Pope Francis leaves memorable, lasting impression in America.
Coverage: Pages 2-3, 9-18, 24
CNS Photo
By Jimmy Patterson

PHILADELPHIA — You remember the scene in “The Wizard of Oz,” the one where Dorothy, the Tin Man, the Lion and the Scarecrow skip arm-in-arm down the Yellow Brick Road singing about being off to see the Wizard?

There was a sense of that in the days leading up to and during the papal visit in Philadelphia, September 26-27.

Imagine 1 million people interlocking arms, singing and all well-mannered, hopeful and in a good mood. The wizard was not at the end of the Yellow Brick Road in this story. Not literally. (Although there was much talk about courage and the human heart). Instead it was Pope Francis at the end of the Benjamin Franklin Parkway, tucked behind a five-hour security line in some cases. The lines were so long that it’s something of a minor miracle that it didn’t seem to bother a single soul in this historic city.

I heard one brief outburst of frustration from someone in the crowd all week. Just one. There simply didn’t seem to be an angry person in the whole town. It was remarkable to be a part of such widespread joy. And, as a Dallas native and Cowboy fan, I might be tempted to add, tongue firmly planted in cheek, “And in Philadelphia, of all places?”

But hey, local news reports during the week indicated even Philadelphians were surprised at how nice they were being.

The people were exemplary. Law enforcement, service workers, drivers, hotel staff, even train stewards. They all added to the pleasantness of the experience.

Had I the opportunity to make one change, it would be to ratchet down the commerce. The fact that security officials immediately absconded with tiny flag sticks didn’t stop street hawkers from selling replica Vatican flags with their endless bark of “Five dollars, five dollars, five dollars!”

T-shirts of most every kind were available (except the one I wanted, of course), and any kind of food you could possibly desire was at arm’s length — including lobster rolls, a bargain at $19, even out of the back of a truck.

It is true, too, that Pope Francis has, culturally speaking, become somewhat of a “rock star.” I was reminded of John Lennon insisting in the 1960s that the Beatles were bigger than God. The Pope would never claim to be bigger than God, and we don’t need to see him as a rock star. We don’t even need to consider him bigger than the Beatles.

“The overriding image that comes to my mind is how people clamored to see him,” Bishop Michael Sis said. “They wanted to be able to go home and say, ‘I saw the pope.’ While there is understandably a certain amount of excitement in that, it can sometimes appear almost like celebrity worship. There was, in some people’s hearts, a
From The Bishop’s Desk

What about me? What am I going to do?

By Bishop Michael J. Sis

The visit of Pope Francis to the United States was one of the biggest news events our country has seen in many years. Tremendous amounts of planning and resources were invested. Pilgrims came not only from our own nation, but also from more than 100 countries. More than 50 people from the Diocese of San Angelo made the journey to see the Pope. I am very proud of the members of our diocese who sacrificed to take this pilgrimage of faith. It was a joy to visit with them in Philadelphia and hear about their experiences. Their journeys involved unforgettable moments of God’s blessings, as well as some very challenging obstacles along the way. Our group included people from Midland, Millersview, Stanton, Brownwood, San Angelo, Fort Stockton, and Odessa. College students attended from Angelo State University and the University of Texas of the Permian Basin.

As the dust settles from this whirlwind visit, all of us should take the time to ponder the historic messages delivered by the Holy Father. More important than his “Pope sightings” in the Popemobile or the black Fiat 500 are his words of wisdom as our universal pastor. He taught us about the importance of family, marriage, prayer, dialogue, mercy, human rights, religious freedom, and the joy of knowing Jesus Christ.

When the official English and Spanish translations of his talks are made available, it will be good for all of us to read them carefully and allow ourselves to be challenged by them. We will dedicate the October and November issues of the West Texas Angelus to coverage of the Papal Visit. The full transcripts of Pope Francis’ messages will also be made available on websites such as www.vatican.va and www.usccb.org.

The words of the Holy Father provide fruitful material for personal spiritual reading as well as for faith-sharing groups. I hope that many parishes and individuals will use them for productive study. They will encourage us in our struggles, they will teach us more about our Catholic faith, and they will inspire us to ongoing conversion.

For example, in his homily at the Cathedral Basilica of Saints Peter and Paul on September 26, Pope Francis spoke about Saint Katharine Drexel, who in her day had spoken to Pope Leo XIII about the tremendous needs of the missions. Pope Leo responded to her, “What about you? What are you going to do?” These words totally changed Katharine’s life. The Pope challenged her to respond to her own Baptismal call to build up Christ’s kingdom.

¿Y yo? ¿Qué haré para ayudar?

Obispo Michael J. Sis

La visita del Papa Francisco a los Estados Unidos fue uno de los mayores eventos sociales que nuestro país ha visto en muchos años. Se invirtió una enorme cantidad de planificación y recursos. Peregrinos vinieron no sólo de nuestra propia nación, sino también de más de 100 países. Más de 50 personas de la Diócesis de San Ángelo hicieron el viaje para ver al Papa.

Estoy muy orgulloso de los miembros de nuestra diócesis quienes sacrificaron para hacer esta peregrinación de fe. Fue una alegría visitar con ellos en Filadelfia y escuchar acerca de sus experiencias. Sus viajes se trataron de momentos inolvidables de las bendiciones de Dios, así como algunos obstáculos muy difíciles en el camino. Nuestro grupo incluía gente de Midland, Millersview, Stanton, Brownwood, San Angelo, Fort Stockton, y Odessa. Estudiantes universitarios de Angelo State University y University of Texas del Permian Basin también asistieron.

A medida que el polvo se asiente de este torbellino de visita, todos nosotros debemos tomar el tiempo para reflexionar sobre los mensajes históricos entregados por el Santo Padre. Más importante que sus "avistamientos Papales" en el Popemobile o el negro Fiat 500 son sus palabras de sabiduría como nuestro pastor universal. Él nos enseñó acerca de la importancia de la familia, el matrimonio, la oración, el diálogo, la misericordia, los derechos humanos, la libertad religiosa, y la alegría de conocer a Jesucristo.

Cuando la traducción oficial de sus pláticas se haga disponible en inglés y en español, sería bueno que todos nosotros las leamos cuidadosamente y retaramos a nosotros mismos por medio de ellas. Dedicaremos las ediciones de octubre y noviembre de este periódico diocesano, el West Texas Angelus, a la cobertura de la visita papal. Las transcripciones completas de los mensajes del Papa Francisco también se pondrán a disposición en sitios web como www.vatican.va y www.usccb.org.

Las palabras del Santo Padre proporcionan material provechoso para la lectura espiritual personal, así como también para los grupos que compartan la fe. Espero que

(Mira OBISPO/20)
**FALL FESTIVALS, FAMILY FAIRS**

*September 25, 2015*

**HOLY REDEEMER CHURCH**

**ODessa**

Holy Redeemer Catholic Church will host its annual one-day festival on Saturday, October 10, 2015 from 10 am–3 pm at our church grounds at 2633 Conover Ave. in Odessa. Some of our food booths this year are gorditas, burritos, hamburgers, turkey legs, fruit cups, curfeyrides, aqua frescas and funnel cakes, we will also have games for the young and young at heart to include a silent auction, cake walk, dice pitch, ring toss, pot of gold, as well as jumpers. This year we have a great raffle with a new 2015 GMC pickup as the Grand Prize and 10 other prizes as follows: washer & dryer - 60 inch TV - Ipod air lap - $500 gift card - 2 Dallas Cowboy tickets & $150.00 gas card - Go pro camera - $250.00 McMinns furniture giftcard - Cowboy boots and $100 Best Buy giftcard. Entertainment is also scheduled throughout the day such as folkloric dancers, and music groups.

Sunday, October 11

**ST. BONIFACE**

**OLFEN**

"Blessings From the Field"

The annual St. Boniface Fall Festival at Olfen will be held Sunday, October 11th at the Parish Hall. A homemade sausage, turkey and dressing meal will be served from 11 a.m.-1 p.m. Dine-in, drive through plates-to-go and walk-up plates-to-go available. Adult plates $10, children under 10, are $5. All plates-to-go are $10. Raw homemade sausage will be sold for $5 per pound until sell-out. Pre-orders are recommended by sending your order and payment to St. Boniface Sausage, 1829 FM 584, San Angelo, TX. 76904. Make check payable to St. Boniface Church. Other activities include games and concessions beginning at 12 noon, a live auction at 1 pm, candy drop at 3 pm, a country store and quilt raffle. Sausage sandwiches will be available in the afternoon. Handicap parking and shuttle bus available. Follow the signs for new routes for incoming dine-in and plates-to-go traffic. Dine-in traffic and walk-up plates to go will enter from FM 1874 coming into Olfen from the north same as previous years and drive through plates-to-go will travel County Road 234 and enter Olfen from the west. For more information, call 325-365-6675.

Sunday, October 18

**ST. AMBROSE WALL**

St. Ambrose Catholic Church in Wall will hold its annual Fall Festival on Sunday, October 18. The turkey, dressing, and sausage meal will be served from 11 a.m. to 2 p.m. Adult and To-Go plates are $10. Child plates are $5. Youth games start at 10:30 a.m., bingo starts at noon, and live auction will begin at 1:15 p.m. Shuttle bus is available from the school parking lot to the church.

Sunday, October 25

**ANGELOCATHOLIC SCHOOL**

**SAN ANGELO**

Angelo Catholic School, the Knights of Columbus, and the Catholic Daughters of America present Oktober Fiesta, Sunday, October 25, 2015, from 10AM to 4PM, at Angelo Catholic School, 2315 A&M Avenue, San Angelo, Texas. Buy plenty of raffle tickets! You could win one of three $1,000.00 VISA Gift Cards! Enjoy a delicious bar-b-que plate with all the fixins. You can eat at the Fiesta, or take a plate home. Lots of fun for the whole family! Enjoy great games, a cookie walk, a live auction, LIVE MUSIC, and shop for arts and crafts.

**Friday, October 30-31**

**HOLY FAMILY PARISH**

**BIG SPRING**

**Fall Festival**

From 11a.m.-7 p.m. and Saturday, October 31 All Day, the Festival Will Be Selling Food! Asado Plates - $9! Carne Guisada Plates - $9! Chicken Flauta Plates - $9! Gordita Plates - $9! Combo Plate - $10! For Call in Orders – 432-517-4491

On Saturday, October 31, The Fun Begins At 6 P.M., with games, basketball and football throw! Duck Pond, Fish Pond, Hole in One, Golf, bingo, And many more games! Join us for good food, fun games and live music!

Sunday, November 8

**ST. JOSEPH ROWENA**

93RD ANNUAL FALL FESTIVAL

Flag Raising and Balloon Release at 10:30 a.m. Turkey and Sausage dinner with trimmings - 11 a.m.-1:30 p.m. Uncooked sausage for sale while supply lasts. Children and Adult games, Country Store, Prize Drawings. Live auction of cotton and donated items. Sausage Sandwich Supper All activities are in the parish hall and on church grounds. For more information, please call 325-365-6447.

**DIOCESAN BRIEFS**

**Newman Center Open House**

SAN ANGELO — The Newman Catholic Student Center, 2451 Dena Dr., San Angelo, will host a public OPEN HOUSE October 11, 2015 from 2-5 p.m. This public Open House is part of the continuing observance of the Newman Center’s 60 years of active ministry to Angelo State University students. Yearbooks, photo albums and so forth will be available for browsing. All are welcome! This event is for alumni, present students, families, members of the local community, and anyone interested in learning more about the Newman Center and its rich history over the past 50 years. If you have not seen the Newman Center in a while, please plan to come by and see how it has grown and changed over the years. Bishop Michael J. Sis will also be present for the Open House and light refreshments will be served.

**Diocesan Conference Day**

Date: October 17, 2015
Time: 9:00 AM to 4:15 PM
Focus: Discipleship
Location: McNease Convention Center, San Angelo.
Keynote Speakers: Sr. Terry Rickard, O.P., Executive Director of RENEW International; and Brian Johnson, Director of Adolescent Catechesis and Evangelization

Cost: $25 if postmarked by September 22, 2015; $30 if postmarked after September 22, 2015; $35 at the door. More information or register online at: sanangelodiocese.org
SCHEDULE
9:00 A.M. — Welcome/Prayer
9:30 A.M. — Witness Matters—Sr. Theresa Rickard, O.P. As Pope Francis wrote in The Joy of the Gospel, "...what you have come to realize, what has helped you to live and given you hope, is what you also need to communicate to others." (#121) This keynote explores the importance of fostering a culture of witness in two key ways: encouraging us to share our faith stories in the parish and beyond, and communicating Christ’s mercy as a parish to the broader community.
10:30 A.M. — Prophetic Voices of the Young Church—Brian Johnson. Like Jeremiah and Daniel, God continues to call young people today. Are we listening?
11:30 A.M. — Eucharist—Bishop Michael Sis
12:30 P.M. — Lunch
1:30—2:20 P.M. — Breakout Sessions (Collection will be taken for Catholic Relief Services)
1.Open the Door of Mercy—Sr. Theresa Rickard, O.P.
2.How to Make Disciples of Young People—Sr. Emily Christensen, C.P.P.S.
3.RCIA All Year Long—Carol Ann Hunt
4.Laudato Si’ (Spanish)—Marcos Martinez
5.History and Heart of Religious Life—S. Elsa Garcia, C.D.P.
6.Our Role as Missionary Disciples and the New Evangelization—Mission Council: Kathy Galinak, Brenda Lehr, Antonio Herrera
7.4:25—5:35 P.M. — Breakout Sessions
1.Open the Door of Mercy—Sr. Theresa Rickard, O.P.
2.How to Make Disciples of Young People—Brian Johnson
3.The Domestic Church: Family and Faith—Carol Ann Hunt
4.Laudato Si’ (English)—Marcos Martinez
Promoviendo Vocaciones en el Pueblo Hispano—Sr. Elsa Garcia, C.D.P.
6.Discipleship and Confirmation—Sr. Adelina Garcia, O.S.F.
7.3:45 P.M. — Closing & Prayer

**All Saints Gathering in Abilene**

ABILENE — Abilene Holy Family Catholic Church will host an "All Saints Gathering" from 9 a.m.-5 p.m. on Saturday, November 7, 2015. This year there will be a celebration of the unity of the Body of Christ with the Saints in heaven as well as our unity through the charisms of the saints on earth. Talks on the various charisms will be given, with a corresponding Saint in heaven who exemplified the charism while on earth and how we can learn more about the charisms through them.

**40 Days for Life**

Sacred Heart Cathedral will be hosting this year's 40 Days for Life Campaign, 20 E. Beauregard, San Angelo, thru Sunday, Nov. 1, 2015. Vigil times are from 7 a.m.–7 p.m. each day. This is a non-denominational opportunity for people of all faiths to come together to pray for an end to abortion. Please consider signing up to pray one hour each week in the courtyard. You can pray with others, or by yourself; you can bring your own devotional and just spend a quiet hour in prayer. Chairs are provided and you can sit or stand wherever you like. All groups and organizations are welcome to participate. If God has blessed you with musical talents, come and sing some songs! Please don't be silent. These precious, innocent babies need our prayers. Their mothers and fathers need our prayers too. For more information or to sign-up for one hour each week (drop by and spend 15 minutes if you can't commit to an hour) call 325.234.3757 or visit our Facebook Page – 40 Days for Life – San Angelo, TX.
Upton Sewell

Full Name: Upton Shaw Sewell
Date of Birth: June 26, 1996
Birthplace: Odessa, TX
Do you Have Siblings?: 3 Older Brothers

What Seminary do you attend?: Conception Seminary
What level are you?: 1st year Philosophy

What led you to enter into formation as a seminarian?: The influence of the fun, and joyful priests and my confirmation sponsor.

Home Parish: St. Ann's in Midland
Favorite Saint: St. Josemaría Escriva
Favorite Scripture: Luke 23:46
Favorite Color: Red
Favorite Sport: Weight lifting
Favorite Food/Restaurant: All of them
Favorite Dessert: Cheesecake
Hobbies: Working out

Objectives: To enjoy the seminary and return to a life of service

My name is Upton Sewell, and I am a seminarian for the Diocese of San Angelo. Officially, I am the youngest seminarian we have. Born on June 26, 1996 to my parents Kelly and Teresa Sewell in Odessa, Texas. I was baptized in Nazareth, by my grandfather, Jerome Brockman, an ordained deacon. I then attended St. Ann’s in Midland until the time I left for the seminary. I did not always hear God’s call on my life. Up until about two years ago, I had my mind set on trying to be an architect, but soon, God spoke to me and told me otherwise. In November of 2013, I went on my Encounter with God’s call at Conception Seminary College. Now, two years later, I attend classes in the same buildings I visited, and played soccer on the same field where we played ultimate Frisbee, and I couldn’t be happier. People, mostly my friends, ask me: Do you miss Texas? I should say yes, but all I can say is no. The humidity here is different, but at the same time, I feel at home, almost like I belong.

BIO

As we celebrate Vocations Awareness Week (November 1-7, 2015), Catholics are asked to pray for more young men and women to consider and respond to God’s call to consecrated and/or ordained life. We must remember that vocations do not form in a void, but rather within our parishes, our families, and our culture. Perhaps the question then becomes how do we help our parish communities to become a type of incubator for vocations?

1. We should be welcoming to those who are considering God’s call in their life.
   Too often we focus on the negative aspects of a vocational call. When I was wrestling with thoughts of becoming a priest, the first people I talked with presented me with their concerns about how hard the life would be and how I was throwing away my gifts when I could make a much better living as a doctor or lawyer. It’s truly sad that some of my first positive reactions came from unchurched acquaintances.

2. Our parishes must be places of prayer focused on the Eucharist
   The Catechism refers to the Eucharist as the source and summit of the Church. This is true as well in regards to vocations. Frequent visits to the Eucharist and Eucharistic Adoration play a huge role in the formation of vocations, both for young people as well as for those praying for vocations.

3. We should be looking for the signs of a vocation in the lives of our young people
   What are the gifts and qualities you want to see in a priest, deacon, or religious? When you encounter them in a young person, encourage them to consider whether God may be calling them to a vocation. Telling a young man that he would be a good priest might just be the seed that needs to be planted in their soul.

4. We must be praying for those in our parish and in our family that God is calling
   The sign of a healthy parish or diocese is that it produces its own native-born vocations. We should be praying for particular individuals, not just some nebulous idea that God will send us priests, deacons, and religious from “somewhere.”

5. We need to put our stewardship of time, talent, and treasure to work
   The cost of educating priests, deacons, and religious is monumental. Seminarian education makes up approximately 13% of the annual diocesan expenditures. This is where a portion of our tithes to the parish goes.

   Catholics can and should be actively praying for those in formation to become a priest, deacon, or religious. They

   (Please See VOCATIONS/23)
BROWNWOOD — On Thursday, August 20, three members of the Ministry of the Third Cross received awards from the Texas Juvenile Justice Department for their ministry at the Ron Jackson TJJD facility in Brownwood. The awards were presented during the annual Volunteer Appreciation Dinner Awards in the facility chapel.

Guadalupe (Lupe) Gonzalez and Elva Rood received Bronze Medal Presidential Awards from President Obama for having given over 100 hours of volunteer service within a one year period. Guadalupe and Deacon Andy Gonzalez received the Family of the Year Award from Ron Jackson for their volunteer work exemplifying a strong Christian family to the girls and boys to whom they ministry in several MOTC programs at the facility. Eleven other MOTC team members were present to congratulate the three recipients for their accomplishments.

MOTC programs in the facility include – two retreats annually, monthly reunions with the girls who have attended a retreat, and Sacramental Preparation Classes for the girls and Scripture Study for the resident preteen boys on Wednesday evenings as well as mentoring and individual visitations. The volunteer team members travel 100 miles to get to the facility and love every minute of the ministry.
Diocesan Catholic Foundation awards grants for 2015

The Angelus

The Catholic Charitable Foundation for the Roman Catholic Diocese of San Angelo was established in 2010. Generous donors have made tax deductible contributions to establish endowments at the Foundation. Some have established designated endowment funds in which they have named Catholic beneficiaries to receive grants paid out from the funds each year. This year $26,277 was paid to named beneficiaries. Others have established unrestricted endowment funds that allow the Board of Trustees, with the concurrence of Chairman Bishop Michael Sis, to determine annually how grants from these endowments are distributed to meet current needs in the diocese. This year $34,954 was available for grants from unrestricted endowment funds. An additional $135,175 was distributed to the Catholic agencies that have management agreements with the Foundation for the management of their endowments.

Twenty five grant applications were reviewed by the Board of Trustees in 2015 and grants were awarded as follows:

- St. Vincent De Paul in Abilene $1,750 for assistance with rent, utilities, etc. for needy families and individuals;
- St. Margaret Church in Big Lake $3,700 to assist in replacing hall heating and air conditioning;
- Our Lady of Guadalupe Church in Eldorado, $3,700 assistance in purchasing a storage building;
- St. Ann’s Catholic School in Midland $1,000 assistance in purchasing document cameras and teacher training;
- St. Ann’s Church in Midland $500 partial scholarship for participation in Hondurans mission trip;
- St. Thomas Catholic Parish in Miles $2,500 assistance in purchasing kitchen appliances and fixtures for new parish activity center;
- Odessa Campus Ministry $500 to purchase a weekday lectionary and Bible study materials;
- Office of Evangelization and Catechesis $640 for purchase of a desk;
- Our Lady of Perpetual Help in Ozona $3,700 assistance to remodel restroom to be ADA compliant;

(Please See GRANTS/23)

Catholic Daughters on ‘Road Trip to Success’

By Terrie Vacek

The leadership team for the Catholic Daughters of the Americas traveled across Texas gathering for a three day Organizational Meeting at the Oblate Renewal Center in San Antonio to present goals, operating procedures, and tools for the 2015-2017 term.

This map to success was a series of presentations August 21-23 by newly elected State Regent Éve Trevino, Corpus Christi; First Vice State Regent Rosie Stockwell, Edinburg; Second Vice State Regent Melodie Brunt, Texarkana; State Secretary Becky Brown, Angleton; State Treasurer Terri Beltran, El Campo; and thirty two (32) State Chairmen. First Vice National Regent Olga Samaniego, El Paso, brought greetings from the National Regent and presented the national news for National Director Carolyn Bachmann, who was unable to attend.

The organizational workshop was designed to ensure that Texas’ sixty two (62) District Deputies and State Chairmen are well prepared to undertake the duties and responsibilities of their office. Past State Regents met to discuss two operational changes. New organizational notebooks were distributed; the district deputies will personally deliver the regent packet to each of their local courts empowering all 236 courts in Texas with updated information, a review meeting with their DD, and the assurance that they are equipped and ready to resume regular meetings in September. CDA newly trained leaders are enthused and ready to meet the challenges and opportunities that lie ahead.

State Chaplain Reverend Bob Dunn, Corpus Christi, said in his opening Mass homily, “Who am I that He would come to my heart and soul? I am His chosen, you are His chosen. He looks at us with love; He delights in us, and He provides food for the journey.” The message that Fr. Bob presented was a challenge to respond to God with a hunger and thirst to do His Will with loyalty and love.

All attendees were invited to gather their local court members for another road trip on September 19th when the CDA members across Texas meet in Corpus Christi to raise the walls of their seventh (7th) Habitat for Humanity Build. To review details of the upcoming calendar of events and learn more about the amazing works of love and service of the Catholic Daughters, please visit the state website at texascda.org.

Terrie Vacek is the State Public Relations Chairman for the Catholic Daughters of the Americas.

Deacon Retreat

At left, Clarke E. Cochran is retired Vice President, Mission Integration, with Covenant Health in Lubbock. He is Professor Emeritus of Political Science at Texas Tech, where he specialized in religion and politics, political philosophy, and health care policy. Cochran held the position of Research Fellow in the Erasmus Institute at the University of Notre Dame (1998-1999). Dr. Cochran is author of several books and numerous articles and reviews. His most recent book, co-authored with David Carroll Cochran, is The Catholic Vote: A Guide for the Perplexed (Orbis Books). He addressed the diaconal retreat at Christ the King Retreat Center on September 5.
Making Sense of Bioethics

‘Imposing our beliefs’ on others

By Fr. Tad Pacholczyk

To be more coherent, of course, the senator really should have chosen to address the substance of my testimony, rather than talking about the imposition of religious views. The argument I had offered, interestingly, did not depend on religious dogma at all. It depended rather on an important scientific dogma, namely, that all humans come from embryonic humans.

The statement that I was once an embryo is a statement about embryology, not theology. Given the fact that we were all once embryonic humans it becomes very clear why destructive embryonic research is an immoral kind of activity. Exploiting the weak and not-yet-born in the interests of the powerful and the well-heeled should not be permitted in a civilized society. This argument, moreover, can be clearly seen by atheists, not just Catholics.

During my testimony, I pointed out how in the United States we have stringent federal laws that protect not only the national bird, the bald eagle, but also that eagle’s eggs. If you were to chance upon some of them in a nest out in the wilderness, it would be illegal for you to destroy those eggs. By the force of law, we recognize how the egg of the bald eagle, that is to say, the embryonic eagle inside that egg, is the same creature as the glorious bird that we witness flying high overhead. Therefore we pass laws to safeguard not only the adult but also the very youngest member of that species. Even atheists can see how a bald eagle’s eggs should be protected; it’s really not a religious question at all. What’s so troublesome is how we are able to understand the importance of protecting the earliest stages of animal life but when it comes to our own human life, a kind of mental disconnect takes place.

Our moral judgement quickly becomes murky and obtuse when we desire to do certain things that are not good, like having abortions, or destroying embryonic humans for their stem cells.

So anytime we come across a lawmaker who tries to suggest that an argument in defense of sound morals is nothing but imposing a religious viewpoint, we need to look deeper at what may really be taking place. That lawmaker may not be so concerned about avoiding the imposition of a particular view on others – more likely, they are jockeying to simply be able to impose their view, a view which is ultimately much less tenable and defensible in terms of sound moral thinking. Hence they seek to short-circuit the discussion by stressing religious zealotry and imposition without ever confronting the substantive ethical or bioethical argument itself. Once the religious imposition card is played, and Christian lawmakers suddenly become weakkneed about defending human life and sound morals, the other side then feels free to do the imposing themselves, without having expended too much effort on confronting the essence of the moral debate itself.

Rev. Tadeusz Pacholczyk, Ph.D. earned his doctorate in neuroscience from Yale and did post-doctoral work at Harvard. He is a priest of the diocese of Fall River, MA, and serves as the Director of Education at The National Catholic Bioethics Center in Philadelphia. The above article was originally published in May 2005.

Building a foundation based on friendship

By Eric Rommel

Catholic News Service

To the shock of absolutely no one who knows me, I am not always a tactful person. It wasn’t until well after I graduated from college that I learned to bite my tongue.

It’s not that my words were untruthful, but there are times where the truth isn’t helpful.

During college, I lived in a co-ed dormitory. A young woman in that dormitory was having relationship problems but instead of comforting her, I said the wrong thing. But I learned something from that experience.

A relationship at that age is like the parable in Matthew 7:24-27, which describes "houses" built on two different kinds of foundations:

"Everyone who listens to these words of mine and acts on them will be like a wise man who built his house on rock," and "Everyone who listens to these words of mine but does not act on them will be like a fool who built his house on sand."

Sadly, most relationships at that age are like houses built on sand. They lack the foundation to survive the changes that come with college life. But some college couples have a different level of relationship. Theirs is the equivalent of a house built on rock. If you asked many of these fortunate couples, they’d define the rock of their relationship in one word: friendship.

Friendship is the most important bond found in any strong relationship. After all, if you’re not friends with someone, it’s hard to spend an afternoon together, let alone the rest of your life.

Friendship makes it easier to support someone, to forgive them, to laugh and cry with them. It was through a relationship built on friendship that I discovered empathy. A close friend gave me the opportunity to learn that just because I could say something, it didn't mean I should. I discovered that tactfulness is a habit, one that's taking me a long time to develop.

Through that friendship, I learned many other things as well. For the first time, I learned the joy of doing something with someone else, such as going to a movie with friends. The conversations after the show are more enjoyable, the discoveries much more meaningful.

I also began to appreciate appreciation. I became grateful for gratitude. When you have a friend who believes you can accomplish anything, who you are becomes less important than who you want to become.

With that description of friendship, it should come as no surprise that my friend became much more than a friend. Our friendship became the foundation upon which we built our house. Over the years, it has withstood many challenges and overcome obstacles.

When times get rough, friendship is our unbreakable bond. I’m still the same person I was when we met, but that friendship has smoothed my rough edges, though they haven’t disappeared entirely. It’s a truth that she’s sure to bring up as she points out exactly how far I’ve come and how far I still have to go.
More than 50 pilgrims from the Diocese of San Angelo joined Bishop Michael J. Sis and an estimated 1 million others for the World Meeting of Families and the Philadelphia leg of Pope Francis’ Journey to America. Read their stories, the bishop’s reflections and much more,

Pages 2-3, 10-18, and Pg. 24
Bishop: The family, dialogue, mercy major themes of papal visit

By Jimmy Patterson
Editor / The Angelus

PHILADELPHIA — Mercy, the sanctity of the family and the theology of encounter were the prevailing themes delivered by Pope Francis to the people of America, September 22-27, as the pontiff’s joy washed over Washington, New York, and Philadelphia, and quickly spread across the U.S.

Speaking before the U.S. Congress, the United Nations and the World Meeting of Families, the pope talked of God’s ever-present mercy and the importance of constructive, meaningful dialogue.

The Most Reverend Michael J. Sis, Bishop of the Diocese of San Angelo, traveled to Washington with other U.S. bishops to help welcome Pope Francis to America before flying to Philadelphia to attend sessions at the family meeting and to be present for the pope’s final days in the country. Bishop Sis noted an interconnectedness of themes, including bridge-building, mercy and an affirmation of the ministry of the Church in America.

“Pope Francis affirmed the gifts that American society brings to the rest of the world,” Bishop Sis said. “He affirmed what our country has done in promoting justice, human dignity, and religious liberty. Also, when you compare the Church in America to the Church in other countries, it is clear that the U.S. Church has made significant contributions in the areas of catechesis, lay formation, and Catholic education.”

One of Pope Francis’ favorite words is “encounter,” and he mentioned it many times in his addresses during his visit. He encourages us to encounter Christ in those we meet. He teaches, “When you meet those most in need, your heart will begin to grow bigger, bigger and bigger! Because reaching out multiplies our capacity to love. An encounter with

San Angelo Diocese pilgrims experience a week like no other

By Jimmy Patterson
Editor / The Angelus

PHILADELPHIA — More than 50 pilgrims from West Texas counted themselves among the hundreds of thousands in Philadelphia in September for the World Meeting of Families and a historic first visit by Pope Francis. It was also the first papal trip to the USA since Benedict XVI came to Washington and New York in April 2008.

Among those attending from the Diocese of San Angelo were a group of 14 from Stanton’s St. Joseph and 27 from St. Mary’s in San Angelo. Eight Midlanders — six of whom were touring the East Coast in RVs — a couple from St. Mary in Brownwood, and a student from UT-Permian Basin also made the trip. Two priests – Fr. Serafin Avenido, pastor of Our Lady of Guadalupe in Fort Stockton and Fr. Hilary Ihedioha, of St. Mary’s in Odessa also joined Bishop Michael J. Sis.

Mary Hanel, one of the six Midlanders camping their way up the coast with husband Frank, Rick and Linda McBridge, and Skip and Tori Baca, were, like many, impressed with how the event unfolded.
World Meeting of Families / Papal Visit

Crisis in fatherhood could affect New Evangelization

by Jimmy Patterson
Editor / The Angelus

PHILADELPHIA — The sacrament of marriage is not what makes marriage easy, apologist Scott Hahn said, it’s what makes marriage possible.

Hahn told a nearly-packed room at the Pennsylvania Convention Center that the New Evangelization will depend on families, families that are bolstered with the faith, families lived out in the grace of matrimony.

The Steubenville, Ohio Catholic convert said that if all families would live out the grace of matrimony and the grace of the Sacrament of Marriage as we are called to do, in four years we would be a Christian society again.

He pointed to an ongoing crisis in fatherhood as a primary reason for why society is where it is today.

“Less than a third of people raised Catholic are still practicing and going to church once a month,” he said. “Well over two-thirds are not practicing. ABC News ran a survey recently about evangelizers. It showed that if a child in the family is the first to experience the grace of a conversion, there is only a 3.7 percent chance that the rest of the family will follow him or her in the faith. If the mother is the first to experience a conversion, there is a 17 percent chance that the rest of the family will follow. If the father is the first to experience the conversion, there is a 93 percent chance that the rest of the family will follow.”

Hahn also said a report conducted by the Southern Baptist Convention showed that similar findings are not just exclusive to Baptists or even to America. In Switzerland, for instance, if the father does not attend church, no matter how faithful his wife may be, only one in 50 children will go on to be a regular worshiper for the rest of his or her life.

“But if the father does go to church regularly, regardless of how the mother practices, two-thirds of children become church-goers for the rest of their lives.

“Brothers in Christ,” Hahn said, “if the New Evangelization is going to survive, it is because we rise to the challenge and live out the grace of conversion in every possible way.”

On marriages, Hahn stressed the importance of a God-led partnership, saying the creator must be allowed to work on spouses, as if he were a sculptor.

“We have to let God chip away at the hardness and the rough edges of our spouses,” he said. “We have to let our Lord use our spouses, because our spouse has become the primary channel of grace.”

Marriages evolve into sacramental marriages often through time; the sacramental aspect of a marriage is what makes it possible to apologize promptly and sincerely.

“I learned the hard way in the early years, when I would say, ‘I’m sorry you took that the wrong way’ and ‘I’m sorry you are hyper-sensitive.’ Those are false apologies. Those are dangerous,” he said.

On sin, Hahn said, “God loves us. He loves us more than we love ourselves and he legislates what he knows will perfect us. When he punishes us for sin, it’s not because he has stopped loving us, or because he suddenly has started loving us a little less. It’s precisely because he can’t stop loving us.

“It’s not our goodness that causes him to love us in the first place It is his love that causes us to come into existence. It is his love that brings our goodness and that allows us to overcome our weaknesses and temptations.”

The five traits of authentically Catholic families

By Dr. Greg and Lisa Popcak
Ave Maria Radio Network

- Catholic Families Worship Together
  Some of you say, "Why can’t I just go to Mass by myself? When I’m busy tending to children I have no idea what father is saying in his homily." We get it. But Catholic families worship together as often as possible. Hold those small children in your lap. Whisper in their ear at the time of Consecration when the Eucharist is becoming the body, blood, soul and divinity of Christ that is Jesus.

  Hold them close. Give our little ones a key word from that day’s readings and tell them to listen for that word. Make worshiping together a time of warmth and connectedness.

- Catholic Families Pray Together
  Only 17 percent of Catholic families pray together, and 13 percent of families say grace together. We can do better. Prayer is not an individual activity – it is a communal activity. When we are praying together all the saints and angels in heaven are praying together. Don’t see family prayer as just checking a box. We have lots of wonderful ways to pray together as a family. A family Rosary is a wonderful gift from God. Start slowly with your
Pilgrims from around the world wait for the arrival of Pope Francis, September 26-27, 2015, in Philadelphia.
PHILADELPHIA — It is up to all of us as Catholics to revive the faith. Everyone in the pews, from the board rooms to the soup kitchens, must take not just a role, but an active role, Bishop Robert Barron said in his keynote presentation at the opening session of the World Meeting of Families at the Pennsylvania Convention Center in Philadelphia.

Citing current studies, Bishop Barron noted that 75 percent of Catholics don't attend Mass today. And with the Second Vatican Council calling for a more active and vibrant involvement and full participation in the Mass among the faithful, "the great voices of Vatican II would have considered their project a failure" had they heard those numbers.

"We, to a large extent, have lost our sense of mission and have forgotten how to sanctify the world," the bishop said. As many have forgotten these vital callings, we have developed a tendency to privatize our religion and have developed lifestyles dependent not on true worship but false worship.

"We are the reason secularism has taken hold," Bishop Barron said, citing a renowned theologian who said, "The only thing I need to ask to understand all about you is what do you worship?"

False worship leads many from authentic worship to addictions like sex, pornography, alcohol, drugs, power and love of self. Building altars to these false Gods, Barron said, leads to a lifetime of trying to satisfy a longing in one's heart. "False worship is not a parlor game," he said. "It is what rends the heart."

In turn, what has led Catholics as well as all Christians to help grow the secularization of America is interiorizing one's faith; keeping one's Christian beliefs inside and not sharing them with others either through words or simply by walking the walk.

"We need to teach our culture how to worship God," he said. "If we keep our worship to ourselves we are not fulfilling our mission. We live in a society increasingly secular. You can see it in the wounded hearts of today."

Despite these hard-to-hear realities, the bishop offered suggestions for turning around our personal lives, which can in turn help to change the world.

"We must think of ourselves as representatives of God," he said. "We must bring his mind, his heart, his power and his wisdom into our lives. It is our mission and our responsibility. God became man, that man could become God. God became us that we might become sharers in the very divine nature. That's what Christianity is. The glory of God is a human being fully alive. That's Christianity."

Barron suggested turning to the strength of the family to strengthen ourselves. Families where virtues such as forgiveness, non-violence, courage and prudence are being taught are those that are being called to teach the world those same virtues.

"We must rediscover who we are meant to be," he said "Living in the image of God is a privilege, an adventure and a command. We must carry this image to the world and we must do it confidently as kings, as people on a mission, and as people on a march."
The best stories often just happen. Frequently, they begin as a series of unplanned, spontaneous occurrences that no one sees coming; events that work together to first form a memory then quickly evolve to reveal a story worth telling.

Such were the origins of this story. I’m not that old. Mid-50s, let’s say. I haven’t seen nearly as much as many others my age have seen. But what my wife, Karen, and I witnessed on a Philadelphia street the night of Sunday, September 27, moved us in a way we’ve seldom been moved before.

It began simply, like so many other best kinds of stories.
San Angelo Bishop Michael Sis was scheduled to be at the Cathedral Basilica of Saints Peter and Paul to have his photo taken with a group of pilgrims from St. Mary in San Angelo. He was a little late. Not surprising because of the enormous number of people that crowded the streets of Philly following Pope Francis’ closing Mass in America.

At almost 7 o’clock, he appeared in a bunched-up crowd of people from everywhere. He searched for the St. Mary’s group until he spotted 24 yellow t-shirts.
We talked briefly and the bishop took a seat among the Angelo State University students on the steps of the basilica. He smiled for the camera,

(Please See MIRACLES/20)
World Meeting of Families / Papal Visit

PHILADELPHIA — Make note of the week of September 21-27, 2015. For with its coming and going, it delivered several historic firsts to America:

The first time Pope Francis has visited the United States.

The first Hispanic, Junipero Serra, canonized.

The first canonization on American soil.

The first time the World Meeting of Families has been held in the United States.

The first time a Filipino cardinal (or any cardinal for that matter) has quoted Hal David and Luther Vandross from the podium. Presumably.

Gently, lovingly and from deep within his heart, Cardinal Luis Antonio Tagle, archbishop of Manila, The Philippines, wove a 50 minute keynote presentation — delivered to nearly 18,000 people at the World Meeting of Families. A day later, he sang the song in a breakout session, driving home the importance of love in our world today and how lonely life is without the love of family, the love of a wife, a husband, of children and grandchildren, and good friends.

Tagle’s keynote also focused on the wounded heart, and the gospel message of how Jesus understands our pain because he experienced our pain, becoming like us with the exception of sin.

A gifted speaker, Tagle spoke of how the heart is more than a mere organ in the body, and how it is hurt most when wounded by a loved one or family member. Worse, still, for the heart, is when someone watches and can do nothing as a family member is hurt, or when families fight amongst themselves.

“Most hurtful are the wounds inflicted on his or her own family members,” Tagle said. “The sacredness of the family is wounded by that. When brothers and sisters fight over money, when relatives fight over a piece of property and they say we are fighting for principle, what type of principle is that when a piece of property is more important than our brother or sister?”

Even when homes are hurt and wounded, Tagle said, it is still the home that is the place where comfort is found by those who are wounded.

“The wounds may come from the family but it is also the family that becomes the source of comfort and healing. What is a home? A home is not measured by how many acres you have upon which your house sits. A home is the gift of a loving presence.”

And then the Cardinal quoted from “A House is Not a Home.”

Cardinal Luis Tagle spoke the lyrics in his keynote presentation — delivered to nearly 18,000 people at the World Meeting of Families. A day later, he sang the song in a breakout session, driving home the importance of love in our world today and how lonely life is without the love of family, the love of a wife, a husband, of children and grandchildren, and good friends.

Concerning the healing of the paralytic (Mark, Ch. 2), Cardinal Tagle said:

“When it became impossible to bring their friend closer to Jesus because of the crowds, what did they do? They opened the roof to lower their friend to Jesus. That’s a family. That’s a parish. That’s a diocese. That’s a church. No one gives up.”

Cardinal Luis Tagle, at left.

Photo by Karen J. Patterson

By Jimmy Patterson
Editor / The Angelus

— “A House is Not a Home” — was made famous by Vandross, the late R&B singer known for his soulful, romantic ballads before his death in 2005.

A chair is still a chair
Even when there’s no one sittin’ there
But a chair is not a house
And a house is not a home
When there’s no one there to hold you tight
And no one there you can kiss goodnight.

Cardinal Tagle spoke the lyrics in his keynote presentation — delivered to nearly 18,000 people at the World Meeting of Families. A day later, he sang the song in a breakout session, driving home the importance of love in our world today and how lonely life is without the love of family, the love of a wife, a husband, of children and grandchildren, and good friends.

Tagle’s keynote also focused on the wounded heart, and the gospel message of how Jesus understands our pain because he experienced our pain, becoming like us with the exception of sin.

A gifted speaker, Tagle spoke of how the heart is more than a mere organ in the body, and how it is hurt most when wounded by a loved one or family member. Worse, still, for the heart, is when someone watches and can do nothing as a family member is hurt, or when families fight amongst themselves.

“Most hurtful are the wounds inflicted on his or her own family members,” Tagle said. “The sacredness of the family is wounded by that. When brothers and sisters fight over money, when relatives fight over a piece of property and they say we are fighting for principle, what type of principle is that when a piece of property is more important than our brother or sister?”

Even when homes are hurt and wounded, Tagle said, it is still the home that is the place where comfort is found by those who are wounded.

“The wounds may come from the family but it is also the family that becomes the source of comfort and healing. What is a home? A home is not measured by how many acres you have upon which your house sits. A home is the gift of a loving presence.”

And then the Cardinal quoted from “A House is Not a Home.”

The song, Tagle said, leads straight to Jesus’ message in the Gospels about love and healing. To support his words, Tagle spoke briefly on the parable of the lost sheep and the story of the Prodigal Son.

Both contain similar elements and the same theme.

“The lost sheep was probably sick or wounded. Why would the father welcome his son with such extravagance? There could be only one reason: You are mine and my home is not complete without you. If you cannot come home, I will carry you home.

“Both parables end with rejoicing and feasting. Why? Because the sheep and the son were lost, but now are found, and they are coming home.”

Tagle said Jesus understands the wounded and lost because he experienced both when he became man.

“He embraced a wounded world, he experienced being hunted down by a vicious ruler. He experienced being a refugee in Egypt. He experienced being lost. He experienced not having a home. He experienced being ridiculed even by religious leaders. He experienced the humiliation of death on a cross and being buried in a borrowed tomb.”

Jesus heals, Tagle said, simply by having been wounded himself.
Rick Warren on What’s Threatening Families

Evangelist Rick Warren, author of “The Purpose Driven Life,” addressed the question of what is threatening families during the World Meeting of Families in Philadelphia by saying ...

In our culture, immorality is glamorized, truth is minimized, sin is normalized, divorce is rationalized, and abortion is legalized.

In TV and movies, crime is sensationalized, drugs are legitimized, comedy is vulgarized, and sex is trivialized.

In movies the Bible is fictionalized, churches are satirized, God is marginalized and Christians are demonized.

In society, the elderly are dehumanized, the sick are euthanized, the poor are victimized, the mentally ill are ostracized, immigrants are stigmatized and children are tranquilized.

Manners are uncivilized, speech is vulgarized, education is secularized, advertising essentialized and everything is commercialized.

What we need is to revitalize our worship, minimize our differences, mobilize our members, evangelize our lost and re-energize our families.

World Meeting of Families coverage planned for the November Angelus

› Cardinal Sarah on the family in a dark world.
› Cardinal Luis Tagle on reaching out to others
› Grandparenting
› How to pray the Lectio Divina
› The Hook-up Culture
› Addiction Recovery from a Catholic standpoint
› Advice from Pope Francis on How to Love
› Family traditions
› The Domestic Church
› More comments. photos from local pilgrims who made the trip to Philadelphia
› More photographs of the papal visit.

Protestant evangelist shares stage with cardinal at closing of family congress

By Jimmy Patterson
Editor / The Angelus


Warren shared the story of a visit he had made to a prison, during which he pulled out a crisp $50 bill, held it up, and asked the inmate population of over 5,000 who wanted it. All hands went up. Warren crumpled the fifty and held it up again. “Who wants it?” he asked. All hands were raised. He crumpled the 50 again, spit on it, threw it on the floor, kicked it and trampled on it. He asked again ... “Who wants it?” Again, 5,000 hands went up.

“This $50 bill represents some of you,” Warren told them. “You’ve been spit on, kicked around, you feel worthless, like you don’t matter and don’t amount to anything. You’ve done something bad and now you’re here in prison, you’ve been dirtied, you’ve been sullied, but you have not lost one cent of value to your Heavenly Father.”

Warren repeatedly drove home the ever-present nature of God’s love in his address, outlining a five-point plan for what creates a joy-filled family.

“No. 1, joy-filled families are based in a love of God. They live it, they experience it together, they enjoy it, they model it and they offer it up,” he said.

Secondly, joy-filled families are built on purpose. “God has never created anything without a purpose,” he said. “Every human being, every animal, every rock has a purpose. If your heart is beating right now, you have a purpose.”

Thirdly, joy-filled families want to become like Christ. “God wants you to grow up spiritually. You may say, ‘Oh, why is this bad thing happening to me?’ I’ll tell you why: to make you like Christ. Jesus

(Please See WARREN/21)
World Meeting of Families / Papal Visit

‘God always knocks at the door of hearts’

The following transcript is Pope Francis’ off-the-cuff remarks he delivered at the closing of the Festival of Families, September 26, 2015, in Philadelphia.

Dear brothers and sisters, dear families,

September 26, 2015, in Philadelphia.

God made this marvel in which we live so as to have that which He could love — it was so great that He couldn’t be egotistical. He had to come out of Himself mean — it was so great that He couldn’t be.

Before creating the world, God loved, was hard for me to come up with an created the world? I can tell you that it creation of the family.

And there God created the world. There God made this marvel in which we live and, since we’re a little mixed up, we are destroying it. But the most beautiful thing that God made, the Bible says, was the family. He created man and woman, and He gave them everything. He gave them the world! Grow, multiply, cultivate the earth, make it produce, make it grow. He presented to a family all of the love that He made in this marvelous creation.

Obviously, earthly paradise is here no longer. Life has its problems. Men, because of the devil’s astuteness, learned to have divisions among themselves. And all of this love that God had given was nearly lost. And shortly thereafter, the first crime, the first fratricide. A brother kills another brother: war. The love, the beauty, and the truth of God — and the destruction of war. And between these two poles, we walk today. We have to decide. We have to decide on which path to walk.

Let’s go back a bit. All of the love that God has in Himself, all of the beauty that God has in Himself, all of the truth that God has in Himself, He gives to the family. And a family is truly a family when it is able to open its arms and receive all of this love.

Let’s think of Mary, this young woman. She couldn’t believe it. "How can this be?" And when it was explained to her, she obeyed. Let’s think of Joseph, full of dreams to form a household. He finds himself with this surprise that he doesn’t understand. He accepts. He obeys. And in the obedience of love of this woman, Mary, and of this man, Joseph, a family is created into which comes God.

God always knocks at the door of hearts. He likes to do this. It comes from His heart. But, do you know what He likes best? To knock on the doors of families and find families that are united, to find families that love each other, to find the families that bring up their children and educate them and help them to keep going forward and that create a society of goodness, of truth, and of beauty.

We are in the Festival of Families. The family has a divine passport, is that clear? The passport that a family has is issued by God, so that within its heart, truth, love, and beauty would grow more and more.

Let’s think of Joseph, full of love. Let’s think of Mary, full of hopes. And in the obedience of love of this woman, Mary, and of this man, Joseph, a family is created into which comes God.

Let’s think of Mary, this young woman. She couldn’t believe it. "How can this be?" And when it was explained to her, she obeyed. Let’s think of Joseph, full of dreams to form a household. He finds himself with this surprise that he doesn’t understand. He accepts. He obeys. And in the obedience of love of this woman, Mary, and of this man, Joseph, a family is created into which comes God.

God always knocks at the door of hearts. He likes to do this. It comes from His heart. But, do you know what He likes best? To knock on the doors of families and find families that are united, to find families that love each other, to find the families that bring up their children and educate them and help them to keep going forward and that create a society of goodness, of truth, and of beauty.

We are in the Festival of Families. The family has a divine passport, is that clear? The passport that a family has is issued by God, so that within its heart, truth, love, and beauty would grow more and more.

Sure, one of you could say to me, "Father, you speak this way because you’re single." In families, there are difficulties. In families, we argue; in families, sometimes the plates fly; in families, the children give us headaches. And I’m not even going to mention the mother-in-law. But in families, there is always, always, the cross. Always. Because the love of God, of the Son of God, also opened for us this path. But, in families as well, after the cross, there is the resurrection. Because the Son of God opened for us this path. Because of this, the family is — forgive the term I’ll use — it is a factory of hope, of hope of life and of resurrection. God was the one who opened this path.

And the children. The children make us work. We, too, as sons and daughters also created work.

Sometimes, at home, I see some of my collaborators who come into work with dark circles under their eyes. They have a baby who is a month old, or two months old, and I ask them,"You didn’t sleep?"

"Oh no, he cried all night long." In families, there are difficulties, but these difficulties are overcome with love. Hate doesn’t overcome any difficulty. Division of hearts doesn’t overcome any difficulty. Only love is capable of overcoming difficulties. Love is a festival. Love is joy. Love is to keep moving forward.

And I don’t want to continue talking, because this will get too long. But I would like to stress two points regarding the family which I would like you to pay special attention to. Not only would I like you to do this, but we must pay special attention to: the children and the grandparents. Children and young people are the future, they are the strength, those who take us forward. They are the ones in which we place our hope. Grandparents are the memory of a family, they are the ones who gave us the faith, transmitted to us the faith.

To take care of the grandparents and to take care of the children is the sign of love — I don’t know if it’s the greatest but I would say the most promising [sign of love] of the family, because it promises the future. A people that does not know how to care for the children and a people that does not know how to care for the grandparents is a people without a future, because it doesn’t have strength and it doesn’t have the memory that will carry it forward.

And well, the family is beautiful, but it is costly. It brings problems. In the family, sometimes there is enmity. The husband fights with the wife or they give each other dirty looks, or the children with the parents … I advise one thing: Never end the day without making peace in the family. In a family, a day cannot end at war.

May God bless you. May God give you strength. May God strengthen you to keep moving forward. Let us care for the family. Let us defend the family, because there, there, our future is in play. Thank you, may God bless you and pray for me, please.
Family Life

**Trust in God’s hidden hand is meaning of faith**

By Fr. John Catoir

Faith teaches us that divine providence is somehow at work behind the scenes in the day-to-day events of our lives. Ask yourself, How did your parents meet? What sparked the mutual attraction between them? They probably met by accident, or so it seemed to them.

Whatever the explanation might have been, the fact is that God knew from all eternity that you were to be born from these two people. Only they could have produced you.

Consider that God wanted you to come to life. Jesus told us he wanted our joy to be full, and that included you. We don’t understand these mysteries, but divine providence is certainly a factor in all of our lives, not only on good days but also on bad.

Knowing this, we are often puzzled about God’s silence, especially when we pray for him to take on the role of a superhero and come charging to our rescue. We need to know why he is silent.

One of the great spiritual writers, Meister Eckhart, said we should always take courage because God will always save us in the end, even if we have to endure what seems like his silence. He meant that we should bear patiently with God, even when we do not fully understand why he seems, to us, aloof at times. We must learn to trust the Lord always.

To remain accepting and without complaint takes courage. But remember: A single act of trust, based on your faith in God’s love, is far more meritorious than a dozen professions of faith. Trust in divine love in all circumstances. The hidden hand of God is always present.

You are responsible for your thoughts and actions. Accept that you have become who you are largely because of your own choices, the good and bad.

Therefore, as you move into the future, think wisely. Do not give in to any doubt about God’s loving presence in your life. Thoughts may come willy-nilly into your mind, but you can weed out the doubts and fears that sabotage your joy.

Feelings follow thoughts, just as actions follow feelings. Actions in turn lead to habits, and habits determine your character and destiny.

One little doubt about God’s loving control over every situation can weaken your faith. But trust God in all circumstances. Trust him even when you think you feel his silence.

It will enable you to rejoice even more when he does come through for you, as he always does. Therefore, when the not-so-great times come, find the courage to rejoice, anticipating the victory.

The Lord is aware that life, with its many sorrows, can be a penance. We all pine for paradise. This yearning for God is always with us.

Be at peace then and trust that God will support you, not only on good days but also on bad. His silence is an illusion. Your supreme purpose in life is to save your soul by trusting the goodness of the hidden hand of God.

---

**Key to peace: Turning off the noise and listening to, for God**

By Effie Caldarola

I sit at the desk in my little home office. A fall sun streams through the window, pouring brilliant light on my plant. If a plant could speak, I know it would tell me how happy it is.

It’s a perfect Monday -- comfortable temperatures, no wind, a cloudless blue sky. My window is open wide, facing the usually quiet neighborhood street. Kids are at school, parents at work. What a day to write.

Across the street, the house painter is back. This man has been meticulously transforming our neighbor’s tall, two-story home with rollers and brushes. No spray paint on this house, which is morphing from boring beige to a deep, resonant forest green.

As he paints, he listens to talk radio. The morning’s stillness is pierced by a man’s belligerent voice asking whether we shouldn’t be concerned that a couple of minor state officials’ names appeared on the Ashley Madison website, where married people pursue clandestine affairs.

To write, I block out noise. But closing the window is unthinkable on a beautiful day like this. I search my cabinet for some instrumental music but instead I pick up one that makes me want to sing. I can’t write so I might as well sing along. I hear the lawn mower and I can hardly hear the words. I turn off the music and resolve to find the steady drone of the mower as a good accompaniment to writing.

But the painter has carefully drawn a huge extension ladder to its full height and he’s climbing up to the tall peak of a very steeply slanted second story roof. All this to reach a narrow patch of wood that divides one part of the roof from a slightly taller one. Then I think, where’s my cellphone? I may need to call 911. At one point, the painter lies flat on his back to get the proper stroke marks in. I know I should be writing, but I’m mesmerized.

The mowing is done, the music has gone silent, and the painter is now painting something so low he’s sitting on the ground.

Finally. But now, the radio has my attention.

As I reflect on it, I realize I’ve described not just my effort to write through distractions, but a pretty telling synopsis of my prayer life as well. Earlier this morning, sitting at a quiet kitchen table, my mind wandered everywhere but toward the relative silence.

In a world beset by noise, news, information and distractions, it’s hard to focus. How do we make room for the quiet, whispered voice of God? It’s difficult, but it’s important to try. And how often we discover that right there in the midst of our crazy daily life, God is waiting to engage us?
**OBISPO**

(Para 3)

muchas parroquias e individuos las usen para estudio paroquial. Ellas nos animarán en nuestras luchas, nos enseñarán más sobre nuestra fe católica, y nos inspirarán a la conversión continua.

Por ejemplo, en su homilía en la Catedral Basílica de los Santos Pedro y Pablo el 26 de septiembre, el Papa Francisco habló sobre Santa Katharine Drexel, que en su día había hablado con el Papa Leo XIII sobre las tremendas necesidades de las misiones. Papa Leo le respondió, “¿Y tú? ¿Qué vas a hacer?” Estas palabras cambiaron totalmente la vida de Katharine. El Papa le retó a responder a su propio llamado Bautismal de edificar la Iglesia de Cristo.

En Filadelfia, el Papa Francisco aplicó ese mismo reto a todos nosotros. Todos tenemos que preguntarnos: “¿Y yo? ¿Qué voy a hacer?”, y asumir la responsabilidad personal para la misión de la Iglesia. Como discípulos misioneros, todos tenemos un papel que desempeñar el cual es de comunicar la alegría del Evangelio en nuestro mundo.

Los discursos del Papa Francisco al Congreso de los Estados Unidos y a las Naciones Unidas recibieron mucha cobertura de la prensa, pero la razón principal para la visita del Papa a los Estados Unidos fue para participar en el encuentro Mundial de Familias. Él quiere apoyar nuestros esfuerzos como Iglesia para responder a las necesidades de las familias y apoyarlas en su camino de fe. En todas nuestras parroquias y misiones, aprovechamos hoy esta oportunidad para revisar cómo nuestras comunidades católicas locales y movimientos están fomentando matrimonios y vidas familiares saludables.

En la Diócesis de San Ángelo, algunos de los ministerios que ayudan a formar y apoyar a las familias incluyen Encuentro Matrimonial, Encuentro de Novios, Pareja Patrocinadora, el Movimiento Familiar Cristiano, y Parejas para Cristo. Espero que más personas y parroquias se aprovechen de los beneficios que estos grupos ofrecen.

La familia es la unidad fundamental de la sociedad. Es una Iglesia doméstica. Con tantas fuerzas en el mundo actual que amenazan el bienestar de la familia, todos nosotros debemos preguntarnos en oración: “¿Y yo? ¿Qué voy a hacer para ayudar a fortalecer mi propia familia y las familias de otros?”

**MIRACLES**

(From 15)

greeted every one individually, had selfies taken with most, and began to wrap things up. The folks from St. Mary were in somewhat of a rush: they had been told if they missed their bus, they would be better off getting back to their hotel on foot — a seven-mile walk — because of the logjam in the city’s transportation system.

The bishop and I were to do a video summarizing his comments on the papal visit and the World Meeting of Families. I figured it might take ten minutes. Then we’d go our separate ways and see each other back in Texas.

It had grown dark by then. Karen approached the bishop and said that a woman had asked her if she could receive a blessing from him.

The video would wait.

The bishop extended his arm and took the woman’s hands. He asked her name, and moments later, following a brief conversation, he reached up and touched her head. He made the sign of the cross and said a prayer in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit.

Before the woman had received her blessing, two, maybe three more people formed a makeshift line behind her. As the minutes ticked by, people approached him one by one, asking for prayer. A few minutes later, a large group of Sisters of St. Francis of Perpetual Adoration from Mishawaka, Indiana, gleefully greeted him with an angelic song and received a blessing in return.

“I need you to pray for me,” Bishop Sis said.

The sisters continued to visit with him.

“No, no. Please pray for me now, if you would.”

And so they did.

Their brief encounter over, the sisters walked away, a song still in their hearts.

Since he had finished taking selfies with the parishioners from St. Mary’s, an hour had passed. Close to 100 people had filed by asking for a blessing.

And they just kept coming, out of the darkness.

One person approached the bishop, admitted she had forgotten her cell phone and could we please take a photo and message it to her. Then came another. And another.

The line shivered to three or four, before growing again to 15 or 20. Families, individuals, men, women, children, young adults. All. One after another. From all over the world.

A mother and father from Mexico came with a family member, profoundly affected by a disability, non-communicative and confined to a wheelchair. Another couple from Africa stepped up, and took a selfie with the bishop. Together, the husband and wife, along with this man they had never met, checked the picture to make certain it was clear and in focus.

One by one. Two by two. Sometimes as many as six in a group they came. A palpable spirit of joy permeated the impromptu encounter.

An hour and a half passed. Then two hours. And when his work was done, an estimated 200 people had stepped up to this temporary prayer booth.

He met and greeted the last with the same amount of consideration and respect as the first.

Less than three hours had passed since Pope Francis had processed out of the public Mass in the City of Brotherly Love. He was gone. But on the streets of Philadelphia this timeless and unforgettable night the message he had left America was very much present and alive.

“Faith opens a window to the presence and working of the Spirit,” the pope said in his homily. “It shows us that, like happiness, holiness is always tied to little gestures. ... (God) asks us to go through life, our everyday life, encouraging all these little signs of love as signs of his own living and active presence in our world. Would that all of us could be open to miracles of love for the sake of their own family and of all the families of the world.”

At least for one night in Philadelphia — but likely much longer for many — Pope Francis’ message to America was being received. Loudly. And clearly.
TRAITs

(From 11) children. And pray for your spouse before they walk out the door. When your spouse is going to work don't ask his or her permission. As he is walking out the door, just pray, "Dear Lord, my husband has a lot on his shoulders, thank you for the gift that he is to me." And boom...you didn't ask for permission, you prayed for him and he feels love.

> Catholic Families are Called to Intimacy

Our former boss Cardinal Timothy Dolan once told us the reason he is a priest is because mom and dad took all the kids to Mass every Sunday and mom and dad sat together and held hands during Mass. He said the affection and connection that he saw in their marriage and by attending Mass and watching them hold hands made him want to serve the Church forever. That's what affection can do for your family.

> Catholic Families Put Families First

Catholic families are called to put families first. The genius of the Catholic families are called to put putting family first. You are saying time to pray together, eat together, read together or play a game you are putting family first. You are saying this is more important than sports. Tell the local Little League we cannot practice on Good Friday. Family life is where we learn socialization and where our purpose and meaningful life is learned. Pope Francis said waste time with your children. You will change the world. And Mother Teresa said if you want world peace go home and love your family.

> Catholic Families Are a Witness and a Sign

Take it to the street. Create that intense intimate loving family union and when we go out to serve our community and our parish, we recommend trying to do that as a family. Tell the scheduler at your parish you want to serve at the Mass where you are all together. We go to Mass as a family, we want to serve at the Mass where we are all together.

The Popcaks can be heard locally on Guadalupe Radio Network.

WARREN

(From 17)

was made perfect by suffering, how do you think you’re going to learn? You’re not going to take your career to heaven. You’re not going to take your car to heaven. You are going to take your character to heaven. That’s you.”

No. 4, joy-filled families serve together and are meant to be a launch-pad for ministry.

Since we will serve God in heaven, Warren said God wants people to practice by serving others on earth. “You are the only Bible some people will ever read,” he said.

Finally, joy-filled families fulfill their mission and that mission is love.

“God put you on this planet to know him, love him, to learn about him, to grow with him and then to share him.”

He encouraged the assembly to do their part in overcoming evil with good.

“Rather than simply being opponents of what is wrong we need to be pro-ponents of what is right. And we need to celebrate good marriages, good families and what God is doing in the sacraments and the sanctity of life, marriage, and family,” he said.

Cardinal O’Malley stepped to the podium after Warren’s talk and humbly — but humorously — told the gathering that while his predecessor had just served up a filet mignon, all he had to offer was a hamburger slider.

The archbishop of Boston, a respected world leader in the faith, said we are all here to help build a field hospital by loving each other and expressing the merciful love of Christ.

“If the world does not believe the message it is in part because we are not united,” O’Malley said. “A crowd pushes away, a community draws people closer to Christ, and our task is to change the crowd into a community. That is what evangelization is about, and it must begin with the family.

“As a domestic church, we must pray, share our faith and show unconditional love. All too often, children believe if you excel at everything you will be loved. But in families, we should learn to forgive, share and nurture. We need to gather the family around the dinner table and the Eucharistic table, where we find our strength and we learn our identity; where we learn to experience unconditional love and to love unconditionally.”

MERCY

(From 10)

others makes our heart bigger.”

Bishop Sis said the pontiff’s trip from Cuba to the U.S. served as a symbolic gesture of bridge-building which, he said, was one of the pope’s major themes of the week. “By flying from Havana to Washington he made a symbolic gesture, and when he addressed Congress, he spoke about building bridges within our society rather than dividing.”

From Cuba the pope brought a commemorative statue of Our Lady of Charity, a gift “from the Cuban family on the island to the Cuban family of the diaspora,” as a reminder that charity unites us, no matter where we live.

A pope of mercy since day one of his pontificate, Bishop Sis said this is one overriding theme that has always surrounded him, a message that will only become stronger in the coming months. The pope has declared the upcoming Church year as the Jubilee Year of Mercy, beginning on December 8, 2015, the Feast of the Immaculate Conception, and ending on the Feast of Christ the King, November 20, 2016.

“With this Year of Mercy, Pope Francis is encouraging the Church to celebrate the mercy of God, and to show the face of mercy to the world. It was a major focus during his papal visit, and it will be a major theme for the next year.”

Bishop Sis and scores of other U.S. Bishops concelebrated Mass with Pope Francis both in Washington and Philadelphia, where the closing Mass of the World Meeting of Families had crowd estimates placed at anywhere from 850,000-1.3 million.

People flooded the streets, in some cases days before the pope’s arrival, but throughout the city, a sense of mercy and joy was prevalent in the faces and actions of the thousands upon thousands there to attend what they knew would be an event like no other. Twenty-four pilgrims from St. Mary’s Church in San Angelo waited five hours to clear security the day of the closing papal Mass. The group, though, was largely resilient and grateful to have the opportunity to be in the same city as the Holy Father if only briefly and from a distance greater than they had perhaps hoped.

A group of 14 from St. Joseph’s in Stanton made the trip, as did six Midlanders traveling together in RVs who left Philadelphia for Niagara Falls after the papal Mass. The trip was also made by Bri’Ann Rodriguez, a volunteer from UT-Permian Basin, Father Serafin Avenido, from Our Lady of Guadalupe in Fort Stockton and Father Hilary Imediha, pastor of St. Mary’s Church in Odessa. (See related story, page 10).

Both CNN and FOX provided comprehensive coverage of the pope’s visit and, according to Bishop Sis, both networks “presented Catholicism in a positive light.”

“This was a tremendous opportunity for the Church to be presented to our culture in a constructive way, and Pope Francis did a great favor to Catholicism in America by doing that. It is now up to us to continue living our faith and proclaiming it boldly in the wake of his visit.”

The bishop said of the World Meeting of Families, “It was an admirable affirmation of marriage and family life as we understand it in the Catholic tradition. It gave powerful and practical support to marriage and family.”

Calling the event “much needed and constructive,” he noted that the meeting of families avoided becoming “a shrill condemnation of sinful behaviors,” instead opting for a “constructive presentation of the theology of marriage and the practical steps needed to live it out.”

The bishop also praised the security forces at all levels of government whose hard work provided a safe environment for the crowds in Washington, New York, and Philadelphia.

“I am very grateful that the event did not include terrorist activity. Many of us were praying every day for the safety of the papal visit, and we are thankful for that protection.”

The numerous first responders and security forces who provided safety were roundly praised for their efforts and the weekend was deemed a resounding success by the city leadership in Philadelphia.

One of the biggest signs of a successful visit came from Glenda Riera, of Lansdowne, Penn., who told the Philadelphia Inquirer: “America needed this. We need love, compassion, caring. We tend to get so selfish, and today, to see a vast expanse of people together being kind, saying excuse me, looking out for one another — (Pope Francis) did that.”

Riera isn’t Catholic. She is Baptist.

“Today,” she told the Inquirer, “we’re all God’s people.”
To begin the process, the plan calls for RENEW International staff to train local parish clergy, staff, and lay leaders who will shepherd the process within the parishes. Pastors, staff, parish councils and lay leaders are invited to attend one of a series of information sessions to be offered throughout the diocese during the week of October 25 - 29, 2015. Parishes/missions will be invited to sign-up to implement Be My Witness/Sean mis testimios in the parish/mission. This process will then begin in February, 2016. RENEW’s staff will train and guide the process on an ongoing basis. Presenters for the Information sessions from RENEW International will be Greg Kremer, Sr. Marie Cooper, SJC and Fr. Alejandro Lopez-Cardinale. All sessions will be offered in English and Spanish as follows:

**Be My Witness: Formation for the New Evangelization — Schedule**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Time</th>
<th>Location</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>October 25, 2015</td>
<td>6:00 p.m. – 8:00 p.m.</td>
<td>Newman Center, San Angelo</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>October 26, 2015</td>
<td>7:00 p.m. – 9:00 p.m.</td>
<td>St. Ann, Midland</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>October 27, 2015</td>
<td>7:00 p.m. – 9:00 p.m.</td>
<td>Holy Trinity, Big Spring</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>October 28, 2015</td>
<td>7:00 p.m. – 9:00 p.m.</td>
<td>Our Lady-Perpetual Help, Ozona</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>October 29, 2015</td>
<td>7:00 p.m. – 9:00 p.m.</td>
<td>Holy Family, Abilene</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

For more information, please contact Sr. Hilda Marotta in the Office of Evangelization and Catechesis at evangelizationcatechesis@sanangelodioce.org or 325-651-7500.

---

**PEACE**

(From 2)

Bishop Michael J. Sis delivered the invocation, the 17th Training Wing Joint Service Color Guard from Goodfellow Air Force Base presented the colors, and Patti Wetzel sang “The National Anthem.”

In his speech, “Marking the Moments of Hope,” the Rev. Steve Davis of The Gathering of San Angelo recalled the horrors of the attacks on the World Trade Center in New York City 14 years ago but urged a continuing spirit of healing and hope.

“Let today serve as a welcome reminder that America’s darkest days are followed by our finest hours,” Davis told the crowd, many of whom included uniformed firefighters, police officers, military and city officials. “If we are to heal, we must choose peace and have hope in our hearts.”

Following Davis’ address, members of the Peace Ambassadors carried a flower wreath in the shape of a peace sign to San Angelo’s 9/11 Memorial. Audience members then walked to the same site to leave long-stemmed carnations.

Rashda Khan, a member of the Peace Ambassadors, said Pfeifer organized the first 9/11 memorial ceremony in San Angelo and each year selected a different organization to lead it. “I think that’s a good way of doing it because each year it has a chance to grow and be unique,” she said. “This year it was about hope. The best way we can remember and honor all those lives lost is to be the best we can be as people.”

Wiping away tears, she added, “Every little bit of (the ceremony) was beautiful.”

Davis said his church was honored to share in the event’s leadership. “Even the monument site (in San Angelo) has the time when each of the impacts” occurred, he said. “We’re so good about marking the moments of devastation and destruction, but we want to look beyond the means of their deaths to those moments of hope. We can be people who daily facilitate peace and hope in our lives.”

Karen Schmeltekopf, a San Angelo hospice grief counselor, said rituals and remembrances like those just demonstrated are invaluable in the healing process. “I love the focus of marking the moments of hope because that’s really how we shift from the past and our loss into our future and our hope,” she said.

Six days later, on Sept. 17, Downtown San Angelo Inc. held its monthly Art Walk, infused with the Season of Peace theme. An art exhibit opening of “Meditations” by Greg Davis, National Geographic photographer, was held at the San Angelo Museum of Fine Arts. The exhibit also included pieces from SAMFA’s collection that community members selected and wrote about.

“We have so many wonderful works of art in our collection, we thought it would be fun to have people in the community select the works that gave them some sense of peace,” said Howard Taylor, director of SAMFA. “It’s certainly not a religious exhibit, but all the paintings and sculptures reflect different spiritual ideas and thoughts about peace.”

Bishop Sis chose an oil painting by Margaret Tuper depicting a Mexican man and woman embracing a young child. “Violence says ‘no’ to God’s precious gift of life,” Sis wrote. “This couple has said ‘yes’ to the gift of this child, no matter how unexpected, inconvenient, or seemingly unaffordable. Openness to new life is an expression of peace.”

Davis’ photographs — including one that captured the face of a dark-skinned man with a long white beard, eyes glinting with joy as he drank from water in his cupped hands — also fit with the Season of Peace theme.

The photo, titled “Nectar of Immortality,” was taken in 2013 at Kumbh Mela, believed to be the largest religious gathering on earth, held every 12 years at the confluence of three holy rivers in India.

“There were 30 million people that day in this location,” Davis recalled. “For some reason, this man, I was drawn to him. You can see it in his eyes, it’s his moment of salvation.”

Davis, of Austin, said there’s an inherent spiritual quality to his work. “To me, (spirituality is) the only thing you should be drawn to: The question, how did we get here?”

In some ways, people throughout the world are different but, Davis noted, “the more I travel, the more I realize that when you cut us open, we’re made of the same thing.”

---

**BISHOP**

(From 3)

‘The family is the fundamental building block of society. It is a domestic Church.’

— Bishop Sis

marriage and family life.

In the Diocese of San Angelo, some of the ministries that help form and support families include Marriage Encounter, Engaged Encounter, Sponsor Couples, the Christian Family Movement, and Couples for Christ. I hope that more people and parishes will take advantage of the good things these groups have to offer.

The family is the fundamental building block of society. It is a domestic Church. With so many forces in today’s world threatening the well-being of the family, all of us must prayerfully ask ourselves, “What about me? What am I going to do to help strengthen my own family and the families of others?”
PILGRIMS

(From 10)

“The people were amazingly friendly,” Hanel said. “Even those that couldn’t get to their homes because of the security perimeter, and even those whose businesses were forced to close.”

At the invitation of parishioners, the six campers from Midland joined a half dozen others from West Texas for a pig roast Friday night at St. Agatha and St. James Church in the University City neighborhood of West Philadelphia. The event was a fundraiser for one of the dozen others from West Texas for a pig whose businesses were forced to close.

Deacon Victor and Mary Lopez, of San Miguel Arcangel in Midland, watched as the pope passed just ten feet in front of them.

“He touched everyone’s heart,” Mary Lopez said. “He embraced us all and is very attentive. Our prayer for our families in our own home and our parish family is that we all work together to help bring healing and unity and accept everyone where they are and not bring division, but love and peace.”

Deacon Lopez gave a blessing to a wheelchair-bound man who just so happened to be the same man that Pope Francis blessed later in the week when he stepped off of Shepherd One at the Philadelphia airport, a moment captured live by many news cameras.

“I am amazed at how the Holy Spirit works,” Lopez said. “Our pope in Philadelphia had a great impact even with our brothers and sisters from other faiths. We have a true leader. We should pray for him constantly. He is truly a representative of our Lord Jesus Christ.”

“I did not have a personal encounter with Pope Francis,” said Fr. Avenido. “But I envy his never-ending joy. The greatest challenge, I think, is to follow and implement his instructions and messages, and to be merciful – just loving and joyful.”

GRANTS

(From 7)

- St. Thomas Catholic Church in Rankin $3,700 assistance in replacing hall heating and air conditioning;
- Angelo Catholic School $1,000 assistance in replacing teachers’ and secretary’s laptop computers;
- San Angelo Catholic Outreach $1,750 to provide fuel/gas and bus vouchers to assist people looking for work;
- St. Margaret Church in San Angelo $928 to purchase computer, monitor and printer for pastor;
- Holy Spirit Catholic Parish in Sweetwater $3,700 assistance to insulate parish hall;
- St. Ambrose Parish in Wall $1,000 to build privacy fence around propane tanks to shield from Rosary walk.

The Foundation continues to grow thanks to generous donors. The following grant distributions have been made to date from the earnings on unrestricted endowment funds: 2013, $15,547 in grants; 2014, $27,160 in grants and this year $34,954 in grants. The value of the original gifts to the Foundation have increased in value even after making the aforementioned grants.

A gift to the Foundation is a gift that will serve our Catholic community forever! The Foundation is an incorporated entity separate from the Diocese of San Angelo and is governed by an independent Board of Trustees who manage the assets and approve all grants and gifts. All funds in the Foundation are managed by professional money managers. The goal of the Foundation is to preserve and maintain the real purchasing power of the principal gift. The Trustees determine the appropriate percent that can be paid out to the beneficiary of each endowment fund on an annual basis while still preserving the value of the original gift. The rate established to be paid out in 2015 was five percent.

Use of funds donated to the Foundation may only be for purposes designated by the donor or, if not designated by the donor, only for the purposes stated in the Articles of Incorporation – to support, serve and otherwise benefit the pastoral and charitable activities of the Roman Catholic Church primarily within the territorial boundaries of the Roman Catholic Diocese of San Angelo. For additional information on how to establish an endowment or leave a legacy gift to the Foundation in your will please visit our website www.catholicfoundationsanangelo.org or contact Kathy Webster, President at 325-698-7206; or Regina Bodiford, Secretary Treasurer at 325-651-7500.

VOCATIONS

(From 5)

continually balance joys and hardship, grace and temptation as they go through formation. I know that a simple letter of encouragement or box of homemade cookies have always made the seminarians feel happy and remembered by the people of the diocese.

6. Priests and Religious must be joyful examples of Christ’s service to our youth

I always encourage our priests and religious to “waste time” with the youth of our diocese. Such a ministry of presence can and does speak powerfully to young people. The most recent CARA study shows that an overwhelming percentage of the newly ordained cited the example of a priest as contributing to their desire to be ordained. Invite your priest, religious, and deacons into your homes. This “de-mystifies” them in the minds of our young people.

7. Parents

Parents are the first teachers of their faith to their children. They also model what is important in life by their actions. It is therefore important for families to attend Mass regularly, say prayers together, encourage holiness in children by being examples of holiness in the home, and praying for vocations (even if it means your own son or daughter is called).

There is an African proverb that states, “it takes a village to raise a child.” I would change this a bit to say, “it takes a parish to encourage a vocation.” Let us all work and pray together to create a culture of vocations within our parishes and our diocese.
**St. Joseph, Stanton**

Representing the Guadalupaña Society from St. Joseph Church in Stanton were, front row, left to right, Norma Saenz, Veronica Bryant, Joan Lozano, Ofelia Ruiz, Senaida Garza, Elva Sundy, Neida Alvizo and Gina Hernandez. Back from, from left to right, Hector Sotelo, Mary Lou Sotelo, Melissa Rios, Teresa Olmedo, Rosey Mindling, Mauro Sotelo and Bishop Michael J. Sis.

*(Photo by Karen J. Patterson)*

**St. Mary, San Angelo**

Young adults from St. Mary’s Catholic Church in San Angelo, many of whom attend Angelo State University, pose with Bishop Michael J. Sis, center, on the steps of the Cathedral Basilica of Sts. Peter and Paul.

*(Photo by Karen J. Patterson)*