Sixth bishop named

Pope accepts Bishop Pfeifer’s resignation; Austin’s Msgr. Michael Sis named new Bishop of San Angelo

By Jimmy Patterson

SAN ANGELO — After 28 1/2 years as Bishop of the Diocese of San Angelo, the Most Reverend Michael D. Pfeifer announced December 12, 2013, that Pope Francis had accepted his resignation almost 19 months after Canon Law required it be submitted on his 75th birthday. Pfeifer’s resignation came simultaneously with the announcement that Msgr. Michael J. Sis, vicar general of the Diocese of Austin, had been named to succeed Pfeifer, becoming the sixth bishop of the Diocese of San Angelo.

Bishop-elect Sis will be installed and ordained at 2 p.m., January 27, 2014, at The Junell Center on the campus of Angelo State University in San Angelo. A vespers prayer service will precede his ordination

‘Lord, what do you want me to do? Send me anywhere’

Editor’s Note: On December 31, 2013, Angelus editor Jimmy Patterson sat down with Msgr. Michael Sis, bishop-elect of the Diocese of San Angelo. Their two-part conversation will be featured in this and the February edition of the West Texas Angelus.

Angelus: It’s been almost a month now since you received that call from the papal nuncio, informing you of your appointment. What are your thoughts now?

Bishop-elect Sis: I have felt sustained by the prayers and the encouragement of people who have contacted me since that announcement. I have experienced profoundly the impact of that prayer support. That’s encouraging for me as I face the prospect of seeking to carry out the role as a successor of the Apostles. I certainly couldn’t do it on my own. I continue to face the reality of the limits of my knowledge and experience, and I’ve been very busy these past three or four weeks just doing my job. I’m still the Vicar General of the Diocese of Austin, which is an extremely demanding position. I will resign on the 24th of January, but right now I’m still going full-speed ahead trying to do my job locally, so that has not allowed me much time to do proactive planning for my

(Please See ANNOUNCEMENT/6)

(Please See INTERVIEW/19)
You are cordially invited to ...  

_A Mass of Thanksgiving for_  
Bishop Michael D. Pfeifer, OMI  
**Tuesday, January 21, 2014**  
6:30 p.m.  
Sacred Heart Cathedral  
19 South Oakes St.  San Angelo  
* * *  

_Vespers_  
**Sunday, January 26, 2014**  
5:00 p.m.  
Sacred Heart Cathedral  

_The Ordination and Installation of_  
_the Most Rev. Michael J. Sis,_  
_Bishop-elect of San Angelo_  
**Monday, January 27, 2014**  
2:00 p.m.  
The Junell Center  
Angelo State University  
2235 S. Jackson  San Angelo
I will pour out my life in service to you

(EDITOR’S NOTE: BELOW ARE THE PREPARED REMARKS OF BISHOP DESIGNATE MICHAEL J. SIS, DELIVERED DURING A NEWS CONFERENCE IN SAN ANGELO, DECEMBER 12, 2013, TO ANNOUNCE HIS APPOINTMENT AS THE SIXTH BISHOP OF THE DIOCESE OF SAN ANGELO.)

Thank you very much, Bishop Michael. It’s a joy, an honor, and an undeserved privilege to be here today as we make this historic announcement in the history of the Church in San Angelo. While we’re speaking here this morning to a group of media representatives and diocesan officials, my words are directed mostly toward the people of the Diocese of San Angelo.

After prayer and consultation with my spiritual director about a week ago, I said yes to this appointment, conscious of the fact that my abilities are limited, and also conscious of the magnitude of the task of being the bishop of such a large diocese. There are many other people who would have been better qualified to take on this role, but I was not on the selection committee. So, I said yes, and I will wholeheartedly say yes every day.

You all know, as Bishop Pfeifer said, priests come and go, bishops come and go, popes come and go, and the one who is always with us is Jesus Christ. He is the one who said, ‘Behold, I am with you until the end of time.’

Every one of us has received gifts from God and we are called by God to accept those gifts gratefully, to develop them, multiply them and turn them back over to God with increase, so that what we do with our gifts might help build up the kingdom of God. In all of our situations, whether it is your family, your business, your parish, or the diocese, there are seeds that were planted before us that bear fruit in our time. And there are also seeds that we plant which will bear fruit in some unknown future and will benefit people that we will never meet in this life. And through all of it, the one who causes the growth of those seeds is God.

Each one of us takes our turn in this world, and whenever we enter into a new situation, we try to learn from those who have gone before us. We celebrate their legacy and then we each try to do our best when it is our turn to carry out our tasks. And we hope to leave each situation that we’ve entered a little bit better than we found it.

I look forward to serving as the sixth bishop of San Angelo, a diocese whose patron saint is my own patron saint. And I am ready to commit myself wholeheartedly to your service. Back when Bishop Pfeifer was appointed Bishop of San Angelo, he was 48 years old. I am 53 years old, and by the time I am ordained in January I will already be 54. Over the past 28-and-a-half years, think of how Bishop Pfeifer has earned your respect and your trust. He, as a good missionary, has poured out his life for you, his flock. He has driven a million miles in his car to seek and find the sheep of his flock. A million miles. And one day, when it is all said and done, the Lord will say, ‘Well done, my good and faithful servant.’ If you will be patient with me as your new servant, I hope to one day earn your respect and your trust.

I will pour out my life in service to you. In loving service, because you are now my new flock. For me the learning curve is going to be very high because I am not very familiar with West Texas. I am from Central Texas. Of the 77,000 Catholics in the diocese, I know just a handful. All of my priesthood has been spent serving the people of the Diocese of Austin. I never expected to become a bishop and I never expected to move to San Angelo. This is only the second time I have ever been in San Angelo. I will have a high learning curve.

Even though I have a lot to learn, I am conscious that God gave me one mouth and two ears, so I will listen and learn about your hopes and dreams and struggles and fears, and I know by the grace of Jesus Christ, and the help of the Holy Spirit, together we have a future full of hope.

So on January 27, 2014, I will be receiving a very important sacrament. I understand the date of January 27 is important to the City of San Angelo because it is the feast day of St. Angela Merici whose name in a funny sort of way is connected to the name of the city. So it’s very special that that is the day I will be ordained as your bishop.

I believe in the grace of the sacraments in the Catholic Church and I place my complete trust in Jesus. I ask St. Michael the Archangel for his protection. And I ask the Blessed Virgin Mary for her prayer support, especially since we are making this announcement on her feast day, the Feast of Our Lady of Guadalupe.

We are Catholics, and that means universal. The church belongs to all of us in the universal worldwide faith that is Catholicism. Regardless of our language, our country of origin, the color of our skin or our economic status, it is our Church and we live together as one family.

As I begin, some of you may be wondering, “Where is this guy coming from? What are his priorities?” And so I will share with you some of my hopes and dreams, and some of the things I consider important. I would suspect that many of them are the same things that you consider important.

I know it is important to support parents in their vocations of marriage and family life. Our Church should seek to support parents in their task of the ongoing human and spiritual formation of their children. Another thing that is really important is priestly life and fraternity. We must support and encourage our priests in their ministry, especially in a diocese that is so spread out over so many square miles, because without priests we don’t have the sacramental life of the Catholic Church. It is also important to me to appreciate our deacons and religious and lay leaders who give themselves in service of the church and to promote all of these vocations and to train more for the future. Another thing that is very important to me has been youth and young adults. We must constantly seek ways to integrate them fully into the life of the church because they are the future.

Another thing I hold in high importance is the value of understanding our faith well enough that we can share it with others in a way that is credible and convincing. All of us need to encourage one another in growing in that ability to understand and explain the reasons for our faith.

Also, I am aware of the fact that Catholics make up something around 10-12 percent of the population of this part of Texas, and we are called to a spirit of ecumenical collaboration with our brothers and sisters in the other Christian churches because we are fellow members of the body of Christ, and I pledge to be a collaborator with our brothers and sisters from other churches.

I also believe strongly that we are called to understand and respect those of other religions and to work together with them in seeking the common good.

I believe strongly as Catholics have a particular mission to defend the right to life, and I am amazed by the successes that have taken place in this part of Texas through your consistent, prayerful efforts. We must continue to proclaim the gospel of life and the civilization of love.

Something really important to me is to always seek to build bridges among the various people in a parish, town, or diocese. We need to seek to build bridges among cultures and languages. We need to seek to build bridges between native Texans, transplants and immigrants. We need to build bridges over this space of 29 counties and 37,000 square miles. I was asking some people just how big this place is. Some said about the size of the state of Ohio. Others said about the size of the state of Kentucky. I looked it up on the Internet and found it is the same size as the state of Indiana. No matter what you compare it to, it’s a big place. I look forward to starting my million miles very soon.

Also we should keep in mind something our pope said recently. Pope Francis published his first apostolic exhortation, Evangelii Gaudium. He encourages every diocese in the whole world to undertake a process of self-renewal through discernment, purification and reform. His hope is that in all of our dioceses, we’ll go through some kind of pastoral conversion with a missionary spirit of going forth to the outskirts of our territory, preaching Jesus Christ. That is the exact spirit that has fueled 28-and-a-half years of ministry of Bishop Michael Pfeifer, and together we hope to continue in that same spirit.

As a diocese we will discern how best to respond to that exhortation of Pope Francis in our circumstances here in San Angelo. I look forward to coming to serve you here in our diocese. I will love you and I will walk with you in our pilgrimage of faith.

In the coming weeks, I will attempt to wrap up things in my work as vicar general in Austin, I will make a retreat, and I will also prepare to move here in mid-January to take up this new mission entrusted to me. It will be very difficult for me to leave my home diocese of Austin, especially my brother priests in Austin. I have been working with them in the vineyard of the Lord for many years and my entire life was committed to serving that one church. Now, with one phone call from the apostolic delegate, I will be transplanted. And I will sink my roots in here and I will embrace my new life with you. So please pray for me. And pray for the people of the Diocese of Austin and for all the people of this Diocese of San Angelo, so that God may give us the graces we need so that we can carry out our shared mission in a way that reflects the love of Jesus Christ.
**Bishop Sis, the people of the Diocese of San Angelo welcome you with, love, full support and prayers**

**Dear Priests and all Sisters and Brothers in Christ,**

As we all know by now Pope Francis has appointed Msgr. Michael Sis, Vicar General of the Diocese of Austin, as the new Bishop of the Diocese of San Angelo to replace me. We thank God for sending us a wonderful new shepherd, and along with all of you, I welcome Bishop Sis, with open heart and hands, and I assure Bishop Sis of our prayers and full support. As you also know, Bishop-elect Sis, will celebrate his Episcopal Ordination and Installation as our new Bishop on January 27, 2014 at 2:00 p.m. at The Junell Center of Angelo State University, located at 2235 S. Jackson. All are invited. Please come and welcome our new Bishop! I also invite you to be present for an evening of prayer, Vespers, with our new Bishop at 5:00 p.m., January 26, at Sacred Heart Cathedral. Our new bishop I am sure shortly after taking office will make every effort to visit all of you in the diocese. I give him my total support and I ask you to do the same.

On May 18, 2012 as I turned 75, I offered my resignation as Bishop of the Diocese of San Angelo to our Holy Father, in accord with Church policy. After a year and some seven months, Pope Francis, also in accord with Church policy, has accepted my resignation and sent us a new bishop.

As we prepare to make this change I invite you to join me for a special Mass at 6:30 p.m. on January 27, 2014 at the Junell Center of Angelo State University, located at 2235 S. Jackson. All are invited. Please come and welcome our new Bishop! I also invite you to be present for an evening of prayer, Vespers, with our new Bishop at 5:00 p.m., January 26, at Sacred Heart Cathedral. Our new bishop I am sure shortly after taking office will make every effort to visit all of you in the diocese. I give him my total support and I ask you to do the same.

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**Obispo Michael Sis: Los fieles de la diócesis de San Ángelo le dan una bienvenida amorosa, de completo apoyo y oraciones**

**Estimados Sacerdotes y hermanas y hermanos en Cristo:**

Como ya sabemos el Papa Francisco ha nombrado al Msgr. Michael Sis, Vicario General de la Diócesis de Austin, como el nuevo Obispo de la Diócesis de San Ángelo para reemplazarlo. Le damos las gracias a Dios por habernos mandado un maravilloso nuevo pastor, y con todos ustedes, le doy la bienvenida al Obispo Sis, con corazones y manos abiertos, y le aseguro al Obispo Michael Sis de nuestras oraciones y completo apoyo. Como ustedes saben, Msgr. Michael Sis, que pronto será Obispo Michael Sis, celebrará su Ordenación e Instalación Episcopal como nuestro nuevo Obispo el 27 de enero del 2014 a las 2:00 p.m. en el Junell Center de Ángelo State University, localizado en el 2235 S. Jackson. Todos son invitados. ¡Por favor de venir y darle la bienvenida a nuestro nuevo Obispo! También les invito a estar presente para una noche de oración, Vísperas, con nuestro nuevo Obispo el 26 de enero a las 5:00 p.m. en la Catedral del Sagrado Corazón. Nuestro nuevo Obispo, estoy seguro, que poco después de asumir su cargo, hará todo esfuerzo para visitarlos en todos los deaneries de la diócesis. Le doy mi completo apoyo y les pido que hagan lo mismo.

**Bishop Pfeifer looks back on his life as a shepherd of the people**

(Note: West Texas Angelus editor Jimmy Patterson sat down for a conversation with The Most Rev. Michael Pfeifer in June 2010 for the most recent interview with Bishop of San Angelo. Below is their conversation. This article originally appeared in the July 2010 Angelus.)*

**Angelus:** Servant leadership was one of your objectives when you came here 25 years ago. Have you met that objective?

**Pfeifer:** I hope.

**Angelus:** Another of your objectives when you came, as you stated in a 1985 interview was to reach out to all people and especially to Hispanics in the diocese. Do you feel you have accomplished that?

**Pfeifer:** I try to be truthful about it, and from my perspective, I think I have to those who work with me. Seventy percent of the Catholic population in our diocese is Hispanic today. The vast majority of lay ministers in our diocese are of Hispanic background. We have Hispanic committees to stay in tune with needs of our Mexican Americans, I’ve been associated for 17 years with the Mexican American Cultural Center in San Antonio, where I have been chairman of the board. More recently the big call has been to focus on family and marriage life in our diocese and I’m trying to do that in a special way with Hispanics. As to the immigration issue, it’s sad to say it was here 25 years ago, and 25 years later some things have happened, others haven’t. We have close to 11 million undocumented people in the United States. We have a lot of undocumented people in our diocese, hidden, living in the shadows for obvious reasons. I was raised among the Mexican people in the Rio Grande Valley. When I was being raised, the population was 70-75 percent Hispanic; now it’s probably 80-85 percent.

**Angelus:** In 1985, in your initial interview in the Angelus, you made note of the lack of vocations, which also continues to be a concern in the Church.

**Pfeifer:** It is an issue. When we did outline our priorities, the plan was to promote vocations for priesthood and religious life, and that’s been up and down. When I first came in, due to the good work of the people before me, we had 15 seminarians. We were ordaining less local priests and the whole Church felt that. That’s when we looked outside the US and opened the doors for more priests to come in. Once we did we received numerous requests, and that opened the door for a lot of international priests. We do have 18 seminarians now for the coming year. So we’ve had a significant increase in men looking into the priesthood.

**Angelus:** Also 25 years ago, you made mention of something you called ‘satisfaction for the moment. Today we call it instant

(Please See PRAYERS/6)
By Shelley Metcalf
Catholic Spirit Staff

Pope Francis named Msgr. Michael J. Sis as the sixth bishop of San Angelo on Dec. 12. He will replace retiring Bishop Michael D. Pfeifer, OMI, DD, who was appointed Bishop of San Angelo by Pope John Paul II in 1985.

Bishop-elect Sis, who will turn 54 on Jan. 9, will be ordained and installed as bishop Jan. 27 at 2 p.m. in San Angelo. “It is a joy, an honor and an undeserved privilege” to be named the next bishop of San Angelo, Bishop-elect Sis said. “Whenever we enter into a new situation, we learn from and honor the legacy of those who have gone before us … that is what I have tried to do wherever I go. Now I am ready to commit myself wholeheartedly to the people of San Angelo, building on the work of Bishop Pfeifer.”

He humbly admitted that his learning curve is high because he is not very familiar with West Texas and Dec. 12 was only his second time in the city of San Angelo. “However, as a Catholic I believe that in our sacraments God gives us the grace that we need to carry out the mission the sacrament calls us to. On Jan. 27, I will receive the sacrament of Holy Orders and with it will come the grace to carry out my role as bishop. I place my complete trust in Jesus, and today especially in the Blessed Virgin Mary as we celebrate the feast of Our Lady of Guadalupe,” Bishop-elect Sis said.

Orated a priest at St. Louis Parish in Austin in 1986. Bishop-elect Sis was raised in Bryan, where he was active in the youth group at St. Anthony Parish, and where his father was a permanent deacon and his mother served as coordinator of religious education. He attended the University of Notre Dame and received his theological training at the North American College in Rome. He speaks Spanish and Italian “with mistakes,” he joked during the press conference on Dec. 12.

Bishop-elect Sis’ first assignment was at Cristo Rey Parish in East Austin. He also served two years at St. Mary Cathedral in Austin. He then returned to Bryan/College Station where he served more than 13 years in campus ministry at St. Mary Catholic Center at Texas A&M University. He served as director of vocations for the diocese from 2006 to 2009 before being named pastor of St. Thomas More Parish in July 2009.

Bishop Joe Vásquez appointed Bishop-elect Sis as vicar general on June 25, 2010. In that role he served as the principal deputy to Bishop Vásquez, exercising the bishop’s ordinary executive power over the entire diocese.

Bishop Vásquez thanked Bishop-elect Sis for his dedication and love of the priesthood and for his service to the Austin Diocese. “He is an exemplary priest who is esteemed by his brother priests and those he has served and worked with over the last 27 years,” the bishop said.

Bishop Vásquez, who was born, raised and ordained a priest in the Diocese of San Angelo, said the people of his home diocese are blessed to have “such a wonderful priest” as their next bishop.

“He is an exemplary priest who is esteemed by his brother priests and those he has served and worked with over the last 27 years,” the bishop said.

Established on Oct. 16, 1961, the Roman Catholic Diocese of San Angelo encompasses more than 37,000 square miles in Central and West Texas with 77,000 Catholics out of a total population of about 860,000. The diocese has 47 parishes and 22 missions. It is the Austin Diocese’s neighbor to the west; however, the San Angelo Diocese is under the metropolitan see of the Archdiocese of San Antonio. Austin is under the see of the Archdiocese of Galveston-Houston.

Archbishop Gustavo Garcia-Siller, MSPS, of San Antonio, who will ordain Bishop-elect Sis on Jan. 27, offered his congratulations to the newly named bishop.

“I ask all in the Archdiocese of San Antonio to pray that God will bless and guide Bishop-elect Sis as he prepares for this important new role as shepherd of the Diocese of San Angelo. I offer him my support and affection, and wish him every success,” Archbishop Garcia-Siller said.

Bishop Pfeifer has been San Angelo’s bishop since July 26, 1985. Pope Francis granted his retirement having reached the age of 75. Bishop Pfeifer welcomed Bishop-elect Sis with open arms.

“I ask you all to give him your constant prayers and support,” Bishop Pfeifer said. “I am not sure what will happen in the future, there is much work still to be done, but it tends to all work out. I don’t know what the future holds, but I know whose hands hold the future: Jesus Christ.”

Bishop-elect Sis said he will stay in Austin for a few weeks wrapping up loose ends and “clearing off my desk,” then he will make a retreat, which the church requires before a priest is ordained a bishop.

“I will move to San Angelo and hit the ground running. Pray for me and the people of San Angelo. Pray that God gives us the graces we need to carry out the mission of spreading the love of Jesus Christ,” he said.
Foundation establishes endowment fund in honor of Bishop Pfeifer

By Kathy Webster
Catholic Charitable
Foundation of San Angelo

SAN ANGELO — The Catholic Charitable Foundation for the Roman Catholic Diocese of San Angelo is pleased to announce the establishment of "The Most Reverend Michael D. Pfeifer, OMI, Bishop of San Angelo Honorary Endowment Fund."

A generous anonymous donor has made a major gift to the foundation to establish this endowment fund. With the endowment, the donor wishes to honor Bishop Pfeifer and thank him for his 28 years of unselfish service to the Diocese of San Angelo, and also believes there are others in the diocese who will want to do likewise. Additional gifts have been received and the endowment fund has grown to $189,000.

"I have never been around anyone who exemplified a more caring and thoughtful interest in people," said the donor when he offered the donation to create the fund. "Bishop Pfeifer has touched many lives in the Diocese as a servant of Christ. He has served as a great leader, a great teacher and a great pastor for the diocese. He has also been an articulate and courageous advocate for unborn children and other pro-life causes as well as the needy, indigent and disadvantaged in West Texas."

The Board of Trustees of the Catholic Charitable Foundation for the Diocese of San Angelo is very appreciative of the gifts and would like to provide others the opportunity to also honor Bishop Pfeifer by making a gift to his honorary endowment fund that will benefit our diocese in perpetuity.

The beneficiaries of the endowment as designated by Bishop Pfeifer are the three Catholic Schools in our diocese, seminarian education and future charitable and building projects in parishes that need financial assistance for such projects.

A gift to the endowment fund is a gift that will provide financial support to these causes forever. Those wishing to donate can send a check in any amount made payable to the Catholic Foundation of San Angelo, PO Box 1829, San Angelo, TX 76902-1829 or use the secure Online Giving portal on the Foundation website: www.catholicfoundationsanangelo.org.

Potential donors who would like additional information may contact Kathy Webster at 325-698-7206 or kjwebster@sbcglobal.net or our treasurer, Regina Bodiford at 325-651-7500 or rbodiford@catholicfoundationsanangelo.org.

The Foundation is a 501(C)(3) organization so all donations are tax deductible in accordance with IRS regulations.

PRAYERS

(From 4)

Tuesday, January 21, at Sacred Heart Cathedral, to offer thanksgiving for the blessings God has bestowed upon our diocese during the past years, to thank God for the privilege of being your shepherd. I also want to thank you for your generosity, support and prayers during the 28 ½ years that I have been your bishop. All are invited to this Mass of Thanksgiving and Farewell which will be followed by a reception in the gymnasium of Sacred Heart Cathedral.

I ask you to continue to pray for our diocese each day and to pray for our new bishop and to pray for me. What the future holds for me is still uncertain. I trust that the good Lord will continue to guide me as the good Lord has guided me through all of my priestly and episcopal years of service. I don’t know what the future holds, but I do know whose hands hold the future and that is enough for me.

As we look to a new beginning under the guidance of our new shepherd, Bishop Sis, let us move ahead with much confidence, hope, and trust knowing that our kind God who has been good and gracious in the past will bestow loving care upon us as we strive to be God’s children and disciples of His Son, Jesus Christ, as we follow the example of Mary, our Mother.

I thank you for your prayers and support.

ANNOUNCEMENT

(From 1)

at 5 p.m., Sunday, January 26, at the Cathedral of the Sacred Heart, 19 S. Oakes Street, in San Angelo.

As we look to a new beginning under the guidance of our new shepherd, Bishop Sis, let us move ahead with much confidence, hope, and trust knowing that our kind God who has been good and gracious in the past will bestow loving care upon us as we strive to be God’s children and disciples of His Son, Jesus Christ, as we follow the example of Mary, our Mother,” said Bishop Pfeifer.

A Mass of Thanksgiving for Bishop Pfeifer will be celebrated at 6:30 p.m., Tuesday, January 21, 2014, at Sacred Heart Cathedral, 19 S. Oakes.

Bishop-elect Sis was raised in Bryan, Texas, and attended the University of Notre Dame, where he received his undergraduate degree in Philosophy in 1982. He also studied Theology at the North American College in Rome, receiving degrees from the Pontifical Gregorian University in 1985 and the Alphonsian Academy of the Pontifical Lateran University in 1990. He was ordained a priest for the Diocese of Austin in 1986 by Bishop John E. McCarthy and was appointed vicar general and Moderator for the Curia for the Diocese of Austin in June 2010, by Bishop Joe S. Vasquez, a former priest of the Diocese of San Angelo.

ORACIONES

(Para 4)

En mayo del 2012 les había notificado que, de acuerdo con la política de la Iglesia, el 18 de mayo del 2012 al completar 75 años de edad, le ofrecí mi resignación como Obispo Diocesano a nuestro Santo Padre. Después de un año y siete meses, el Papa Francisco, de acuerdo con la política de la Iglesia, ha aceptado mi resignación y nos ha mandado a un nuevo Obispo.

Al prepararnos para este cambio les invito a acompañarme para una Misa especial el martes, 21 de enero del 2014 a las 6:30 p.m. en la Catedral del Sagrado Corazón, para ofrecer acción de gracias por las bendiciones que Dios nos ha concedido sobre nuestra diócesis durante los años pasados, para dar gracias a Dios por el privilegio de haber sido su pastor. También quiero darles gracias por su generosidad, apoyo y oraciones durante los 28 ½ años que he sido su Obispo. Todos son invitados a esta Misa de Acción de Gracias y Despedida que será seguida por una recepción en el gimnasio de la Catedral.

Les pido que continúen rezando por nuestra diócesis cada día y de rezar por nuestro nuevo Obispo y rezar por mí. Lo que el futuro contiene para mí aún está incierto. Confío que el buen Señor continuará a guiarme como Él lo ha hecho durante todos mis años sacerdotal y episcopales. No se que es lo que el futuro contiene para mí, pero lo que sí se es que en qué manos está mi futuro y eso es suficiente para mí.

Al mirar hacia un nuevo comienzo bajo la dirección de nuestro nuevo pastor, Obispo Sis, sigamos moviéndonos adelante con mucha confianza y esperanza, sabiendo que nuestro buen Dios quien ha sido bueno y misericordioso en el pasado nos concederá cuidado amoroso al esforzarnos a ser hijos de Dios y discípulos de Su hijo, Jesus Cristo, y al seguir el ejemplo de María, nuestra Madre.

Les doy las gracias por sus oraciones y apoyo.
St. Mary’s Student Center in College Station extends prayers to ‘Fr. Mike’

By Marcel LeJeune

As the saying goes, we stand on the shoulders of giants. If there are any giants in the history of St. Mary’s Catholic Center, then Msgr. Mike Sis is certainly one of them. Today he was named Bishop of San Angelo, by Pope Francis. As Rocco Palmo told me this morning on the phone, "Francis came to Aggieland."

Fr. Mike was assigned to St. Mary’s in the summer of 1992 (and made Pastor in 1993), along with Fr. Dean Wilhelm as Associate Pastor (now the Pastor of the biggest parish in the Austin Diocese - St. William). Fr. Mike quickly won the hearts of the students and parishioners, with his smile and welcoming personality (and the way he starts counting with his thumb during a homily). He also found out that the facilities were old and inadequate. We frequently had to have meetings outside, due to the tight space.

Fr. Mike led the effort, unequalled in the Austin Diocese at the time, to build a new Student Center, Chapel, and Activity Center. The campaign brought thousands of donors together and taught the staff at St. Mary how to form relationships with benefactors. Due to this success, St. Mary’s grew astronomically from the mid 90s into the new Millennium. When Fr. Mike arrived in the early 90s, the staff had four people. It now has more than 10 times that number!

Due to the first campaign’s resounding success we continued to expand and grow even bigger. Today, we are (once again) so big we have no more room in our buildings and are in a campaign to expand to a size once unthinkable.

Fr. Mike grew up in Bryan — which borders College Station, for those of you who are not local. He received his 1st Communion with his friend, and our current pastor, Fr. David Konderla. He attended Notre Dame and then entered the seminary after college. He studied at both the Gregorian and the Lateran in Rome. He was assigned to several parishes until he landed at St. Mary’s. Since his time in Aggieland he has been Vocation Director for the Austin Diocese, pastor at a large parish, and Vicar General. Known for being detailed-oriented and an extremely dedicated worker, Fr. Mike will frequently answer emails late at night and sometimes into the early morning hours. His work as the Vicar General of the Diocese of Austin has merely added to his reputation. Many consider him to be a model priest, which would explain why so many Aggies become priests and religious (135+) and we average around 10 students entering formation or seminary annually. The big wave started when he was pastor.

One of my best memories was when I was a student and he was a young priest (early 30s). I went to him struggling with my faith. I told him all the stupid things I had been doing. Somehow, he inexplicably told me to shape up and made me feel good at the same time. I walked out of his office feeling both a sense of purpose and happiness, knowing he had a keen pastoral touch, that thought with the mind of the Church. After I graduated we became friends. Once I started in campus ministry, he became a mentor to me.

Just a few weeks ago, he sent me his bio to post for our 100th Aggie Awakening Retreat Reunion and Conference. I wrote him back and told him it was the best bio I had read in a long time and that it brought a smile to my face.

It reads:

Msgr. Mike Sis is a priest of the Diocese of Austin. He served at St. Mary’s Catholic Center in 1989, and then from 1992 to 2005. He participated in various ways in all the Aggie Awakening retreats during those years.

He grew up in Bryan, Texas. He is the son of Ray and Jan Sis. His father was a professor in the Veterinary School at A&M, and his mother was the coordinator of religious education at St. Mary’s. When he was in the second grade, he was the first Holy Communion at St. Joseph’s Parish in Bryan, along with Fr. David Konderla.

While everybody knows that he loves the Aggies, he never attended Texas A&M. He received degrees from the University of Notre Dame, the Gregorian University and the Lateran University, and he was ordained a priest in 1986.

He was the pastor of St. Mary’s when the current student center was built, when we bought the Mud Lot, when Kappa Theta Beta was established, when Bonfire fell, when we applied for a federal license to get a radio station, when we first made those little maroon Aggie Catholic bumper stickers, when we did our first car raffle, when we got our first website, and when the Aggie football team had a Wrecking Crew defense.

After turning over St. Mary’s to the capable leadership of Fr. David Konderla, Fr. Mike served for a few years as the Vocation Director for the Diocese of Austin. He is currently serving as the Vicar General and the Moderator of the Curia of the Diocese of Austin. This is an administrative position where he oversees diocesan staff, assists Bishop Joe Vásquez, and learns something new every day.

He is an avid racquetball player, he is proud to be Catholic, and he considers the most precious treasure in his life to be his loving relationship with Jesus Christ.

St. Mary’s is excited and blessed to see Fr. Mike Sis join the rank of The Apostles. Please join us in praying for our former pastor and the soon-to-be Bishop of San Angelo, Michael Sis!

Gig ‘em Bishop Mike!

Marcel LeJeune is Assistant Director of Campus Ministry at St. Mary’s Catholic Center at Texas A&M University

San Antonio archbishop offers prayers for new bishop

Comment from Most Rev. Gustavo Garcia-Siller, MSpS, Archbishop of San Antonio, on the appointment of Msgr. Michael Sis to become the sixth Bishop of San Angelo:

I offer heartfelt congratulations to Bishop-designate Michael J. Sis. I am pleased that our Holy Father Pope Francis has appointed him as the new bishop of the Diocese of San Angelo. As metropolitan of the ecclesiastical province of San Antonio, which includes the San Angelo Diocese, I look forward to many years of working with Bishop-designate Sis in a collaborative relationship.

The experience and diverse background of Bishop-designate Sis make him a tremendous choice to lead the Diocese of San Angelo. He has served as a pastor in campus ministry at Texas A&M University, parish pastor, vocation director for the Diocese of Austin and currently serves as vicar general and moderator of the curia for that diocese.

I ask all in the Archdiocese of San Antonio to pray that God will bless and guide Bishop-designate Sis as he prepares for this important new role as shepherd of the Diocese of San Angelo. I offer him my support and affection, and wish him every success.

In addition, I also express my gratitude and thank Bishop Michael Pfeifer, OMI, whose resignation was accepted by the pontiff, for his decades of service to the church in West Texas, as well as the universal church. He has done an excellent job in the Diocese of San Angelo, and I have valued his skills as a leader and administrator. May the Lord bless him in his retirement.

Un abrazo y un saludo a todos y cada uno de los fieles de la Diócesis de San Angelo.
¡Felicidades!

First impressions

Msgr. Michael J. Sis, newly named bishop-designate of the Diocese of San Angelo, admitted at his news conference December 12 that it was only the second time he had ever been to San Angelo. When asked his early impressions on West Texas and its people, bishop-elect Sis gave his first impressions:

"The space is what is impressive to me, first of all; the large spaces. When I was driving here yesterday the sky was so beautiful. The expansiveness of space is very impressive. There is something very spiritual about that. The people impress me. Good, solid, hard-working citizens. Lovable people. The history of Catholicism is beautiful with the Indians and the Franciscan missions. The whole frontier mission of the church is admirable. But there is so much for me to learn because it is new territory for me."
Bishop Pfeifer:

‘I leave here with much gratitude in my heart’

Editor’s Note: Following are prepared remarks delivered by Bishop Michael D. Pfeifer, OMI, at a news conference December 12, 2013, to announce his resignation and the appointment of Bishop-elect Michael J. Sis as the sixth bishop of San Angelo.

“As I leave this office as Bishop for the Diocese of San Angelo, I indeed welcome with open arms and an open heart the open heart of all the people of the diocese, Bishop Michael Sis, and I ask you to do the same. I ask you all to give him your constant prayers and support. From my own experience, when we had to make these changes, please also give him your patience. I leave as your bishop with much gratitude in my heart for the many, many prayers and kindnesses you offered me. I am not sure what will happen in the future, there is much work still to be done, but it tends to all work out. I don’t know what the future holds, but I know whose hands hold the future: Jesus Christ. And that’s enough for me. Christ and his mother, Mary, have already taken care of me, and I trust they will continue to if you say a little prayer. Please also give this man, Bishop-designate Sis, your prayers

“We need to remember at this point in a transition, the real shepherd is Jesus Christ. The sheep are here but the main shepherd is always Jesus Christ. For some strange reason we human beings are chosen through a process guided by the Holy Spirit. We have human shepherds who come into the diocese, but we need to remember the diocese doesn’t belong to Mike Pfeifer, it didn’t belong to Joe Fiorenza, or any of the other bishops. We are the shepherds. And what a privilege and responsibility it is.”

2013 … what a year it was in West Texas

By Jimmy Patterson

It is a given that a country the size of the United States, with its 314 million inhabitants, can easily list its Top 10 news stories of the year. We do enough fascinating, horrifying and historic things to easily populate such an annual recounting.

It is quite another matter to expect a Catholic diocese the size of Ohio with just a few thousand Catholics to be able to have an easy time filling out a Top 10 stories of the year — just among Catholics in the Diocese of San Angelo.

But 2013 ... wow, what a year it was. The stories of the year were huge news-makers.

1. NEW BISHOP NAMED. Pope Francis names Rev. Michael J. Sis, Vicar General of the Diocese of Austin, as sixth bishop of San Angelo, replacing the Most Reverend Michael D. Pfeifer, OMI, who served as the Church’s shepherd for 28 1/2 years.

2. NEW POPE. A global appointment affecting the people of the Diocese of San Angelo? You better believe it. By the end of 2013, after just nine months as Pope, it was hard to remember a day for many Catholics that they didn’t pray for, hear of or talk about Pope Francis, a leader credited with bringing thousands back to the church. His compassion for the poor, afflicted, young and old — and seemingly all, for that matter — is nothing short of heart-warming inspiration.

3. CLOSED. Planned Parenthood shutters abortion facilities in both Midland and San Angelo. With Planned Parenthood in Abilene having closed in 2012, the diocese went from three abortion facilities to none in a year’s time.

4. MORE NEW SHEPHERDS. Rev. Innocent Eziefulie, Rev. Lorenzo Hatch, Rev. Sam Matthesen and Rev. Francis Onyezkuruzi were all ordained in June 8, 2013. Never before had the diocese welcomed as many priests at one ordination.

5. GONE BUT NOT FORGOTTEN. When Fr. Marek Stroba and Fr. Lawrence Mariasosai were reassigned by the Oblates of Mary Immaculate from Midland’s Our Lady of Guadalupe to serve in areas of greater need — Tijuana, Mexico, and Eagle Pass, Texas, respectively — the Oblates were without a priest in service to a parish in the diocese for the first time in 80 years. When Fr. Cornelius Scanlan, OMI, who had been in residence at Christ the King Retreat Center, retired and relocated to San Antonio, and when the resignation of Bishop Michael D. Pfeifer, OMI, was accepted by Pope Francis on December 12, 2013, the Oblates were but a memo-

DIOCESAN BRIEFS

Bread of Life

SAN ANGELO — Holy Angels will again host the Bread of Life Retreat/Youth 2000 weekend, January 24-26. The Franciscan Friars of the Renewal will lead the retreat.

For those who attended our last Bread of Life Retreat in 2012 you may remember that we almost ran out of room in the Parish Hall because of the large number of attendees - around 500. Please start planning now so you will be able to register early in case organizers are faced with having to limit registration. For more information, email Holy Angels at haed61@verizon.net

Monastery Jubilee


The Most Reverend Michael J. Sis, Bishop-elect of the Diocese of San Angelo, will be the main celebrant. All Priests attending are invited to concelebrate. (Please bring alb and stole.)

RSVP by Jan. 23. Phone: 325-853-1722. Email: desertcarmel@hotmail.com Please put “Jubilee” on the subject line.

Diocesan Conference Day

McNease Convention Center, San Angelo
February 8, 2014 9 am - 4 pm

“Zeal For The Mission”

The day will focus on different paths of discipleship and zeal in being “Bearsers of Good News.”

The Conference is open to everyone especially catechists, catechetical leaders and youth ministry leaders. Sessions include, “Fired Up! Ready to Go!” presented by keynote presenter Sr. Linda Bolinski, SSCM; “Seeing Life as Vocation,” presented by Sr. Bolinski, SSCM; “RCIA Rites and Dismissal,” presented by Carol Ann Hunt; “Solidarity: A Call to Live as One Family,” presented by Marcos Martinez, and “Acelerando con amor: Comprendiendo y aplicando las obras de misericordia espirituales y corporales,” presented by Sr. Elsa Garcia, CDP, and “On Your Mark ... Get Set ... Go!” by Sr. Bolinski.

Contact the Office of Education and Formation at 325-651-7500 for info.

Holy Land pilgrimage

When: April 2-11, 2014, Pilgrimage Cost: $3,550 (Single)

Package price includes the following:

- Meet at Ben Gurion Airport upon arrivals and departures.
- Three nights’ accommodation in Tiberias in double occupancy with breakfast, lunch and dinner.
- Two nights’ accommodation in Jericho in double occupancy with breakfast, lunch, and dinner.
- Three night’s accommodation in Bethlehem in double occupancy with breakfast, lunch, and dinner.
- Nine days sightseeing in a modern air-conditioned private bus.
- English-speaking government licensed Christian tour guide for arrival and all touring days.
- Entrance fees to places of interests while on tour in the Holy Land.

For more information contact Holy Redeemer 432-580-4295 Or Goodshepherd Travel 810-397-8669.

From the Editor

2013 ... what a year it was in West Texas

By Jimmy Patterson

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( Please See PATTERSON/22)
Biographies

Bishop-elect Michael J. Sis, sixth bishop of San Angelo

Rev. Msgr. Michael J. Sis is the Vicar General and the Moderator of the Curia for the Diocese of Austin. He was appointed by Bishop Joe S. Vasquez in June of 2010.

Msgr. Sis grew up in Bryan. He is the son of Raymond and Janice Sis. Born on January 9, 1960, he is the fourth of five children. His siblings are Susan Sis-Boyde of Georgetown; Valerie Bourque of Salado; Mark Sis of Broomfield, Colo., and Amy Short of Pearland. He has seven nieces and nephews and two great-nephews.

He attended St. Joseph Catholic School and Bryan Public Schools in Bryan. He graduated from Bryan High School in 1978. He earned an undergraduate degree in Philosophy in 1982 from the University of Notre Dame in South Bend, Ind., where he attended Moreau Seminary. He studied Theology at the Pontifical Gregorian University in Rome, receiving degrees from the Pontifical Lateran University in 1985 and the Alphonsian Academy of the Pontifical Lateran University in 1990. He was ordained a priest of the Diocese of Austin in 1986 by Bishop John E. McCarthy.

Msgr. Sis has served in a variety of roles in the Diocese of Austin. His first assignment was in Hispanic ministry at Cristo Rey Parish in East Austin. He assisted Bishop John E. McCarthy and Msgr. Edward C. Matocha in the administration of historic St. Mary Cathedral in downtown Austin. His longest term of service was in campus ministry at St. Mary Catholic Center at Texas A&M University in College Station, serving first as parochial vicar, then as pastor, for a total of 13 years. Archbishop Gregory M. Aymond then appointed him in 2006 as full-time Vocation Director for the Diocese of Austin. Then, after serving one year as pastor of the large suburban parish of St. Thomas More in Austin, he was named Vicar General and Moderator of the Curia by Bishop Joe S. Vasquez in 2010.

In his role as Vicar General and Moderator of the Curia, he assists Bishop Vasquez as coordinator of diocesan administration and as supervisor of the secretariat directors. His office is located at the diocesan Pastoral Center in Austin. The diocesan curia is the collective body of persons and offices assisting the diocesan bishop in governing the diocese.

Over the years, Msgr. Sis has served as a member of the Presbyteral Council, the Priest Personnel Board, the College of Consultants, the Vocation Team, the Permanent Diaconate Admissions Committee, and the Bishop's Advisory Council. He also served as Dean of the Bryan-College Station Deanery.

Some of the most formative experiences that have helped shape his life of Christian faith have been the following: the training he received from his parents at home; his participation as a teenager in the religious education and CYO programs of St. Anthony Parish in Bryan; volunteer service in Big Brothers/Big Sisters of America; his academic and seminary studies; a summer of volunteer missionary service in Tanzania, East Africa; working with Ethiopian refugees in Rome; teaching religion at Marymount International School in Rome; making the Spiritual Exercises of St. Ignatius of Loyola; celebrating the Catholic sacraments as a parish priest, especially Confession and the Eucharist; pastoral ministry with Hispanic immigrants in Texas; campus ministry with the students of Texas A&M; ecumenical and inter-religious collaboration; the Cursillo and Awakening retreats; assisting in the formation of seminarians; the good example of fellow priests; the influence of friends; and the experience of spiritual direction. He considers his most precious treasure to be his personal relationship with Jesus Christ.

Bishop Michael D. Pfeifer, OMI, fifth bishop of San Angelo

Written by Most Rev. Michael D. Pfeifer

I was born in Alamo, Texas in the Rio Grande Valley on May 18, 1937, as the eighth child of a family of eleven. Five days after my birth, on May 23, 1937, I was baptized at St. Joseph's Church in Alamo, Texas.

My early childhood days were spent on a farm. In this environment, I was accustomed to work at a young age. Though I enjoyed the work, there were the suffering of ups and the downs of living on a farm. The poverty of my family developed my sense of spiritual values at an early age. My parents worked very hard and the older children in the family looked after the younger ones. Since I was the eighth child, my brother and older sisters had a big influence on my life. There was a lot of caring and concern among us.

Though we were poor and a large family, my parents found the means to provide a Catholic education for all of us. I attended St. Joseph's School from first grade through eighth grade. Each school day, my brother and sisters and I would walk about two miles to school. After school hours many times, I assisted our parish priest with various jobs around the church. Then, walking home, I would attend to the farm chores waiting for me.

As a child, I was fascinated by the style of the Oblate priests who often visited my home. They gave me insight into people; they were a people's person and their styles were down to earth. I was inspired by their guidance and their priestly ways.

As time went on, I realized the priesthood would be the best means for me to assist and serve the people. My older brother, Ted, also served as a model for me.

In 1951, I entered the seminary at the age of thirteen at St. Anthony's Junior Seminary in San Antonio. There I completed my high school and junior college studies. In 1957, I entered the novitiate training for my spiritual development. I did my spiritual and novitiate training at La Lomita in Mission, Texas. This was a year dedicated to deep reflection and to take responsibility for my whole life. It brought me in closer contact with God.

Making my first vows as an Oblate of Mary Immaculate, on May 31, 1958, I began my three year course on philosophy at the Oblate College of the Southwest in San Antonio, Texas. Four years later in September, 1961, I pronounced my perpetual vows. I began the four year theology course, receiving clerical tonsure and minor orders the same year. In May 1954, I was raised to the sub-deaconate and diaconate orders. During these seven years I underwent intense study with very strict discipline.

On December 21, 1964, I was ordained an Oblate priest by the Most Rev. Stephen A. Leven. My ordination services took place at the Immaculate Conception Chapel of Oblate College. I celebrated my First Low Mass at 8:30 a.m., a Tuesday, in the chapel of Mount Sacred Heart Convent in San Antonio. My First Solemn Mass was held at St. Joseph's church in Alamo, Texas. My brother, Ted, served as the deacon of the Mass; my cousin, James Pfeifer, acted as the sub-deacon. Fr. Louis Schering, my cousin, served as an arch-priest for the Mass. A professor of Oblate College, Father George O'Connell, O.M.I.,
Every unborn child condemned to abortion has the face of the Lord

By Bishop Michael Pfeifer, OMI

“Every unborn child condemned unjustly to be aborted has the face of the Lord.” Pope Francis stressed these words recently during a meeting with hundreds of obstetricians/gynecologists who were in Rome for a special conference. Pope Francis pointed out that modern medicine has shown progress in finding new cures for diseases, but on the other hand, doctors find the danger that they might lose their identity as servants of life. The Holy Father reminded health professionals that “They are called to collaborate in the creation of new human lives. Yours is a unique vocation and mission which requires study, conscience, and humanity.”

Pope Francis pointed out that there is a widespread mentality of profits that leads to a culture of waste, a disposable culture, which enslaves the hearts and minds of many at a very high cost: It requires the elimination of human beings, especially if they are physically or socially weaker. The Pope told medical professionals that every fragile person one encounters is an invitation to recognize the face of Christ, and that the face of Christ can especially be seen in unborn children condemned to abortion as well as the elderly and the sick. Pope Francis insisted, “You cannot discard them.”

Since the Supreme Court legalized almost unlimited abortion in 1973 with its disastrous Roe v. Wade ruling, over 56 million babies have lost their lives at the hands of abortionists. That is more than the entire population of California, Oregon, Washington, Nevada and New Mexico combined. Sadly this means over one fourth of all babies conceived in the US since 1973 have been aborted.

Abortion is a huge business in the US. The biggest player in the abortion industry is Planned Parenthood, responsible for committing over 300,000 abortions each year. While promoting itself as a “women’s healthcare provider,” Planned Parenthood raked in over $542 million of our tax dollars in the last year alone.
Abortion represents 92% of their services to pregnant women. Sadly and disgustingly, Planned Parenthood is always pressuring its clinic directors to meet abortion quotas.

The battle we still face with the issue of abortion is huge and the battle is not easy. But, because of a courageous woman like Abby Johnson, who had a great love for innocent babies, we finally have the opportunity to make a decisive difference in the battle for life.

There is a terrible punishment and chastisement hanging over our country and the entire world. Worldwide, 50,000,000 babies are murdered each year in their mother’s wombs. Since 1984, aborted children number over 1.3 billion. That is about one sixth of the world’s current population. Their innocent blood cries to Heaven for vengeance. How long will our compassionate God tolerate this slaughter of the most innocent? In the United States, there are 1.21 million victims of abortion each year.

Our Catholic Church in its long tradition since the very beginning, has stressed the great evil and crime of abortion. Pope Pius XI far back in 1930 pointed out that there is never “a sufficient reason for excusing in any way the direct murder of the innocent. The life of each is equally sacred, and no one has the power, not even the public authority, to destroy it.” He also condemned the senseless argument of one who would say an innocent child is an unjust aggressor. The true aggressor is rather the abortionist who aggresses against the life of the innocent child—sadly with the permission of the mother. How can we ever in accord with right reason and our faith belief, as a society declare that the fertilized content of a woman’s uterus is somehow her enemy? Instead we stand up and declare “Babies are beautiful! Babies are good. Babies remind us of our humanness, our connectedness, our ability to share with one another. Babies are not the problem; rather, the problem is with those who fail to recognize the face of the Lord on each precious unborn, and would classify these little ones as aggressors. And how sad it is that many, many abortions are elective—

(Please See ABORTION/22)

Del Escritorio del Obispo

Cada niño no nacido, pero condenado injustamente a ser abortado, tiene el rostro del Señor

Por el Obispo Miguel Pfeifer, OMI

“Cada niño no nacido, pero condenado injustamente a ser abortado, tiene el rostro del Señor.” El Papa Francisco resaltó estas palabras recientemente durante una reunión con cientos de ginecólogos quienes estuvieron en Roma para una conferencia especial. El Papa Francisco señaló que hay progreso en la medicina moderna en la investigación de nuevos tratamientos para curar enfermedades. Por otro, sin embargo, registramos también el peligro de que el médico extravié la propia identidad de servidor de la vida. El Santo Padre les recuerda a los profesionales de cuidado de salud que son “llamados a colaborar en el nacimiento de nuevas vidas humanas. La vuestra es una singular vocación y misión, que necesita de estudio, de conciencia y de humanidad.”

Desde la decisión mortal de la Corte Suprema en 1973, dando permiso humano para matar al no nacido en cualquier etapa de desarrollo, las vidas de más de 55 millones de preciosos bebes han sido destruidos en nuestro país. La crueldad del aborto ocurre en Texas 81,500 veces cada año. El proteger al no nacido y trabajar para vencer el grave mal del aborto, más que nunca, es el tema pre-eminente de la vida. Esto significa que uno no puede hacer otros temas de la vida como educación o cuidado de salud moralmente equivalente a la destrucción deliberada de vida humana inocente. El Papa Benedicto ha llamado esto “la llave de [nuestra] entera existencia”.

Al marcar el 41º aniversario de la decisión de la Corte Suprema, más que nunca todo Católico, todos quienes dicen ser pro-vida, deben ponerse de pie, y no solamente rezar por el fin del aborto y protección del no nacido, sino participar aún mucho más activamente en los programas de pro-vida para proteger la vida humana preciosamente sellada con la imagen de Dios, comenzando con la concepción. Debemos enfatizar más y más que todos los temas de la vida están conectados, y como verdaderos católicos, somos pro-vida en cada etapa de vida.

Como su predecesor, el Papa Francisco condena la matanza del niño por nacer y en su encíclica reciente, La Alegria del Evangelio, condena el grave mal moral del aborto, y enfatiza la responsabilidad moral y sagrada de proteger la vida por nacer: “Entre esos débiles, que la Iglesia quiere cuidar con predilección, están también los niños por nacer, que son los más indefensos e inocentes de todos, a quienes hoy se les quiere negar su dignidad humana en orden a hacer con ellos lo que se quiera, quitándoles la vida y moviendo legislaciones para que nadie pueda impedirlo. Frecuentemente, para ridiculizar alegremente la defensa que la Iglesia hace de sus vidas, se procura presentar su postura como algo ideológico, oscurantista y conservador. Sin embargo, esta defensa de la vida por nacer está íntimamente ligada a la defensa de cualquier derecho humano. Supone la convicción de que un ser humano es siempre sagrado e inviolable, en cualquier situación y en cada etapa de su desarrollo. Es un fin en sí mismo y nunca un medio para resolver otras dificultades. Si esta convicción cae, no quedan fundamentos sólidos y permanentes para defender los derechos humanos, que siempre estarían sometidos a conveniencias circunstanciales de los poderosos de turno. La sola razón es suficiente para reconocer el valor inviolable de cualquier vida humana, pero si además la miramos desde la fe, “toda violación de la dignidad personal del ser humano grita venganza delante de Dios y se configura como ofensa al Creador del hombre”.

Todos sabemos que los centros de muerte de Planned Parenthood de nuestra diócesis se han ido, cerraron sus puertas, y gracias a Dios no tenemos estos centros para matar a los no nacidos. Planned Parenthood mata a los preciosos no nacidos en tres ciudades mayores de la (Mira OBISPO/23)
Editor’s Note

The Third Extraordinary General Assembly of the Synod of Bishops, October 5-19, 2014, will focus on “The Pastoral Challenges to the Family in the Context of Evangelization.”

In preparation for that global meeting of bishops, dioceses around the world are being asked to distribute the following questionnaire, which asks for your input on matters considered to be real situations experienced by people in a family. Responses will be used to gather information and concrete suggestions consistent with Catholic doctrine.

(Questionaire continues on Pages 12-14)

Upon completing your responses, please return by U.S. mail to:

Diocese of San Angelo
P.O. Box 1829
San Angelo, TX 76902

Attention: Synod of Bishops
Questionaire

Or in person to:

Diocesan Pastoral Center
804 Ford Street
San Angelo, Texas
b) Is the idea of the natural law in the union between a man and a woman commonly
b) Do unions which are not recognized either religiously or civilly exist? Are reliable sta-
known, accepted, rejected and/or criticized in areas outside the Church? What are the cultural
tistics available?

c) How widespread is the Church’s teaching in pastoral programmes at the national,
c) Are separated couples and those divorced and remarried a pastoral reality in your
diocesan and parish levels? What catechesis is done on the family?
particular Church? Can you approximate a percentage? How do you deal with this situ-
d) In what way have the local Churches and movements on family spirituality been able to

d) In cases where non-practicing Catholics or declared non-believers request the cele-
c) How successful have you been in proposing a manner of praying within the family
c) Is the idea of the natural law in the union between a man and a woman commonly
rate or develop in civil and Church institutions?
which can withstand life’s complexities and today’s culture?
accepted as such by the baptized in general?
d) Is there a law in your country recognizing civil unions for people of the same-sex

3. The Pastoral Care of the Family in Evangelization
a) What experiences have emerged in recent decades regarding marriage preparation?
a) What specific contribution can couples and families make to spreading a credible
What efforts are there to stimulate the task of evangelization of the couple and of
transmitting the faith?

b) To what extent — and what aspects in particular — is this teaching actually known,
the family? How can an awareness of the family as the “domestic Church” be promoted?

b) What pastoral care has the Church provided in supporting couples in formation and
b) Is the idea of the natural law in the union between a man and a woman commonly

4. Pastoral Care in Certain Difficult Marital Situations
a) Is cohabitation ad experimentum a pastoral reality in your particular Church? Can

f) What pastoral care has the Church provided in supporting couples in formation and
couples in crisis situations?

5. On Unions of Persons of the Same Sex
a) Is there a law in your country recognizing civil unions for people of the same-sex

b) Do unions which are not recognized either religiously or civilly exist? Are reliable sta-
towards both the State as the promoter of civil unions between persons of the same sex and the people involved

b) In those cases where the Church’s teaching is known, is it accepted fully or are

(continued on page 14)
Preparatory Document: Synod of Bishops on the Family 2014

(FROM 13)

b) How do parents in these situations approach the Church? What do they ask? Do they request the sacraments only or do they also want catechesis and the general teaching of religion?

c) How do the particular Churches attempt to meet the needs of the parents of these children to provide them with a Christian education?

d) What is the sacramental practice in these cases: preparation, administration of the sacrament and the accompaniment?

7. The Openness of the Married Couple to Life

a) What knowledge do Christians have today of the teachings of Humanae vitae on responsible parenthood? Are they aware of how morally to evaluate the different methods of family planning? Could any insights be suggested in this regard pastorally?

b) Is this moral teaching accepted? What aspects pose the most difficulties in a large majority of couple’s accepting this teaching?

c) What natural methods are promoted by the particular Churches to help spouses put into practice the teachings of Humanae vitae?

d) What is your experience on this subject in the practice of the Sacrament of Penance and participation at the Eucharist?

e) What differences are seen in this regard between the Church’s teaching and civic education?

f) How can a more open attitude towards having children be fostered? How can an increase in births be promoted?

8. The Relationship Between the Family and the Person

a) Jesus Christ reveals the mystery and vocation of the human person. How can the family be a privileged place for this to happen?

b) What critical situations in the family today can obstruct a person’s encounter with Christ?

c) To what extent do the many crisis of faith which people can experience affect family life?

9. Other Challenges and Proposals

a) What other challenges or proposals related to the topics in the above questions do you consider urgent and useful to treat?
St. Ann’s School: Building a community of faith through service

By Heather Bredimus

MIDLAND — Throughout the month of January, Catholic Schools are gearing up to celebrate National Catholic Schools Week. Students, parents and teachers will join together to celebrate the 40th anniversary of this annual event. During the week of January 26th through February 1st, as those in Catholic education prepare for this upcoming milestone, we reflect on the countless benefits a religious school experience provides.

For many parents, the greatest gift is that God is a part of each school day, incorporated into every subject. Students are encouraged to create a deep spiritual awareness and often enjoy a closer relationship with their teachers and priests.

When students were asked what they liked best about their school, responses included the wonderful teachers, lifelong friendships, prayer every morning, classroom management, and the welcoming, non-judgmental environment.

This year, the theme for National Catholic Schools Week is “Catholic Schools: Communities of Faith, Knowledge and Service.”

Most Catholic schools will hold special events that the community can join. Special activities include Masses, appreciation days, open houses and service projects.

Teachers are excited as students learn to give back to their community and the world through service projects as a part of their faith journey. Often service projects center around the Christmas season; however St. Ann’s Catholic School has done much to engage the student body in service projects throughout the entire year.

In September, the junior high students of “The House of St. Jude” collected canned foods for the St. Vincent de Paul Organization, and in October, raised over $300 while participating in the National Down Syndrome Society’s “Buddy Walk” on the campus of Midland College. “The House of St. Blaise” students from St. Ann’s Junior High volunteered their time to work the “Tic-Tac-Toe” booth at the 65th annual St. Ann’s Family Fair, while “The House of St. Bernadette” worked to clean up Reyes-Mashburn-Nelms Park for “Keep Midland Beautiful.”

The pre-teens have inspired our younger students to create their own community service projects as well. Preschoolers send artwork to “Meals on Wheels” throughout the year to be placed on trays and brighten their day. In December alone, the first grade classes collected baby clothes, diapers and blankets to hand deliver to the Life Center, while the fourth grades donated toys to “Janet’s Closet”, a charity named in honor of a pediatric nurse who passed away from cancer at Midland Memorial Hospital. In addition, the third grade classes “adopted” a family of five via the St. Vincent de Paul Society, gifting clothing, groceries and toys for Christmas.

Music and the arts are also part of a Catholic school education and there are many opportunities to serve for the glory of God. The Honor Choir enjoyed singing Christmas carols for the Museum of the Southwest at their “Christmas at the Museum” celebration this year, while the art teacher, Mrs. Jan Matchus, involved the entire school in creating snowflake blessings to hang at Midland Memorial Hospital. Such involvement provides St. Ann’s Catholic School the opportunity to create long-term Catholic identity projects in the community.

We are called to follow in Christ’s footsteps, to learn and model our lives from Jesus’ works and words. Helping students learn more about and live their faith is what Catholic schools are all about. Together, we are building communities where faith is active, positively influencing the lives of many.

Please contact your local Catholic school for more information about enrollment opportunities and special events being held this week.

Angelo Catholic to mark National Catholic Schools week, Jan. 26-Feb. 1

By Lucy Thomas
Principal
Angelo Catholic School

SAN ANGELO — Angelo Catholic School is set to mark National Catholic Schools Week by celebrating the many things which Catholic Schools do well. The theme for “Catholic Schools Week is Catholic Schools: Communities of Faith, Knowledge, and Service.” This theme encompasses concepts that are at the heart of Catholic education. Schools are communities in and of themselves; however, they also belong to larger communities, i.e., home, parish, city, and nation.

Across the world, Catholic school students embody service. Angelo Catholic School students are no different. Recently, ACS 4K students Blaine Belcher and Jaxson Hunter represented the ACS student body when they presented Sandra Franke, Director of The Pregnancy Help Center of the Concho Valley, with a check for over $1,600. The money was collected at the weekly Masses in which the students plan and serve. Students also make monthly trips to Baptist Memorial to play games or lead a craft creation. Students, too, collect canned goods for the poor and gifts for the Baby Jesus, which are donated to the Pregnancy Help Center. Some students create cards with messages like, “We are praying for you and your baby,” which are utilized at the Pregnancy Help Center.

Students also created cards for Bishop Pfeifer, which were presented to him at the Christmas Mass in December. The cards carried messages of love and thanks for Bishop Pfeifer’s time of protecting and leading his flock – us!

Therefore, in early January, ACS students begin creating cards utilizing the new logo and thanking those members in our community. ACS students strive to follow the words of Blessed John Paul II, “True holiness does not mean a flight from the world; rather, it lies in the effort to incarnate the Gospel in everyday life, in the family, at school and at work, and in social and political involvement,” as they try to make a difference in the world.

This year, the 40th Anniversary of National Catholic Schools Week, is especially exciting, as Bishop-elect Sis will be ordained and installed on Monday – Celebrating our Community. On that day, ACS students will celebrate the larger, diocesan community as they welcome and serve at the Ordination.

Tuesday – Celebrating ourStudents – Students will participate in a Living Rosary.

Wednesday – Celebrating our Nation – Students will invite military members from Goodfellow and community service personnel to a tea honoring them.

Thursday – Celebrating Vocations – Students will celebrate their vocations as Catholic School students by participating in a Science Fair. There will be an Open House and Awards Assembly that evening.

Friday – Celebrating our Faculty, Staff, and Volunteers – Students will write cards and create gifts for their families to thank them for sending the students to Catholic school. Faculty and staff will enjoy a catered lunch.

Much of what happens at YOUR Catholic school in San Angelo is because of the generosity of the people in the Diocese. Thank you for your prayers, your time, and your talent. And, please, keep us in your prayers, as you are always in ours.
The Angelus

The blessings, trials of vocations to the priesthood

By Bishop Michael Pfeifer, OMI

As all parents know, their vocation is filled with many blessings, and at the same time, there are many trials. Parenting can be described as a “life of agony and ecstasy.”

In their good moments, children bring feelings of richness and joy to the lives of parents. However, when they misbehave, they can challenge their parents to remain faithful to the standards of behavior they have set for themselves and to respond in the most helpful way possible. From time to time, children bring parents such uncertainty that there is nowhere to turn, except to lean on God for assurance and encouragement. It is during these times of trial that parents grow the most.

Parenthood packs a rich abundance of living into a few wonderfully hectic years. In the loving intimacy of marriage, a couple blends their miraculous human endowment and generate with God new life. Then within the short span of about twenty years, parents nurture this life from a condition of complete parental dependency to the physical, emotional, intellectual and spiritual maturity that enables their children to go out on their own into the adult world.

Since the beginning of time, parenting has always been a challenging vocation, a vocation that is at the heart of family and society. Parents need to work for and build on the positive qualities they see in their children, and to know how important, how worthwhile their vocation is. Christian parents need to turn often to the ideal parents, Mary and Joseph, for their assistance and to imitate their example. Mary and Joseph were entrusted to be the parents of the most unique person who ever walked this earth. Their son, Jesus Christ, gives all parents the grace and strength they need to carry out their vocation of parenting. It is by imitating these good parents, Mary and Joseph, and so many other saints who were parents, that today’s parents can receive inspiration and encouragement to fulfill their critical and important role of parenting in our world.

When God calls you to a vocation to Catholic single life

By Bishop Michael Pfeifer, OMI

We believe that God calls each person to a distinctive state of life in which the person can reach holiness. Through our baptism we are all called to have an intimate relationship in holiness with God - Father Son and Holy Spirit. God has created the human person to love and serve God in a specific vocation, and the fulfillment of this vocation is eternal happiness.

Because of their great shortage, we pray often for more vocations to priesthood and religious life.

And, at times we also offer prayers for those who are preparing for marriage and those who have joined their lives together in the sacrament of matrimony. Seldom though, do we pray for people who are called to the Catholic single life.

Based on recent surveys, more and more people hear the call to Christ as a single person.

One poll indicates that more than four out of every ten adults in the United States are not married. In 1999 there were 72 million single people of whom 42 million had never married.

While we as a church have given much effort and time to the vocation of priesthood, religious life and married life, we have to humbly admit that we have not paid enough attention to those who are choosing the single vocation. As not enough attention is paid to those who are single, they can easily fall into the trap of self-centeredness and an economic mode of thinking. What single people need from the church is to be acknowledged in a positive light and to stress the great contribution that singles can make to the church and society.

First and foremost the church needs to present Jesus to singles as their role model. Jesus was single and Jesus as a model new way. The church should encourage singles to see their own calling as allowing them to be single in imitation of Christ realizing that they are witnessing true discipleship in the midst of the world.

The vocation of the single Catholic is to represent Christ wherever they are and whatever they do.

Single people need to have a strong spiritual life centered on Christ and sustained by the sacramental life of the church. The church needs to listen to single people and to discover what are the particular needs of their vocation. The church can assist singles with their innate need to love and to be loved by helping them find fulfillment in their spiritual life, and by providing opportunities for them to meet other singles in support groups and in ministry.

To assist our single people I strongly recommend our parishes to form groups to which singles can belong. Perhaps a city-wide single group could be formed in those areas where there are several parishes in close proximity. This is a concrete way of letting single people know the church is interested in them. The church should invite singles to be active members in the church and to participate fully in the life of the church.

Solidaridad con los ancianos

Por el Obispo Miguel Pfeifer, OMI

Es fácil olvidar a las personas que se han dado y que han trabajado para ayudarnos a ser como somos hoy. Estos son los ancianos que han sacrificado para hacer un mundo mejor. En este artículo comparto con ustedes algunas reflexiones sobre los ancianos que fue tomado de Misal Mensual de Agosto 2001.

Cualquiera sean las razones, la cruda realidad es que crece el numero de ancianos que han quedado solos y abandonados. Pero no debemos olvidar los sacrificios y penalidades que soportaron los ancianos: raramente tenían las facilidades de que gozamos hoy, ni las ayudas mecánicas y electrónicas de que disponemos en casa y en el trabajo. Han sudado muchos años para ganarse la vida y la de su familia. La medicina estaba mucho menos avanzada que hoy y eran corrientes las enfermedades mortales y epidemias que les diezmaban sus hijos. La vida era muy dura y los ha envejecido antes de tiempo. Más que dinero, los ancianos necesitan cuidados y atención; alguien que los visite y los escuche, alguno a quien decir una palabra o que los invite a comer o a tomar una taza de te. Con frecuencia les faltan los sencillos medios que les ayuden en sus necesidades materiales: alguien que les lleave un recado o les eche una mano en los trabajos domésticos de cada día. O, quizás necesitan simplemente el consuelo de la presencia de alguien o que esté cerca o les lea algunas noticias del periódico.

No es raro que se vean abandonados de sus mismos hijos. El cuarto mandamiento va más allá de la obediencia a los padres siendo niños y el mandamiento de Dios de amar a los demás nos compromete a seguir amándolos en su ancianidad.
Diocese of San Angelo
Financial Report
(Year ending June 30, 2013)
The fourth (and final) period of the Council began September 14, 1965 and the bishops were awaiting Paul’s opening address. He had spoken of the crisis of obedience during the recent months and many wondered if he was giving a message to the Council.

But his address was totally positive, an exhortation to charity and union of hearts and minds that abstained from any direct reference to concrete issues at the Council. At the very end he made two surprise announcements: 1) he would create the Synod of Bishops 2) he would go to the United Nations during this period, where he would echo the voices of the bishops in proclaiming the message of “concord, justice, fraternal love, and peace among all human beings, who are loved by God and gifted with good will.” The address seemed to be a vote of confidence in the Council and gave the bishops a much-needed shot of energy and determination to carry on to the end.

The following day the schema on religious liberty was again presented and the same arguments for and against were presented. Cardinal Benjamín de Arriba y Castro gave one of the shortest and most blunt arguments against the schema: “Only the Catholic Church has the right and the duty of preaching the Gospel. Therefore, proselytism of Catholics by non-Catholics is illicit and insofar as the common good allows, must be impeded not only by the Church but also by the state.”

This stance was not accepted by the Council. Cardinal Urbani said: “The civil right to religious liberty is for certain inscribed in the teaching that the holy Church must now and in the future proclaim to the world—not only because it is timely, but because it is true.” The reality is that religion cannot be imposed on people. With the addition of the bishops from Brazil, the pendulum had swung in favor of the schema. The vote was 1,997 to 224 in favor. Once again this revealed that the minority was indeed a minority, pit bulls that just wouldn’t let go. The final vote after further revision was 1,967 to 249.

On September 21, a revised version of On the Church in the Modern World was presented for voting. After further revision was 1,967 to 249.

(Please See VATICAN II/20)

### El Cuarto Período (1965), 2 Parte

Por Fr. Joseph Uecker, C.P.P.S.

El cuarto (y final) período del Concilio empezó el 14 de septiembre de 1965 y los obispos estaban esperando el discurso de apertura del Papa Pablo. Había hablado de la crisis de obediencia en los meses pasados y muchos pensaban que estaba dándole al Concilio un mensaje.

Pero este discurso fue totalmente positivo, una exhortación a la caridad y la unión de corazones y mentes que no tenía ninguna referencia directa a los asuntos concretos en el Concilio. Al terminar hizo dos anuncios de sorpresa: 1) iba a crear el Sínodo de Obispos 2) iba a visitar las Naciones Unidas durante este período, donde iba a hacer eco de las voces de los obispos al proclamar el mensaje de “concordia, justicia, amor fraternal, y paz entre todos los seres humanos, que son amados por Dios y dotados de buena voluntad.” El discurso parecía ser una declaración de confianza en el Concilio y dio a los obispos una inyección necesitada de energía y determinación de seguir adelante.

El día siguiente el esquema sobre la libertad religiosa fue presentado de nuevo y los mismos argumentos en favor y en contra fueron presentados. El Cardenal Benjamín de Arriba y Castro dio uno de los argumentos más corto y directo en contra el esquema: “Solo la Iglesia católica tiene el derecho y el deber de predicar el evangelio. Por eso, proselitismo de católicos por los no-católicos es ilícito y en cuanto permite el bienestar común, tiene
next role. The amount of correspondence since December 12 has been surprisingly high, through emails, texts, phone calls, letters and cards, and people wanting to see me one last time before I leave Austin. You combine the already demanding job that I have now as Vicar General and the Moderator of the Curia with trying to do the necessary preparatory work for becoming a bishop — like the coat of arms, clothing, the insignia — and then you combine that with trying to learn something about the Diocese of San Angelo, I’m faced these days with the limitation if time. The amount of time between the announcement on December 12 and the ordination on January 27 is very quick. One week of that is retreat, which I’ll be doing from January 4-10 in San Antonio. That’s been the central core of my experiences these days. It’s been a joyful time. I’ve been tremendously encouraged by the support of fellow members of the Church, friends and family, and I’m very grateful for that support. I’ve been contacted by some of the priests, and seminarians, and by some of the lay faithful, as well.

Angelus: You have been warmly welcomed?

Bishop-elect Sis: Everyone has been very welcoming, and I’m grateful for that. I had an interesting conversation with somebody from the San Angelo Diocese who grew up there and now lives in Austin. She’s a friend. She gave me two gifts to prepare me. One of them was a bag of Julio’s Tortilla Chips, and the other was a can of Prestone Windshield De-icer. She said, ‘You’ll need both of these.’ I’ve been receiving lots of support from Bishop Michael Pfeifer. He’s been staying in touch by telephone and email and regular mail. He’s been very gracious and very helpful in helping me to prepare to come and serve.

Angelus: How will a new bishop affect the Catholics in the Diocese of San Angelo?

Bishop-elect Sis: I think in the lived experience of most Catholics, it doesn’t make a large difference. They go to their local church, they have their pastor, they have the Sacraments, and they have their friends. They go on about their lives, whoever the bishop is. I think that’s important to recognize: that their lives continue. I think another thing to keep in mind is that I’m new to the area, and new to being a bishop. To me it’s going to be a learning and growing experience. I will be affected by and shaped by this job. The way I exercise my ministry five years from now, or 10 years from now, will probably be slightly different from how I exercise it this spring, because this spring I will be a neophyte to this role. There are things I need to learn that I haven’t learned yet, and that’s important for the people in the diocese to realize. When I look back on my years in the priesthood, I can see each of the places where I served molded and shaped me as a priest. I can anticipate that happening in the future. I will be molded and shaped by the people and the Church in San Angelo.

Angelus: One of the priorities you mentioned at your December news conference concerned your hope that people can discuss the faith fluently; that they learn enough so they can talk about it intelligently. Is it a problem that people discuss the faith without proper knowledge and perhaps state things that are not entirely factual?

Bishop-elect Sis: I think it’s more that people often don’t feel confident to say anything about it. When their teenage son comes home from public high school and they say “My classmate said blah-blah-blah about Catholics,” they don’t know what to say in return. I want to empower people to have something to say, because I think that’s a common issue for Catholics everywhere. They’re afraid, they’re not confident enough in their ability to articulate the faith. I think the Church will fulfill its mission more fully if Catholics gain the confidence to articulate the faith. I don’t know if that’s the case in San Angelo, but I’ve seen it wherever I’ve been.

Angelus: Talk a little, if you will, about your discernment process after you received the call of your appointment from the apostolic nuncio, Archbishop Vigano.

Bishop-elect Sis: When the nuncio called me to tell me the Holy Father had appointed me the next Bishop of San Angelo, I asked him if I could pray about it and get back to him and he said yes you can, call me tomorrow. Part of my prayer included the Office of Readings on the morning of Tuesday, December 3. That had a significant impact on my own response. It’s from the Memorial of St. Francis Xavier and it’s from the second reading from the Office of Readings, from a letter by St. Francis Xavier. He speaks of people who will need to settle their account with God for their learning in the talents entrusted to them. God has given each one of us talents and education, and God will hold us accountable for how we put those to good use. It goes on to say what God is saying to them, that they would forget their own desires and human affairs and give themselves over entirely to God’s will and His choice. They would cry out, ‘Lord I am here. What do you want me to do? Send me anywhere you like.’ Those are powerful words. St. Francis Xavier went to Asia from Western Europe to spread the Gospel. Those words, “Lord send me anywhere you like” were instrumental in helping to guide me in my response to the appointment.

Angelus: Did you read that particular reading before or after the call from the nuncio?

Bishop-elect Sis: I read them after. I got the call on December 2 and I didn’t read these until the morning of December 3. It was very instrumental for me in solidifying my discernment. Another thing that happened after I got the call is that I spoke with my spiritual director, who has been guiding me for many years. I think he started serving as my spiritual director in 1989. It’s been a long time. He knows me well. He’s a very wise and holy priest. One of the first things I did after this call was I went into our chapel in our pastoral center and I prayed with my Bible in the presence of the Lord. Then I went to see my spiritual director and we talked it through, then I applied to my own situation some tools that I’ve given to people over the years for discerning major decisions. In my work with young people, I was often involved in helping people discern their life direction in major decisions in life. I applied those tools myself in thinking through my response, and they were very helpful in helping to clarify my response. Those were the key things I did: going to the chapel to pray, turning to Scripture, talking to my Spiritual Director, applying these tools for discernment, taking it to prayer to the Eucharist in Mass, and doing the regular prayers in Church. Through all of those the message was very consistent and clear that I should say yes to this. I didn’t say yes with the first phone call. I needed to go through that prayer process. So I said yes on the morning of December 3, and we announced it on December 12. I didn’t even tell my Mom and Dad until after it was announced at the Vatican. One other thing that came to mind immediately when I got the call was that San Angelo has St. Michael the Archangel as its patron saint. The patronage of St. Michael was also a source of reassurance for me.

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In February: Part 2 of Bishop-elect Michael J. Sis’ talk with The Angelus.

VATICANO II

(Para 18)

promoción de la paz, y básicamente quitó la distinción entre una guerra justa y una guerra injusta. Hasta el Cardenal Ottaviani dijo: “La guerra tiene que ser prohibida.” Pero algunos dijeron que hasta en nuestro día, una guerra justa es posible. Carlín dijo que la objeción por conciencia era ilegítima.

La mayoría estaba en favor de la posición que era innormal producir y poseer armas de destrucción de masas, pero no todos estaban de acuerdo. Pero los obispos estaban unidos que debe haber algún tipo de cuerpo internacional para monitorear y hacer límites tocante a lo que las naciones produzcan.

Pfeifer: And I talk mainly of lay people’s desire for instant gratification and I’m sad to say that’s growing, too. We have a few instant things back then, instant coffee for example, but now, with instant communication, gee whiz, the developments in communications have been tremendous. Nobody dreamed we would all have cell phones, all these computers, and it’s led to Americans wanting instant happiness in their lives and they usually seek it in the wrong ways. The Holy Father pointed that out. Pope Paul VI pointed out that the great drama of our time is the disconnect between faith and culture or between the gospel and culture. It was a concern then and it’s an even bigger distance today. The whole purpose of preaching the gospel is to bring faith and gospel and the culture together. That’s what Jesus did, he came into our culture and brought the human and the divine together. He did that in His person. Our challenge today is to bring secular and sacred together but the gap keeps getting wider and wider.

Angelus: What are some of the things we’ve had to celebrate most over last 25 years that you’d like to recall?

Pfeifer: I hope, Number one, that we’ve grown in a deeper understanding in the mystery of Christ in our lives and how we share in the paschal mystery of Christ, especially in the field of liturgy and education, and how we develop our ministries. We want to express that too, in the elements we are given in family life and marriage. Family life is the cell of the Church along with marriage in society. That’s where I give a lot of strong focus. That area is getting more difficult all the time with the breakdown of marriage, and families falling apart.

Angelus: What about more physical aspects of your 25 years here?

Pfeifer: I am satisfied, but also the efforts of our priests and so many thousands of lay ministers, women and men who have helped us reach out and encourage people to live their Catholic faith and in the process drawn in new members. Every year I’ve been here there’s been continual growth in the Catholic population. I judge this from what I know through the RCIA process. We do have some slippage but we pick up a good number every year. I judge it by the Rite of Election on the first Sunday of Lent; there’s always about 250 that come in; always a good number looking to grow the Catholic Church, and we also increase in numbers through baptism.

Angelus: What about the biggest challenges you’ve had to overcome since coming here?

Pfeifer: There have been certain priest personnel problems on the negative side; we had a priest take his life, the sexual abuse problem, although it wasn’t very strong in our diocese, mainly there were some cases from the past that we had to deal with and that was a very disheartening moment, pulling down our energy. About 12 years ago we had a financial crisis when one of our trusted individuals was syphoning off funds. It was hard to accept the financial loss that was there, but also the breach of trust. We’ve seen tragedies in our families, I can remember a plane crash that took five members of one family in a terrible accident. Mistreatment through abuse and violence has always been a negative and it has led me to want to do more through the drug efforts we have here and in Midland and other places. We’ve also worked here and in other communities to decrease the abuse of children.

Angelus: What greater issues are we faced with that extend beyond diocesan boundaries that have been and continue to be a concern such as abortion, immigration and the economy?

Pfeifer: All three. Number one would be pro life, respecting the dignity and sacredness that comes out of the book of Genesis. Sadly through the years three abortion centers have come into our diocese. Try to give a lot of emphasis to counteract that.

We’ve tried to develop recently a diocesan plan for the unborn.

The whole question of immigration today is a huge one. Those are the major issues plus the secularization of society. Secular values can be good but when the secular takes over its almost like you exclude the divine and when that happens we’re in deep trouble. It goes back to what Pope Paul VI said about the chasm between the Gospel and culture and that’s widening in so many ways. Drugs must also be included among the most challenging issues.

Angelus: What’s left to be done?

Pfeifer: Basically I leave it up to the Lord to keep working to the best of my ability in the time I have left. What’s left is to strengthen what we’re doing. Working on families, strengthening them; vocations, bringing the true meaning of respect for life, and working to overcome some of these major issues in societies. The Gulf between faith and culture. Working on drug culture, education. But I would like to end by saying the focus is on the spiritual. It’s getting people, especially young people, to be more committed to Christ and living His Gospel. That’s how I would sum it up. What’s left is in the hands of the Lord. I like to use the image we didn’t use...
25 years ago, an image become more popular in the Church: “We’re all coworkers in the vineyard of the Lord. We’re open to people who come in to work together, not just drink the wine that is there but to work according to our gifts.”

Angelus: Do you think about retirement? Pfeifer: It crosses my mind. I don’t give it a lot of thought but I know it’s coming. In the future.

One year prior to this new assignment as Provincial of the Oblates, I spent two months in Rome as one of a select few rewriting the Oblate Rule of Life which had not been updated since 1966. The new edition, entitled Constitutions and Rules, was published in June 1982.

I was reappointed for a second term as Provincial by the Superior General of the Oblates in July, 1984. This appointment came after a consultation of 150 priests and brothers of the province, which comprised the southern states of the U.S., Mexico and Zambia, in Africa. Just one year before this appointment, I prepared the foundation for the new Oblate mission in Zambia. In my second term as Provincial, I administered the mission’s activities from the Provincial headquarters in San Antonio.

The biggest event of my life was yet to come: On June 4, 1985, I was appointed by Pope John Paul II to become the Bishop of the Diocese of San Angelo. The appointment was announced in Washington, D.C., by Msgr. Eugenio Sbarboro, charge of affairs at the Vatican's apostolic nunciature.

The appointment was a humbling experience. As I wrote the Holy Father, I felt very humble concerning my appointment. I felt unworthy in many ways, but I trusted the good Lord and He gave me many gifts with which to serve the people. The appointment was from the Lord, and I accepted it gladly. I was happy to be with the people of San Angelo and the diocese.

My ordination as Bishop took place on July 26, 1985. An estimated 3,000 West Texans flocked to the San Angelo Coliseum to witness my ordination as the fifth bishop of San Angelo. The coliseum was transformed into a cathedral for the public’s rare opportunity to see an Episcopalian ordination Mass.

The evening was highlighted by the ordination, which was conducted about 90 minutes into the two-hour ceremony. Bishop Flores was the principal celebrant and consecrator, and the Most Rev. John Fitzpatrick of Brownsville and Joseph Fiorenza from Houston were concelebrants and co-consecrators. Fiorenza was Bishop of San Angelo until February 17, The Rev. Pío Laghi, Apostolic Pro-Nuncio and Pope John Paul II’s ambassador to the United States was also present.

I, as the new “Shepherd” of West Texas, lead a flock of 72,000 Catholics. The area included 30 counties where about 75 priests serve 50 parishes and 3 missions. I join 88 bishops who are members of religious orders in the United States — about one-fifth if the nation's more than 400 Bishops.

The first thing I tried to do as Bishop of San Angelo was to give myself time to know the people and the reality they live in. I don't really know how to be bishop, but I know Christ had led me to be a servant leader and that I strive to be. I will always strive to serve all the people as a servant-leader.

As I review my life, I see the wisdom of the poor in mission. However, my stay in Mexico was an experience. It helped me grow as a person, and I was able to master the Spanish language. I learned about life, love and warmth; the people helped me.

In 1976, I was asked to become the superior of the Oblate community for all of Mexico, directing the community life of the Oblate Fathers in Mexico and Oaxaca. The time spent in serving the needs of the Oblate Fathers was a good preparation for the future.

In 1981, I became Provincial for the Southern Province which consists of 149 Oblates, 30 of these in Mexico. Leaving Mexico was a significant change for me. I went through reversal shock. I had to make a lot of adaptations and changes, a lot of adjusting and learning, but now I feel I have a better understanding and knowledge of the community. I left it in the hands of Our Lady of Guadalupe. If God wanted it, it would work well.

One year prior to this new assignment as bishop, bishops normally offer their resignation and in most cases it is accepted when you turn 75. Maybe a year from now I’ll think more about it because I’ll just have one more year left. Where will I be and what will I do? I think about it, pray about it and as I get closer, do some consultations. My health and energy have been good; not the same as 5, 10 or 25 years ago, but still good. The demands of the ministry are much greater than they were 25 years ago. It just grows and grows and is compounded, especially because of this instant way of communication we have today. My desk work grows and grows, but the bureaucracy is getting more demanding all the time.

But mainly I have a message of gratitude to the people for 25 years. When a leader celebrates 10, 15, 25 or 40 years, I think what we do is celebrate more the entire Church because it depends on not only the bishop but on hundreds and even thousands of people. Hopefully the one who sits in this chair has been able to guide it in a strong pastoral way.
ABORTION

(From 10)

done by women supported by men for financial and social reasons.

Like his predecessor, Pope Francis condemns the killing of the unborn and his recent encyclical, The Gospel of Joy, condemns the grave moral evil of abortion, and stresses the moral and sacred responsibility to protect all unborn life:

“Among the vulnerable for whom the Church wishes to care with particular love and concern are unborn children, the most defenseless and innocent among us. Nowadays efforts are made to deny them their human dignity and to do with them whatever one pleases, taking their lives and passing laws preventing anyone from standing in the way of this. Frequently, as a way of ridiculing the Church’s effort to defend their lives, attempts are made to present her position as ideological, obscurantist and conservative. Yet this defense of unborn life is closely linked to the defense of each and every other human right. It involves the conviction that a human being is always sacred and inviolable, in any situation and at every stage of development. Human beings are ends in themselves and never a means of resolving other problems. Once this conviction disappears, so do solid and lasting foundations for the defense of human rights, which would always be subject to the passing whims of the powers that be. Reason alone is sufficient to recognize the inviolable value of each single human life, but if we also look at the issue from the standpoint of faith, “every violation of the personal dignity of the human being cries out in vengeance to God and is an offense against the creator of the individual.”

Sadly, many women disguise and twist their abortion decision by the phrase “my body, my choice.” Pro-lifers agree with this statement. It is entirely up to a person, man or woman, to decide what they can do with their own bodies, so long as no one else’s rights are being violated and in accord with right reason. And this one-liner would hold water if, and only if, abortion did not involve the body of a completely separate and unique human being who will die a violent and painful death during the process of the so-called choice. Your body, your choice; baby’s body, baby’s choice.

Forty-one years after the Roe decision, references to the unborn as being only potential life, are scientifically outdated. Even abortion rights activists now concede the basic biological fact that human life begins at conception. Unfortunately, because most have been reticent to admit this, many Americans, including some vocally pro-choice Catholic politicians, still fail to understand that science informs Church teaching in this regard. Forty years later, it is not only religiously false, but also scientifically misformed to make statements like “As a Catholic, I believe life begins at conception, but …”. Based on the latest medical science and always in accord with Church teaching, no Catholic politician, no true catholic, can ever separate the truth about the evil of abortion from one’s public witness. We human beings begin our existence when our father’s sperm meets our mother’s egg — whether we choose to believe it or not. A human being, in every other context in US history, save the era of slavery, has been understood to enjoy certain human rights simply because he or she is human. Today a child in every context of American law, save abortion, merits their parents’ care and protection — simply because she/he is their child.

Abortion is one of the greatest evils in the world. Thank God that in the past fifteen months, the three abortion death centers of Planned Parenthood no longer are present in the Diocese of San Angelo. This is due to the grace of God, to our prayers, to our working together, to pointing out the dignity and sacredness of unborn life, of all human life, and our efforts have been supported by recent Texas legislation. Although these centers no longer exist in our Diocese, since their closure, I have pleaded and pleaded with all of our Catholic people that now we must give our full attention to the health care for women and children who were helped in some way by Planned Parenthood and to proclaiming that we are pro-life at every stage of life. From the information I received, the Pregnancy Help Centers and The Life Centers in our diocesan territory are receiving an enormous amount of requests from women seeking health assistance. From the very day that Planned Parenthood closed its centers in our diocese, I have requested over and over with priests, with our people, to provide volunteers to help in these centers, to support them financially, to identify particular programs in these centers that our Catholic Church can support, to work to establish, in conjunction with these centers, our pro-life Project Rachel program for women who have had an abortion to make a new beginning. Once again, I plead with all our priests and the people of our Diocese to reach out and offer much more support to women and children who seek assistance at the Life Centers and Pregnancy Help centers. We all still need to be much more pro-active in supporting all efforts to end abortion throughout our state, country and world.

In a particular way, I encourage our Pro-Life Committees and Catholic organizations, and all our people to write letters to the editor and columns pointing out the evil of abortion and the specific pastoral ways of how we are pro-life at every stage of life. Our pro-life mission is far from over, and more than ever, we need to keep taking a stand to show that we are pro-life and against a culture of death in our battle against abortion.

Here I remind all that we must do more to help women in difficult situations. Let us listen again to Pope Francis: “On the other hand, it is also true that we have done little to adequately accompany women in very difficult situations, where abortion appears as a quick solution to their profound anguish, especially when the life developing within them is the result of rape or a situation of extreme poverty. Who can remain unmoved before such painful situations?”

We need the involvement of all people, we need prayer in each parish which is our basic tool and brings us the grace of God, we need our monthly pro-life Mass in each Deanery, we need people who are willing to speak out, we need good teaching and preaching, we need volunteers, we need to take a stand and confront our present presidential administration that has given full support to the killing of the unborn. The light of liberty cannot shine if it is not fueled by the light of consistent moral principles. That light has been flickering in recent years. Children, born and unborn, have been innocent victims in our country. When this is happening at home, how can we expect to exercise moral judgment or command moral credibility and respect abroad? We need to wake up that this is a core problem from which we suffer today.

PATTERSON

(From 8)

dy to the diocese.

6. BOUNDLESS GENEROSITY.
Anonymous donors from Midland and the Permian Basin were behind the combined financial gifts of $2.2 million in aid to Syrian refugees in Jordan, and Typhoon Haiyan victims in the Philippines. The generous and anonymous donor gave $720,000 to help educate more than 1,000 Syrian children displaced by Syria’s civil war. An anonymous donor followed that gift with an announcement that he or she would donate $1 million of his/her own money to help Filipino typhoon victims if donors elsewhere could raise $500,000. The 2-for-1 matching grant was met — and exceeded — in just one week.

7. CHURCH GROWTH. Big Spring’s Holy Trinity Church broke ground on a new church hall in April 2013 as Msgr. Bernard Gully said growth from the booming oilfield economy had been so rapid it would likely prompt the need for a new church even before the hall under construction was complete. On November 19, Iran’s St. Francis of Assisi Mission opened the doors to its new facility with help from many church members and financial assistance from the Catholic Extension Society. The construction was an effort four years in the making and groundbreaking was held April 2013, the same week as Big Spring’s Holy Trinity broke ground.

8. CONSOLIDATION. Angelo Catholic, Holy Angels school campuses in San Angelo consolidate. When the new school year began in August, all ACS students began attending Holy Angels campus, although the school remained strongly committed to being a communitywide school, mainly supported by Sacred Heart Cathedral and Holy Angels Church with assistance from St. Joseph’s and St. Mary’s.

9. HONORING THE UNBORN,

NELLIE. Pro-life supporters march on the 40th anniversary of Roe v. Wade, honoring Big Spring native Nellie Gray, founder of the March, who died in August 2012.

10. SUPPORT. Saying the true pilgrimage of immigrants is one of faith and hope that inspires everyone, all Texas, New Mexico and Mexico border bishops issue a letter stating, “we want to encourage their hope, and the hopes of all of us who see in them the face of Christ. We want to contribute with our prayer, and with the action that each one can offer, to achieve all that might be possible in favor of our brothers and sisters.”
diócesis de San Ángelo—Midland, Abilene, y San Ángelo. Mientras le damos las gracias a Dios por la cerradura de estos tres centros de muerte, nos recordamos que nuestra misión de pro-vida está lejos de ser terminada.

Le damos gracias a Dios por este regalo que ya no existe Planned Parenthood en la diócesis, y doy gracias de nuevo por nuestra mucha gente que es pro-vida quienes han rezado, especialmente los muchos rosarios rezados en frente de Planned Parenthood, y trabajaron por la cerradura de estos tres centros que mataban al precio de un nacido por medio del aborto.

Ahora es el tiempo para que nosotros primeramente y antes de nada de arrodiarnos y rogarle a Dios su perdón por la maldad que estos centros cometieron—la matanza de miles de preciosos no nacidos, hechos a la misma imagen y semejanza de Dios. Y, al darle gracias a Dios por haber escuchado nuestras oraciones, también le damos las gracias a la reciente legislación de Texas que sabiamente cortó fondos a los tal llamados centros de salud en el estado de Texas que hacen abortos. El embarazo no es una enfermedad, y la matanza de bebés nunca es parte de cualquier tipo de servicio de salud.

Al darle gracias a Dios por la cerradura de estos centros de muerte de Planned Parenthood, también recordamos que nuestra misión de pro-vida está lejos de ser terminada. Como seguidores de pro-vida de Jesús, nuestra misión es la de demostrar respeto por toda vida humana, desde su principio en concepción, a través de la vida, y hasta que esa vida sea regresada a Dios por medio de la muerte natural. Con la cerradura de Planned Parenthood, hoy es el tiempo para todos los que hoy están pro-vida de demostrar que somos realmente pro-vida por medio de cumplir una parte mayor de nuestra misión de pro-vida, la cual es la de asistir a mujeres y sus niños con sus necesidades de cuidado de salud y especialmente ayudar a quienes están luchando con una decisión de aborto.

Ahora es el tiempo de dar nuevo énfasis a nuestro entero ministerio de pro-vida, y como ya lo he hecho en persona y por medio de mi predicación y enseñanzas, les pido a todos nuestros sacerdotes y todo el pueblo católico de nuestra diócesis que tomen la iniciativa y ayuden a estas mujeres y familias con sus muchas necesidades de salud, especialmente ayudar a las que se enfrentan con una decisión de embarazo.

Como parte de nuestro servicio de ayudar a mujeres y familias con sus necesidades de salud, ya sea emocional, sicológica, financiera, pastoral o espiritual, les pido a todas nuestras iglesias católicas que pongan en su boletín que nuestras puertas están abiertas para proveer estos servicios. También, pido que los doctores, enfermeras y trabajadores de servicios sociales y salud y otros voluntarios de nuestras parroquias a ofrecer sus talentos profesionales y dones al Pregnancy Help Centers, Life Centers y organizaciones que asisten a las mujeres y sus familias. Les pido a nuestros sacerdotes de todas las ciudades en los tres deaneries que sigan planeando y pongan por escrito claramente maneras pastorales en las cuales nuestras parroquias ayudarán a mujeres con sus necesidades de salud. Al extender nuestra ayuda a nuestras hermanas en Cristo, necesitamos también promover fuertemente la idea de adopción. Hay muchas parejas quienes están esperando para adoptar cada niño inocente que es destruido por el aborto.

Para continuar llevar a cabo nuestra misión de pro-vida, les pido no solamente a nuestros sacerdotes pero también a las religiosas, diáconos, y líderes pastorales que planeen maneras pastorales específicas de cómo vamos a asistir a mujeres con sus necesidades de cuidado de salud y especialmente a las que se enfrentan con una decisión de embarazo. Tenemos en nuestra Diócesis algunos Pregnancy y Life Centers que ya están ayudando a mujeres y sus familias, en Abilene, San Ángelo, Midland, Odessa y Andrews. De manera especial, le pido a todos nuestros sacerdotes y miembros de los comités de pro-vida de cada deanery, con todas las organizaciones católicas, en especial los Knights of Columbus, Catholic Daughters, Cursillistas y miembros de ACTS que se ofrezcan a proveer asistencia social, emocional, espiritual y financiera al Pregnancy Help Centers and Life Centers en nuestras comunidades, especialmente ayudándoles a fundar facilidades especiales para hacer pruebas de embarazo y STD.

Como parte de nuestro servicio de ayudar a mujeres y sus familias con sus necesidades de salud—ya sea física, emocional, financiera, sicológica, pastoral o espiritual—les pido a todas nuestras iglesias Católicas de toda la diócesis que pongan en sus boletines que nuestras puertas están abiertas para proveer estos servicios. También fuertemente animo a doctores, enfermeras, trabajadores sociales y salud de nuestras parroquias a ofrecerse y sus talentos profesionales a los Pregnancy Help Centers y Life Centers que tenemos en San Ángelo, Midland, Odessa y Abilene y Andrews. Y, continuo pidiendo a mis hermanos sacerdotes, al reunirse cada mes, que planeen claramente maneras pastorales que nuestras parroquias ayudarán a mujeres con sus necesidades de salud. Hay que seguir con nuestra Misa mensual de pro-vida en cada deanery. Y, necesitamos continuar escribiendo cartas de pro-vida y artículos para nuestros periódicos locales. También necesitamos alcanzar a mujeres quienes han tenido un aborto, dejándolas saber que nuestro Dios es misericordioso y perdonador y animando a estas mujeres a tomar parte en los programas como Project Rachel.

Aqui les recuerdo que hay que hacer aún más para ayudar a mujeres en situaciones difíciles. De nuevo escuchemos al Papa Francisco: “Pero también es verdad que hemos hecho poco para acompañar adecuadamente a las mujeres que se encuentran en situaciones muy duras, donde el aborto se les presenta como una rápida solución a sus profundas angustias, particularmente cuando la vida que crece en ellas ha surgido como producto de una violación o en un contexto de extrema pobreza. ¿Quién puede dejar de comprender esas situaciones de tanto dolor?”

Ahora es el tiempo de renovar nuestro compromiso total a nuestra misión de pro-vida, de respetar la santidad y dignidad de todo ser humano en cada etapa, y de continuar trabajando para traer un fin al aborto, por todo nuestro estado y nación. Necesitamos continuar proclamando fuertemente de una manera pública, especialmente predicando, enseñando, como testigos y por medio de los medios de comunicación, que realmente somos pro-vida en cada etapa de la vida, y que debemos de continuar rezando que con la ayuda de Cristo, por la intercesión de María, a poner un fin al mal de aborto y un nuevo respeto por la santidad de toda vida humana, desde la concepción hasta la muerte natural.

Al darle gracias a Dios que el precioso no nacido ya no será matado en los centros de Planned Parenthood en San Ángelo, Midland, y Abilene, hemos de renovar nuestras oraciones y esfuerzos pastorales para demostrar nuestro compromiso a la santidad y dignidad de todo ser humano hecho a la imagen y semejanza de Dios. Gracias por sus oraciones y su apoyo.
‘Best Christmas Pageant Ever’ a big success at Sacred Heart Cathedral

By Deacon Steve Zimmerman

SAN ANGELO — Did you know that the wise men brought gifts of Vienna Sausage, syrup, and milk to the Baby Jesus on Christmas? There was a 9-month-old baby flying with the choir of angels. This is just one of the many hilarious events that occurred at Sacred Heart Cathedral’s first experience in doing a Christmas play.

The play, “The Best Christmas Pageant Ever,” was performed at Sacred Heart Gym on Wednesday, December 18, in front of about 300 people. There were 38 actors of all ages, from 6 months old to middle age. Most of them were members of Sacred Heart Cathedral parish.

There were also people who helped make costumes, nativity sets, and many more.

The play was an idea by Ana Torres, a senior in high school this year. She was the director and her mother, Betty Torres, was her moral support as well as the disciplinarian with the child actors when it was needed. Ana planned and directed all facets of the play.

They began rehearsals in early October and worked 2-3 nights a week since then. Many adults discovered they could sing and many children discovered that their high energy personalities can be a real asset in the play. There was even a member of the San Angelo Fire Department who was able to have a cameo role in the play.

The families of Sacred Heart Cathedral found the play to be a great way to build community in our parish. We are proud of all our actors. They were Lisa Soto, Scant Ynostrosa, Jerry Mares, Dylan Fisher, Gabriel Mc Lester, Elijah Ynostrosa, Stephanie Fleming, Amber Fleming, Derek Fisher, Fallon Dinolfo, Kandle Ynostrosa, Gloria Rivera, Lydia Garcia, Amy Perez, Betty Torres, Brandon Mc Lester, Dominic Perez, Joseph Perez, Krista Lucas, Amy Martinez, Riley Heckman, Ann Maria Holguin, Araceli Holguin, Melinda Holguin, Tanaya Kackson, Abigail Soria, Juliana Castanon, Philip Perez, Mercy Ynostrosa, Jacob Ynostrosa, Virginia Ynostrosa, Zayden Torres, Jason Fernandez, Mason Matthews, Carl Perez, Mandolynn Torres, and Sonia Torres.

A special thank you goes out to Rosalinda Castro, for costume design; Marcos Perez, for set design; Scant Ynostrosa, stage manager; Kandle Ynostrosa, back stage manager, and Amy Perez, floor manager.