

The Lord Bless and Keep You

2013



ACKERMAN CHRISTMAS LETTER



HAPPY 67TH BIRTHDAY, PA-PA

**BETTY, LYNNE, NATALIA, ROB,JO,BISHOP KEITH, DONNA,DOMINIC, KEITH,
ETHAN, RENEE, AND ELLIE**

"And the Word became made flesh and dwelt among us."

Dear friends and family,

Jo and I are very blessed to be serving at St. Timothy's Church in Fort Worth where every Sunday after the Blessing, the above Gospel is read. It takes us back to earlier days at St. Mary's Church in the Oakland section of Pittsburgh, where we were married 46 1/2 years ago, where the "Last Gospel" was said at every Mass. But more importantly, this Gospel is the most remarkable summary of the theological reality of the Incarnation. While devoid of Angels, Wise Men, and a Star it is the guiding Gospel Reading that reminds us that the only begotten Son of God took on flesh and dwelt among us. Jesus Christ our Savior.

For Jo and me it has been another busy year as she has recovered well from her heart attack of last year. Apart from gaining too much weight, my health is good, and so much of our time is spent doing what grandparents dream of being able to do: live near their children and grandchildren and see them all with regularity. In a real sense we live a "fairy tale" life; we love our children, we love their spouses as our own, and we love our grandchildren. This is "Incarnational" and we know that we must thank God regularly for these undeserved blessings.

I continue to travel quite a bit as I exercise a variety of ministries in a variety of places, and in so doing, continue to be in touch with old friends and making new friends at the same time. For Jo's 68th birthday she, Renee (41) and Ellie (10) went to the Big Apple to see a few Broadway Shows and have a ride in a carriage around Central Park. When they returned home they were met in our house by the rest of our family plus a Magician who then entertained the en-

tire family with magic tricks with Ellie, Dominic (6 1/2) and Natalia (6) as Magician Assistants. Natalia even "levitated" while Betty (1 1/2) sat motionless in amazement. We will let our children tell you a bit about their lives, but remember how important you are to us, and remember how much God loves you, by sending His Son into the world.



The K. A. Ackermans

The biggest news for us has been our move to a new house in May. After 18 years living in the southern end of Arlington, we moved to the northern part of Arlington - which happens to be 2 miles from the Ballpark in Arlington. The house sits atop one of the few hills around and is on a mature wooded lot which gives us a Pennsylvania feel. The move has cut down our work commutes in half which after driving over an hour each direction for both of us is greatly welcomed.

SAFE AT HOME!

From a work standpoint, the biggest part of Keith's work has been occupied by the completion of City Square's new location called The Opportunity Center. This 50,000 square foot facility will house our expanded Food Pantry, Case Management and Counseling Services, Vocational Training programs, Food Preparation & Delivery Services, City Solutions (a social enterprise Keith created within City Square), AmeriCorps services and house the Texas Workforce Commission's new location. Keith's role has been to work with the developer and construction team to ensure the facility is built in the best ways to maximize program usage. The Center opens in phases throughout 2014.

Donna remains active with Pet Rescue causes, having been instrumental in numerous rescues and adoptions this year. She volunteers her time monthly at a local shelter walking the dogs, cleaning kennels, playing with the animals and assisting in getting the word out about pets in needs of homes. So if you want a new addition to your family - let Donna know!



KEITH AND MICHAEL

The Norris's



Ethan - This was the "big 40" year for Ethan, and many events have punctuated this year for him. He has transitioned in even more in working for Glenn Beck (Mercury Studios, the Blaze, the Glenn Beck Show) and is now producing Glenn's live commercials in addition to still working a bit for Circle R Studios. Glenn graciously has an amazing Christmas Party for his staff, and Renée and Ethan had a great time again this year at Glenn's party. If you have seen the amazing chalk board work on Glenn's television show - that's Ethan's work. In fact this year Ethan and Renee's Christmas card is based on what Ethan does as it relates to the chalk board work. Ethan on the left with Glenn reviewing the work as he does on his show. You can also see Ethan in television commercials in the Dallas/ Fort Worth area. In the midst of having such a busy job Ethan plays in a band and continues to perform in Shakespeare in the Park in Dallas. He even had time to fill in as a baseball coach this Summer for Dominic's team. The family highlight of the year was the Norris family trip to Disney World.

Renée -(written by her Dad) - It is impossible to define Renee (or to convince her to talk about her accomplishments.) Her high energy level and zest for life make her quite a juggler. For her students she is a hero. She is Dominic's favorite person in the world, and she dispels the rumor that teachers have an easy life: 8 A.M. - 4 P.M. with three months off. For Renee that would be semi-retirement. Her performances are breath taking! This year she is Directing the Musical "Peter Pan" and both Ellie and Dominic will be in it. She and NaNa and Ellie had a great trip to New York City where Renee was able to check on one of her former students who is a Theatre Major at the prestigious Marymount College. One of her former Students who graduated with honors from Texas Christian University was tragically killed in an automobile accident this year - and Renee was asked by the family to do the eulogy at the Funeral. She has touched many lives.

Ellie - is now 9 years old and in the Fourth Grade. She has discovered that she loves to sing, and is singing in the school choir plus the children's choir at St. Stephen's Church. Ellie also was in a remarkable Hip Hop Dance review in the Spring, and then this Fall and Winter enjoyed her debut as a Cheerleader. One of the fun things for her grandparents is to see that while she is growing up, she has not "grown up too fast." She still enjoys her family, her dolls, and has phenomenal love for her brother and cousins. Ellie is still shy, but when she talks she has many profound things to say. She thinks it's great that her PaPa has gone ice skating with her.

Ellie has become a great cook, has taken cooking classes, and loves to cook in NaNa and PaPa's kitchen where, thanks to NaNa, she has some of her own cooking utensils. . She likes the fact that her Uncle Keith and Aunt Donna have outfitted NaNa and PaPa's house with every type of recreational food equipment that any house could have: outdoor pizza maker, snow cone machine, soft serve ice cream machine, pancake makers and devices, large popcorn machine, popsicle maker, and a chestnut roaster. Aunt Donna topped it off with giving Ellie an incredible Tea Set that she put together with obvious care and detail.

Like her mother, she is an "Uptown Girl" and loves the Big Apple

Dominic - "Look, up in the sky; it's a bird; it's a plane. No, it's Super Dominic." Dominic is a man on a mission. Apart from sharing a love for Superheroes with his Daddy, he continues to do gymnastics that amaze everyone. Whenever there is any "break in the action" then you will find Dominic on his hands walking across the room, or doing a one armed hand stand, or break dancing, or on the gymnastic bar constructed at NaNa and PaPa's house. He is also a Cub Scout (for a few months - a Tiger Cub), has just earned his Bobcat badge, and at the ceremony was presented with numerous gifts from his Eagle Scout Uncle Keith (Uncle Keith's Cub Scout jacket, equipment, etc.) But, Uncle Keith (the Hero of his nieces and nephew) took his Dad's Bobcat Badge (PaPa) and had it pinned on Dominic. Bp. Keith had received that badge 61 years ago. Dominic had a great year playing T ball, enjoyed graduating from Kindergarten and entering the First Grade, and enjoys occasionally serving at the Altar at St. Timothy's as the "Boat Boy" (incense carrier) when he is not at St. Stephen's with his sister and Mommy. He says that one of the best things that ever happened to him was when Betty was born, and when you see Betty's face when she sees Dominic, it is obvious that the feeling is mutual. Dominic is also very sensitive, and while athletic and physical, cares very deeply about the feelings of others.



The Shattucks

Lynne – This year has been a year of change and transition for Lynne. In January 2013 she completed her tenure as Youth Director at St. Vincent's Cathedral in Bedford. It was a decision that was made prayerfully, but it was time to allow someone else to have the joy of leading this ministry. On January 5th, 2014 she will complete her position as Director of Christian Education at St. Vincent's. It has been a joy and an honor for Lynne to lead such important ministries in the spiritual growth of children and youth. Lynne has gone back to school to work towards her Master's Degree in Educational Administration. She has just completed her first semester at Concordia University and will complete her studies in April of 2015. Lynne continues to teach Pre-K at Jerry Junkins Elementary School where she also serves as the secretary for the Site Based Decision Making Committee and the Chair for the Happiness on Patrol Committee which is the Hospitality Committee. Lynne is enjoying a new volunteer position she has taken on this year as being a Co-leader for Natalia's Girl Scout Troop. She continues to be a Consultant for Mary Kay. She is excited to share that she returned to Weight Watchers in July and to date has lost over 30 pounds! Lynne's greatest joy this year has been watching Natalia and Betty as they grow and change.

Rob - This year has been full of changes. Rob started the year working as a Retirement Relationship Manager for Fidelity Investments. He enjoyed his work there, but another opportunity developed and Rob made the transition to a local start-up company, KwikBoost. They make mobile device charging stations. Rob's role includes sales and developing a reseller channel for the company. Over the year, he enjoyed spending time with his girls, playing guitar for Sunday School and retreats, and watching sports with his friends.

Natalia – Natalia is in the first grade this year and continues to attend the school where Lynne teaches. Natalia enjoys singing and dancing and is always putting on a performance for her family. She is in her second year of being a Daisy Scout. Her goal is to sell 650 cookies this year! Cookies go on sale on January 10th, so if you need cookies—Natalia will gladly get them sent to you!! She has been enjoying the service projects and Field trips that she is able to take part in through the Girl Scouts. Natalia enjoys being a Big Sister and loves teaching Betty new things. Natalia enjoys spending time with her cousins! Natalia wishes that the pool at Nana and Papa’s house could be open year round. Swimming is her favorite activity!

Betty Nicole- Betty has changed so much over this past year. Much like her big sister, she has a big personality! She loves to laugh and has a great smile! Betty really likes Minnie Mouse, Elmo, and Cookie Monster. She likes to play in her play kitchen! She loves singing *Twinkle, Twinkle Little Star* especially if she gets to sing it with Dominic. Betty knows how to use the phone and enjoys doing Facetime with Nana and Papa. Betty is very talkative and enjoys entertaining everyone!





← SCARBROUGH FAIRE



↑
← DISNEY WORLD 2013



↑ Tiger Cub Dominic

Bulldogs Cheerleader Ellie →







Saint Timothy's
Church



**OUR CHRISTMAS GIFT FROM THE
CHILDREN AND GRANDCHILDREN**