‘It’s a piece of cake’

Fr. Hubert Wade, pastor in Ballinger, Robert Lee and Bronte, is handling his second round of serious cancer in three years with an inspiring amount of grace — and joy / Page 2

(Photo by Karen J. Patterson)
Fr. Hubert Wade, a native of Norfolk, Virginia, only wanted two things when he fulfilled his military commitment as a chaplain with the U.S. Army: A rural parish and a rectory with a rocking chair on the front porch. He got both.

(Photo by Karen J. Patterson)

Courageous priest in Ballinger an inspiration for those facing life trials

By Jimmy Patterson
Editor / West Texas Angelus

BALLINGER — Father Hubert Wade’s lifelong connection to the United States military has saved his life, put his life in peril and given him new life in West Texas.

The former U.S. Army sergeant and chaplain is a son of a Pearl Harbor survivor. To memorialize and give honor to their parents, Fr. Wade and his sisters return to Hawaii every five years.

On their latest visit, in February 2015, the Wade siblings went scuba diving. It was then that Fr. Wade’s sisters noticed a mole on his back, and after a biopsy, doctors had little good news.

“I have melanoma,” he said, “And the biopsy showed the cancer was already in my bloodstream.”

After years of serving his parishioners — almost 20 of those years at St. Mary, Star of the Sea in Ballinger; Our Lady of Guadalupe in Robert Lee; and St. James in Bronte, those same parishioners are now returning that service. The people at his three parishes take care of Fr. Wade.

(Please See WADE/21)

Following God’s call — to the ends of the earth

By Denise Morris
West Texas Angelus

We are all called to serve God in various ways, big and small, over the course of a lifetime. It seems when we listen more closely, we receive inspirations that involve greater personal challenge and force us to grow into better humans through the process of service.

Sister Kathy Kudlac, OSF, found herself called to one of the poorest locales in the world, about as far away from the comforts of home as one could get. In the rocky mountains of Kyrgyzstan, people were fortunate to find cow dung for fires to warm themselves. Children beamed at Christmas if they were gifted a small loaf of bread. There was no medical service available to villagers who lived hours across rocky paths that were the only connective roadways to the capital city of Bishkek.

It was here this Catholic school principal from Pennsylvania spent 5 1/2 years, serving in any means that each day provided in a Central Asian nation where only a tiny fraction of the population is Catholic.

She heard the call at an international community meeting of her order, the School Sisters of St. Francis from Mt. Assisi.

“God wanted me to go beyond the comforts of my life in the USA — which I was holding onto very tightly”

(Please See KUDLAC/5)

Conference attendees hear the call to be witnesses of mercy

By Becca Nelson Sankey
Special to the Angelus

SAN ANGELO — Hoping to reinvigorate their faith and bring fresh ideas back to their respective parishes and families, approximately 300 area Catholics and lay religious leaders converged on the McNease Convention Center in San Angelo on October 17 for Diocesan Conference Day.

Those who attended, from throughout the Catholic Diocese of San Angelo, focused on the theme of, “Discipleship: A Call to Witness,” and participated in a half-dozen breakout sessions.

Sister Hilda Marotta, OSF, director of the diocese’s Office of Evangelization and Catechesis, which each year organizes the conference, said the event is an opportunity to bring people together from throughout the diocese, learn from each other and the presenters, and grow in the faith as part of their on-going faith formation.

Sister Theresa “Terry” Rickard, OP, president and executive director of RENEW International, in Plainfield, N.J., and keynote presenter, gave two presentations entitled Witness Matters and Open the Door of Mercy. The second presentation was chosen because of the Jubilee Year of Mercy proclaimed by Pope Francis.

“It will begin December 8 on the Feast of the Immaculate Conception and ends in

(Please See CONFERENCE/21)
Forgiveness essential for families’ futures

By The Most Rev. Michael Sis
Bishop of San Angelo

In response to Pope Francis’ visit to the United States for the World Meeting of Families in Philadelphia, this edition of the Angelus is dedicated especially to the family.

We all know that there are many different kinds of families. In our homes in West Texas, we have a wide variety of family structures: traditional families; large, extended families; small, nuclear families far from relatives; children being raised by grandparents; single-parent families; foster families; blended families, and long-distance families.

God wants to be a part of all these families. The Church is here for all of us. No family is perfect, but God isn’t finished with us yet. We can all stand to grow closer to one another and to God.

Among the many different vocations God gives to the members of his Church, most people are called to the vocation of marriage and family life. When God gives us a vocation, and we accept that vocation, the work is not over when the sacramental ceremony is over. For the rest of our lives, we must exercise regular, vigilant, prudent care for our vocation, to protect it, nourish it, and keep it vibrant. This is vital to the survival of any vocation.

Through 2,000 years of history, our religious tradition has learned a few things about family life. There are some trustworthy “best practices” for marriage and family life that have withstood the test of time, and I would like to share some of them in this article.

Family life is strengthened when the members share meals together as often as possible. We all grow in faith when we pray together at home as a family, and when we attend Mass together.

The first and best place for children to learn their prayers is in the family. Children need to hear their parents praying at home. Parents are the primary catechists of their children. Children should also be enrolled in the religious education program and youth group in the local parish, to supplement and reinforce the Christian values taught at home in the family. Consider Catholic School for your children, if one is available in your area.

In every family, there come times of disagreement and hurt feelings. The blessing of healthy family life is that it can provide an atmosphere of safety and trust in which to work out these things. The family is a place to learn and practice good assertive communication skills.

When parents disagree over something, they should work out their differences privately, rather than argue in front of the children. St. Paul’s advice in Ephesians 4:26 is helpful: “Be angry but do not sin; do not let the sun go down on your anger.”

In the family, we need to ask for forgiveness and forgive each other. It is also very beneficial for a family to come to the Church together to receive the Sacrament of Penance.

El Perdón Esoencial para los Futuros de la Familia

Obispo Michael J. Sis

En respuesta a la visita del Papa Francisco a los Estados Unidos para el Encuentro Mundial de las Familias en Filadelfia, esta edición del Angelus está dedicada especialmente a la familia.

Todos sabemos que hay muchos diferentes tipos de familias. En nuestros hogares en el oeste de Texas, tenemos una amplia variedad de estructuras familiares: familias tradicionales; grandes familias extensas; pequeñas familias nucleares lejos de los parientes; los niños criados por los abuelos; familias de madres o padres solteros; familias de acogida; familias mixtas, y las familias de larga distancia.

Dios quiere ser parte de todas estas familias. La Iglesia está aquí para todos nosotros. Ninguna familia es perfecta, pero Dios aún no ha terminado con nosotros. Todos podemos mejorar nuestro amor hacia uno al otro y con Dios.

Entre las muchas diferentes vocaciones que Dios da a los miembros de su Iglesia, la mayoría de las personas son llamadas a la vocación del matrimonio y la vida familiar. Cuando Dios nos da una vocación, y aceptamos esa vocación, el trabajo no termina cuando la ceremonia sacramental se ha llevado a cabo. Para el resto de nuestras vidas, tenemos que regularmente ejercer vigilancia y cuidado prudencial para nuestra vocación, para protegerla, alimentarla, y mantenerla vibrante. Esto es vital para la supervivencia de cualquier vocación.

A través de dos mil años de historia, nuestra tradición religiosa ha aprendido algunas cosas acerca de la vida familiar. Hay algunas “prácticas mejores” dignas de confianza para el matrimonio y la vida familiar que han resistido la prueba del tiempo, y que gustaría compartir algunas de ellas en este artículo.

La vida familiar se fortalece cuando los miembros comienzan juntos lo más seguro posible. Todos creemos en la fe cuando oramos juntos en casa como una familia, y cuando asistimos a misas juntos.

El primero y el mejor lugar para que los niños aprendan sus oraciones es en la familia. Los niños necesitan escuchar a sus padres orando en casa. Los padres son los catequistas principales de sus hijos. Los niños también deben estar inscritos en el grupo de jóvenes y en programas de educación religiosa en la parroquia local, para complementar y reforzar los valores cristianos que se enseñan en casa en la famili-
Fr. Knick and Sandie Knickerbocker

Saints & angels: Our family in heaven

By Fr. Knick and Sandie Knickerbocker
St. Therese Church-Junction

November 1st the Church celebrated All Saints Day; November 2nd, All Souls Day; October 2nd, Guardian Angels; and September 29th, St. Michael the Archangel. In the Apostles' Creed we affirm, "I believe in the Holy Spirit, the Catholic Church, the communion of Saints, the forgiveness of sins, the resurrection of the body, and life everlasting."

When we celebrate the Eucharist the priest says, "And so with Angels and Archangels, with Thrones and Dominions, and with all the hosts and Powers of heaven, we sing the hymn of your glory."

What is "the communion of Saints," who are "the hosts and Powers of heaven" with whom "we sing the hymn of your glory," and how do we relate to them?

The Holy Catholic Church is the communion of Saints! (Catechism of the Catholic Church 477) "This refers to 'communion in holy things (sancta),' principally in the Eucharist that represents and brings about unity of believers, on earth and in heaven, as one Body in Christ. This refers also to communion 'among holy persons (sancti)': Christ died for all so that what each one does or suffers in and for Christ bears fruit for all" (CCC 948). As Mark Shea reminds us, "Catholic worship is...rooted in the reality of the communion of saints. The Mass...is offered to God in the context of a Body which includes not only the people next to you in the pew but angels, archangels, martyrs, apostles, prophets and the Blessed Virgin, and all those who have died in God's friendship. It proceeds to prayers and petitions...both to and for the dead. Its consummation is Holy Communion, which unites us with all who are in Christ, living and dead ("Saints Our Unseen Prayer Partners").

Spring pilgrimage to Holy Land, Italy

Travel with Fr. Arockia Raj Chinnappa Gali from St. Lawrence Catholic Church on a pilgrimage, March 28-April 10, 2016. Stops include Jerusalem, Bethlehem, Galilee, Capernaum, Rome, Assisi, Tuscany, Florence, and Venice. Cost for the 14-day trip will be $4,799 (Airfare included from anywhere in the U.S.). For more information call Proximo Travel at 1-855-842-8001. www.proximotravel.com (Proximo entrusts all trips to the maternal care of the Blessed Virgin Mary.)

Retirement Fund for Religious collection December 12-13

On the weekend of December 12-13, 2015 you will have an opportunity to express your gratitude to the multitude of women and men religious who have served God and the People of God through teaching, nursing, serving in the foreign missions and dedicating themselves to parish and pastoral ministry.

For years they labored for little or no pay. Now their communities lack adequate savings for retirement and elder care. Many of these retired religious spend hours before the Blessed Sacrament thanking God for your generosity, while some volunteer to support the ministry of younger religious.

You are being given an opportunity to "Give to those who have given a lifetime."

Be assured of the prayer of 33,000 religious now over the age of 70 and the ever increasing numbers of those who will retire soon.

May God reward your generosity
For more information, visit www.retiredreligious.org

Upcoming Calendar Dates

Sunday, November 22 — Christ The King
Sunday, November 29 — 1st Sunday of Advent
Sunday, December 6 — 2nd Sunday of Advent
Tuesday, December 8 — The Immaculate Conception
Saturday, December 12 — Our Lady of Guadalupe
Sunday, December 13 — Third Sunday of Advent
Sunday, December 20 — Fourth Sunday of Advent
Friday, December 25 — Christmas
KUDLAC

(From 2)

— to an unknown land, to trust implicitly in the providence of God,” Sister Kudlac said. “And while I fought what I was hearing, it was the photos of the children that captured my heart and I knew without a doubt that I had to go and be that Good News for God and God’s people.”

Maryknoll magazine had laid the seeds for this awakening as Sister Kathy recalled the inspirational passage:

“Spreading the Good News is the main task of the family of God and concerns the whole of our lives; and we are sent to become messengers of the Gospel and to work for the transformation of the world in the light of the Gospel.”

Her first thought when struck by the call to this remote, cold, agriculturally-based Third World Country was if she could drive there.

“I don’t like flying,” she said bluntly. The flight is to the opposite side of the planet, with numerous stops and a couple days on and off airplanes.

Beyond providing shoes for people to survive the winter and harsh terrain, beyond bringing medical supplies and food, and otherwise ministering to the poor, there was a deeper meaning the sister felt she shared with the people of Kyrgyzstan.

“They need to feel truly cared about, rather than a charity case.”

Communication was challenging on a verbal level due to her difficulties with the Russian language – as when she sat with a dying woman.

“We could not communicate, she could not speak, and I could not speak in her language, so we knew it had to be the language of love. People just want a presence, a sense that you are paying attention.”

The most touching experience there had to do with a birth.

“A woman just had a baby, and we took some things to her to help. She was so happy, so grateful, she gave me two pieces of candy – which was everything she had – and said to give it to the people in America who sent the (baby things).”

Sister Kathy was in a dilemma about accepting the woman’s tiny but tremendous offering, but didn’t want to refuse her beautiful expression of gratitude.

“I chose to keep the candy.”

The country is 75 percent Muslim and 20 percent Russian Orthodox. There are about 600 Catholics in a nation of 5.7 million people. The School Sisters are based in Bishkek, where Sister Kathy served out of St. Michael the Archangel, one of three parishes in the country. Priests somehow reach the villages to serve Communion to remote Catholics on a weekly basis, Sister Kathy said.

The mission of the Sisters is to serve the poor regardless of religion.

“We were there to help everyone,” she said of the ecumenical approach that turned out to have secondary benefits. “Once the government saw how much we were helping their own people, they didn’t interfere as much.”

Sister Kathy eventually heard the call that she was needed elsewhere, and returned to the U.S. where she is now Director of Campus Ministry for the Angelo State University Newman Center, through the Diocese of San Angelo. Since 2010, back in this land of plenty, she is still preparing and serving food and ministering to young people through the universal language of love.

Editor’s Note: Contributions can be made by check, made payable to School Sisters of St. Francis, 110 Crestwood Dr., San Angelo, 76903. In the memo line please write “Central Asia.”
Diocesan Knights of Columbus Dinner

Scenes from the annual Diocesan Knights of Columbus Dinner, October 13, 2015, at St. Mary’s Parish and School, Odessa (Photo by Alan P. Torre).

St. Elizabeth Ann Seton

Adult Confirmation, Class of 2015, October 4, 2015, in Odessa.

(Hope by Alan P. Torre / aptorre.com)

Holy Redeemer

Confirmation Class of 2015, September 30, 2015, in Odessa.

(Photoby Alan P. Torre / aptorre.com)
Fishers of Men

Len Oswald, top photo, founder and president of Guadalupe Radio Network, presents San Angelo Bishop Michael J. Sis with the annual Fishers of Men award during GRN’s annual Fishers of Men banquet, October 3 at the Midland Center. At right, Catholic country singer Collin Raye provided the entertainment for the evening. Above, Raye, left, and Bishop Sis with the Poor Clare Nuns from San Antonio. A part of Mother Angelica’s Order, the nuns have a live show on GRN Wednesday’s at 1 p.m. called ‘The Good Habit.’

China changes its population control policy

BEIJING (CNS) — China’s Communist Party leaders announced they would change the nation’s one-child policy, which most strictly applied to Han Chinese living in urban areas of the country.

The Oct. 29 announcement was contained in a Xinhua news agency report on the Communist Party’s Central Committee in Beijing. It said China would allow all couples to have two children, but did not provide additional details.

The Chinese government imposed its one-child policy in 1979 to curb the growth of the population that, at that time, was reaching 972 million people. The policy most strictly applied to Han Chinese, but not to ethnic minorities around China. Han families in rural areas could apply to have a second child if the first child was a girl. In areas where the policy was enforced, parents could lose their jobs for having more than one child. Sometimes the second or third child was penalized and could not be registered, so he or she could not go to school.

The one-child policy often was enforced at the provincial level, and enforcement varied; some provinces relaxed the restrictions. In a 2007 interview with Catholic News Service, Jean-Paul Wiest, research director of The Beijing Center for Chinese Studies, said some provinces provided that if each spouse was a single child, the couple could have two children. How much the policy was followed also depended on local officials, Wiest said.

Speaking of Saints

Feast Day of ecumenist St. Josaphat, priest, monk, celebrated Nov. 19

By Mary Lou Gibson

All of us have been affected either directly or indirectly by events that happened years before. These could have been natural disasters, wars, plagues, migrations or religious disunity and upheaval. So it was that the Schism of 1054, also called the East-West Schism, played a pivotal role in the life of a young 17th century Lithuanian boy named John Kunsevich.

In this Schism, the Pope of Rome and the Primate of Byzantium excommunicated each other thus creating the Great Schism that divided the Catholics of the East and West.

When John was born in 1584 in Vladimir, Volhynia, a city of ancient Poland, his family was Christian of the Greco-Slavic rite that was in use then among the Russians. A few years later, the Orthodox metropolitan of Kiev had sought communion with Rome and this resulted in the Union of Brest-Litovsk in 1595. Paul Burns explains in “Butler’s Lives of the Saints” that this resulted in millions of Ruthenians (Ukrainian and Byelorussian) Byzantine Christians to become members of the Roman Catholic Church with permission to retain their own liturgy. Burns noted that this action produced a long and bitter controversy that left John with a deep concern for Church unity.

John became an apprentice to a merchant at Vilna who offered him a partnership in the business and marriage to his daughter. John Delaney writes in the “Dictionary of Saints” that John refused both offers and instead made the decision to enter the Holy Trinity Monastery at Vilna to become a monk. He took the name of Josaphat in religious life. He persuaded his friend, Venyamin Rutsky, to join him at the monastery. According to Burns, the two looked for ways to bring about a reconciliation between Orthodoxy and Western Catholicism.

John was ordained a priest of the Byzantine rite in 1609. He gained a reputation as a preacher and leading advocate for union of the Ukrainian Church with Rome. Josaphat faithfully followed the rituals of the Byzantine rite, the sacred traditions that were used to celebrate the sacraments. These rites were deeply influenced by the culture in which they developed. Throughout his priestly career, Josaphat remained loyal to the pope.

In time, his friend Rutsky was appointed abbot of Holy Trinity. He sent Josaphat to organize new houses in Poland. When Josaphat returned to Vilna in 1614, he became abbot and then in 1617 was named bishop and archbishop of Polotsk. Michael Walsh, editor of “Butler’s Lives of the Saints” writes that the more religious people (Please See SAINTS/23)
Making Sense of Bioethics

The continuing mystery of male-female complementarity

By Fr. Tad Pacholczyk

James Parker came out at age 17 and later entered into a relationship with another man. He worked as a gay activist for a while, but his personal experiences of intimacy and human sexuality eventually led him to grasp that “same-sex marriage just doesn’t exist; even if you want to say that it does.” He concludes that trying to persuade those with homosexual inclinations that they can have marriage like heterosexual couples is basically to “hoodwink” them: “Deep down, there is no mystery between two men, ultimately.”

This striking insight helps bring into focus the authentic and remarkable mystery we encounter in the joining of husband and wife in marriage. That abiding mystery touches on their one flesh union and reveals an inner fruitfulness, enabling them to contribute together something greater than either can do alone, namely, the engendering of new life in the marital embrace. Ultimately, that life-giving mystery flows from their radical male–female complementarity.

Pope John Paul II commented on this “mystery of complementarity” when he noted how “uniting with each other [in the conjugal act] so closely as to become ‘one flesh,’ man and woman, rediscover, so to speak, every time and in a special way, the mystery of creation.”

The personal and bodily complementarity of man and woman, along with the “duality of a mysterious mutual attraction,” reminds us, again in the words of the Pope, how “femininity finds itself, in a sense, in the presence of masculinity, while masculinity is confirmed through femininity.”

In recent times, nevertheless, the importance of the bodily and spiritual complementarity of man and woman has come to be diminished and even negated in the minds of many, largely due to the diffusion of contraception. This way of intentionally impeding our own procreativity has effectively diminished and even undermined our ability to perceive the inner order and interpersonal meaning of our own sexuality. Pope John Paul II once described the root truth about human sexuality as that “characteristic of man — male and female — which permits them, when they become ‘one flesh,’ to submit at the same time their whole humanity to the blessing of fertility.”

The routine promotion of contraceptive sexual relations across all strata of society has effectively collapsed the mystery of sexuality into the trivial pursuit of mutually-agreed-upon pleasurable sensations. It has managed to reconfigure that sexuality into, basically, sterile acts of mutual auto-eroticism. Men and women, neutered and neutralized by various surgeries, pharmaceuticals, or other devices, no longer really need each other in their complementary sexual roles, with homosexual genital activity claiming the status of just another variant of the same game. This depleted vision of our sexuality strips out the beautiful mystery at its core and diminishes our human dignity.

Human sexuality clearly touches deep human chords, including the reality of our solitude. In the depths of the human heart is found a desire for completion through the total spousal gift of oneself to another, a gift that profoundly contributes to alleviating our primordial sense of human solitude. Both Pope John Paul II and Pope Francis have noted how the deeper mystery of communion that we seek through intimacy is connected to this desire to overcome solitude. We are ultimately intended for communion, so our experiences of human solitude draw us into relationship, and beckon us to an encounter with the other.

Yet the union of friendship that arises between two men, for example, or between two women, while clearly important in helping to overcome solitude, can be predicated only on non-genital forms of sharing if their friendship is to be authentic, fruitful and spiritually life-giving. Genital sexual activity between members of the same sex fails to communicate objectively either the gift of life or the gift of self. Such activity countermands authentic intimacy by collapsing into a form of consensual bodily exploitation, contradicting the very design and meaning of the body in its nature as masculine or feminine. It represents, in fact, the lifeless antithesis of nuptial fruitfulness and faithfulness.

The beauty and meaning of every sexual encounter in marriage, then, is rooted not only in faithful and exclusive love, but also in the radical complementarity of spouses manifested in the abiding mystery of their mutual procreativity. Pope Francis, speaking at the 2015 Synod of Bishops and addressing the theme of The Vocation and Mission of the Family in the Church and in the Contemporary World, reiterated this divine design over human sexuality when he stressed: “This is God’s dream for his beloved creation: to see it fulfilled in the loving union between a man and a woman, rejoicing in their shared journey, fruitful in their mutual gift of self.”

Rev. Tadiecz 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. See www.ncbcenter.org

Use your imagination, but don’t let it run wild

By Eric Rommel

Catholic News Service

Many of us have been told, as far back as we can remember, that we can do anything if we put our mind to it. Left unsaid is the idea that some things are better left in the imagination. In most cases, we learn this through trial and error. When we're young, our mistakes are small. But as we grow, the potential damage from the error of our ways grows.

Back in the early days of the Internet, a woman named Wendy Northcutt created a website for what became known as the Darwin Awards. These were awards given to people who tragically acted upon their worst impulses.

The stories are tragic, but many fall into the category of "there, but for the grace of God, go I." Survivors received "honorable mention." Some doubt the veracity of some of the stories, but they were meant to teach a lesson.

One story was about an alleged incident in Poughkeepsie, New York, in which an eyewitness reported watching a car in front of him suddenly accelerate. It failed to turn at a curve, crashing into a guardrail. According to the story, the witness stopped to help and asked the driver what had happened. The driver had apparently been listening to a song that gave dance directions, accelerated on "left foot stomp" and didn't hit the brake because the song told him to "freeze."

Does that mean we shouldn't sing in the car? It means that we need to keep our imaginations in check with a healthy dose of reality.

Controlling impulses isn’t always easy. Sometimes people are so inspired by the sparks of creativity that action seems imperative. Those are the moments when medical professionals are often necessary.

Those medical professionals have a system of coding every injury they see, often for insurance purposes. They use codes for the mundane, from headaches to arm pain, but also for more exotic injuries.

A person walking when injured by a collision with a roller skater? There’s a code for that. Injury caused during an activity involving arts and crafts? There’s a specific code for that as well. If these codes exist, it’s logical to assume they must have occurred at least once.

These codes are more than humorous, they’re inspirational. They’re examples of what makes people so amazing. I don’t mean just the crazy stuff. People have walked on the moon because someone entertained their imagination. Deadly diseases were eradicated because someone entertained his or her imagination. Right now, people are being equally embarrassed and inspired because they entertained imagination.

The next time you have a big idea, take a big leap of faith. Believe in yourself. Do what others say can’t be done, but be safe. I don’t want to read that you received a Darwin Award, or that your actions caused doctors to create a code for a new type of injury.

After all, you have to be healthy enough for your next spark of inspiration.
Catholic Voices

Ten Commandments for befriending self, others

By Rev. Ron Rolheiser

More than twenty-five hundred years ago, Moses gave us the Ten Commandments. The centuries since, the Enlightenment notwithstanding, haven’t given us a single reason to doubt the validity and importance of any of those precepts. However, as we struggle to live them out, it might be helpful if Moses again descended from that same mountain with two new tablets of stone, spelling out some rules for better befriending each other, God, life, and ourselves. Perhaps this second set of commandments might read like this:

1) Befriend humanity …
To be human is to be fallible, wounded, scarred, sinful, and living in a far-from-perfect history, body, family, church. Don’t look for anyone to blame, to sue, to be angry at. This is called the human condition. Make friends with it. Grieve, don’t rage. Think of chaos, not blame. Our parents called this “original sin.” We talk of “dysfunctional families.” It has ever been thus. Don’t live in a sulk.

2) Befriend what’s best in you …
As long as we look out at the world through our wounds we will always fill with self-pity, bitterness, and jealousy. If, however, we look out through the prism of what’s best in us, our jealousy can turn to appreciation and we can again be astonished at others’ goodness. We have two souls, a grand soul, where we carry the image of God and the memory of our blessings, and a petty soul, where we carry the bitterness and jealousies that come from our wounds. We need to attach our eyes, our ears, our speech, and our attitudes to our grand soul. We need to be better friends with what’s best in us.

3) Befriend those who love you …
There are only two potential tragedies in life: To go through life and never love and to go through life and not express love and affection to those who love us. We need to make better friends with our friends, to express more readily our affection, our gratitude, our appreciation, and our contri. Thank those who love you for loving you. Never take their love for granted, or as owed. Give out a lot more compliments. Say thank-you constantly.

4) Befriend chastity …
So much of our pain and restlessness comes from our lack of chastity and much of our subsequent rationalization and bitterness come from not admitting this. We have sophisticated ourselves into unhappiness. For all of our knowing, we aren’t happy. Make friends with chastity. Children and virgins, scripture assures us, enter the kingdom easily. Be post-sophisticated.

5) Befriend your own body …
Don’t be afraid of your own body, of its goodness, its sexuality, its pleasures, its tiredness, its limits. It’s the only one you’ve got in any case. Befriend it. Don’t punish it, don’t spoil it, don’t denigrate it. It’s a church, a temple. Give it enough rest, enough exercise, enough discipline, and enough respect.

6) Befriend the other gender …
The mothers and the fathers, the wives and the husbands, are fighting. Small wonder the children are suffering. Never trivialize the issues of gender. We are being called to a new level of mutual respect and mutual sympathy. Make friends with what seems most threatening to you in the other gender.

7) Befriend your father …
Father-hunger is one of the deepest hungers in the Western world today. Reconcile with your own father, with other fathers, and with God the Father. Your father’s blessing will de-constrict your heart. Forgive him his inadequacy. Acknowledge your hunger.

8) Befriend your mortality …
Death comes to us all. Make friends with aging, with wrinkles, with grey hair, with a body that is no longer young. Accept, let go, grieve, move on. Bless the young. Share your wisdom with them. Give away what’s left of your life. Let the zest, beauty, and color of young people enliven you.

9) Befriend humor …
In our laughter we taste transcendence. Humor takes us above the tragic. Laughter gives us wings to fly. Thomas More cracked a joke to the man who was about to behead him. That’s a quality of sanctity that we too often neglect.

10) Befriend your God …
The gospel is not so much good advice as it is “good news”, it tells us how much God loves us, what God has already done for us. God is as proud of us as is any mother of her children. Peace comes to us when we can enjoy that favor. Befriend the God of love and the God of the resurrection, the God who is completely relaxed, whose face beams like a marvellous symphony, whose power to raise dead bodies from the grave assures us that in the end all will be well and all will be well and every manner of being well be well. Befriend the God who tells us 365 times in scripture not to be afraid. Walk in that confidence.

Ronald Rolheiser, a Roman Catholic priest and member of the Missionary Oblates of Mary Immaculate, is president of the Oblate School of Theology in San Antonio.

Pope visit, true mercy and a memorable American encounter

By The Most Rev. Robert Barron
Auxiliary Bishop of Los Angeles

Having just returned from a week covering Pope Francis’s triumphant journey to the United States, I can confidently tell you that the news media are in love with the Vicar of Christ. Time and again, commentators, pundits, anchorpersons, and editorialists opined that Pope Francis is the bomb. They approved, of course, of his gentle way with those suffering from disabilities and his proclivity to kiss babies, but their approbation was most often awakened by this Pope’s “merciful” and “inclusive” approach, his willingness to reach out to those on the margins. More often than not, they characterized this tenderness as a welcome contrast to the more rigid and dogmatic style of Benedict XVI. Often, I heard words such as “revolutionary” and “game-changing” in regard to Pope Francis, and one commentator sighed that she couldn’t imagine going back to the Church as it was before the current pontiff.

Well, I love Pope Francis too, and I certainly appreciate the novelty of his approach and his deft manner of breathing life into the Church. In fact, a number of times on the air I commented that the Pope’s arrival to our shores represented a new springtime after the long winter of the sex abuse scandals. But I balk at the suggestion that the new Pope represents a revolution or that he is dramatically turning away from the example of his immediate predecessors. And I strenuously deny that he is nothing but a soft-hearted powderpuff, indifferent to sin.

A good deal of the confusion stems from a misinterpretation of Francis’s stress on mercy. In order to clear things up, a little theologizing is in order. It is not correct to say that God’s essential attribute is mercy. Rather, God’s essential attribute is love, since love is what obtains among the three divine persons from all eternity. Mercy is what love looks like when it turns toward the sinner. To say that mercy belongs to the very nature of God, therefore, would be to imply that sin exists within God himself, which is absurd.

Now this is important, for many receive the message of divine mercy as tantamount to a denial of the reality of sin, as though sin no longer matters. But just the contrary is the case. To speak of mercy is to be intensely aware of sin and its peculiar form of destructiveness. Or to shift to one of the Pope’s favorite metaphors, it is to be acutely conscious that one is wounded so severely that one requires, not minor treatment, but the emergency and radical attention provided in a hospital on the edge of a battlefield. Recall that when Francis was asked, in a famous interview two years ago, to describe himself, he responded, “a sinner.” Then he added, “who has been looked upon by the face of mercy.” That’s getting the rela-
Young adults in diocese attend first ‘Journey of Faith’

West Texas Angelus

BIG SPRING — On September 17, 2015 approximately 50 young adults from the age of 18-25 and attending area universities/colleges in the diocese, gathered at the Guadalupe Center at Holy Trinity Parish in Big Spring for the first Diocesan Collegiate Conference.

The keynote presenter for the day was nationally known speaker and musician Cooper Ray, of Dallas.

The theme, “Journey of Faith,” explored healthy relationships, living life with a moral compass, social justice and living our faith in meaningful ways in today’s world. Other presenters for the breakout sessions were: Fr. Joe Uecker, CPPS; Liz Zenteno, of Midland College, and Marcos Martinez from Catholic Relief Services. Topics included “Navigating Relationships: How to Develop Healthy Relationships”; “Rooted in Your Faith: Believing and Belonging”; “Staying on the Right Path: Making Good Moral Choices,” and “What Does Scripture Say About Justice?”

The day began for these 50 young adults with lively ice breakers and singing by Cooper, who also spoke on the journey of faith being one of both struggle and joy. His openness with his own journey had a definite impact on the young adults, who were able to see that through one’s struggles one matures and comes to see life through the eyes of faith.

(Please See COLLEGE/20)

Life Center

Bishop Michael J. Sis, left, with Judy Rouse, executive director of The Life Center in Midland. The bishop attended The Life Center’s annual banquet and meeting Thursday, November 5, 2015 at the Midland Center.

(Photo by Jimmy Patterson)

Understanding of love comes through love in the family

By Jimmy Patterson
Editor / The Angelus

PHILADELPHIA — From two symbolic moments — and two acts of sheer goodness — God created man to share in His own goodness, said Cardinal Robert Sarah, of Guinea, at the World Meeting of Families. The world congress was September 23-26 in Philadelphia.

“The first (act) is when God creates life from the formless void of earth and the darkness of the deep,” he said. “The second symbolic moment, the pinnacle of God’s visible creation, concerns the human person. Man and woman, Adam and Eve, are the first human family, complementary in relation and both called to make the gift of himself or herself for the other, an imitation of God himself.”

Cardinal Sarah said that man exists insofar as God gives him being and insofar as God gives him being for loving, for God is love.

“We are alive only because God gives us our being out of love,” he said.

God’s bringing good from evil is how He has worked from the beginning, the Cardinal said.

“In the family we learn to relate to love by serving another,” he said. “We become like God through the relationship of self-giving love. The family becomes the place where solitude and selfishness find healing. Where we become the centered person and another becomes the center of our life.”

HEART

(From 2)

Fr. Hubert Wade, who is overseeing the program’s implementation, said it has been well received in the diocese.

“One of the program’s objectives is to bridge the gap between the newly ordained and the well-seasoned priests,” Fr. Wade said. “We talk of prayer, the sacraments and our different experiences. And we talk about the ability we all have to build good priestly friendships.”

The program was started at the recommendation of Bishop Michael J. Sis, who is in a similar small group with other bishops and has been active in support groups throughout his priesthood.

“My life has been enriched by participating in priest support groups over many years,” Bishop Sis said. “I hope this practice will continue on an ongoing basis in the lives of our priests here.”

Bishop Sis noted the large area of the diocese can sometimes lead to an isolation of sorts for some priests who are serving in small towns, many miles from family and from other priests.

“We priests need fraternal support to live our lives in a way that is healthy and joyful. I have encouraged all priests in our diocese to participate in this program so that they can have that experience.”

One support group in the diocese, Bishop Sis said, has been meeting for decades and has served as a steady source of mutual support for the priests who have taken part over the years.

“Priests are tremendously enriched when they participate actively in support groups,” the bishop said.

An important by-product of priestly fraternal support is that often, the joy experienced by the priest can trickle down to his parishioners, which provides mutual benefit for many.
**World Meeting of Families / Papal Visit**

### Holy Father reminds us family is everything

**By Jessica Ramirez**

PHILADELPHIA — Forever I will carry this journey with me. Even the experience of waiting in line for three hours to enter the papal Mass. Yes, of course it was tiring, but worth the experience. I had the opportunity to interact with various people from different cultures and ethnicities. I had the opportunity to speak with priests and religious sisters and monks of different orders. It was an awesome experience to be surrounded by people from different countries and cultures. To sing with friends and strangers, to pray the Rosary and laugh together, enjoying each other’s presence and being thankful for such a beautiful day. It felt as if the whole world gathered in one place for the sole purpose of seeing Pope Francis and hearing his message which was Holy Spirit-inspired from our Lord.

I come from a divorced family; therefore, I am at the moment discerning my vocation. For some reason when marriage comes to mind, the fear and questions creep in: “Am I going to be a good mother? ... Am I going to marry the right man the Lord has provided for me?” To hear one of the guest speakers give her testimony about her engagement and soon-to-be wedding, I could relate when she compared herself to her friends and society. She gave examples of the lifestyle of her friends, the ones living together before marriage and the ones that were married and ended in divorce. She mentioned that divorce is her greatest fear and that is why she waited so long to be engaged. Her speech stayed with me more than the rest, because those are my feelings and my fears as well.

Even though that was one of my favorite speeches, what gave me peace was Pope Francis’ message: “Family is valued and precious to our Lord because, he sent his only Son into a family and that is when family was created. Family is beautiful yet it does come with a cost. Family comes with problems and difficulty but it is important to end the day in peace not war.” This message brought me to tears because Pope Francis is correct; my generation is selfish; we prefer to help ourselves rather than help others. Love manifests and evil destroys; therefore, we should do everything with love. I pray for the ones that heard Pope Francis’ message, I hope they take it to heart and put it into action. I pray that others, especially my generation, take the time to listen to the message on families from our Pope. His message speaks volumes. It is a reminder to our generation and future generations that family is everything. Even though “Families come with difficulty,” family is beautiful and is a gift from God. Wherever there is love, there is God and whenever there is God, there is hope, love and strength. I am blessed that I was able to experience this papal pilgrimage. It has helped me develop a deeper relationship with our Lord. This message and experience has brought me peace during my prayer on my vocation. More importantly, this message on families has helped me to love, value and respect my family even more.

*Jessica Ramirez is a parishioner at St. Joseph Catholic Church in San Angelo and a graduate of Angelo State University.*

### Pope reminds us of oneness of all people

**By Lauren Lopez**

PHILADELPHIA — I met up with the Saint Mary’s group Friday evening. As I am currently living in NYC, I didn’t have quite the travel as the rest of the group. But I have to say joining 26 others from my home parish really made it feel as if home was brought right to me in the Northeast.

I am still in disbelief that we had the privilege to not only be but feet away from Pope Francis during his papal parade, but that we also had the honor of celebrating Mass with our Holy Father.

I know it can be difficult for people outside the Church to understand the significance of the presence of the pope. But Pope Francis makes it easy. He simply lives his life so closely to how God calls us to that his character begins to resemble that of Christ.

I believe that being in Pope Francis’ presence changes our own disposition. The way he shows love to the sick, the marginalized, the young, the old, to everyone is a reminder of how we not only should but can live our lives. His simple display of compassion is moving — and that is the true blessing.

Pope Francis spoke with a rare union of eloquence and clarity, but I believe his message was beyond what was said. I think of our own group and how connected we became through this pilgrimage. Then, I think of the thousands and thousands of people gathered to see him; somehow amongst all the crowd there was a sense of unity. We were all united and gathered in love because of this one individual. That was Pope Francis’ message for me — a reminder of the oneness of all people because of the one God of love and mercy.

Again, the experience for me was surreal. I know it is going to take a while for me to completely comprehend everything that went on during this quick weekend. I wish I could put everything I felt in words for you but I guess some things are beyond words.

*Lauren Lopez is a graduate of Angelo State University and is currently a graduate student in journalism at Harvard University.*
It was too exciting and spiritually enriching to be present at the World Meeting of Families in Philadelphia, September 22-27, 2015. I'm very happy and thank God for the opportunity to be present. The arrangements were excellent. There were many volunteers in all sections. Just ask questions and you receive assistance or direction. I was there for the whole week, and attended most of the conferences and breakouts sessions which involved moving to another hall or next building. The greatest turn-out was the concluding Papal Mass on the Benjamin Franklin Parkway on Sunday, which I concelebrated with the Pope, many bishops and priests. Pope Francis request- ed that we don't forget to pray for him. I pray for him and our bishop, Michael Sis each time I celebrate Holy Mass. While at the World Meeting of Families in Philadelphia, I prayed for all families in my parish, all families in San Angelo Diocese and all families in the world. God bless Pope Francis. God bless our bishop, Michael J. Sis. God bless the Diocese of San Angelo.

— Fr. Hilary Ihedioha, STL, PhD
Pastor, St. Mary’s Church
Odessa

Fr. Hilary, pastor of Odessa’s St. Mary’s, grateful for Philly pilgrimage to see Pope Francis
Parishes must provide tools for families, couples

**By Jimmy Patterson**
Editor / West Texas Angelus

PHILADELPHIA — Although parents should be considered the first communicators of God’s message of love to their children, it is the parish that must provide the tools for young married couples and families so they can approach that responsibility even better equipped.

Christine Codden, Director of the Office of Marriage and Family in the Diocese of Saint Cloud, Minn., reminded attendees at the World Meeting of Families that Pope Benedict XVI pointed out parishes are the family of families. Parishes, Codden said, must develop ways to engage and families. Parishes, Codden said, must develop ways to engage and provide the tools to evangelize especially to those who are listening.

“We can no longer assume that the people we serve know their faith,” Codden said. “Our message to them and to everyone must be solid, compelling and consistent. If it isn’t, they will get up and walk away because they are confused.”

Codden noted that with the U.S. Supreme Court’s controversial decision attempting to redefine marriage, spreading God’s message has become even more urgent.

“It is no longer something nice to do,” she said. “It is something we must do. If we do not make communicating this message to our families a top priority, our future generations will not understand the Gospel and they will not be able to find true happiness through Christ and his Church.”

Codden said parishes must accompany parishioners on all stages of their spiritual journey by using eight building blocks:

- Building leadership
- Forming youth and young adults
- Preparing parishioners for the sacraments
- Creating a culture of life
- Strengthening marriages
- Pastoral caring for those in need
- Divorce healing
- Worship and prayer

Codden stressed that it is important for parishes to form ministry teams comprised of a variety of people from all backgrounds who have a passion for family life.

She also emphasized the importance of simply asking people for their help, saying that many are simply looking for the invitation to play a role in their parish’s ministries.

“If we don’t challenge parents to take up their honest roles, we will continue to lose our children to the secular humanist roles they are offered at every turn every day,” she said.

Normalizing the faith makes it easier for a family to overcome ‘gotta have it’ culture

**By Jimmy Patterson**
The Angelus

PHILADELPHIA — Kathy Hendricks, a national catechetical consultant, says our society’s “gotta have it” mentality plays heavily into leading many of us into a pattern of believing we don’t have enough time for faith in our lives.

A panel of three, which also included Sister Patricia McCormick, IHM, director of the Immaculate Heart of Mary’s Office of Formative Support in Philadelphia, and Matthew Pinto, founder and president of Ascension Press, reaffirmed Hendricks’ assertion during a discussion on “The Sacred Balancing Act: Busy Lives and Family Spiritualitry” during the recent World Meeting of Families.

“We have too much to do, too much to maintain, too much anxiety, too many complications, too much technology and just too much pursuit of the superfluous and temporal,” she said. “And furthermore, the trouble is we all feel like we have to buy into the notion that if we don’t appear busy we’re apathetic to our children’s success and if we don’t have the latest gizmo we’ll be left behind.”

This “too much” mentality, Hendricks said, inhibits discovery and being present in the world God gave us.

Pinto suggested a number of “trigger mechanisms” to help combat what he called intentionality, the notion that we pursue that which we value most.

“We get distracted with things of lesser value,” Pinto said. “If you love the mall, your kids will love Nordstroms. If you love the Grateful Dead, your kids will be Dead Heads.

Pinto’s trigger mechanisms include:

“When we hear a siren or an ambulance go by, we offer a prayer,” he said. “When we drive by a church, we make the sign of the cross. Before our sports games, when backing out of the driveway, we pray. If we see a bumper sticker that might be contrary to the faith, we pray for the people in that car. If we drive past a cemetery, we pray for the dead. In doing all of this, we normalize the faith, weaving it in and out of our lives in an integrated and natural way.”

Sister McCormick offered a few additional suggestions on normalizing the faith and bringing it into the home:

- Make a centerpiece for the dining room table to correspond with the liturgical season.
- Mark each of the Holy Days of obligation with special meals or celebrations.
- Explain the significance of the sacraments, especially the Eucharist, to your children.
- Create a prayer intention box where family members can write a prayer and toss it in the box knowing that Jesus will take care of it.
- Write special quotations or Scripture and put them where children can read them.
Hook-up culture trivializes sex

By Jimmy Patterson
The Angelus

PHILADELPHIA — The World Meeting of Families breakout session on the dangers of the “hook-up culture” opened with a popular music song whose lyrics begin, “Everybody, everybody wants to love, everybody, everybody wants to be loved.”

It was an odd irony, since the trivialization of sex in today’s culture rarely has much, if anything, to do with love at all.

As defined by moderator Erika Bachiochi, a self-described pro-life feminist, attorney and champion of Catholicism, the hook-up culture, prevalent among young adults, often college-age, includes sexual encounters where alcohol is often a major contributor.

“Female regret is almost always a constant,” Bachiochi said. “Studies tell us now that 2/3rds of all college students hook up at least once before graduation, which also means that a hearty 1/3rd never hook up at all, which is the good news.”

Pornography is another major player in the hook-up culture, Bachiochi said. “Pornography has become this generation’s sexual educator,” she said. “Eighty-six percent of men on college campuses interact with it monthly and half of them use it weekly. Porn is grossly hostile to a woman’s dignity. Vile and demeaning acts toward women are commonplace, and watching that alters the male brain, diminishing desire and desensitizing men toward normal relationships with women.”

Furthermore, Bachiochi said, watching porn encourages men to assert stronger pressure in the sexual act, emulating what they see on screen.”

Bachiochi said Yale University is actually celebrating the new casual sex. Orchestrated by the Yale Health Services Department, the Ivy League school since 2002 has sponsored ten days of activities and lectures featuring professors, sex therapists and even porn stars extolling the merits of sex as recreation. Organizers have said the event is to help de-mythologize sex and emphasize that it is just a fun, intimate exchange between people.

Not just through programs such as the one offered at Yale, but through society as a whole, men, Bachiochi said, “are being given cultural permission to exploit women.”

Ironically, the moderator said, it is not men fascinated by casual sex, but Christian men who would lay down their lives for those they love; those who are kind and emotionally attentive that “feminists dream of.”

Lectio divina: Finding Christ alive in the ancient form of prayer

By Jimmy Patterson
The Angelus

PHILADELPHIA — God didn’t give us just one type of prayer. The four basic prayers in the Catholic Christian tradition are blessing and adoration (praising God), petitions (asking for what we need), intercessions (asking for what others need) and prayers of Thanksgiving. Types of prayer include meditative, contemplative and even a type of Ignatian prayer that asks people to place themselves in a particular Scripture passage in the Bible in order to imagine what a particular situation would have been like in reality.

One type of prayer growing in its practice, particularly among small faith groups, is called lectio divina. Latin for Divine Reading, there are four more movements to the prayer, which allows for in-depth study of a particular Scripture passage: lectio (read), meditatio (meditate), oratio (pray) and contemplatio (contemplate).

Groups reflect on what God is trying to say to them through this method of prayer as well as what an individual believes should be the response toward which God is drawing him.

The lectio dates to 3rd century Christian scholar Origen, who considered focusing on Christ as the key to interpreting Scripture. According to “Reading to Live: The Evolving Practice of Lectio Divina” by Raymond Studzinski, “When you devote yourself to the divine reading, seek the meaning of divine words which is hidden from most people.”

Praying the lectio was a topic of one of the many breakout sessions at the World Meeting of Families, September 22-26 in Philadelphia. Fr. Dempsey Rosales-Acosta, SSL, noted that the lectio divina is “not a scholarly study but instead a very personal, very spiritual way to pray.” The individual or small group connects themselves to the true spirit of what has been written through this type of prayer.

“There is nothing superfluous in the Scripture,” Fr. Rosales-Acosta said. “Any passage of Scripture is the word of God. There are difficult and sometimes obscure passages and those that are sometimes very hard to swallow and not always easy to understand. I always tell people to start with the New Testament when they begin to read the Bible and that they will need more chocolate before attempting to take on the Old Testament.”

Scripture comes alive through praying lectio divina. “Christ is alive in the Scripture and that is why lectio divina is such an important way to pray. It is a dialogue with the Scripture and what God wants you to hear he touches you in your heart. My prayer is my answer back to God.”
Teach your children well — and from a young age

By Jimmy Patterson
The Angelus

PHILADELPHIA — Catholic mom blogger Lacy Rabideau says family traditions can be used to help instill the faith in children’s lives as they grow. As another conference moderator at the World Meeting of Families phrased it, traditions help to “normalize the faith” in their kids’ lives.

Introducing faith-based traditions, however, may take eliminating other traditions that may not be as important to the spiritual development of children. There are only so many hours in a day, so many opportunities to teach our kids.

“Kids love tradition,” Rabideau said. “They love reading the same books over and over, listening to the same songs over and over in the car. Think of some of the fond memories you had as a child. It only takes a few years for new traditions to take root in your family.”

Some examples Rabideau outlined included:

- Decide what is important that you want to make a part of your family traditions. Every family has to make its own choices.
- Get rid of the deterrents in your day (like laundry, vacuuming, etc.).
- Instead of the giant crazy birthday parties, make a big deal out of Baptism parties and First Communion parties.
- If you sing Christmas carols during Advent, make them faith-based Christmas songs like “Joy to the World.”
- If you see your child eating a candy cane, take the time to point out the story behind the treat: how the cane resembles a shepherd’s crook, how the cane, if turned upside down, is a “J,” for Jesus, and how the red is symbolic of the blood of Christ and the white is symbolic of the divinity of Christ.
- If you have a green thumb, plant a Mary garden.
- Start the day with a prayer. The prayers may begin simply enough at a young age but will blossom the more days the practice is repeated.
- Start a tradition like “Give Jesus 5,” encouraging children to give Jesus five minutes of each day.

Rabideau said it is important to remember to make positive associations about the faith for children from a young age. It is in those associations, she said, where the joy of the family tradition begins.

“We need to make sure we are reaching out our kids with activities that are relatable to children, engaging to children and age-appropriate for children,” Rabideau said. “Too often I see examples of adult concepts just using slightly smaller words.”

Remember, too, that all traditions and activities don’t have to be crammed into one year.

Share with your kids in small tidbits each year that grow deeper and deeper every year.

“Make sure your children also know that religion is about more than dressing up, being uncomfortable and sitting still in Mass,” she said. “They need to think, ‘Wow, because I’m Catholic I get to do this!”

Parents as catechists: So important as to be impossible to provide adequate substitution

By Jimmy Patterson
West Texas Angelus

PHILADELPHIA — The charge of the Second Vatican Council and the Catechism of the Catholic Church makes it quite clear: the importance of the parents’ role in the education of their children cannot be overstated. The Catechism, in fact, puts it this way: “The role of the parents in education is of such importance that it is almost impossible to provide an adequate substitute (CCC 2221).”

The Catechism’s emphasis on the importance of the parents’ role as catechists brings to mind St. Augustine’s writing 1,600 years ago that remains relevant today: Children reborn to life become children of God because of the moral and spiritual education provided by parents.

“As educators, the parents’ ministry is aimed at fostering a truly good life for their children, a holy life in this world, but also preparing them for eternal life,” according to Most Rev. J. Michael Miller, archbishop of Vancouver, and a moderator at the World Meeting of Families.

The archbishop’s topic, on parents as primary catechists, emphasized the responsibility of all parents while noting that today’s parents are not performing nearly as well as they did in earlier times.

“Pope Francis offers a sober observation,” Archbishop Miller said. “He writes that we cannot overlook the fact that in recent decades there has been a breakdown in the way the Catholic faith has been handed down to the young.”

Many parents are simply unaware of their responsibility and the emphasis the Church places on that responsibility. Compounding the problem are parents who enroll their children in a catechism program more as a babysitter than as a provider of religious education. Parents often cite being too busy or work pressure as reasons for not participating in their child’s religious formation.

Parents also see themselves as ill-equipped to hand down the faith, thinking, “I can’t pass on what I don’t have.”

Some parents, Archbishop Miller said, are simply bewildered as to what the Church stands for and are confused at mixed messages sent by today’s media.

“Parents should talk to their children about their faith journey and what the Lord is doing in their life,” he said. “We want to speak about the ones we love, and we love the Lord, and we should want to speak of him to the ones we love the most: our spouse and children.”
No permission is necessary to be a family these days

Dr. Greg Popcak

Moms and dads, I want to let you in on a secret. You don't need permission from your children's coaches, teachers, youth ministers, scout leaders, etc, etc, etc, to have a family life. All those people have to ask YOU permission to borrow your kids. NOT the other way around.

At my wife's and my recent presentation at the World Meeting of Families, the above statement earned an unexpected ovation. In our talk, we asserted the completely counter-cultural and Catholic idea that family life, itself, is an activity not an accessory. We are used to having a family life but working at everything else; school, sports, work, lessons, you name it. We have time for everything except working, praying, talking, and praying as a family. Worse, we have all come to accept this as normal and necessary when it is anything but.

Family: The School of Humanity

Family life has never been perfect, but it would not be overly nostalgic to note that as little as a generation or two ago, it was assumed that family life was the place where people learned to be human beings. Family life was the place where socialization occurred, where children and parents developed a sense of purpose, meaning, and values. Family constituted people's primary and most important relationship--in reality, not just in name. Children were permitted to participate in extra-curricular activities to the degree that they did not infringe too much on family meals, church, and other important family rituals.

Three generations of the culture of divorce have destroyed this idea. Today, about 41% of all children are born to unmarried women and about half of children have a step-sibling. In an age where so many people's experience of family life has been radically disrupted, almost every family--including intact families--have fallen prey to the idea that socialization, meaning, purpose, values, direction and significant relationships are supposed to happen outside the home while the family home is reduced to a train station where people pass each other on the way to the really important activities. Research notes that Millennials score higher on measures of narcissism than any other generation before them, but if that's true, it's only because we parents have all but closed the doors of meaningful family life--which the Church tells us is the School of Humanity--where we all learn the virtues that help us live life as a gift (Evangelium Vitae).

We Should Do What?!

Even suggesting to listeners of my radio program that they need to carve out regular time each day as a family to work together, play together, talk with each other and pray together (Please See POPCAK23)

God’s mercy, grace help those who are addicted

By Jimmy Patterson

The Angelus

God's mercy, grace help those who are addicted

San Angelo Bishop Michael J. Sis blessed graves, final resting places at the columbarium, and comforted the grieving at Calvary Cemetery in San Angelo on All Souls Day, Monday, Nov. 2.

(Photos by Jimmy Patterson)

Alcohol and other forms of substance abuse can upend a family, an individual, a career, a marriage. And while there is no one stop cure all, basing a personal recovery program in the Gospels can give some who suffer a jump start over others who may not turn to Jesus' comforting words in time of affliction.

"The Gospel is filled with verses to help us with addiction," said Fr. Kevin Gillespie, SJ, who presented to the World Meeting of families in Philadelphia on “Bringing Power to our Powerlessness: Addiction and Devotion.”

"Particularly helpful are the stories of the Prodigal Son, the woman with five husbands -- had she been abused? What was her story? How did she feel taking part in this healing around the well.

"Especially, too, is St. Paul's statement: in my weakness is my strength. Three times Paul prayed for relief from the thorn in his side."

Fr. Gillespie cited the spirituality inherent in the Serenity Prayer, which many in AA and other 12 Step programs routinely call on.

"The faith formation that takes place when a person deals with his or her addiction builds character," Fr. Gillespie said. "Facing it and mastering it builds character. Those who participate in support groups together empower each other.

"Addicts must acknowledge their addictions not alone but with God's grace.

"A sense of one’s soul provides direction and purpose," he said. "Acknowledging our addiction not only empowers us but leads us toward God’s loving judgment, provides us with a sense of God’s power in this life and the next. As Pope Francis continues to say, God’s mercy allows us to experience the soul of God’s loving power. Our soul will live beyond our death and our new lives will be judged by God’s merciful love."
Following Jesus vs. American lifestyle; the pope’s sister

By Fr. Kenneth Doyle
Catholic News Service

Q. My husband and I live relatively modestly by American standards, are conscious of the amount of resources we use and tithe 10 percent. However, I realize that even doing so we are still living in extreme luxury compared to most people in the world.

In the Gospel, Jesus talks of embracing poverty and leaving all possessions behind to follow him. I feel guilty about having so much, but I also feel that if my husband and I gave up further luxuries (e.g., a computer or a car), it would limit our ability to maintain our jobs, keep contact with friends and family, engage in volunteer activities, go to church, etc.

So, is it possible to follow Jesus in America while living a somewhat "normal" American lifestyle?

(Indianapolis)

A. The biblical passage to which you refer is found in all three of the synoptic Gospels (Matthew, Mark and Luke).

A rich young man approaches Jesus and asks what he needs to do to be saved. Jesus recites to him the commandments and when the man says that he has indeed followed them, Jesus suggests that he take one further step: to sell all that he has and give the proceeds to the poor, and then come and follow Christ.

Endless commentary has been written about these words and whether they were an invitation or a command. I believe that they were an invitation, and I would argue in particular from Matthew's version (19:21), which has Jesus saying, "If you wish to be perfect ..."

Also, when Zacchaeus the tax collector in Jericho was so taken by Christ that he pledged to give away "half" of his possessions and to repay fourfold anyone he had defrauded, Jesus was obviously pleased and said that salvation had come that day to Zacchaeus' house.

So I do not believe that every Christian is bound to live in abject poverty, although Christ encourages such a choice and many of his disciples over the centuries have made that choice.

But all Christians are bound to reflect continually on their lifestyle and to examine whether they are doing as much as they might for those who have been blessed with less.

This does not mean that you have to give up your job or your computer or that you can abandon your responsibility to raise and educate your children. It has more to do with where your ultimate loyalty lies -- and that should not be in material possessions. (Luke says in 12:34, "Where your treasure is, there also will your heart be.")

From the description of your current lifestyle, I believe that you and your husband are surely faithful disciples of Jesus.

Q. I have tried in vain to find out whether Pope Francis has ever had the chance to visit in person with his only surviving sibling since he was elected pope. (Indianapolis)

A. I can find nothing to indicate that Maria Elena has visited Rome since her brother's election in March 2013. His only surviving sibling, 12 years younger than the pope, has been hospitalized briefly a couple of times during the past two years with various ailments, which I do not believe were life-threatening.

When her brother was elected pope, he telephoned her immediately during his first free moments. She told an interviewer that she had not expected his election and was actually rooting for someone else because she wanted her brother back home.

In late 2014, Maria Elena's son said in a Latin American blog that his uncle "Jorge" was continuing to telephone his family once or twice a week. He said that they had not yet traveled to Rome and preferred to wait instead until the pope was able to visit Argentina.

In September 2015, Monsignor Guillermo Karcher, an Argentinian priest who is on the Vatican staff, told the Buenos Aires Herald that the pope is expected to travel to Argentina in 2017. (Maria Elena had told the press that she wants "two minutes to hug him.")

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Questions may be sent to Father Kenneth Doyle at askfatherdoyle@gmail.com and 40 Hopewell St. Albany, N.Y. 12208.

Pope Francis’ unforgettable journey to America

By Moises Sandoval
Catholic News Service

One cannot help marvel at the man who was formerly the archbishop of Buenos Aires, Argentina, named Jorge Mario Bergoglio and now known as Pope Francis.

When he came to the conclave in Rome following the resignation of Pope Benedict XVI on Feb. 28, 2013, he could not have dreamed of being Pope Benedict's successor. But suddenly, on March 13 of that year, he was elected and, at age 76, faced his greatest challenge as a Jesuit priest, pastor and bishop.

A quote from Pope Francis that appeared on the eve of his visit to the United States perhaps illustrates best how he has faced his enormous responsibility. It appeared in the comic strip Mutts by Patrick McDonnell on Sept. 21 and says: "Rather than a problem to be solved, the world is a joyful mystery to be contemplated with gladness and praise."

As he went about visiting the mighty and the humble in Cuba and the United States, those words best explain his joy and his humility. He saw everyone he met, from Fidel Castro to President Obama, from the members of Congress to the delegates of the United Nations General Assembly, from the students at a school in East Harlem to the inmates of a prison in Philadelphia, as being endowed by an innate dignity worthy of respect.

In today's world, that insight is not easy to accept. Yet, what the pope seemed to be telling us during his visit is that the process nations and political leaders follow in trying to solve problems is deeply flawed.

Demonizing, invading, destroying, isolating, embargoing, imprisoning -- all of these steps do not work. Pope Francis is humbly illustrating another way, based on the Gospel. It nurtures hope that once intractable problems can be solved.

Our Lady Queen of Angels School in the East Harlem neighborhood of New York City is one place where hope and excitement were palpable the week of the papal visit.

(Please See JOURNEY/23)

Un viaje involvidable

By Moises Sandoval

Es maravilla contemplar al antes arzobispo de Buenos Aires, Argentina, Jorge Mario Bergoglio, actualmente conocido como el Papa Francisco.

Cuando el vino al conclave en Roma reunido después de la dimisión del Papa Benedicto XVI el 28 de Febrero del 2013, no podría haber soñado ser el sucesor del Papa Benedicto. No obstante, el 13 de marzo de ese año fue elegido y, a la edad de 76 años, enfrentó el más grande desafío de su vida como sacerdote jesuita, pastor y obispo.

Una cita del Papa Francisco que apareció el 21 de septiembre en la tira cómica Mutts de Patrick McDonell quizás ilustra como él ha desempeñado esa enorme responsabilidad. Apareció el 21 de septiembre y dice: "En lugar de ser problema para resolver, el mundo es un misterio jubiloso para ser contemplado con alegría y alabanza".

Mientras visitaba a los poderosos y a los humildes esta semana en Cuba y en los Estados Unidos, esas palabras muy bien explican su alegría y humildad. Vio a cada persona quien encontró, sea Fidel Castro o el Presidente Obama, los miembros del Congreso estadounidense o los delegados a la Asamblea General de las Naciones Unidas, los alumnos en una escuela primaria de East Harlem, o los presos en una prisión en Filadelfia, como seres dotados con una innata dignidad digna de respeto.

En el mundo actual esa idea escasamente se acepta. Aún, lo que el papa trataba de comunicar durante su visita es que el proceso desarrollado por
Family Life

The joy Pope Francis left behind on September visit

By Fr. John Catoir
Catholic News Service

Pope Francis is the true vicar of Christ on earth today. During his first visit to the United States, he touched us deeply with his wisdom and love. He encouraged us to live joyfully and to keep our hopes high. Countless millions, young and old alike, through the miracle of television, experienced the sights and sounds of the cheering crowds reacting to his smiling presence.

It all began with the jubilant Cuban youngsters. Imagine this, these kids were born and raised in an atheistic state, and yet they were ecstatic as the pope told them to work together, to keep their hopes high for better days. "Dream that with you the world can be different," he said to them.

On the plane to the U.S., the press questioned him about perceptions by some that he wasn't Catholic or that his views leaned to the left of the political spectrum.

"I don't believe that I have said anything not found in the church's social teaching," he explained, adding that he follows church teaching and that's what's behind what he says, does and writes about.

On the White House lawn, his "God Bless America" thrilled us. To the U.S. Congress, he spoke of the "richness of your cultural heritage" and said that "you are called to defend and preserve the dignity of your fellow citizens in the tireless and demanding pursuit of the common good, for this is the chief aim of all politics."

In New York City, at Madison Square Garden, he spoke of the riches that cities represent: "Big cities are a reminder of the hidden riches present in our world: in the diversity of its cultures, traditions and historical experiences. In the variety of its languages, costumes and cuisine. Big cities bring together all the different ways we human beings have discovered to express the meaning of life, wherever we may be."

Yet for all the good he speaks, some have put a label on Pope Francis, or painted a picture of a person he is not. Some have labeled him an anti-capitalist. The truth is that Pope Francis has denounced greed, not capitalism. He is not afraid to afflict the comfortable, even as he goes about comforting the afflicted.

Pope Francis continually tried to lift our spirits. He encouraged all of us to live joyfully because of his knowledge of God's love. He never stopped stressing joy because the central message of Christianity is joy. This supernatural truth was revealed to us by our Savior Jesus Christ, in whom we live and breathe.

He is the inspiration behind everything this pope says and does. We thank Pope Francis for his visit and ask that God continues to bless him as we continue to keep him in our love and in our prayers.

Finding God in a day's work

By Effie Caldarola
Catholic News Service

Sometimes you can find inspiration for prayer in surprising places.

Parade magazine is a small publication that's inserted into many Sunday newspapers. Recently, they profiled Hugh Jackman, the Australian actor famous for his signature role as Wolverine in the "X-Men" movie series, who made some surprising comments about faith and vocation.

Jackman's mom deserted the family when he was 8, and he admits to working through a lot of anger. He seems to have emerged whole and healthy, with a sound marriage and a strong sense of self.

Raised a Christian, he retains a deep sense of spirituality. He says he reminds himself before each film that his kids are going to watch. I hope that's true, and I wish more Hollywood actors had that attitude.

As a college student, he discovered that acting, especially on stage, brought him peace and deep happiness.

Jackman is quoted in a recent edition of Parade: "In 'Chariots of Fire', the runner Eric Liddell says, 'When I run I feel [God's] pleasure.' And I feel that pleasure when I act. . . . When I go on stage . . . I pause and dedicate the performance to God, in the sense of 'Allow me to surrender.'"

How many of us can describe our vocation in the way Liddell or Jackman describe theirs? How many of us do what we love to the extent that we can feel God's enjoyment? I began my career as a classroom teacher, and I can remember times when I realized I had started a fire of interest and discernment in a student's heart.

And as a writer, when I finish writing something that I truly think is good, I experience gladness.

But did I feel God's pleasure in those moments? We seek God's approval, we attribute our success to God's help. But do I imagine the work I do as something in which God takes delight? Do I surrender my work to God and let God be an active partner in it?

Sometimes, we do our work or we volunteer with a heavy sense of burden or obligation or resentment. Do I sense God's pleasure in that? If not, perhaps we need to pray over what we're doing and be open to choosing a new path. Maybe we're doing the wrong thing. Or perhaps we're doing the right thing, but with the wrong attitude.

Frederick Buechner, an American theologian, said, "Vocation is the place where our deep gladness meets the world's deep need."

Perhaps he might have added that our deep gladness is a sign of divine enjoyment as well.

We've all heard stories of people who forsake high-paying careers for some artistic or charitable endeavor that barely feeds the body but nourishes the soul. It takes courage to make big changes, or sometimes even little ones, but it would be worth it to hear God laughing.

Some of us are beyond the age when we're making significant vocational or career choices. But each of us wakes up each morning to serve God. Each day, we have plenty of decisions to make about how to use our time and what will make us feel creative and good at the end of the day.

Do we spend our workday with our eye on the clock? Do our volunteer activities both help the community as well as contribute to our happiness and growth? Or do we agree to them because "somebody has to do it"?

God is as near to us as our laughter and our tears, and if we listen to each, they provide for us a lesson in God's will.
KNICKERBOCKERS

(From 4)

found most among the most 'natural' men, not among those who surrender to Christ. How monotonously alike all the great tyrants and conquerors have been; how gloriously different are the saints" (Mere Christianity).

How do we relate to the "gloriously different" saints in heaven, our brothers and sisters in all of their "variety" — through the first of the saints, our Blessed Mother Mary. As Mother of God and Mother of the Church, our family, she is the Mother of all saints and our Mother. Through her grace, prayers, and assistance, we are drawn more deeply into Christ in our daily lives as we aspire to her holiness and that of all the saints.

Essentially, prayer is a relationship with the three persons of the Holy Trinity: God, our Abba Father; Jesus, his Son — our Savior, brother, and friend, and their Holy Spirit of love.

Through our prayer relationship with our Blessed Mother, we are drawn into the life of the Holy Trinity and become friends with the saints. If you do not have a relationship with our Blessed Mother, begin praying the Rosary. As you reflect on the mysteries of Christ, the Holy Spirit will help you know Jesus, and through Him, His Mother. Mary will help us love Jesus through her Immaculate Heart, and Jesus will help us love His Mother through His Sacred Heart.

If you have a relationship with a particular saint, perhaps your name saint or your patron saint from your Baptism or Confirmation, ask Mother Mary to help you grow in the virtues of your special saint. Learn about the life of your saint and read their writings and prayers in order to grow in their spirituality and holiness. And, of course, ask the saint's prayers for your needs and concerns. If you do not "know" a saint, ask our Mother Mary to guide you to a saint or saints who want to share their lives and spirituality with you. It is not uncommon for a saint to recommend himself or herself to us with the words, "Ask me to pray for you." Our Mother wants to help us grow in holiness, and she will lead us to a saint—or a saint to us!

The celebration of All Souls the day after All Saints Day was instituted by St. Odilio of Cluny in 998. Who are the "souls" that we recognize on November 2? These are all the faithfully departed who have died in God's grace and friendship. These are our dearly departed whom we can name, as well as all who have gone before us in faith who remain unnamed to us but are known by God. "All who die in God's grace, but still imperfectly purified, are indeed assured of their eternal salvation; but after death they undergo purification, so as to achieve the holiness necessary to enter the joy of heaven" (CCC 1030). On All Souls Day we offer prayers and Masses for our family members, friends, and those who have no one to pray for them who are in a state of purification as they are being prepared to be welcomed by Christ into heaven. There are many customs associated with All Souls Day, and these vary greatly from culture to culture. In the Mexican culture All Souls Day is el dia de los muertos, or "the day of the dead."

2 Maccabees 12:40-46 recounts the practice of praying and offering sacrifices for the dead. In the New Testament and in evidence from the Early Church, we know that the Church has honored with great respect the memory of the dead. Our prayers for them not only help them to be purified from their sins, but also make their intercession effective for us (CCC 958). St. Paul prayed for mercy for his friend Onesiphorous (2 Timothy 1:18); liturgies and inscriptions on catacomb walls attest to prayers for the departed; Church Fathers Tertullian (155-240) and St. Cyprian (200-258) wrote about the practice of praying for the souls of the departed. Because of the union of all believers in the Holy Trinity, our departed brothers and sisters are alive in the Mystical Body of Christ, the Church, the one family of God.

"And so with Angels and Archangels...and with all the hosts...of heaven...." Both Scripture and Tradition give witness to the existence of angels, the servants and messengers of God. They are purely spiritual creatures that have intelligence and will--personal and immortal creatures (CCC 329, 330).

Angels were created through and for Christ, messengers of his saving plan (Mt. 25:31; Col. 1:16): "Are they not all ministering spirits sent forth to serve, for the sake of those who are to obtain salvation?" (Heb. 1:14) (CCC 331).

The concept of a guardian angel is a development of Catholic doctrine and piety based somewhat on Scripture. In Mt. 18:10, Jesus says, "See that you do not despise one of these little ones, for I say to you that their angels in heaven always look upon the face of my heavenly Father." They are assigned to represent us before God, to watch over us always, to aid us with their prayers, and to present our souls to God at death. In the history of the Church, St. Benedict (480-543) developed devotion to the angels and St. Bernard of Clairvaux (1090-1153) spoke of guardian angels. In the 16th century a feast in honor of guardian angels was observed, and Pope Paul V added it to the Roman calendar in 1615. "Devotion to the angels is an expression of faith in God's enduring love and providential care extended to each person day in and day out until life's end (AmericanCatholic.org). "May the angels lead you into paradise; may the martyrs come to welcome you and take you to the holy city, the new and eternal Jerusalem" (Rite for Christian Burial).

St. Michael the Archangel fought the rebellious angel Satan and the other fallen angels and cast them out of heaven down to earth (Rev. 12:7-9). The Church invokes the protection of St. Michael from Satan, principalities, and powers of darkness by praying the St. Michael Prayer (I Pet. 5:8-9), "...the whole life of the Church benefits from the mysterious and powerful help of the angels" (CCC 334).

God in his Holy Trinity, a family, has shared His nature with us. That is why Scripture says that "his whole family in heaven and on earth derives its name" from Him" (Ephesians 3:14). "As God is one in love, so we, in both heaven and earth, are one in him also" (Mark Shea, "Saints: Our Unseen Prayer Partners").

We rejoice in the unity of the Church militant and the Church Triumphant, in the splendor of all her saints and angels!

COLLEGE

(From 10)

Joy is often waiting when our eyes are opened to God's presence in our life.

After a delicious lunch prepared by Holy Trinity Parish volunteers, the young adults networked with one another and visited the available resource booths to obtain more information for their journey of faith. After the breakout sessions, liturgy was celebrated, with Fr. Joe Uecker, CPPS, as presider. A collection was taken for CRS and the young adults gave generously.

The Office of Evangelization and Catechesis are looking forward to planning the next Collegiate Conference.

(Submitted by Sister Adelina Garcia, OSF)
which means giving him his privacy on his chemotherapy recovery days — every Wednesday and most of every Thursday. A few years ago, the same parishioners took turns driving him to and from Houston’s M.D. Anderson Cancer Center when he battled large B-cell Lymphoma, which was found in his bones after a pre-operative examination on his knee.

"Once when we went to M.D. Anderson, the guys at the parishes came in and built ramps all around the church property. I came back and said, ‘What is this a skateboard park?’" Fr. Wade said, hand on the girls’ head as he gently moved her toward the classroom.

"The people here, they know exactly what is going on with me and my health at all times," Fr. Wade said. "They know it was pretty good sized, and they know I go to San Angelo every Tuesday for chemo and not to bother me on Wednesdays and Thursdays because I feel bad. Monday I have RCIA and feel great, on Tuesday I run all the errands for the church and go to San Angelo and get my injection. By the weekend I’m fine. We all work around that schedule together."

The B-Cell from 2012-2013 is “resolved,” as doctors are referring to it, avoiding use of the once-popular “cancer free” term, at least in Fr. Wade’s case. He is roughly 15 chemo treatments into a 52-treatment schedule for his melanoma. His motto is “It’s a piece of cake,” words he says he will keep with him until that 52nd abdominal injection in August 2016. And when that final chemo session is over, Fr. Wade says, watch out.

“I’m having me the biggest piece of chocolate cake you can imagine,” he said.

Fr. Wade is from Norfolk, Virginia, “Thats ‘NAF-folk, Virginia,’ not ‘NOR-folk,’ Nebraska,” he’s quick to remind.

Raised by devoutly Catholic parents, he was an altar server, as well as a performer of other church-ground chores. "Every Saturday morning, mom would clean the church and dad and I would take care of the grounds, rake the yard, and such, and by Sunday morning it would look beauti- ful. There were no Saturday Masses then."

Wade joined the Army as a young man and was stationed in Phu Bie Province in Vietnam. For two years he was unable to attend Mass because there were no priests stationed where Fr. Wade was. It was that reality, that lack of celebration of the Eucharist, that helped him make his decision to enter the priesthood.

During one heavy shelling in Vietnam, Fr. Wade lost his Rosary. When it was later found by a couple of Army buddies with whom he was stationed, he found that a bead was missing on the third decade. Fr. Wade still prays on that same Rosary, and still prays nine Hail Marys on the third decade. He doesn’t, however, use it publicly.

“When I would use it, someone would be sure to say, ‘Father, you missed a Hail Mary on the third decade,’” he laughed.

"So, how did this Virginian get to West Texas?"

He threw his collar into the ring as a chap- lain and went to work for the Diocese of the United States Military. When he signed up for his tour, he needed a bishop’s sponsorship. It just so happened to come from Bishop Joseph Fiorenza, who was, at the time, the Bishop of San Angelo and was staying as a guest in Fr. Wade’s seminary. Bishop Fiorenza happened to be in town for a meeting of the U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops.

Fr. Wade told Bishop Fiorenza once he had fulfilled his military commitment, all he wanted was to serve a rural parish in West Texas that had a rectory with a rocking chair on the front porch.

Done, Bishop Fiorenza told him.

When Bishop Michael D. Pfeifer succeeded Fiorenza, the deal carried from one bishop to the next, although Bishop Pfeifer told Wade he’d have to bring his own rocking chair.

That was January 1, 1996. Fr. Wade has been in Ballinger ever since.

He doesn’t know how long he’ll be here, but this man of outgoing and obvious joy, exhibits an infectious gratefulness for every day he rolls out of bed and unrolls the Ballinger newspaper in that front porch rocker of his.

“He leads courageously, he finds a way to bring fun into all the different experiences of community life, he injects joy into his envi- ronment, and all of that is a clear sign of a man who is close to God and to Jesus Christ,” said Bishop Michael Sis of Fr. Wade, who also serves as the Vicar for Priests, and the Engaged Encounter Director for the Diocese of San Angelo.

A most inspiring aspect of his service is that there’s simply not enough time or desire for Fr. Wade to let an illness slow him down.

“This is what I have and I have a choice,” he said. “I can either sit back in my room and close the windows and the blinds, or I can continue on. I’m very fortunate I can continue on. I haven’t had as many bad days as I had with lymphoma. It really knocked me down. But God is not going to give us anything we can’t handle. I know God is with me on this journey and that I can be an inspiration to others who may be struggling with a disease of some sort. God chose me, he is going to help me and I can handle it. So, it becomes me an example of ‘I’m going to preach the Catholic Christian faith completely trust- ing God and living that.’”

November 2016 on the Feast of Christ the King,” Rickard said. “One of the things I talked about is how people can celebrate this Year of Mercy. The first way is to be open to receive God’s mercy, God’s unconditional love for us and in a particular way through the Sacrament of Reconciliation. The second thing is to share mercy with others, forgiving those who have offended us. The third way is to do acts of mercy – reaching out to those in need. The Holy Father has offered a plenary indulgence for the faithful who complete the following actions: go to confession, pray for the Holy Father’s intentions, be free from the attachment of sin and make a pilgrimage to one of the designated Holy Doors.

The Holy Year (or Jubilee Year) is tradi- tionally celebrated every 25 years and most recently occurred in 2000. Pope Francis announced that an Extraordinary Jubilee Year of Mercy would be celebrated 10 years early beginning December 8, the Feast of the Immaculate Conception, because “the world is in such need of mercy,” Rickard said.

The Jubilee of Mercy will commence with the ceremonial, symbolic opening of the door of St. Peter’s Basilica in Vatican City, Rome. At that time, Rickard said, pilgrims will be invited to pass through the Holy Door.

“The whole idea is you make a pilgrim- age to a holy door and receive special graces,” Rickard said, adding that Pope Francis knows everyone cannot visit Rome, so he has asked each Diocesan Bishop to designate a Holy Door of Mercy in a Cathedral and in other local churches or shrines. Bishop Sis has decided to designate four Holy Doors in different parts of the diocese so all have the opportunity to make a pilgrimage to one of the doors of mercy, Rickard said.

In the Catholic Diocese of San Angelo, those doors will be at

> St. Mary’s Parish in Odessa;
> Our Lady of Guadalupe Parish and Shrine in Midland;
> Sacred Heart Eucharistic Chapel in Abilene, and
> the Cathedral Church of the Sacred Heart in San Angelo.

Nearly two dozen faculty members from St. Ann’s School in Midland attended Saturday’s conference. Inspired by Rickard’s session, “Open the Door of Mercy,” a handful of group members discussed how Midland’s own door of mercy could benefit their students, ages preschool through eighth grade.

“We want all our students to be able to see the door and pass through the door” at Our Lady of Guadalupe, said Janis Harrington, a teacher at St. Ann’s.

The topic of mercy is different – and must be taught differently – for preschoolers than for middle-schoolers, Harrington said, “but the door is something that will be the con- stant.”

“If our students aren’t filled with mercy for themselves and others, then God won’t fit into their hearts,” added Kyla Hendricks, a teacher at St. Ann’s.

Conferences such as the Diocesan Conference Day, which St. Ann’s teachers attend each year, “allow us to be stronger in our faith and to share that with our students,” said St. Ann’s teacher Stephanie Montez. Isabel Vera, who teaches RICA classes and volunteers at her church, said she attends Diocesan Conference Day to glean ideas to take back to her parish.

“Some ideas don’t go well,” she said with a laugh. “But it’s a start. We have to move with the Church, with our faith.”

Vera said she likes the prospect of merging the Church’s “old-school” ideas with its modern ones.

“I was taught by nuns, so what they taught me got stuck in my mind,” she said. “I need to learn to evolve.”

Vera said she attended Carol Ann Hunt’s breakout session, “The Domestic Church: Family and Faith,” because she was intrigued by the word “domestic” and its relation to the Church. The class proved a popular one, with about 75 people packing into one room to hear Hunt speak.

Hunt, of St. Ann’s in Midland, discussed how to merge family life with the Church and emphasized how to engage children in their faith.

“You heard the bishop say it this morn- ing,” she told the group gathered. “The parents are the primary catechists for their chil- dren.”

Hunt suggested bringing children to Mass, sitting down for dinner as a family to teach the Eucharist, praying together and always remembering to say – and show – “I love you.”

“Catholic families should put families first,” she said, saying aloud the words on the projector. “Pope Francis says to waste time with your children…” Mother Theresa said. “If you want world peace, go home and love your children.” It starts at home.

Diocesan Conference Day has been offered annually since 1967.
BISHOP

(From 3)

Reconciliation. This helps children see that parents, too, humbly acknowledge their failures and imperfections. It shows that forgiveness is a normal pattern in the life of the Catholic family.

Families benefit from time spent together outside of dinner for family discussions, game nights, movie nights, and home projects. Young members of the family gain a sense of identity by hearing the stories of family history and ancestors. We learn important life skills and virtues when we work together in house cleaning, yard work, and home repairs.

I recommend participation in Church groups and movements that promote

When was the last time you said 'I love you' to a family member?
— Bishop Michael Sis

...marriage and family life, such as Marriage Encounter, Christian Family Movement, Couples for Christ, Retrouvaille, The Choice Wine, and Strong Catholic Families, a program that is offered through our diocesan Office of Evangelization and Catechesis.

In many of our parishes we have local married couples groups. If there is no such group in your own parish, it is not difficult to get one started. I know many people who have started parish married couples groups from scratch, with some guidance from their local priest or deacon, and it has brought about tremendous good in their lives.

There are many good books, websites, and blogs dedicated to healthy family life. One particular book that I recommend is Good Families Don't Just Happen, written by a wonderful Catholic couple in Houston, Catherine and Joseph García-Prats.

My mom and dad married 64 years ago. They are still growing in holiness through their vocation of marriage. Throughout their life, they have referred back to the lessons they learned through the Christian Family Movement in the early years of their marriage. They have allowed those “best practices” to guide them in their marriage and family life.

When we approach it with the right attitude, family life becomes a gymnasium for the virtues, a living school of prayer, and a greenhouse for spiritual growth.

In the wake of Pope Francis’ visit to our country, each of us would do well to ask ourselves some challenging questions: What is my own contribution to the dynamic of my family life? When was the last time I said, “I love you” to the members of my family? When was the last time I sacrificed my own personal agenda for the good of my family? What can I do to become a more helpful, constructive, loving member of my family?

OBISPO

(Para 3)

ia. Considere una escuela Católica para sus niños, si hay una disponible en su área.

En cada familia, vienen momentos de desacuerdo y de sentimientos heridos. La bendición de una vida familiar saludable es que puede proporcionar un ambiente de seguridad y confianza donde estas cosas se puedan resolver. La familia es un lugar para aprender y practicar las buenas habilidades de comunicación asertiva.

Cuando los padres no están de acuerdo sobre algo, deben resolver sus diferencias de forma privada, en vez de discutir delante de los niños. El consejo de San Pablo en Efesios 4:26 es útil: “Si se enoja, no les dure todo el día.”

En la familia, tenemos que pedir perdón y perdonar el uno al otro. También es muy beneficioso para una familia estar en la Iglesia juntos para recibir el Sacramento de la Reconciliación. Esto ayuda a los niños que vean que los padres, también, humildemente reconocen sus fallas e imperfecciones. Esto demuestra que el perdón es un ritmo normal en la vida de la familia Católica.

Las familias se benefician del tiempo que pasan juntos aparte de la cena para las discusiones familiares, noches de juegos, noches de cine y proyectos en el hogar. Los miembros jóvenes de la familia adquieren un sentido de identidad al escuchar las historias de los antecedentes familiares y antepasados. Aprendemos habilidades y virtudes importantes de la vida cuando trabajamos juntos en la limpieza de la casa, trabajos en el jardín, y reparaciones caseras.

Recomiendo la participación en grupos de la Iglesia y los movimientos que promueven el matrimonio y la vida familiar, como el Marriage Encounter, Movimiento Familiar Cristiano, Parejas para Cristo, Retrouvaille, The Choice Wine, y Familias Católicas Fuertes, un programa que se ofrece a través de nuestra Oficina Diocesana de Evangelización y Catequesis.

En muchas de nuestras parroquias locales tenemos grupos de parejas casadas. Si no existe tal grupo en su propia parroquia, no es difícil de crear uno. Conozco a muchas personas que han iniciado grupos parroquiales de parejas casadas desde la nada, con alguna orientación de su sacerdote local o diácono, y que ha traído un gran beneficio en sus vidas.

Hay muchos libros buenos, sitios de Web y blogs dedicados a la vida familiar saludable. Un libro en particular que yo recomiendo es “Good Families Don’t Just Happen”, escrito por una maravillosa pareja Católica en Houston, Catherine y Joseph García-Prats.

Mi mamá y mi papá se casaron hace 64 años. Ellos todavía están creciendo en santidad a través de su vocación del matrimonio. A lo largo de su vida, ellos han consultado las lecciones que aprendieron a través del Movimiento Familiar Cristiano en los primeros años de su matrimonio. Han permitido que esas “prácticas mejores” les sigan guiando en su matrimonio y la vida familiar.

Cuando la vivimos con la actitud correcta, la vida familiar se convierte en un gimnasio para las Virtudes, una escuela viva de oración, y un invernadero para el crecimiento espiritual.

En la estela de la visita del Papa Francisco a nuestro país, cada uno de nosotros haría bien en hacernos algunas preguntas estimuladoras: ¿Cuál es mi propia contribución a la dinámica de mi vida familiar? ¿Cuándo fue la última vez que le dije: “Te amo” a un miembro de mi familia? ¿Cuándo fue la última vez que me sacrificué mi propia agenda personal para el bien de mi familia? ¿Qué puedo hacer para llegar a ser un miembro más útil, constructivo, y amoroso para mi familia?

SANDOVAL

(Para 18)

naciones y líderes políticos para resolver problemas está profundamente equivocado.

Demonizar, invadir, destruir, aislarnos, acusar — todos estos medios no logran el resultado deseado. El Papa Francisco humildemente ilustra otro modo más eficaz, basado le el Evangelio. Nutre esperanza que problemas ahoras vistos como insolubles sí se pueden resolver.

En la escuela elemental de Nuestra Señora Reina de Los Ángeles en East Harlem durante la semana de la visita papal, la esperanza y emoción palpaban. Francesco optó visitar a esa escuela porque los alumnos, la mayoría inmigrantes son parte de la población que él ve como los más meritorios de atención y asistencia. En la vecindad, negros y latinos son los más numerosos de los residentes.

Según Tina Susman de los periódicos de la compañía Tribune, la escuela tiene 290 alumnos de kínder hasta el grado ocho. Los ingresos de la mayoría de las familias son tan bajos que califican para asistencia financiera.

El papa conversó con algunos de los alumnos, seleccionados por lotería, y también con decenas de refugiados e inmigrantes, algunos de cuales vinieron a Estados Unidos como menores sin sus padres.

Uno sólo puede imaginar como el encuentro con el Papa Francisco va a influir la vida de los alumnos y otros jóvenes con buena fortuna de poder conversar con él. Al mínimo, recordarán ese momento por el resto de su vida, quizás inspirándolos a una vida de servicio.

En un entonces yo conocí al antiguo presidente Jimmy Carter en una reunión un día nevoso en Washington, dándole un apretón de mano, una experiencia que jamás olvidaré.

Según las noticias, el papa dio mas de una docena de conferencias durante su visita a Estados Unidos, gran logro para un hombre de 78 años. Cuatro eran en inglés, que no es su lengua nativa, y por eso un desafío especial. Pero las desempeña con la misma alegría evidente en todo lo que hace.

Para todos — los ancianos, los de edad media, y los jóvenes — el papa inspira, sembrando esperanza igual cuando pase rápidamente en el papamóvil. ¡Anhelamos tenerlo ad multos annos!
Pope Francis chose to come to the school because its students, largely immigrant and underprivileged, are among the population he sees as most deserving of attention and assistance. The neighborhood is predominantly Hispanic and black.

According to Tina Susman of Tribune Newspapers, the Harlem school has 290 pupils from kindergarten to the eighth grade. The income of most of the families is low enough to qualify them for financial aid.

**JOURNEY**

(From 18)

The pope spoke with a few students, selected by lottery, and also with dozens of refugees and immigrants, some of whom came to the U.S. as unaccompanied minors. One can only imagine how the encounter with Pope Francis influences the lives of those students and other young people fortunate enough to meet him. At a minimum, they will remember it for the rest of their lives, perhaps inspiring them to lives of service.

I once met former President Jimmy Carter at a meeting on a snowy day in Washington, the only president with whom I was able to shake hands. It is a moment I will never forget.

Pope Francis gave more than a dozen talks during his visit to the United States, quite an accomplishment for a 78-year-old man. Four of them were in English, which is not his native language and thus a special challenge. But he went at it with the same joy evident in everything he does. To every generation -- the old, middle aged and young -- he is an inspiration, sowing hope as he pauses to touch someone or even as he goes by in the popemobile. We hope

**BARRON**

(From 9)

In Polotsk were inclined to schism. They feared that Rome would interfere with their worship and customs. Josaphat stood firm as a proponent of union with Rome while at the same time maintaining the rites of the Byzantine clergy with their local customs. These actions cost him much disrepute. As many have indicated, Papa Francesco speaks of the devil more frequently than any of his predecessors of recent memory, and he doesn’t reduce the dark power to a vague abstraction or a harmless symbol. He understands Satan to be a real and very dangerous person.

When Pope Francis speaks of those on the margins, he does indeed mean people who are economically and politically disadvantaged, but he also means people who are cut off from the divine life, spiritually poor. And just as he reaches out to the materially marginalized in order to bring them to the center, so he reaches out to those on the existential periphery in order to bring them to a better place. In speaking of mercy and inclusivity, he is decidedly not declaring that “I’m okay and you’re okay.” He is calling people to conversion. As my mentor, Cardinal Francis George, said, “All are welcome in the Church, but on Christ’s terms and not their own.”

Nowhere has the confusion on this score been greater than in relation to the Pope’s famous remark regarding a priest with a homosexual orientation, “Who am I to judge?” I would wager that 95% of those who took in those words understood them to mean that, as far as Pope Francis is concerned, homosexual activity is not really sinful. Nothing could be further from the truth. The Pope was responding to a hypothetical involving a priest with same sex attraction, who had fallen in the past and who is now endeavoring to live in accord with the moral law, a sinner, in a word, who has been looked upon by the face of mercy.

So as we quite legitimately exult in the beauty of Pope Francis’s unique style and theological emphasis, let us not turn him into an advocate of an “anything goes” liberalism. As St. Augustine long ago reminded us, misericordia (mercy) and miseria (misery) are two sides of the same coin.

**SAINTS**

(From 7)

In 1623, Josaphat decided to go in person to the city of Vitebsk where anti-Rome feeling was very strong. He hoped to preach and attempt to make peace. Instead, Burns writes, Josaphat fell into a trap set by the rival archbishop. He found his followers being attacked and appealed to the crowd to leave his servants alone. They turned on him then, beat and shot him. His body was thrown into the Dvina River, but was recovered several days later. Josaphat was canonized by Pope Pius IX in 1867, the first Eastern saint to be formally canonized. David Farmer writes in the “Oxford Dictionary of Saints” that Josaphat could be considered a patron of ecumenical endeavor today. His feast was extended to the entire Western Church by Pope Leo XIII in 1892. He is the patron of Ukraine and his feast is observed on November 12.

**POPCAK**

(From 17)

is met with an almost existential level of angst. "HOW are we supposed to find time to do ALL THAT?!!!" Catholic families have swallowed the secular lie that if our children are not enrolled in 3,000 activities on Wednesday evening that we are depriving them and that they will be social outcasts if not completely socially inept. But what makes a person socially inept is not whether or not they know how to steal a base, but rather whether or not they know how to be a good husband and father, mother and wife. Such lessons can only be taught in the School of Humanity that is family life.

None of this is to knock extra-curricular activities. Sports, music lessons, classes and community involvements can play an important role in creating a fulfilling life. But when these things threaten the primary work of the family, it is time to make a change. I would like to suggest that it is time for Catholic parents to evangelize the culture—and insist on re-humanizing society—by reclaiming our families in three simple (if not necessarily easy) steps.

Take Back Your Family
Three Steps

First, ask yourselves, "If we were to carve out a least a little bit of time — say, 15-20 minutes — to work, play, talk, and pray together, each day what would we do?" Come up with a short list of ideas yourself, then discuss it as a family. Start doing some of those things now—even periodically—so that your family can get used to the idea of being intentional about being together.

Second, begin thinking of extra-curricular activities—including your own—as secondary to the need to make time to work, play, talk, and pray together as a family. If you actually gave yourself permission to prioritize your family life—as your Church asks you to—what else would there be time for? Perhaps the answer is "not much." That's OK. Your family is the single most important activity you can do in the course of your week. Start giving yourself permission to think of this as if it was.

Third, start setting boundaries. Tell your kids' coaches that your kids won't be attending practices or games when they conflict with family commitments—especially your family's commitment to attend mass together. Tell the various ministry heads to schedule you for reading, altar serving, and cantoring at the same Mass. You do not need their permission or approval. It is YOUR family that is at stake. Not theirs. Make them work around you, not the other way around.

It's time to start a revolution for the family. Chances are, the people you have let think they own your children won't like it. Tough. Revolutions are never easy. But in light of Pope Francis' witness at the World Meeting of Families, perhaps the best way to create a "Culture of Encounter" that brings Christ to the world is to simply do what he says and finally make time to "waste time with your children."

Dr. Greg Popcak and his wife, Lisa, were featured speakers at the 2015 World Meeting of Families. They host More2Life Radio and are the authors of 20 books including For Better...FOREVER! and Parenting with Grace.
San Antonio
St John/Assumption Seminary celebrated its Centennial Mass in September. San Angelo Diocese participants included, top photo from left, Fr. Frank Chavez, Msgr. Bernard Gully, Bishop Emeritus Michael D. Pfeifer, OMI, and Msgr. Larry Droll. It was a beautiful Mass of Thanksgiving, according to Msgr. Droll.
(Courtesy Photo)

San Angelo
Scenes from the Kickoff of the 40 Days for Life Pro-Life Campaign, September 22, 2015, at Sacred Heart Cathedral in San Angelo. The event, chaired by Sharla Ynostrosa, was attended by more than 100 people.
(Courtesy Photos)

Christoval
Br. Augustine Mary of the Mother of God, O. Carm., right, with his pastor, Msgr. Bush. He was invested in the Holy Habit of Carmel on the 500th Anniversary of the birthday of St. Teresa of Avila at Mount Carmel Hermitage, October 15th, 2015.
(Courtesy Photo)

San Antonio
Br. Augustine Mary of the Mother of God, O. Carm., right, with his pastor, Msgr. Bush. He was invested in the Holy Habit of Carmel on the 500th Anniversary of the birthday of St. Teresa of Avila at Mount Carmel Hermitage, October 15th, 2015.
(Courtesy Photo)

Fort Stockton
Knights of Columbus Council 9674, from Our Lady of Guadalupe Church in Fort Stockton, stood for the defense of life, October 6, 2015, in commemoration of the appearance in Fort Stockton of The Silver Rose, Oct. 5-7. The Silver Rose is one of six that travels the country, and represents the rose presented to St. Juan Diego in Mexico by Our Lady of Guadalupe. The rose brings devotion to the Blessed Mother shown through the defense of life. (Courtesy photo).