

Consider books as gifts

Barb Frazee/CNS

WASHINGTON — The following children's books are suitable for Christmas giving.

DINOSAILORS, by Deb Lund, illustrated by Howard Fine. Harcourt Inc. (Orlando, Fla., 2003). 29 pp., \$16.

With a rocking rhythm, clever wording and humorous illustrations, Lund and Fine have rigged a swash-buckling story that children will love. The "Dinosailors" — dinosaurs who take off on a ship — are ready for adventure, until their vessel hits a squall. "Their dinotummies slosh and churn. They groan with every twist and turn. Their paling faces dinofrown. 'Heave ho!' they cry. 'It won't stay down.'" This book rose dinohorns and scaly tails above the rest. Ages 4-9.

LITTLE PIERRE: A CAJUN STORY FROM LOUISIANA, by Robert D. San Souci, illustrated by David Catrow. Silver Whistle (Orlando, Fla., 2003). 28 pp., \$16.

This colorfully illustrated yarn is a great read-aloud book, mixing some Cajun dialect with outrageous

The Invisible Seam



ANDY WILLIAM FREW Illustrated by JUN MATSUOKA

These are the covers to *The Invisible Seam* by Andy William Frew with illustrations by Jun Matsuoka; *Little Pierre: A Cajun Story from Louisiana* by Robert D. San Souci with illustrations by David Catrow; and *Dinosailors* by Deb Lund with illustrations by Howard Fine.

adventure. Brothers Big-Pierre, Fat Pierre, Wise Pierre and Foolish Pierre have special talents, but they are no match for their youngest brother, Little Pierre. Catrow's illustrations and caricatures stretch the imagination; the watercolors dominate the pages, with text blended in. Be prepared to read this book to the children multiple times. Ages 5-9.

THE INVISIBLE SEAM, by Andy William Frew, illustrated by Jun Matsuoka. Moon Mountain Publishing (North Kingstown, R.I., 2003). 28 pp., \$15.95.

The Invisible Seam is a well-woven story of a young Japanese girl who must apprentice as a seam-



ROBERT D. SAN SOUCI Illustrated by DAVID CATROW

stress when her aunt can no longer care for her. Michi's stitches are small and tight and bring great pride to her teacher but cause tensions with the other apprentices. She deals with peer pressure, her promise to do her best and the discovery that different people have different talents. The watercolors help illustrate her feelings of pride, aloneness, conflict and joy. A good read-aloud book for younger readers. Ages 7-10.

RUN FROM THE NUN, by Erin



CNS

MacLellan. Holiday House (New York, 2003). 165 pp., \$16.95.

When fifth-grader Kara McKinney transfers from a public to a Catholic school, she is determined to get expelled so she can return to her friends. But her hijinks backfire and she is drawn into trying to solve a mystery involving dead bodies, the parish cemetery, the custodian and the principal, Sister Mary Francis. Kara's adventures and misadventures highlight an enjoyable tale about friendships. Ages 9-11.

MOUNTAIN SOLO, by Jeanette Ingold. Harcourt Inc. (Orlando, Fla., 2003). 304 pp., \$17.

Mixing flashbacks with the present, Ingold tells the story of a talented teen musician who must discover herself after an embarrassing failure at her international debut. One of the appeals of this book, however, is that it mixes in some Montana frontier history, modern friendship, family conflicts and musician Tess' love of camping and nature. This well-told tale is one of the better time-to-grow-up books offered for teens this year. Ages 11-14.

MINT'S CHRISTMAS MESSAGE, by Mary Y. Spitz, illustrated by Joanne Y. Pierce. Mother Moose Press (Potomac Falls, Va., 2003). 32 pp., \$17.95.

Mint's Christmas Message is an unusual twist on the message of Christmas. A grandfather who does not believe in Christmas receives the message of its real meaning when Mint, a retired champion, and other horses refuse to come in during a snowstorm. Pierce's illustrations are designed to look like old-fashioned oval-framed pictures, and they face text of a story told quite conversationally by Spitz. The result is an appealing story. All ages.

Frazee is international editor at Catholic News Service and has three children.

JOIN US THIS DECEMBER & JANUARY

Dec. 7 *Open House at Stella Maris*

See page 7 for invitation. All are welcome. 2:00 - 5:00 p.m.

Dec. 10 *Walking with Jesus from Bethlehem to Jerusalem* This two-part presentation, co-sponsored by the Church Women United will be given by Nancy Ring, Ph.D., former chair of the Religious Studies Department and presently interim Dean of Arts and Sciences at LeMoyne College. Relying on the Scriptures, Dr. Ring will focus on the humanity of Jesus as he makes the journey from birth to resurrection, and the significance of that journey for us today. This particular presentation will center on the birth of Jesus and the presentation on March 10th will center on the Resurrection. Registration from 9:30 - coffee and snack available. First session - 10:30; Lunch at noon. Second session - 1:30. Departure - 3:00 p.m. Offering: \$15 Call to register.

Dec. 12-14 *Noel Retreat for Women in Recovery "Dancing in the Dark"* How can we use the Twelve Steps to help us live joyfully even when we can't see the way ahead? Often the times of unknowing can be the most fertile for our personal growth, just as a seed is preparing in the dark earth for the gorgeous flowering to come. As we approach the darkest day of the calendar year, we will explore what the Steps can teach us about living with the questions with an open heart, rather than trying to force the answers with "grim determination"! Presenter Mary Gleason is an educator and naturalist. She has designed and facilitated numerous workshops for adults and children in libraries, schools, nature centers, retreat centers and other organizations, and has been an active member of several 12-Step programs for many years. Friday evening 6:00 (dinner) to Sunday noon. Offering: \$100

Dec. 16 *Advent Day of Reflection* This year take a day to prepare spiritually for the coming of the Lord. We will reflect on the beautiful antiphons that we pray the last seven days before Christmas, The "O Antiphons". These seven ancient prayers recall the prophecies of the coming of Jesus, for example, "O Wisdom! O Holy Word of God! You govern all creation with strong yet tender care. Come!" Presented by Sister Mary Lynch, SSJ, Retreat Facilitator and Spiritual Director 9:30 a.m. - 3:00 p.m. (Includes lunch) Offering: \$25

Dec. 18 *A Day of My Own* This special opportunity is offered on the third Thursday of each month and will provide a sacred space for you to "take time out" just to be with God - a time to reflect, pray and be refreshed in any way that will nourish your spirit. Come when you want to just "be"! Lunch will be provided. Offering: \$12.

Dec. 19-21 *Advent Retreat Weekend* During the sometimes hectic days of preparation for Christmas, our spirits need to pause and rest and peacefully reflect on the Gift that God so wonderfully gives us in Jesus. These days give us that opportunity. Given by Friar Tom Purcell, member of the Friars of Francis, Brother of Peace and Vocation Director for his Province. Friday evening 6:00 (dinner) - Sunday morning Offering: \$100

Dec. 31 *New Year's Evening of Reflection* "Remembering, Rejoicing, Resolving" Our God, ever ancient, ever new, invites us to look back with gratitude at the graced year 2003 and to look forward in trust to 2004. Join us for prayer, reflection time and a festive dinner on this last day of the year. 6:00 p.m. (festive dinner) to 9:00 p.m. Offering: \$25

JANUARY 2004

Jan 9-11 *Retreat Weekend for Married Couples* This special retreat is presented by a married couple, Deacon Rob Borchert and Lorrie Borchert, who will talk about marriage and the Sacrament of Matrimony from the Old Testament and the New Testament. Discussion of marriage and the family and the Sacrament in today's world and today's Church will also be a focus to strengthen the uniqueness of each couple and to share their specialness with the Church. This is a grace-filled retreat for couples wanting to grow in their spirituality. Fr. Rob and Lorrie minister at St. Mary's of the Lake Parish in Skaneateles, New York. Friday evening 6:00 (dinner) to Sunday morning. Offering: \$200 per couple



Stella Maris Retreat and Renewal Center

130 East Genesee St., Skaneateles, New York 13152

315-685-6836

www.stellamarisretreat.org

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