayal of him is based on sound penetrating biblical scholarship as well as on a deep understanding of and empathy with the human condition. (A)

Sanctity within Reach: Pier Giorgio Frassati (DVD, 90 min.) EWTN Home Video, 2009. Blessed Pier Giorgio Frassati ascended the mountain of personal holiness with much the same tenacity he used to climb his beloved Italian Alps. The film unpacks the life and spirituality of this avid mountain climber and fun-loving Italian youth--who dying in 1925 at the young age of 24, left behind an astounding legacy of good works. (J,S,A)

No Greater Love: A Unique Portrait of the Carmelite Nuns (DVD, 105 min.) Hot Property Films, 2011. No Greater Love gives a unique insight into this closed world of Discalced Carmelite Nuns. The film interweaves a year in the life of the monastery with the daily rhythms of Divine Office and work. Centered on Holy Week, it follows a year in which a novice is professed and one of the older nuns dies. Though mainly a meditational film, there are several interviews with the nuns, which offer insights into their lives, faith, moments of doubt and their belief in the power of prayer in the heart of the community. (S,A)

Taste and See: Savoring the Child's Wisdom (Book) Moore, Pam, Liturgy Training Publications, 2011. A major contribution to helping catechists learn what it means to "observe" the child: to see, listen to, trust, and savor the child's words and activities for what they reveal to us about the religious life of the child. (A)

Prepare! Celebrate! Live It! (Book) Martineau, Mariette, Twenty-Third Publications, 2011. This comprehensive resource helps catechetical and pastoral leaders prepare for, engage in, and live out the Gospel challenges of central feasts, seasons, and milestones of the liturgical year. It also helps them prepare participants (age specific and intergenerational), to participate fully in the seasonal prayer services included here. (A)

Our One Great Act of Fidelity: Waiting for Christ in the Eucharist (Book) Rolheiser, Ronald, Doubleday, 2011. Explores the history and meaning of the sacred tradition of the Eucharist, discusses its role in the lives, prayers, and worldviews of believers, shares the author's thoughts on the centrality of the Eucharist in his Roman Catholic faith, and looks at the practice in other faith communities. (A)

The Nun: The Story of a Carmelite Vocation: A Documentary (DVD, 58 min.) Ignatius Press, 2010. Filmed on location at the Carmelite convent in Glumslöv in southern Sweden, this award-winning documentary tells the story of Marta, a young Catholic woman and her counter-cultural choice to become a cloistered Carmelite nun. (J,S,A)

Scenes from a Parish (DVD, 85 min.) Lost Nation Pictures, 2008. When a young, irreverent priest arrives at Saint Patrick Parish in Lawrence, Massachusetts, he discovers the unexpected -- boiling ethnic tensions in a changing working-class community. Filmed over four years, Scenes from a Parish tells the wildly diverse personal stories of Father Paul O'Brien and his unruly flock, as they struggle to hold onto faith in the face of desperate circumstances. (S,A)



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