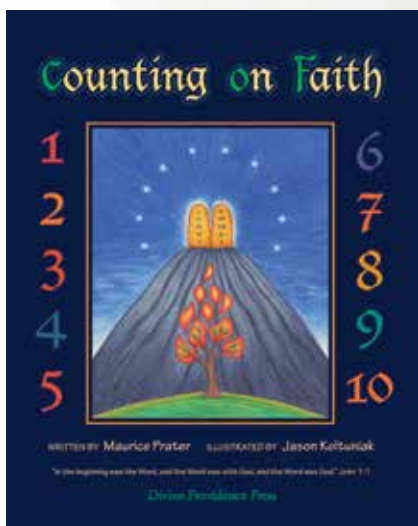


Last-Minute Christmas Gift Guide 2015

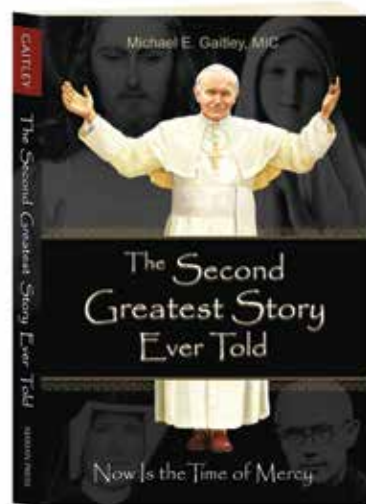
The waiting for Christ is almost over: Jesus' birthday is almost here! The Register offers more Christmas gifts for everyone on your list. We hope that these gift ideas will ease your shopping schedule and allow you ample time to prepare your heart and home for the coming of Christ. (Prices subject to change.)

GLENDIA / SHUTTERSTOCK



COUNTING ON FAITH

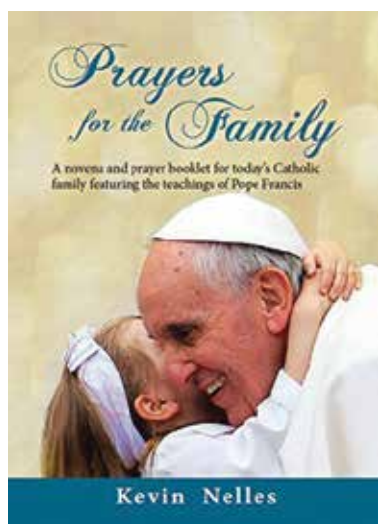
A child learning to count can also learn about the Catholic faith. This book teaches about the Holy Family, days of creation, Jesus' death and resurrection, guardian angels, the Ten Commandments and prayers such as the Our Father. Captivating images draw readers into the page, helping children stay focused. The book, with imprimatur, includes a list of spiritual references where each topic from the book is discussed in the Bible, as well as a glossary of words. \$9.95, CatholicWord.com or (800) 932-3826



THE SECOND GREATEST STORY EVER TOLD

Give your relatives and friends this excellent companion for the Year of Mercy. Marian Father Michael Gaitley reveals St. John Paul II's witness for our time. Building on the prophetic voices of Sts. Margaret Mary Alacoque, Thérèse of Lisieux, Maximilian Kolbe and Faustina Kowalska, this book is more than an historical account of the "Great Mercy Pope." It explains the profound connection between Divine Mercy and Marian consecration and inspires all who desire to bear witness to the mercy of God, focused on Christ and formed by Mary. Now is the time of mercy. Paperback, 240 pages. From the Marians Fathers of the Immaculate Conception. Code: SGSBK, \$14.95, ShopMercy.org or (888) 484-1112

PRAYERS FOR THE FAMILY
This novena and prayer booklet features highlights from Pope Francis' teachings on the family. "Litany of the Family" calls for the intercession of holy spouses and parents throughout salvation history, from Abraham and Sarah to Sts. Louis and Zélie Martin, the parents of St. Thérèse. Item: SP-2, \$4. CatholictotheMax.com or (740) 282-5334



Kevin Nelles



PORTRAITS OF SAINTS

Clockwise from top, Portraits of Saints offers visual reminders of faith. The lovely plaque of the **Savior of the World** has a sweet image of the Christ Child on top of the world. The **Holy Family** plaque is a beautiful reminder of Christ's birth and a year-round reminder of the sanctity of marriage. The **Our Lady of Good Help** plaque is a beautiful artistic representation of Sister Adele Brise's description of Our Lady as she appeared to her in 1859 in Champion, Wis., home of the only approved Marian apparition in the United States. Pope Francis' favorite Marian devotion is to Our Lady under the title of Mary, Undoer of Knots. This devotion goes back to the second century and has proved popular to anyone who has "knots" that need untying. The **Our Lady, Undoer of Knots** plaque offers this beautiful and unique image of Mary. All images: Choose from 5 1/4-inch x 7 1/4-inch plaque, \$24; or large 7 1/4-inch x 10-inch plaque, \$34. Made in the U.S., with free shipping. PortraitsOfSaints.com

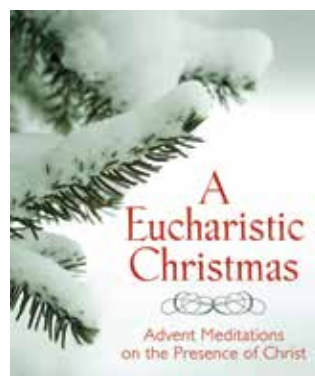
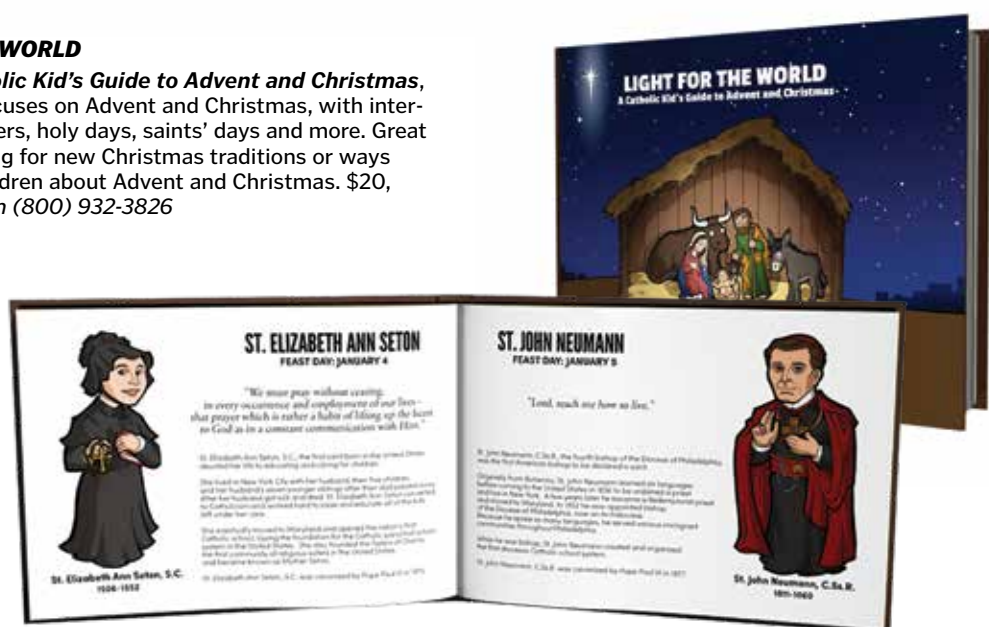


BIBLEZON TABLET

The first all-Catholic tablet will help you learn, live and practice your Catholic faith anywhere. The 7-inch tablet comes preloaded with the Bible, Catechism, daily readings, Catholic Encyclopedia, Rosary, Liturgy of the Hours, Divine Mercy Chaplet, Stations of the Cross and prayers, plus Catholic books, games, activities, music, quizzes and a marketplace to download many other Catholic apps. No Internet browsing or access to any unholy content is accessible. Biblezon for ages 13 and up, \$119; Biblezon Kids Tablet, for ages 5-12, \$129. Biblezon.com or (855) 538-5500

LIGHT FOR THE WORLD

Subtitled *A Catholic Kid's Guide to Advent and Christmas*, this good read focuses on Advent and Christmas, with interesting facts, prayers, holy days, saints' days and more. Great for families looking for new Christmas traditions or ways to teach their children about Advent and Christmas. \$20, CatholicWord.com (800) 932-3826

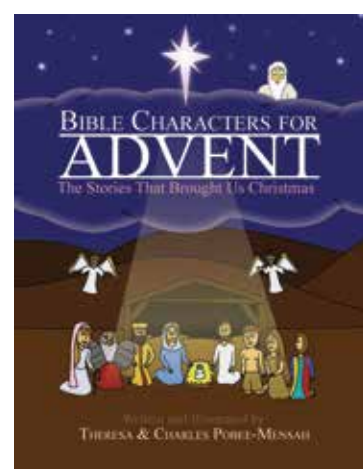


A EUCHARISTIC CHRISTMAS

This book offers a simple meditation from a well-known Christian writer each day from Dec. 1 through the 12 days of Christmas. The meditations focus on the scriptural basis for understanding the Eucharist, how to prepare to receive Our Lord, praying before the Blessed Sacrament and the difference a Holy Hour can make. Mary's example as she carried Jesus in her womb can show us how Jesus takes flesh in our own lives when we receive him with reverence. Item: T36808, \$12.99, Shop.FranciscanMedia.org or (888) 322-6657

COLORFUL BIBLE CHARACTERS

Bible Characters for Advent is a one-of-a-kind Catholic children's book designed for parents who want their children to learn about Jesus and the Bible during the season. This colorful book offers 25 biblical characters, who tell the stories of salvation history and show how they connect to Jesus, our Savior, who is born at Christmas. Designed for elementary students, it is proving popular for children as young as preschool age. \$19.95, BibleCharactersforAdvent.com or Amazon.com

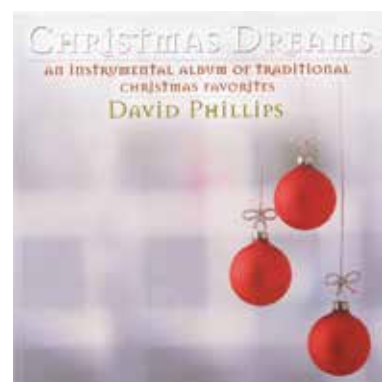


GIFTS FROM OUR FATHER

This book guides families through the liturgical year, helping parents teach their children how to pray. Illustrated to attract children, the prayers and lessons are suitable for all Catholics. \$20, CatholicWord.com or (800) 932-3826

CHRISTMAS DREAMS

This beautiful, instrumental collection of favorite Christmas carols from Gentle Spirit Music offers 25 songs. Available as a CD album, MP3 digital download or individual tracks. Album, \$11.99; MP3 download, \$9.99. GentleSpiritMusic.com or iTunes



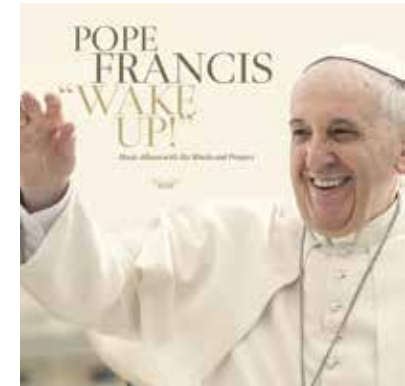
Papal 'Pop Rock' Album Debuts

BY JOHN PAUL SHIMEK

VATICAN CITY — Successors of St. Peter have convened ecumenical councils and synods. They have authored encyclical letters and delivered homilies. But Pope Francis is shaking things up this holiday season.

The Holy Father has debuted his first recorded LP album, entitled *Wake Up!* — a collaborative effort between Believe Digital and the Vatican.

Wake Up! is an 11-track album produced by Don Giulio Neroni and Tony Pagliuca that features spoken words from Pope Francis set to music sung by a variety of Italian artists, including Giorgio Kriegsch, Mite Balduzzi, Giuseppe Dati, Lorenzo Piscopo and Dino Doni.



"I TRIED TO BE STRONGLY FAITHFUL TO THE PASTORAL PERSONALITY OF POPE FRANCIS: THE POPE OF DIALOGUE, OPEN DOORS, HOSPITALITY."

Using a broad range of musical styles, from Gregorian chant to the more popular progressive Italian rock, the album spotlights themes of peace, hope, human dignity, fraternity, solidarity and care for the Earth, among others.

The album opens with a recording of the March 13, 2013, announcement made in St. Peter's Square of the election of Pope Francis. Then it continues with a recording of the *Salve Regina* sung in Rio de Janeiro, during World Youth Day, and in Cagliari, Italy, on Sept. 22, 2013.

Parts of speeches the Pope delivered both at the Vatican and around the world are also incorporated into the album, including addresses made in Seoul, South Korea, during the Sixth Asian Youth Day and Manila, Philippines, during the Pope's apostolic voyage there earlier in 2015. On the album, the Pope speaks in English, Spanish, Portuguese and Italian.

Producer and artistic director Neroni has said, "I tried to be strongly faithful to the pastoral personality of Pope Francis: the Pope of dialogue, open doors, hospitality."

He added, "For this reason, the voice of Pope Francis in *Wake Up!* dialogues [with] music. And contemporary music (rock, pop, Latin etc.) dialogues with the Christian tradition of sacred hymns."

John Paul Shimek writes from Rome.

Yes, Virginia, There Is a Santa Claus

BY CATHERINE MENDENHALL-BAUGH

St. Nicholas was born during the fourth century in Patara (Asia Minor), a village in Turkey. He later moved to Myra. His wealthy parents died when he was still young, and he inherited their fortune. Nicholas was raised by his uncle, the bishop of Patara. His uncle mentored him and later ordained him a priest. Soon after, Nicholas became a bishop.

He was always known to have a giving heart. One of the stories associated with Nicholas' spirit of giving was when he learned of a poor nobleman who had three unmarried daughters who were in danger of being sold into slavery because their father didn't have money for their dowries. In those days, a woman without a dowry had few options of survival.

The young bishop acted immediately: One evening, in the middle of the night, he slipped a sack of gold through the window into the nobleman's house. Later, two other sacks arrived the same way. Once the father discovered it was Nicholas' doing, he approached the bishop to express his thanks. The humble bishop replied, "No, all thanks go to God, not me." The compassionate bishop believed what Christ said, "Sell what you own and give the money to the poor." He further believed that when we give we should do so in Christ's name and not in our own. It was discovered that the kindly bishop was known to give whenever he could to those in need in his community.

During the persecution of Christians by Roman Emperor Diocletian, Bishop Nicholas was exiled and imprisoned, along with thousands of other Christians. He was imprisoned for his faith until Emperor Constantine made Christianity the state religion. He participated in the first ecumenical council of the early Christian Church and produced the first uniform Christian doctrine, the Nicene Creed.

He died on Dec. 6, his feast day



ORIONTRAIL / SHUTTERSTOCK

in the Church. It's still the main day for gift-giving in much of Europe.

After the American Revolution, New Yorkers founded the New York Historical Society in 1804, making St. Nicholas the patron saint of both the city and the society. In 1809, Washington Irving referenced St. Nicholas in one of his works. This jolly image received a huge boost in 1822 from a poem known originally as *A Visit From St. Nicholas* — now better known as *'Twas the Night Before Christmas*. The poem generally has been attributed to Clement Clark Moore, a professor at New York's Episcopal General Theological Seminary.

The image of Santa Claus with a red suit, with white cuffs and collar and black leather belt, became the popular image in the United States in the late 19th and early 20th centuries because of the "Merry Old Santa Claus" images created by political cartoonist Thomas Nast. He created a series of drawings in *Harper's Weekly* motivated by the descriptions found in Irving's work. These drawings identified a rotund Santa, with a long, flowing beard, fur garments and a clay pipe. This work had a major influence in creating the "American Santa Claus," whose true backstory is a simple Christian bishop who loved God and loved people.

St. Nicholas, pray for us!

Cathy Mendenhall-Baugh writes from Portland, Oregon.



XTRKX/SHUTTERSTOCK

GIVE EWTN's National Catholic Register as a Christmas gift and GET this FREE BOOK

Ensure your friends, relatives, priest or deacon receive the finest in Catholic journalism delivered every other week!

And as a special "thank you", we'll send YOU **30 Days with Teresa of Avila - the latest book in the Navigating series - absolutely free!** These letters from Teresa of Avila to her friends offer a rare window from which to gaze upon the Saint's genuine witness and pragmatic advice on pursuing an intimate friendship with God.

Or, subscribe now for yourself and you can also receive the free book!

Call (800) 421-3230 and mention code 915CPA, or visit NCRegister.com/Christmas, and give the gift that will bless their entire year!

NATIONAL CATHOLIC REGISTER
America's most complete Catholic news source
A Service of EWTN

'Tis the Season ... for Reading!

Advent and Christmas Children's Book Picks

BY PATRICIA A. CRAWFORD AND KERRY CRAWFORD

It's the time of year when every flip of the calendar seems to bring another joyful event. Although December is often jam-packed, don't miss the opportunity that the days of Advent provide. In spite of the busyness, the days offer a great opportunity to spend time with kids and invite them to be full participants in every aspect of the holy days. Here are some books to help young readers mark this special time of waiting and to savor the sweetness of the season.

CHRISTMAS STABLE
Written by Juliet David
Illustrated by Sophie Hanton
Candle Books, 2014
14 pages, \$11.99

The basics of the Christmas story are told — from the Annunciation to the birth of Jesus — with direct, child-friendly language and bright, warm illustrations. Children will love the way the book concludes with an oversized pop-out manger scene. *Ages 3-6.*

THE GIFTS THEY GAVE
Written and illustrated by Patricia Reeder Euba
Sterling, 2013
24 pages, \$9.95

Readers will find a familiar, traditional carol in the pages of this book: "Jesus, our brother, kind and good, / was humbly born in a stable of wood. / And the friendly beasts around him stood. / Jesus, our brother, kind and good." As each stanza unfolds, the stable animals take turns telling of the special gifts that they gave to the Christ Child. The charming illustrations depict cozy images of the animals snuggling with Jesus and

the Holy Family. A great choice for read-alouds — or sing-alongs — with little ones. *Ages 3-8.*

WHO'S HIDING
Written by Vicki Howe
Illustrated by Krisztina Kallai Nagi Liguori, 2010
20 pages, \$12.99

This sturdy board book has a twist. Each of the eight Christmas vignettes, from the Annunciation to the Epiphany, prompts readers to guess. "It's someone who's hiding behind the door. Who it is we can't be sure. Open up a little more ..." Lift the flap and discover the many familiar characters and their Christmas stories: Mary, the innkeeper, an angel and others. *Ages 3-8.*

STAR BRIGHT
Written by Alison McGhee
Illustrated by Peter H. Reynolds
Atheneum, 2014
40 pages, \$16.99

A very special baby is about to be born, and everyone is excited! On earth, the Magi are preparing to bring gifts to the baby, and in heaven, all the angels are shining bright with joy! But the newest, tiniest angel can't seem to find the perfect gift. Feeling small and lonely in the darkness, the angel wonders if this new baby might feel the same way; and, suddenly, she knows just what to do. The angel flutters toward earth, stopping and sitting exactly where she is needed most: She shines her glorious light in the darkness to bring comfort to the Holy Family and to guide others who will come to visit the Baby. This sweet story brings together a host of modern angels and the classic Nativity tale in a warm, whimsical and reassuring way. *Ages 4-8.*

THE LEGEND OF THE CANDY CANE
Written by Lori Walburg
Illustrated by Richard Cowdrey
Zonderkidz, 2012
32 pages, \$15.99

Is the candy cane just a minty, striped treat? In this story, young Lucy is thrilled to discover that a

candy store is about to open in her town. When the kindly shop owner shares a candy cane with her, he explains that the treat can help to tell the story of our faith. Held one way, it can look like a "J" for Jesus. Held another, it looks like the crook of the shepherds, who kept watch in the fields. The red can remind us of Jesus' blood, while the white can stand for his purity. The stripes remind us of the way that Jesus suffered for our sins. Both Lucy and the shop owner decide that this is a sweet tale that must be told — and they share it with all the townspeople on Christmas Eve. *Ages 4-7.*

CHRISTMAS FUN
Written by Leena Lane
Illustrated by Roma Bishop
Pauline, 2015
32 pages, \$9.95

This hands-on activity book provides lots of fun and learning-filled experiences to help children celebrate Advent and move into the Christmas season. The story snippets trace the Nativity narrative, beginning at the Annunciation and continuing through the birth of Jesus. Each is accompanied by a puzzle, maze, coloring page or craft project. *Ages 4-8.*

THE CHRISTMAS CAT
Written by Maryann MacDonald
Illustrated by Amy June Bates
Dial, 2013
32 pages, \$16.99

Like all babies, Jesus cried! On the night Jesus is born, each of the stable animals tries to calm the crying infant, but none can do so. Finally, a tiny kitten emerges from the shadows. Her soft fur and gentle purring are irresistible — and soon the Baby falls fast asleep. This reassuring story follows Jesus and the kitten as they grow — with the cat saving the day during the Holy Family's flight into Egypt. Inspired by an ancient legend and Leonardo da Vinci's drawings of the *Madonna of the Cat*, this beautiful book is sure to delight. *Ages 3-8.*

THE FIRST CHRISTMAS NIGHT
Written by Keith Christopher
Illustrated by Christine Kornacki
Ideals Children's Books, 2013
32 pages, \$16.99

"'Twas the very first Christmas, / when all through the town / not a creature was stirring / there was not a sound." Presented in the tradition of Clement Moore's *The Night Before Christmas*, this book presents a rhythmic, rhyming retelling of the Nativity story. The large, richly detailed illustrations and familiar poetic cadence make for a joyful tale. "And now we that know / can say with delight, / Jesus was born on / the first Christmas night!" *Ages 3-8.*

MANGER
Poems selected by Lee Bennett Hopkins
Illustrated by Helen Cann
Eerdmans, 2014
32 pages, \$16

This collection presents a fresh look at the Christmas story, as told from the perspective of each of the different stable animals. Beginning with the rooster, who announces dawn, each animal commemorates Christ's birth and honors him in a special way. The selections, written by a host of well-known poets, convey a quiet, intimate tone and are complemented by a series of graceful, mixed-media illustrations. Don't miss the beautiful end papers that hint of the story to come. *Ages 4-8.*

The Crawford sisters write from Pittsburgh.



Bring Home the Truth of the Catholic Faith
Support Mother's Mission by Donating at ewtn.com



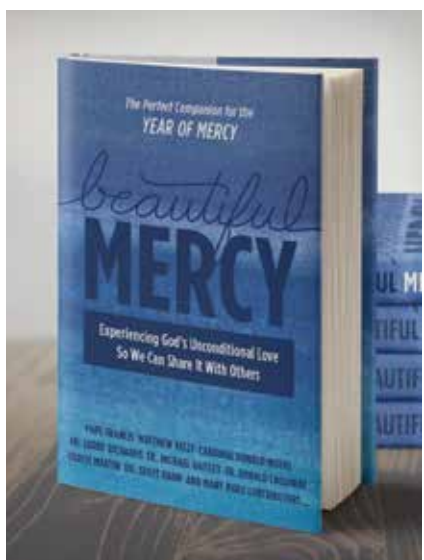
EWTN

Global Catholic Network

Go to ewtn.com/donate or send your donation to:

EWTN 5817 Old Leeds Road, Irondale, AL 35210

Television • Radio • News • Online • Publishing •



BEAUTIFUL MERCY

A new book for the Year of Mercy, *Beautiful Mercy* provides an encounter with the heart of God. It focuses on the seven spiritual and seven corporal works of mercy to inspire readers to realize that extraordinary acts of love and mercy are possible for us all. Best-selling author Matthew Kelly has enlisted 26 Catholic authors who witness to the power of God's mercy, provide simple, practical tips on how to be an instrument of that mercy and bring hope to anyone searching for deeper meaning in life. Contributors include Pope Francis, Cardinal Donald Wuerl of Washington, Father Larry Richards, Marian Fathers Michael Gaitley and Father Donald Calloway, Scott Hahn, Lisa Hendey, Sarah Swafford, Jennifer Fulwiler, Daniel Burke (the Register's executive director), Msgr. Charles Pope and Curtis Martin. Hardcover, \$25. DynamicCatholic.com/BeautifulMercy

ORIGINAL DIVINE MERCY IMAGE

This Divine Mercy image is the original version painted by art professor Eugene Kazimierowski under the supervision of St. Faustina Kowalska and her confessor, Blessed Michael Sopocko. It was completed in 1934 and underwent several color enhancements in 2011. From the Marian Fathers of the Immaculate Conception, this 10-inch x 18-inch image is on canvas in a gold frame. Special pricing: \$49.95. Frameless gallery-wrapped (shown), \$19.95. DivineMercyArt.org or (888) 484-1112



MY SAINT, MY HERO BRACELETS

From My Saint, My Hero, the official jewelry company of World Meeting of Families 2015, the **Love and Mercy** bracelet reminds the wearer to extend God's mercy and love to transform the world. The medals encircle the bracelet with the image of the Divine Mercy, alternating with "Jesus, I trust in you." **Brilliance Trinity** offers 14 Italian crystals surrounding each of the three silver or gold-plated Benedictine medals made in Italy, with the "three" representing the Trinity of Father, Son and Holy Spirit. **Blessings for Joy** is a reminder to radiate joy, as Mother Teresa said: "Find Joy in Jesus, Others and Yourself." Available as a silver medal with silver cord and gold medal with gold cord. Love and Mercy, \$40; Brilliance Trinity, \$75; Blessings for Joy, \$28. Get 10% off of your online order by using the code NCR2015*; valid through Dec. 31, 2015. MySaintMyHero.com or (888) 472-HERO



DOLLS FROM HEAVEN

Dolls from Heaven offers children a beautiful **St. Thérèse doll**. She comes with a Carmelite habit and a paperback book. Also available is a blue, long-sleeved dress inspired by her childhood and her love for going to church wearing her "Sunday best." Dolls from Heaven is offering two bonuses: 10% off to those who order, plus a 10% donation to EWTN from all the sales, with the coupon code "EWTN." The code expires on Jan. 15, 2016. Doll and book, \$98; Doll, book and accessories, \$118; Doll, book, accessories and second outfit, \$145. Accessories (mantle, rosary, holy cards), \$24; and Sunday best dress, \$38, available separately. DollsFromHeaven.com

—Compiled by Register staff writer Joseph Pronechen

Catholic Showcase

NEED SPACE?



HANDCRAFTED IN THE USA

..... Unique Custom Bed Solutions.
Custom made space saving solid wood Loft & Bunk Beds for youth, teen, college & adults. Need more creative space, a large desk, arts & crafts table or a bedroom makeover for your child? Easy-To-Assemble Kits in twin, full, queen & king sizes. Handcrafted in USA.
866-739-2331 CollegeBedLofts.com / ncr

Complex moral issues...



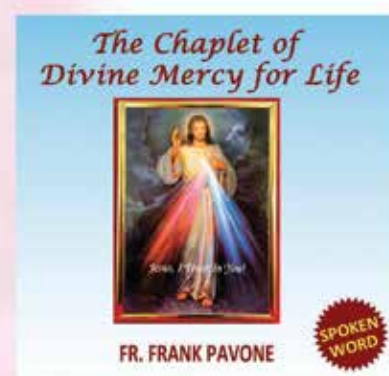
made simple.



CULTURE OF LIFE FOUNDATION

Give the gift of a free subscription this Christmas.
www.cultureoflife.org

Your Catholic One Stop Distributor HEART BEAT



HBCD8 \$15.99

"THE CHAPLET OF DIVINE MERCY FOR LIFE" with Fr. Frank Pavone, National Director of Priests for Life
"My friends, our world needs Mercy and as we pray the Chaplet of Divine Mercy, let us receive His Mercy with confidence and joy"
PO Box 20, Donnellson, Iowa 52625
1-800-433-3262, www.heartbeatdistribution.com

OUTGROWING YOUR SUV?

Install a **LITTLE PASSENGER SEAT** and you can have the seating capacity of a minivan!
3rd and 4th row seats for most SUVs are specifically designed for each model to ensure safety and ease of installation.
Our bench seats meet Federal safety specs and include lap belts with available shoulder belts and head restraints.

800-252-9989
LittlePassengerSeats.com

Looking for something other than Carols?
Gregorian chants, choral hymns, and polyphony from Advent & Christmas!

LUMEN GENTIUM

Advent and Christmas at Mater Dei


Purchase or download album at:
www.cdbaby.com/choirsofmaterdeiparish
(music also available at Amazon, iTunes, Google Play, Spotify)
THE CHOIRS OF MATER DEI PARISH
Profits support the rich Catholic music tradition, and FSSP parish's efforts in Irving TX.

Simply The Best! **TRAPPIST PRESERVES**
30 All-Natural Flavors
Trappist Beer Imported From Belgium
Trappist Fruitcakes
Chocolate Cookies Fudge
Christmas Gifts Made by Monks & Nuns
FREE CATALOG With Hundreds of Monastery Products
MonasteryGreetings.com
800-472-0425


+ Francis +
Created to celebrate the papacy of Pope Francis. A distinctive, refreshing aftershave.


+ Benedictus +
Created for Pope Benedict XVI on the Sixtieth Anniversary of his Ordination. Linden blossom, bergamot and frankincense create a soothing, refreshing aftershave.


The Pope's Cologne
Private formula of Pope Pius IX historic, refreshing aftershave. A wonderful gift!

Order now. Free Shipping. • www.excelsisUSA.com
• 888-357-3957 • www.ThePopesCologne.com

Making Faith Fashionable 



Put On Christ
Apparel & Accessories

The Perfect Christmas Gift For The Woman In Your Life!
Visit us at: www.putonchrist.com

"Follow the saints, because those who follow them will BECOME saints."
—POPE ST. CLEMENT I



CREATE SAINTS. GIVE Shining Light Dolls.
WWW.SHININGLIGHTDOLLS.COM Use code "TTZDVL9X" for 10% off on Amazon.com