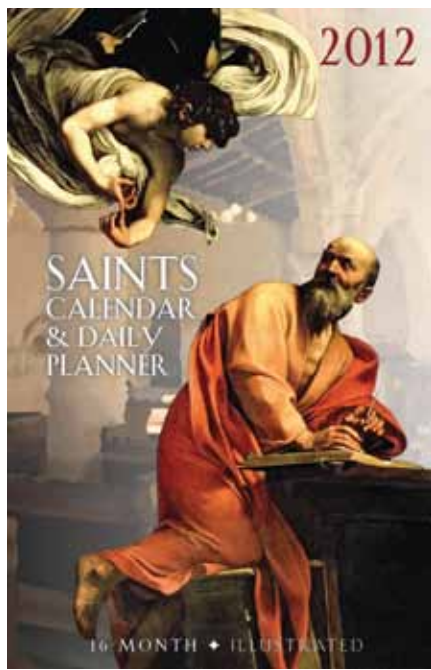


Last-Minute Christmas Gift Guide



The weeks before Christmas can be hectic, full of preparations and shopping. We hope that these gift ideas will ease the busyness of your schedule and allow you ample time to prepare your heart and home for the coming of Christ.

*prices subject to change



Saints' Calendar & Daily Planner

This calendar-planner combination offers plenty of extras, such as 70 illustrations and mini biographies of saints, feast days, days of fasting and abstinence, and an alphabetical list of more than 700 patron saints. Each day's section includes plenty of writing space. This spiral-bound planner is a generous 5 1/2 inches by 8 1/2 inches. Item: 2341, \$16, from EWTNReligiousCatalogue.com or (800) 854-6316

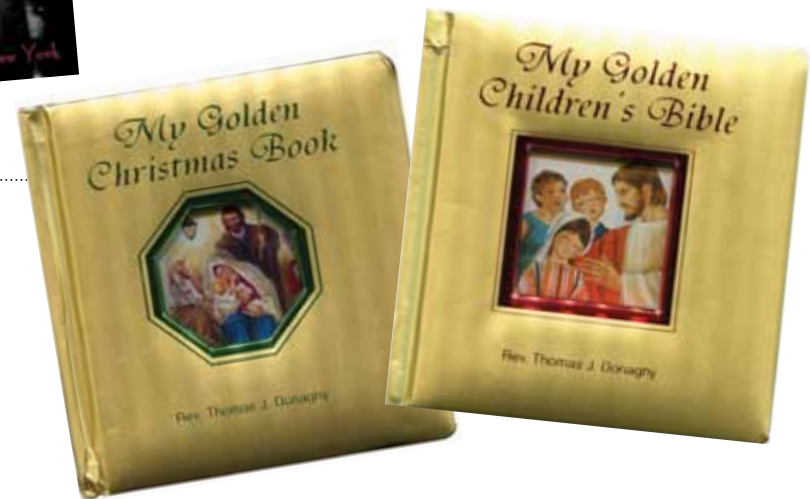


Catholic Underground Adoration Music

The Franciscan Friars of the Renewal seminarians' showcase adoration songs on their *Catholic Underground 2010 Live From New York* album. They recorded live during adoration of the Blessed Sacrament at the friars' Catholic Underground group at Our Lady of Good Counsel Church in New York City, where hundreds of young people join in worshipping our Eucharistic Jesus. Five of the six songs include meditations within the music. The album is \$9.99 and available for download on iTunes at iTunes.apple.com

My Golden Children's Bible and Christmas Book

For decades, children have treasured the Golden Books series. These two beautifully illustrated, full-color books introduce young children to the faith. *My Golden Children's Bible* contains an illustrated collection of dearly loved Bible stories, while *My Golden Christmas Book* details the birth of Jesus and describes Christmas celebrations around the globe. Both sturdy board books have padded gold covers and gilded pages. Items 44597, 42597, \$10, from EWTNReligiousCatalogue.com or (800) 854-6316



CONTINUES ON PAGE C3





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Christ incarnate — the Word made flesh. An amazing reality isn't it? Christ's presence and mark on His world will never be undone. Until the end of time, He will rule in the hearts of those who embrace His Kingdom and will ultimately subject all things to His full redemptive power.

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Register readers are at the forefront of this battle. Empowered by the presence of God in the sacraments and prayer, we stand and fight with a confidence that is unshakable because we know the end of the story. Still, the battle is hard. We sometimes question ourselves and our ability to engage effectively. **We work to submit our souls to the Great King and give our love to those around us, but sometimes we question ... How best to love? How best to fight?**

This is where the *Register* comes in. Our goal is to answer these important questions about the coming of our King in the hearts, minds and culture that we live in. We answer these questions by analyzing the news of the day through the lens of the Church. We answer these questions through many feature stories of encouragement and education. We work to lift you up and inspire you so that your energy, your mind and your heart are fully engaged in all that it means to bring Christ to an embattled world devastated by the delusion of sin.

We need your help in order to continue answering these urgent questions of our day, and spreading the good news of our triumphant King. With faithful people like you, we will continue to bring the news of the Church to those who need it most. As we look ahead at all there is at stake in the coming year, we realize, more than ever, that we need you to join with us. 2012 will bring political elections that truly have life and death consequences. We need to work together to increase the number of people who can gain access to the *National Catholic Register* — a much-needed alternative to pop culture's secular media, which bombards us all. Even now, in this most holy of

seasons, the culture of death is working to remove Christ from Christmas and society as a whole. We cannot remain silent. We must be the voice of truth and reason, and we must always be available to fight in a charitable, but decisive, manner.

Every dollar you donate will be turned into the *Register's* bountiful coverage of the things that matter most to you, your family and our faith. **We ask that you consider making the *Register* one of your top giving priorities this year.** Every day, countless souls are lost to the enemy through the lies and deception that are spread about the Church. We need your help to keep this vibrant editorial environment robust and growing by returning Christ's gifts to further bless our mission. In a series of what we believe to be miraculous events, the *Register* has been blessed over the past year to be able to continue to deliver the trustworthy, Magisterium-faithful content that you have come to depend on. We take this as a sign from our Lord that we are helping to affect positive change in our culture. Be a part of our new success story with EWTN.

Join us so that we may keep our momentum, as well as reach out to new readers who need the *National Catholic Register*. Sadly, so few people know about the *Register* despite our longstanding presence! As you consider your tax-deductible, year-end giving, we humbly request your crucial support to help us expand the reach of the *Register*. We are extremely encouraged by the confidence you and many other supporters have shown to us this year. *Register* gift subscriptions and the number of new subscribers are gradually increasing, and we are gaining new listeners to *Register* Radio — praise God! We've also been blessed with new donors. Thank you! **But, we have far to go to meet our financial needs, even with a very lean staff.** No matter what role you have with the *Register* — as a subscriber, donor or both — you are partners in our mission.

We are looking forward to 2012 and the opportunity to deepen our relationship with you and to work together to help turn many hearts to Christ.

We wish you a blessed Advent and a very Merry Christmas!

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P.S. As you battle with us in truth and love, please also consider giving a gift subscription of the *National Catholic Register* to family and friends for Christmas. It'll be a gift they can receive all year long! Please go to NCRegister.com/subscribe for more information, or call (800) 421-3230.



Virgin of the Eternal Bloom

Who wouldn't want to get a picture of our Mother as a present? Christmas is a wonderful time to remember our Blessed Mother in any number of her titles. In this little-known one, Our Lady holds a lily as a sign of her purity. Sitting on her lap, the Christ Child holds a globe of the world and raises his hand in blessing. The colorful wood plaque, imported from Russia, is 13 1/4 inches by 16 inches. Item: IR232, \$50, from EWTNReligiousCatalogue.com or (800) 854-6316

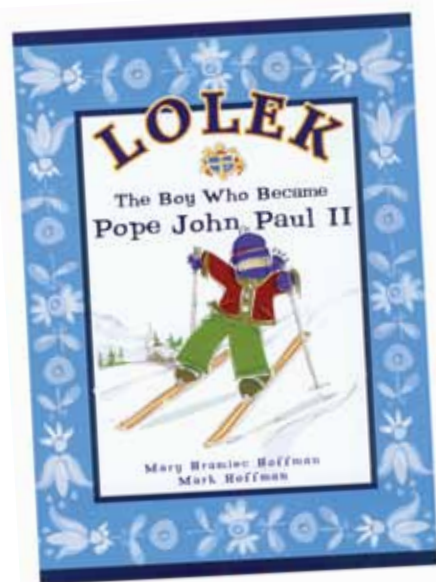
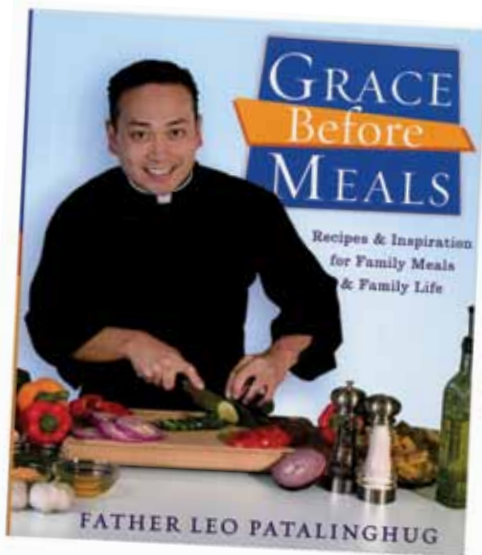


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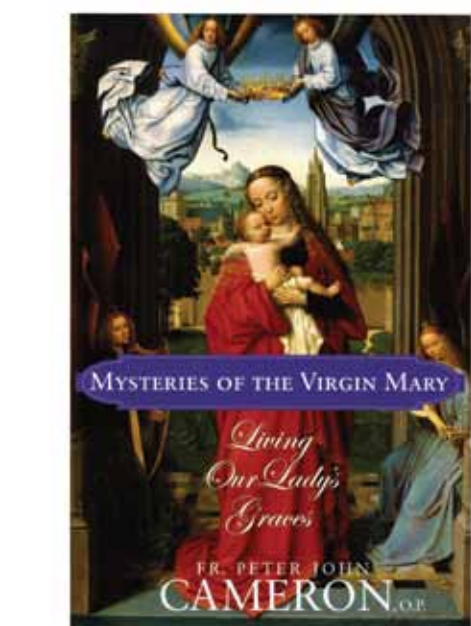
Grace-Filled Family Cookbook

Cook delicious meals, courtesy of award-winning chef Father Leo Patalinghug's *Grace Before Meals*. Each chapter contains fun and easy-to-prepare healthy recipes, a short reflection on the joys and challenges of family life, questions and topics to discuss during the meal, Scripture references, and family-friendly cooking and parenting tips. Item: 17214, \$17, from EWTNReligiousCatalogue.com or (800) 854-6316



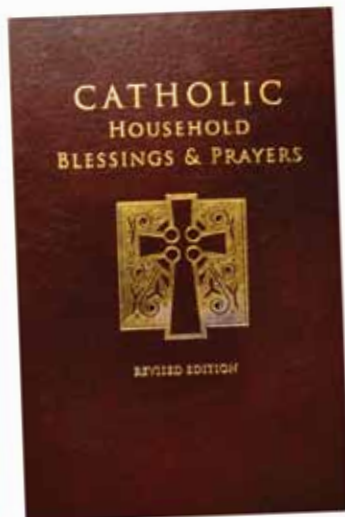
John Paul's Childhood Book

Children 8 and up will be fascinated and inspired by reading *Lolek: The Boy Who Became Pope John Paul II*. This "Once upon a time" celebration of the childhood of Blessed John Paul II is delightfully and colorfully illustrated. Extras include easy-to-follow illustrated instructions on how to pray Lolek's favorite prayer, the Rosary. Hardcover. Item 90117, \$19, from EWTNReligiousCatalogue.com or (800) 854-6316



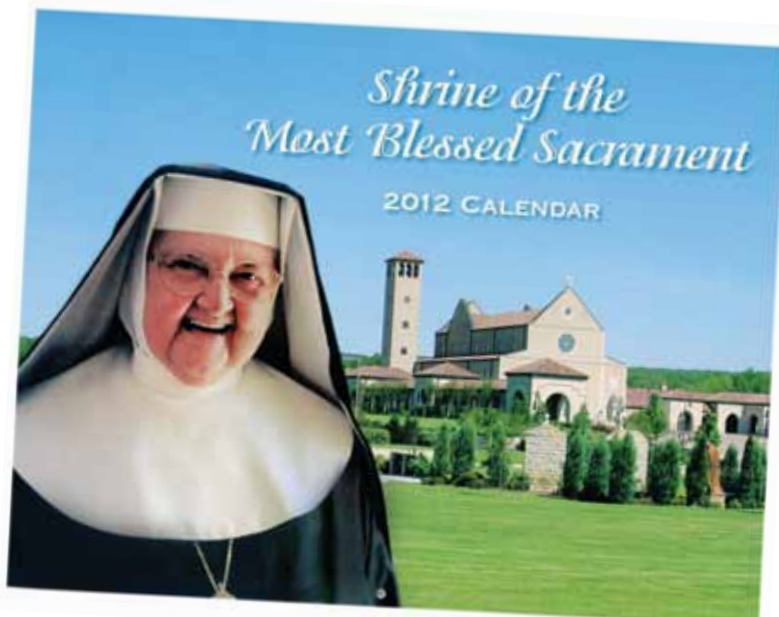
Mysteries of the Virgin Mary

In *Mysteries of the Virgin Mary*, Father Peter John Cameron not only helps us better understand the 13 major mysteries of the Mother of God — he also helps us see that Mary is always close, ever ready to help us become who we are meant to be. Paperback. Item: 16925, \$15, from EWTNReligiousCatalogue.com or (800) 854-6316



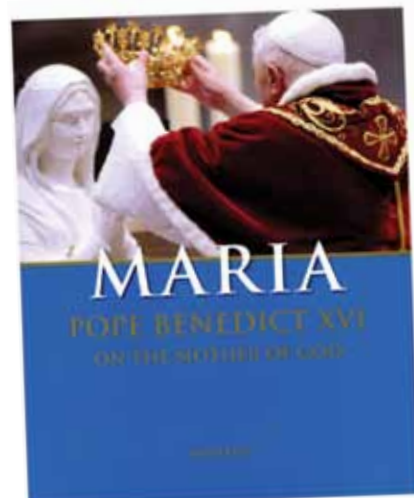
Catholic Household Blessings & Prayers

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2012 Shrine Calendar

This 2012 calendar offers a pictorial visit to the Shrine of the Most Blessed Sacrament in Hanceville, Ala., through original photos of Mother Angelica, Deacon Bill Steltemeier, the nuns, friars, and the beautiful shrine grounds. Also included are novenas the nuns pray, plus all feast days and saints' memorials from the Roman Missal. Every month includes an inspirational Mother Angelica quote. Opens to 11 inches by 17 inches. Item: 2012C, \$11, from EWTNReligiousCatalogue.com or (800) 854-6316

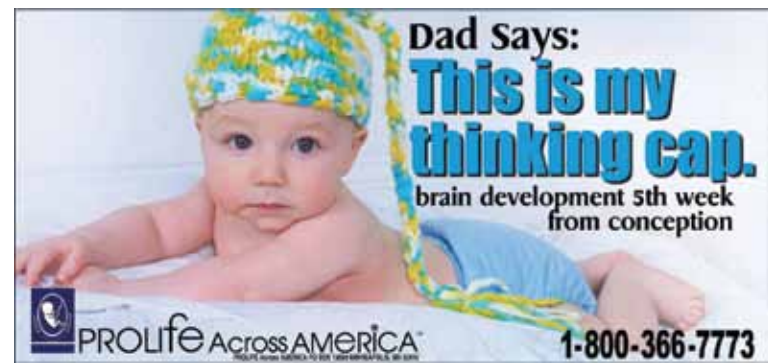
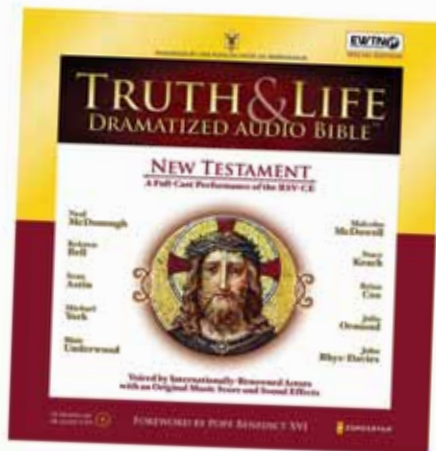


Maria: Pope Benedict XVI on the Mother of God

Maria: Pope Benedict XVI on the Mother of God is a coffee-table book that's more than just for display. The book features superb illustrations of dozens of famous and inspirational paintings and artwork of the Blessed Virgin Mary from around the world. Accompanying the images are Pope Benedict XVI's profound writings and homilies on Mary's unique role in human history and God's plan for salvation. Hardcover. Item: 3074, \$22, from EWTNReligiousCatalogue.com or (800) 854-6316

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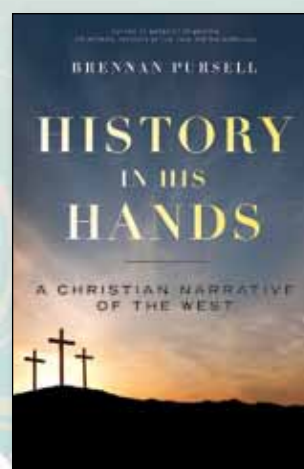
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The State of Catholic Youth Today

BY THOMAS L. McDONALD

What do American youth want from their faith? What do they have to give? And what role will they play in the Church as it heads into increasingly difficult times?

The National Catholic Youth Conference is one of the major events on the Catholic youth calendar. It was held in November this year. Every two years, high-school age students gather for a three-day experience of prayer, keynote addresses, adoration, workshops, Mass and praise-and-worship music. Robert McCarty, executive director of the National Federation for Catholic Youth Ministry, which organizes the event, sees it as a kind of World Youth Day for American teens.

"It's not just a conference," McCarty said. "It's a celebration of the young Church. It's a pilgrimage that young people begin preparing for a year out. They're doing fundraising, planning, praying together and getting ready for this pilgrimage. At NCYC, the wider Church gets to see the giftedness, energy and passion of the young Church."



TRUTH SEEKERS. Youth listen attentively at a conference. Youth leaders say teens are hungry for the truth of the faith. Courtesy of the National Federation for Catholic Youth Ministry

This energy is vital to the universal Church, as Pope Benedict XVI acknowledged in his remarks about World Youth Day. He told the youth that "the Church depends on you. She needs your lively faith, your creative charity and the energy of your hope. Your presence renews, rejuvenates and gives new energy to the Church. That is why World Youth Days are a grace, not only for you, but for the entire people of God."

McCarty would agree. While attending the past five World Youth Days, he observed "the deep and genuine hunger for the holy, and the hunger to be connected to something bigger, that I find in youth and young adults today. At World Youth Day they connect with the universal Church, under the banner of the

Pope, so they really have this incredible sense that they're part of something bigger."

Young & Catholic, But for How Long?

Correctly understanding the perceptions and desires of Catholic youth is a crucial issue for the future of the Church. As shown by the Pew Forum on Religion and Public Life, there are 30 million lapsed Catholics, which would make them the largest religious denomination in the country. One in 10 adult Americans is an ex-Catholic.

The usual culprits are blamed in the Pew survey. Among former Catholics, 65% stopped believing the Church's teachings overall, while 56% cite the Church's stance on

homosexuality, and 48% blame the prohibition on birth control. Those who left the Church to become Protestant didn't have as many issues with these teachings, but they felt their spiritual needs were not being met.

These statistics expose the failure of catechesis and youth-ministry programs to adequately engage and educate the young. Catholic youth are exposed to anywhere from eight to 12 years of religious education, and the Church is still losing many.

Bishop Christopher Coyne, apostolic administrator of the Archdiocese of Indianapolis, participated in NCYC. He agrees that the key to engaging Catholic youth is "conversation, dialogue and an openness to their questions. I think one has to be honest with them about what the Church teaches and why we believe what we believe, but to do so from a positive perspective. I think you need to emphasize what we are for rather than what we are against."

Bob McCarty sees the needs of youth as an issue of five universal "hungers": Youth today are hungry for meaning and purpose in their lives, some recognition of the gifts they have to give to the Church, a connection to something bigger than themselves, justice, and an encounter with the holy.

For McCarty, the key question for the Church today is: "How do we feed those hungers?" As he observes, young people "will go where their hungers are fed. Responding to those hungers is the clearest sign that this is a community that values you and invites you in. If we ever hope to educate their heads about the faith, it has to begin with engaging their hearts. They want to know more about this faith of ours: our community, rituals, teachings, all of it. But until we engage their hearts, we never get to the next stage of educating their heads."

Thomas L. McDonald is an eighth-grade catechist from Medford, New Jersey.

Hart's Advice

CONTINUING PAGE B2 INTERVIEW

using that as a tool. It's not the end; it's the means. The music isn't "praise and worship" just so we can turn it up loud because "that's what the kids like." We utilize the contemporary music to set up the silence. We might only have 30 minutes of music in an hour and a half. That's followed by maybe 20 minutes from a speaker and then more than 30 minutes of silence. It's incarnational. It's about meeting teens where they are, but then walking them into the sacred.

Isn't it possible for the deeper traditions of the faith to become obscured amid the rock music and lights and charismatic approach?

When people understand teens and liturgy and culture, they see that it doesn't have to be an either-or situation. There's a way to utilize some contemporary elements, but then you have to utilize some traditional approaches. You use some Latin, and you absolutely use silence. Teens are capable of silence, and they need it.

There's a way to blend these cultures together that won't empty the sacredness of the liturgy and won't empty the sacredness of traditions or devotions, but will enhance it. Too often, young people are used to one [Catholic] culture, and then they're dragged to an event like this that is drastically different for them.

The problem comes when parish youth leaders put teenagers on a bus and take them to an event with stages and lights and things, and it becomes event-based spirituality. It may be the one big thing they do that year, and they put all their eggs in that one basket. And they say, "Hey, it's better than nothing." I think that's dangerous. It's not better than nothing. It's a disservice to the young people. Teenagers need help to understand the underlying message beneath the lights and the glitz.

Teens experience these events, where they hear a priest who is a passionate preacher or an articulate speaker or a really talented music minister. When they go back to their parishes, they need someone to explain that: *The Eucharist they saw there on the stage in front of 25,000 kids is the same Eucharist that we have in this chapel right here. And that priesthood that proclaimed the Gospel on the stage is the same that proclaims the Gospel here at this ambo.* Without that, they can't connect the dots between their parish and those events.

Is there some secret to connecting to Catholic youth today?

Listen to them. The most effective youth ministers and speakers know how to listen. It's not a tricky formula. It's scriptural. Before Christ said a word to the disciples on the way to Emmaus, he listened to them.

A lot of teens are spoken at;



COURTESY OF MARK HART

they're not spoken to. Very rarely are they asked their opinion of anything. Teenager's opinions, even if they're wrong, they're still valid, because they're formed out of life experience. We can still listen to them. Unfortunately, life has taken on such a frenetic pace that people don't talk to teenagers anymore. We're seeing the results of that because they would rather go talk to their friends than their mentors or adults, because their friends will listen to them.

Teens really desire depth. They desire relevance and depth in their relationships and their faith. When you introduce teens to the mystical, to the ethereal, to the world beyond what they see, they are far more open to it than adults are. They are looking at the world through wide eyes, and often very pure eyes.

What are Catholic youth looking for from their lives and their faith?

Modern culture has this image of teenagers with faces buried in screens — which they are, since we're a screen-based culture now. They have this image of them as socially inept, which many of them are. I think a lot of times we've just written off this generation. We think they don't care, but they really do.

They're yearning for real relationships. They're yearning for intimate relationships, and I mean "intimate" in the purest sense of the word. They're dying to be spoken to, but they're also dying to be listened to. Many of them haven't developed those social skills and haven't developed that prayer life, in part because we are increasingly screen-based. And that's not just the fault of parents or teachers or culture. We all have to take responsibility for that.

We sell teenagers short. They're capable of tremendous spiritual depth. They are living in a spiritually arid culture. As people hijack words like "spirituality," a lot of times our Catholic youth are left holding the bag and trying to make sense of it. How can they best understand words like *ritual* and *tradition* and *religion*, which have a negative connotation in their culture? How are these words still relevant in the 21st century?

It isn't so much about giving them a new message: It's about helping them connect the dots in a timely way with the timeless truth of the Church and helping them find their place in it.

Thomas L. McDonald is a catechist for the Diocese of Trenton, New Jersey.

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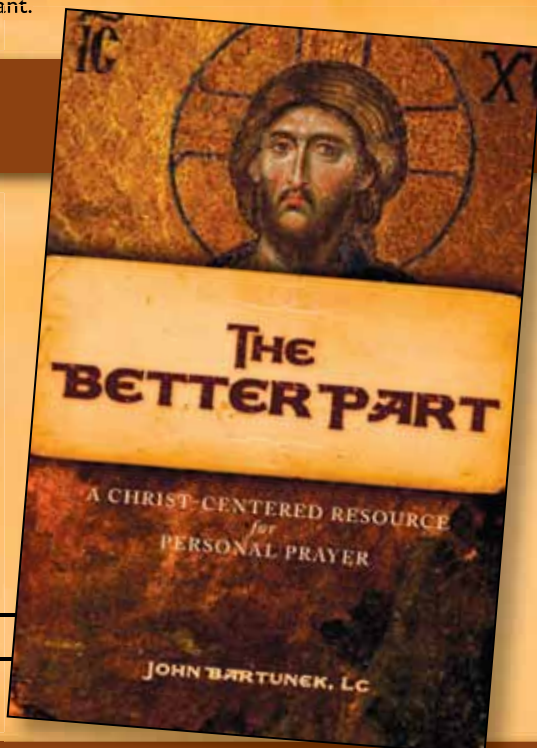
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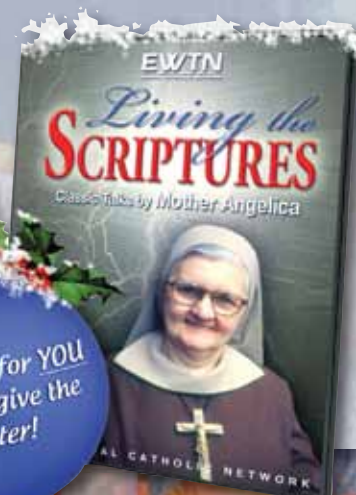
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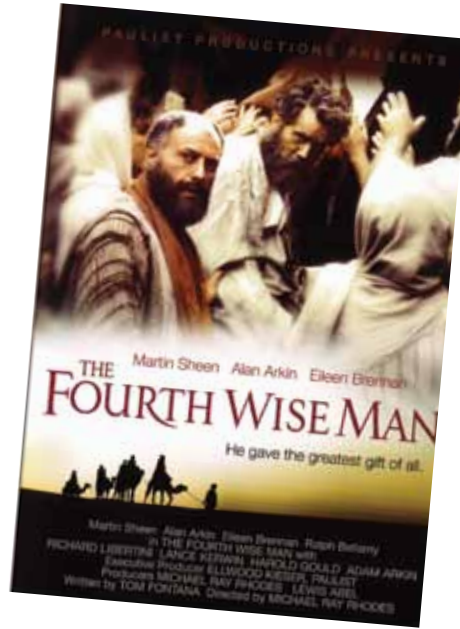
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The Other Wise Man

The Fourth Wise Man, a classic film based on Henry van Dyke's fictional story, follows another magi named Artaban (Martin Sheen) who studies prophecies and witnesses a sign in the heavens he hopes will lead him and his servant (Alan Arkin) to the Messiah. They arrive late in Bethlehem, then pursue Jesus for 33 years, missing him at every turn. Do they ever find him? Watch the movie to find out. Recommended for ages 14 to adult. Item: 4416D, \$15, from EWTNReligiousCatalogue.com or (800) 854-6316

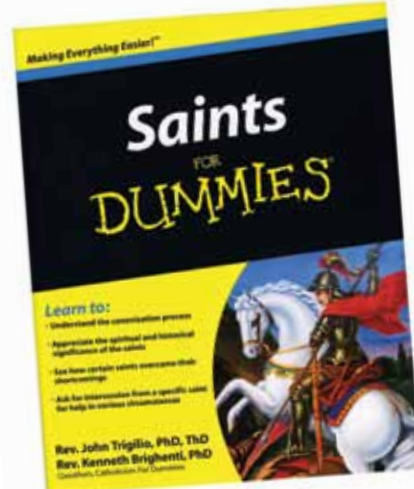
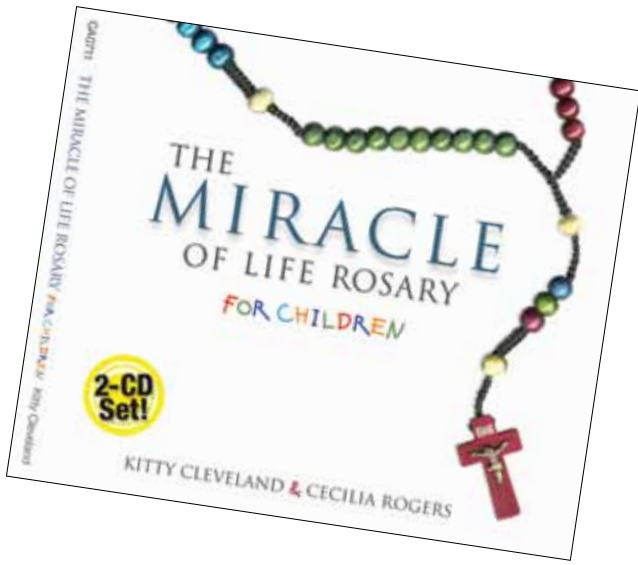


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This exquisite L'Innocence gold-and-enamel rosary box features a serene Blessed Mother cradling the Christ Child with a little lamb. The famous image by 19th-century painter Bouguereau reminds the faithful that Christ is the Lamb of God. The image as well as the box are encircled in beautiful filigree crosses and tiny beads. The box measures 1 1/4 inches by 2 1/2 inches. Item: 489IN, \$18, from EWTNReligiousCatalogue.com or (800) 854-6316

Children's Rosary

Children pray the Rosary with other children on award-winning musician Kitty Cleveland's new two-disc CD, *The Miracle of Life Rosary for Children*. It's a family event, as 7-year-old daughter Cecelia leads many prayers, husband Mel accompanies, and young nieces and nephews take turns leading decades through all four mysteries with life-affirming music and meditations. \$18.95, from CCOfAmerica.com or (800) 935-2222



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Compiled by Register staff writer Joseph Pronechen

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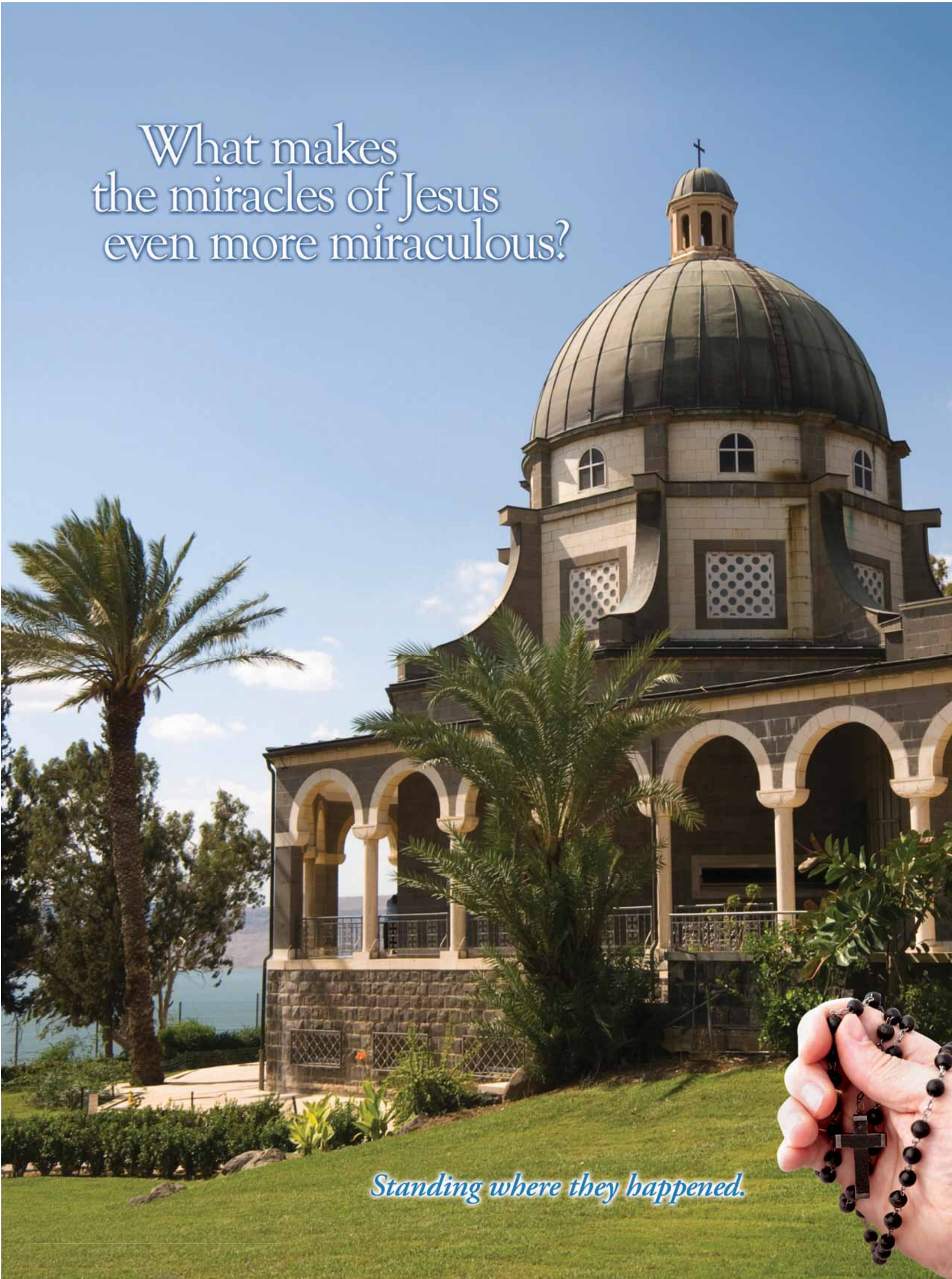
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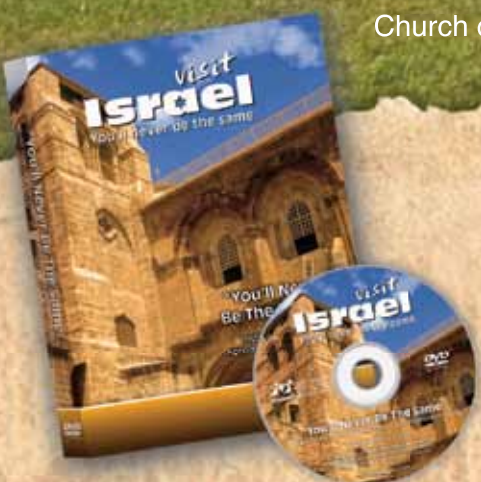
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