Season of Lent again upon us

Lent, the season of prayer and penance before Easter meant to better prepare Catholics for the feast of the Resurrection, begins March 5. Easter Sunday is April 20. Mark your calendars, there are a number of notable dates that will enable you to maximize your participation in the Lenten season (a complete list of Lenten penance services can be found on Page 2).

**LENTEN CALENDAR**
- March 5 — Ash Wednesday
- March 9 — 1st Sunday of Lent
- March 16 — 2nd Sunday of Lent
- March 23 — 3rd Sunday of Lent
- March 25 — The Annunciation
- March 30 — 4th Sunday of Lent
- April 6 — 5th Sunday of Lent

**HOLY WEEK**
- April 13 — Palm Sunday
- April 17 — Holy Thursday
- April 18 — Good Friday
- April 19 — Holy Saturday
- April 20 — Easter Sunday

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The bishop’s Coat of Arms: The meaning in its design

The coat of arms of the Most Rev. Michael J. Sis, sixth Bishop of San Angelo, features a basket containing five loaves of bread, with two fish, one above and one below the basket. Rooted in ancient Christian iconography, it recalls the miracle of the multiplication of the loaves and fishes, the only miracle story recorded in all four Gospels.

“Lord, let my life, like this candle, be

**“We should be like lit candles,” Bishop says in first homily / Pg. 7**

the Lord and Candlemas, a day commemorating the purification of the Blessed Virgin, 40 days after Christ’s birth. The occasion is also used to bless candles in the church and is often preceded by a procession with candles commemorating Christ as the light of the world.

“Lord, let my life, like this candle, be

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Keys to the Cathedral

Bishop takes possession of Cathedral as first official act as shepherd of San Angelo diocese.

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**Seminarian Report**

Timothy Hayter, left, is the Seminarian of the Month, while Fr. Francis Onyekozuru writes of a favorite Seminary Memory / Pg. 3

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**INSIDE**

Sister Linda Bolinski, SSCM, told a room full of religious educators and parish volunteers at the McNease Convention Center, February 8, that it takes zeal to properly convey the Good News-affirming message of Jesus Christ.

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**Keys to the Cathedral**

Bishop takes possession of Cathedral as first official act as shepherd of San Angelo diocese.

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Most Rev. Michael J. Sis, sixth Bishop of San Angelo, with Fr. Steven Hicks, left, prepares to celebrate his first Mass as Bishop of San Angelo, February 1, 2014.

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**Bishop Michael Sis’ Lenten Twitter Devotional at “SABishopMike” or by friending the “Diocese of San Angelo” Facebook page.**

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**By Jimmy Patterson**

Editor / West Texas Angelus

SAN ANGELO — The Most Rev Michael Sis took possession of the Cathedral of the Sacred Heart, Sunday, February 1, in a simple yet holy ceremony as a crowded church welcomed him as sixth Bishop of San Angelo.

The bishop’s celebration of the first Sunday Eucharist as shepherd of the diocese fell on the Feast of the Presentation of the Lord and Candlemas, a day commemorating the purification of the Blessed Virgin, 40 days after Christ’s birth. The occasion is also used to bless candles in the church and is often preceded by a procession with candles commemorating Christ as the light of the world.

“Lord, let my life, like this candle, be

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Follow Bishop Michael Sis’ Lenten Twitter Devotional at “SABishopMike” or by friending the “Diocese of San Angelo” Facebook page.
**An open heart, a little planning can bring your best Lent ever**

**By Most Rev. Michael J. Sis**  
Bishop of San Angelo

Lent 2014 has the potential to be the best Lent you’ve ever had. With a little bit of planning and a willing heart, you can open yourself to receive graces like never before.

Lent is a season of conversion. Conversion is a turning away from illusion, dried-up wells that do not give life and a turning to God, our true fountain of love and abundant life. Lent originally developed as a 40-day retreat, preparing converts to be baptized at the Easter Vigil ceremony, but it is an opportunity for all members of the Church to grow.

From the very beginning of the Lenten season, the Church proclaims that Lent is about relationships. In the first reading of the Mass on Ash Wednesday, the Lord says in the Book of the Prophet Joel, “Return to me with your whole heart… return to the Lord, your God.”

As you think of what you will do this Lent, try to see how your observances connect with your relationships with God and with others. All the special practices of Lent (sacrifices, self-denial, and prayer) should bring us into a closer relationship with Jesus Christ. The point is that Jesus is so important to us that we are willing to sacrifice for the sake of this relationship.

Our Lenten practices of prayer, fasting, and almsgiving are not intended to prove our own holiness or to win God’s love for us. God is already loving us and saving us. He loves us first. Then, in response to his unconditional love, we joyfully enter into activities of prayer, fasting and almsgiving in order to thank God and to open ourselves more fully to God’s gift of grace.

**PRAYER**

Any relationship needs quality time for good communication. Our relationship with Jesus Christ. The point is that Jesus is our own holiness or to win God’s love for us.

The theme for this year’s poster contest is: “Our Flag Stands for Freedom.” In America, you are free to grow up to be whatever you want to be: a doctor, teacher, police officer, etc. What would you like to be when you grow up? All posters must include an image of the American Flag. Visit cliu.com for contact information.

**Preparando para la cuaresma**

**Por el Obispo Michael J. Sis**

La Cuaresma 2014 tiene la posibilidad de ser la mejor Cuaresma que hemos tenido. Con un poco de planificación y un corazón dispuesto, podemos abrirnos para recibir gracia como nunca antes.

La Cuaresma es una temporada de conversión. La conversión es un alejamiento de las norias ilusorias y secas las cuales no dan vida y volver a Dios, nuestra fuente verdadera de amor y vida abundante. Originalmente la Cuaresma se desarrolló como un retiro de 40 días, prestando a convertidos para ser bautizados en la ceremonia de la Vigilia de Pascua, pero es una oportunidad de crecer para todos los miembros de la Iglesia.

**Children’s Poster Contest for Kids**  
Catholic Life Insurance is hosting a Children’s Poster Contest to commemorate the 237th anniversary of the American Flag. This contest is open to all children enrolled in K-5th Grade. We will be awarding cash prizes to 18 winners. The theme for this year’s poster contest is: “Our Flag Stands for Freedom.” In America, you are free to grow up to be whatever you want to be: a doctor, teacher, police officer, etc. What would you like to be when you grow up? All posters must include an image of the American Flag. Visit cliu.com for entry forms and complete information.

**David Kauffman reschedules for March 29 in San Angelo**

SAN ANGELO — Catholic artist/musician/vocalist David Kauffman, originally scheduled to appear at Holy Angels Church in December but was forced to cancel because of wintry weather, will appear in a Lenten Concert of Sacred Songs and Prayer, at 7:30 p.m., Saturday, March 29, at Holy Angels, 2309 A&M Ave., San Angelo. Tickets are $10 for adults, $5 for deacons and their wives, and free for all priests, religious, seminarians and children. A nursery will be provided. Tickets available at San Angelo Catholic Church Office, 402 E. 11th St., at 6:30 p.m.

**DIOCESAN BRIEFS**

**Ordination Videos**

DVDs of Bishop Michael J. Sis’ January 27 ordination in San Angelo are being reproduced and will be available soon. Watch future editions of The Angelus and our website, www.sanangelodiocese.org for more information.

**Come Fish With Me**

ODESSA — Join us at St. Elizabeth Ann Seton Church on Saturday, March 15, 2014 for a day of fun, games, talks, and prayer. Bring a sack lunch and a drink. Sunday Vigil Mass will be held at 4 p.m. with Bishop Michael Sis. Cost: $10. Please register with your parish. See your coordinator of youth ministry for more information. Contact S. Adelina Garcia, OSF at Office of Education and Formation, for more info, 325-651-7500

**St. Mary Queen of Peace Mission**

BROWNWOOD — Brownwood is hosting a Lenten Mission in English and Spanish, at 6:30 p.m., March 17-20. Each night’s mission will last approximately 1 hour and 15 minutes. We will begin the Mission with Mass of the sick (Healing Mass). Father Alfredo and Father Bob, Passionist priests from San Antonio, will walk us through: “Come to Jesus, the fullness of God’s Mercy, Communion, and Reconciliation. Each evening will end with a time for fellow-

**CLIU Poster Contest for Kids**

Catholic Life Insurance is hosting a Children’s Poster Contest to commemorate the 237th anniversary of the American Flag. This contest is open to all children enrolled in K-5th Grade. We will be awarding cash prizes to 18 winners. The theme for this year’s poster contest is: “Our Flag Stands for Freedom.” In America, you are free to grow up to be whatever you want to be: a doctor, teacher, police officer, etc. What would you like to be when you grow up? All posters must include an image of the American Flag. Visit cliu.com for entry forms and complete information.

**LETEN PENANCE SERVICE SCHEDULE**

**SAN ANGELO DEANERY**

March 24  —  Wall St. Ambrose, 7:30 p.m.
March 26  —  Brady, St. Patrick, 6:30 p.m.
March 26  —  Sonora, St. Ann, 6:30 p.m.
March 31  —  Eden, St. Charles, 6:30 p.m.
April 2   —  San Angelo, St. Margaret, 7 p.m.
April 7   —  Rowena, St. Joseph, 7:00 p.m.
April 8   —  Big Lake, St. Margaret, 6:30 p.m.
April 9   —  Ozona, C. O. Perp. Help, 6:30 p.m.
April 10  —  San Angelo, St. Joseph, 6:30 p.m.
April 14  —  Ballinger, St. Mary.
April 15  —  San Angelo, Sacred Heart Cath., 7 p.m.

**ABILENE DEANERY**

March 19  —  Brownwood, St. Mary, 7:00 p.m.
March 26  —  Coleman, Sacred Heart, 6:30 p.m.
March 27  —  Abilene, St. Vincent Pallotti, 7:00 p.m.
April 3   —  Abilene, Holy Family, 7:00 p.m.
April 9   —  Abilene, St. Francis, 7:00 p.m.
April 14  —  Abilene, Sacred Heart, 7:00 p.m.
April 16  —  Colorado City, St. Ann, at 6:30 p.m.

**MIDLAND-ODESSA DEANERY**

March 11  —  Midland, San Miguel Arcangel, 7 p.m.
March 19  —  Big Spring, Holy Trinity, 7 p.m.
March 31  —  St. Lawrence, 7 p.m.
April 2   —  Midland, Our Lady-Guadalupe, 6:30 p.m.
April 7   —  Odessa, St. Mary, 7 p.m.
April 9   —  Fort Stockton, St. Agnes, 6:30 p.m.
April 10  —  Andrews, Our Lady of Lourdes, 6 p.m.
April 14  —  Odessa, Holy Redeemer, 7 p.m.
April 15  —  Midland, St. Ann’s, 7 p.m.
April 16  —  Odessa, St. Joseph
Remembering ‘Who dat Seminarian Nation’

By Fr. Francis Onyekozuru

It was around five o’clock on the afternoon of Sunday, February 7, 2010, in San Antonio; the theology students of Assumption Seminary had finished their various parish ministries and were back to the seminary for the routine evening activities. In the central atrium of Archbishop Flores Building (the seminarians’ dorm), balloons of various colors were flying and hanging around, drinks filled the coolers and the refrigerator (memory suggests soda drinks), and the popcorn machine was very busy. Lots of things were brought to the table: trays of Cheese Puffs or cheese balls, trays of boiled shrimp, boxes of pizza, pretzels, chips, and other edibles. The entrances to the atrium were decorated with colorful streamers. The projector was on and faced towards a big bright wall in the atrium, waiting for the game to start. On two opposing sides of the wall were posted “WHO DAT!” and “DARE BLUE” – symbols of the two teams in the Super Bowl that year (the New Orleans SAINTS and the Indianapolis COLTS). With great excitement, the seminarians were coming in; many were in their sports outfits/jerseys with the colors of the team they support (Blue for the COLTS and Gold for the SAINTS). All were ready for the Super Bowl game – the entire seminary community.

Tom and Gayle Benson, (owners of the New Orleans Saints) gave the largest financial gift to Oblate School of Theology in the School’s history. This is also the school where most of the Assumption seminarians study. Since the New Orleans SAINTS were competing in the Super Bowl for the very first time, it was natural that the Oblate school community supported them. Many in the school prayed for them and took a group photograph that was sent to them to show our support. Guess who was among them?

During the game, fans were cheering and praying for their own team to win. Supporters of the COLTS were so happy with their lead until the “GOD OF FOOTBALL” decided to hear the prayers of sinners who were praying for the Saints and turned the game around. Yes, it was only on this day that I saw sinners (seminarians) praying for the Saints (the New Orleans team). Eventually, the prayers of the sinners paid off in the victory of the Saints’ team.

During and after the game, all (supporters of the SAINTS and supporters of the COLTS) were shaking hands, chatting away, laughing, drinking/eating the edibles, analyzing the game, and other fun things. It was a fantastic evening spent in fraternal brotherhood. Even in our diversity of views (in supporting the SAINTS and in supporting the COLTS), there was an impeccable sense of unity, warmth, and family. Such fraternal conviviality among the seminarians sends a message that we may share different opinions and ideas about certain things in life, yet nothing is worth dividing us either in our various families and parish communities. We are all sons and daughters of the same God who loves us unconditionally and without exclusion.

Some of our young people who may want to enjoy such fraternal brotherhood as seminarians and future priests may not have frequent access to The Angelus newspaper and thus, to these memorable stories. Such discerners could be our friends, relatives, colleagues, co-workers, acquaintances, children, grandchildren and great-grandchildren. Please feel free to share these stories with them: monthly stories from the memories of our priests on some remarkable events during their seminary years.

Rev. Francis Onyekozuru is parochial vicar at St. Ann’s Catholic Church & School in Midland and a former student at Assumption Seminary in San Antonio.
He was ordained as a diocesan priest on June 8, 2013.

Ballinger Knights help raise $2,523 for Pregnancy Help Center

BALLINGER — The St. Mary Star Knights of Columbus Council #10985 in Ballinger annually raises money to benefit the Pregnancy Help Center of the Concho Valley. During Advent 2013, the Knights distributed baby bottles to the parishioners at the weekend Masses at St. Mary’s. The parishioners were asked to place their loose change in the bottles for a month or until they were full, and then return the bottles to church. The collection brought in $2,523 for the Pregnancy Help Center. At right, Grand Knight Larry Lange presents the check to Jonna Vu, of the Pregnancy Help Center.

Other Knights attending the presentation are, from left, Mike Kozelsky, Fr. Hugh Wade, Deacon David Workman, and James Matthiesen, Board Member of the Pregnancy Help Center. The Pregnancy Help Center of the Concho Valley is a locally funded organization which provides guidance and support to expectant mothers experiencing an unexpected or crisis pregnancy. The Pregnancy Help Center provides ultrasounds as well as information, counseling, and support concerning alternatives to abortion. The Knights of Columbus wish to thank the parishioners of St. Mary’s Star of the Sea in Ballinger for their generous support.

TIMOTHY HAYTER

Date of Birth: September 20, 1982
Birth Place: Fort Stockton
Do you have siblings? 1 sister 2 brothers
What Seminary do you attend? St. Mary’s in Houston
What Level are you? 2nd Theology
Home Parish: St. Agnes – Fort Stockton
Favorite Saint: St. John Vianney, St. Francis of Assisi
Favorite Colors: Red & Blue
Favorite Sport: Football, basketball
Favorite food/restaurant: loves food in General and always willing to try new things
Any hobbies: Enjoys doing manual labor outside as well as traveling and working with horses and livestock.
Objectives: To be a holy priest and serve God’s People

BIO

My name is Timothy Hayter and I am a seminarian for the Diocese of San Angelo. I grew up as the youngest of four siblings on a cattle ranch 40 miles southwest of Fort Stockton. After graduating Fort Stockton High School, I attended Howard College and Texas Tech University where I majored in food science and minored in business. Upon graduating from Texas Tech in 2005 I worked in the food industry and business in Grand Prarie and Fort Stockton before discerning into the seminary in 2010.

In my free time, I enjoy the outdoors whether it be riding horses and working with livestock or traveling. I also like to run as well as play and watch various sports.

Over time I have found myself consistently drawn towards service in the form of the ministerial priesthood. I was nervous at first and not sure about the whole thing, but through much time and prayer, God has made it very clear that he is calling me to the priesthood and that he will provide the strength, understanding, patience and perseverance that I will need to serve him in this way. I am very happy to be a part of the Diocese of San Angelo and am thankful for the many people who have helped me along the way.
BISHOP SIS’ SCHEDULE

MARCH
6 — STANTON, St. Joseph – Midland/Odessa Deanery meeting at 10:00 a.m.
15 — ODESSA, St. Elizabeth – Jr. High Event – 4:00 p.m.
March 22
15 — SAN ANGELO, Angelo Catholic School – Alumni Dinner at 6:30 p.m.
25 — SAN ANGELO, Diocesan Pastoral Center – New Budget Review 10:30 a.m. to 2:00 p.m.
27 — OZONA, Our Lady of Perpetual Help – Confirmation at 6:30 p.m.
29 — ODESSA, St. Mary – Catholic Schools Commission meeting 9:00 a.m. to 12:00 noon
31 — SAN ANTONIO, Texas Bishops’ Meeting – 10:00 a.m.

CHRIST THE KING RETREAT CENTER
MARCH
14-16 Trinity Lutheran Ladies Bible Class Retreat
15 SA Cursillo School of Leaders
19 Heart of Mercy Prayer Group
18 Adoration of the Blessed Sacrament
21-23 Engaged Encounter
23 Natural Family Planning
24 Heart of Mercy Prayer Group
25 Adoration of the Blessed Sacrament
27 Pro Life Mass for the Unborn
28-29 First Central Presbyterian Women
30 First Holy Communion Retreat-St. Ambrose, Wall
31 Heart of Mercy Prayer Group

APRIL
1 Adoration of the Blessed Sacrament
4-6 Beginning Experience
7 Heart of Mercy Prayer Group
8 Adoration of the Blessed Sacrament
8 ACTS Core Meeting
11-13 Deacon Formation
13 Palm Sunday
14 Heart of Mercy Prayer Group
15 Passover
15 Adoration of the Blessed Sacrament
18 Office closed in Observance of Good Friday
19 San Angelo School of Leaders
20 Easter Sunday
21 Heart of Mercy Prayer Group
22 Adoration of the Blessed Sacrament
22 Deacon Quarterly Meeting
24-27 Women’s Walk to Emmaus
27 Divine Mercy Sunday
28 Heart of Mercy Prayer Group
29 Adoration of the Blessed Sacrament

NECROLOGY
April
2-Deacon Lassaro Sevier (2009)
3-Deacon Edward Martinez (1985)
16-Deacon Eliseo Carrillo (1989)
19-Deacon Hubert Collins (1999)
21-Rev. Thomas Leahy, SAC (1969)
25-Deacon John Munoz (2007)
29-Deacon Robert Daigle (1986)

CATHOLIC TWITTERVERSE

Editor’s Note: Each month the Angelus will include a sampling of Tweets from the ‘Twitterverse.’ Tweets are taken from random dates in the month preceding publication in the Angelus.

Ecumenism can help us answer big questions

By Jimmy Patterson
West Texas Angelus

With Pope Francis stressing the need for ecumenism in the church and new Bishop Michael J. Sis further emphasizing Catholics’ working together in understanding of differing points of view, you might ask how you go about increasing that understanding. I may be no expert, but if I were to make a suggestion for a starting point, I would recommend reading the author Philip Yancey, a former contributing editor to Christianity Today magazine — a publication that mostly shuns Catholicism yet shares with us our common belief that Jesus Christ is our savior. Yancey’s touch is deft and memorable.

His most popular work, “Where is God When it Hurts?,” was distributed gratis to people in Newtown, Conn., following the tragic school shooting of December 2012. His latest book, “The Question That Never Goes Away,” is a sort of sequel to “Where is God When it Hurts.” Yancey expertly answers that continuing question of where is God in tragedy by sharing stories that exemplify the creator’s manifestation through human character and goodness. The author’s memorable stories focus on the kindnesses of survivors not only in Newtown, but in Japan following the February 2011 tsunami, and the inhumanity of the Bosnian war. Through it all, Yancey asserts, human response has been there to outshine the darkness. God, as he asserts and we all know, is visible in the actions of those courageously thrust into caring and caretaking roles.

I try to read most anything Yancey writes. His sensitivity to our differences is best exhibited by the absence of any labeling. He instead focuses on that one common denominator: Our faith and goodness, and how they flow through us for others.

I don’t know when my highlighter was last used, but here is one from Yancey’s writing: “I may be no expert, but if I were to make a suggestion for a starting point, I would recommend reading the author Philip Yancey, a former contributing editor to Christianity Today magazine — a publication that mostly shuns Catholicism yet shares with us our common belief that Jesus Christ is our savior. Yancey’s touch is deft and memorable.”

Would that we could all learn similar messages by those whose faith foundations differ from ours. Philip Yancey’s work helps us do just that.

From the Editor

God saves us” bit.ly/1oMAV80

James Martin, SJ @JamesMartinSJ
Gospel: Jesus offers his disciples signs, but they don’t believe. God offers you signs of God’s presence in your life. What’s your response?

Cardinal Dolan @CardinalDolan
“Blessed is he who perseveres in temptation” Today’s reading from the Letter of James encourages us to turn moments of temptation into grace

Bishop Edward Burns @BishopBurns
It’s easy to get preoccupied with the problems and needs of the day and to forget the most important reality of all – God’s abiding presence.

Editor’s Note: Each month the Angelus will include a sampling of Tweets from the ‘Twitterverse.’ Tweets are taken from random dates in the month preceding publication in the Angelus.

America Magazine @americamag
Church must “sound alarm at advance throughout Africa of draconian legislation aimed at criminalizing homosexuals.

USCCB @USCCB
Today’s Readings: “Lord, even the dogs under the table eat the children’s scraps.” http://ow.ly/3hhbGt

USCCB @USCCB
Pope Francis says going to Mass should be a life-changing event. http://ow.ly/tyQv3

The Catholic Herald @MilCathHerald

Lino Rulli @linorulli
"Can you believe this weather?!
-Said by almost everyone, everywhere.

Archbishop Carlson @abp_carlson
BEFORE THE CROSS | Pray through life’s distractions - Archbishop Robert J. Carlson

VaticanInsider @VaticanInsider
#Francis: “Temptations grow, infect and imprison us. Only the Word of
‘Zeal for the Mission’

Presenter stresses need to evangelize with fervor, passion

By Jimmy Patterson / Editor

SAN ANGELO — The Catholic Church is filled with opportunities for personal enrichment through worship, spirituality, education, interpersonal relationships and much more, but it is not without its challenges.

According to the book “Dynamic Catholicism,” less than 6 1/2 percent of registered parishioners across America contributed 80 percent of the volunteer hours and 6.8 percent of parishioners donate 80 percent of parish collections. Less than 7 percent of parishioners in America are actively engaged in the work or mission of the parish and a large majority of parishioners are not exactly “going forth” and spreading the Good News -- only 1 in 3 are pumped about that opportunity as Catholics.

The numbers are easy to comprehend. The reasons for the numbers, not so much.

Sister Linda Bolinski, a member of the Congregation of Sister of Saints Cyril and Methodius, spoke to a room full of religious educators and parish volunteers February 8 at the McNease Convention Center in San Angelo and made a good case for a lack of individual fervor being a primary reason for the lackadaisical attitude of some in the church. And she wasn't necessarily just talking of the attitudes of those who aren’t terribly excited about their faith. Sister Bolinski said it is essential that every one — perhaps particularly those in leadership and education positions in the church — approach the messages they spread with zeal.

(Please See ZEAL/21)

Fr. Santiago celebrates 25 years as priest

The Angelus

On Tuesday, February 18, 2014, parishioners, friends and family gathered to join in celebrating Fr. Santiago Udayar’s 25th Priestly Ordination Anniversary. There was an estimated 500+ in attendance at both the Liturgy Service at St. Mary’s Church, Odessa, as well as the dinner reception that immediately followed in the School’s gymnasium. All were extremely proud of Fr. Udayar and honored to be able to participate in this humble celebration.

The 4th Degree Knights of Columbus Assembly #1913 formed the honor guard as altar servers, Fr. Santiago, priests, deacons, and Bishop Michael J. Sis entered the Sanctuary. It was a beautiful service as Bishop Sis began his homily stating that Fr. Santiago had been chosen by God to serve this community and how all were better off because of the teachings he is able to provide. Many people feel that Fr. Santiago has a close and unique relationship with God, they seek blessings from him knowing they are receiving an amazing gift through him, and can feel the presence of Jesus when they are near him.

He joined the Seminary in June 1976 and was ordained a Priest on March 31, 1989 by Bishop Charles Gomez, D. D.

Vocation to Priesthood is strong in his family. Two of Fr. Udayar’s first cousins and a nephew are priests. He joined the Diocese of San Angelo in 2002 and began serving as associate pastor at Sacred Heart Church in Abilene. He served as pastor of three parishes: St. Vincent Church, Abilene; Sacred Heart Church, Coleman, and Our Lady of Mt. Carmel in Winters. Since 2009, he has served as pastor of St. Mary’s, Odessa and administrator of St. Mary’s Central Catholic School in Odessa.

Fr. Udayar is a very devoted priest and a God-fearing person. In his heart, he has deep faith in God, the Father Almighty, great love for Jesus Christ who is present in the Sacred Eucharist, and a special devotion for the Blessed Virgin Mother Mary! With immense gratitude to God for being his “Dad” all his life, Fr. Santiago Udayar recommitted to continue to love and serve God for the rest of his life by loving and serving the people of God. His prayer has always been, "Father…not my will, but Yours be done" (Luke 22:42).
Carmelite Sisters celebrate 25 years in Diocese of San Angelo

Sister Mary Grace Erl, superior of the Our Lady of Grace Monastery near Christoval. Photo by Andrew Mitchell / San Angelo Standard-Times

By Candace Cooksey Fulton
San Angelo Standard-Times

SAN ANGELO — Two distinct blessings occurred Feb. 2, 1989, and Bishop Michael D. Pfeifer will never believe one was independent of the other.

Our Lady of Grace Monastery had its official welcome and formal dedication on that date.

But secondly, it rained.

The rain fell in torrents, drenching those attending the dedication mass. Rain gauges in the area filled to a full 4 inches.

“We had been in a drought that winter of 1989,” Pfeifer said on the eve of the Mass of Thanksgiving celebrating the Silver Jubilee of the monastery’s foundation held February 2.

“I had asked Mayor Dick Funk to declare it a day of prayer for rain and that Sunday, the rain came.”

Moreover, to have the Carmelite Nuns to come to the San Angelo diocese was a wonderful answer to a prayer, Pfeifer said.

When Pfeifer was made bishop for the San Angelo diocese in 1985, one of the earliest requests he heard from members had been for a contemplative community of sisters to be established here, he said.

While those possibilities were being discussed and prayer requests were being sent, a Carmelite Nun community in Whapton, N.D., was seeking a possible relocation destination for about seven of its sisters because of limited space in the monastery there.

“These prayers crossed in the sky,” Pfeifer said, “and it all worked out wonderfully.”

Not too surprisingly then or now, a way has been made and the community of sisters has been able to do what it came to do. For 25 years, they have been contemplative and prayed without ceasing.

A brochure given out by the Silver Jubilee Foundation suggests “the whole world is their field of action — at the speed of grace.”

“Contemplative sisters are those who give their lives to God, in silence, in prayer and work, and give praise to God. They pray for all people, spending most of their time cloistered at the monastery,” Pfeifer said.

Arrival of the sisters

According to the Carmelites’ journal entries, “word was received” Oct. 10, 1988, “a house on 10 acres of land on Goodfellow Avenue near the church” had been found. The next journal entry, dated Oct. 12, said the house had been purchased.

And at Sunday’s Mass, Father Fabian Maria Rosette shared the journal entry of Nov. 4, 1988, telling of how the sisters arrived in San Angelo and were going to the church when they saw a priest “with a beautiful Afghan hound” walking. He — Father Fabian — saw the van with North Dakota license plates and began running back toward the church to meet and welcome them.

The small home served the sisters well for 14 years.

Monastery life is no-frill by design. In modern times, central heat and air conditioning are standard, but the Carmelites having taken vows of chastity, poverty and obedience to God and live with minimal furnishings and few other modern conveniences.

By 2002, they had begun to outgrow the little house with a tiny kitchen and single bath. San Angelo was growing and the city was enveloping the home, encroaching on the solitude of the 10 acres with the sounds of traffic.

“The prayers were for a better living arrangement,” Pfeifer said, “though what that might be, no one knew.”

But, he said, the prayers were answered “when a 6-foot-7-inch miracle by the name of Pierce Holt — who played for the San Francisco 49ers — came through the door and offered land to build a monastery on his ranch 18 miles out of Christoval.”

Serene setting

It is 15 miles from San Angelo to Christoval, 18 miles farther to Our Lady of Grace Monastery and the last 4.2 miles are a hard caliche road.

In a Feb. 3, 2001, Standard-Times article about the relocation to the Holts’ property, Mother Superior Mary Grace said, “The road of life is much like that road, filled with bumps and rocks and pitfalls ... but there also were smooth places in the road, quite like the even, smooth places in life and when you get to those it’s a delightful surprise.”

The metaphor stands true.

The monastery is a beautiful and peaceful place, built with stone, wood and tile in an 18th-century style architecture. It is a serene place.

The jubilee, in celebration of the Carmelites’ 25 years of faithful prayer and service in the San Angelo diocese, Bishop Michael J. Sis, appointed last month for the diocese when Pfeifer retired, said how blessed “we all are to have this great spiritual resource.

“These Carmelite sisters are the spiritual lungs of the church. We are so blessed to have the Hermits and Carmelites, who have said yes to their vocation and live out their commitment in this place within our midst.”

Sis, addressing the sisters, said one of the things that led him to accept the bishop assignment was knowing “you are here.”

But to the hundreds seated on metal folding chairs in the double-winged monastery cathedral, Sis said, in making the more than 30-mile trip watching the vast openness marked only by cedars, oaks and mesquite, he couldn’t help but ask, “Why?” Why this place?

He shared the answer he was given in his own contemplation.

“Why? First of all because of the many benefactors who made this possible,” Sis said.

“Why? Because what goes on here is important,” he concluded.

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I would like to be like a candle. And I hope that you, too, would pray that you would be like a candle. Not an unlit candle, like those sitting on the table here, but like those on the altar, burning brightly.

I would want to be like a lit candle, not an unlit candle.

Think about a lit candle. What is the source of light? A candle itself is not the source of light. The candle has received the flame and pulls the flame and nourishes the flame and allows the flame to shine its light all around, but it's not the candle itself that is the source of the light and heat. It is the flame that is the source of its light and heat.

You and I, as Christians, want to be like lit candles. We want to be candles where our life is being spent and consumed. If a candle keeps burning, the candle will go down, down, down because the candle wax is consumed. In the same way you and I, like good candles, allow ourselves to be spent and to be consumed, so that, as candles, we are being spent and consumed, and our light is shining into the world because of that. The light and the word of Christ is shining into the world and, like good candles, you and I are being spent for the sake of that light.

Jesus Christ is the light of the world, but Jesus also experienced the darkness of suffering, rejection and death. And in that experience of darkness all around him, Jesus courageously let his light shine through that darkness. His light was not afraid of the darkness. He didn’t run from it, he shined right into the darkness and thereby transformed that darkness.

Around us in the world there is darkness. The darkness of sin and of suffering and of death. There are all kinds of darkness around us. And so when you and I are in moments of darkness, we should never forget that God is with us. Even though there might be darkness all around, God is with us. Even when it all seems lost, and forsaken, even when we pass through the darkness, God is with us and God will bring us through. His light shows the way through the darkness and his light transforms it by his presence.

By taking this same meditation I offer you about candles and light, I want you to try something at your homes. It is very simple and everybody can do it. It. Get a little candle, light it and sit there, comfortable and relaxed. Quiet. Turn off the TV and the radio and in the quiet and silence, watch that candle burn. And when you are looking at the candle, you remember your desire for God. Call to mind your deep desire for union with God and look into the flame of that candle and allow your eyes to focus on that flame and open your heart to the Lord, who is the light of the world, and in the stillness of that quiet time, be aware of the presence of Christ who is the light shining into your heart, and you say, "Lord, let my life, like this candle, be consumed by your love. Let me be your candle, set me on fire with the light of your love and let me shine on everyone I meet so that I can also recognize your face in them. You, Lord, gave me the light of faith from the day I was baptized. Help me to keep that flame burning brightly until the day you welcome me into heaven in the splendor of your glory, forever and ever amen.”
Following in the footsteps of a teacher: My mom

By Heather Bredimus

During the last week of January, Catholic communities nationwide joined in jubilation for the celebration of National Catholic Schools Week. Within our Diocese, the faculty, students, family and alumni of St. Ann’s Catholic School in Midland came together to create an epic week of joyous festivities and recognition of those who make our mission possible.

The 40th anniversary of National Catholic Schools Week began as the congregation of St. Ann’s Catholic Church “packed the pews” at the 10:45 Sunday morning Mass. The parish delighted as students from the school performed every possible role in the service. From greeters to altar servers, lectors to gift takers, each child contributed to a spiritual experience of rejuvenation and evangelization. Even tears of ethereal awakening were witnessed as the school’s Honor Choir sang, “Open the Eyes of My Heart.”

On the last day of Catholic Schools Week, St. Ann’s celebrated the children who have made the school so special. Deemed “Student Appreciation Day”, those in Kindergarten-8th grade were invited to “Dress for Success.” Boys and girls of all ages colored the hallways with costumes ranging from the familiar options of doctor, police officer and professional athlete to the unexpectedly creative “back-up dancer” and “secret agent spy.”

It was the girls in glasses, wearing professional name badges and lanyards with keys, carrying arms full of books that quietly brought the most attention. Daughters of two middle school teachers at St. Ann’s Catholic School dressed as their role models: their mothers.

Mrs. Kathy Jones, the Middle School Language Arts teacher at St. Ann’s, was not surprised by her daughter’s desire to dress as an educator. According to her mom, Aubrey and her sisters often “play school” as one of their favorite pretend (Please See TEACHERS/19)

San Angelo Catholic Foundation now accepting grant applications

The Angelus

The Catholic Foundation for the Roman Catholic Diocese of San Angelo held its Annual Meeting on January 3, 2014. Trustees, after reviewing the positive returns on the investments in 2013, adopted a four and one half percent payout rate for endowments at the foundation. Therefore $27,320 will be available from Unrestricted Endowment Funds for Grants this year of generally of up to $1,000 for projects and programs of parishes, schools and Catholic organizations throughout the Diocese.

Interested parties can apply for a grant by reviewing the grant policy and completing the grant application found on our website: www.catholicfoundationsanangelo.org. All grant applications must include the pastor’s signature and are due by April 15th. The Board of Trustees will review the grant applications and approve those addressing critical needs in our diocese at a meeting in May. All grants made will be paid before June 30th.

Grants of $12,007 were also paid in January to the beneficiaries, as designated by the donors of the designated endowment funds. In addition, $111,998 was distributed to the agencies who have management agreements with the Catholic Foundation for the Diocese of San Angelo for the management of their endowment funds. The total value of our portfolio on December 31, 2013 was $4,880,535.

The Catholic Foundation that benefits our Diocese was established under the guidance of Bishop Michael Pfeifer in 2010. The trustees are extremely grateful for the confidence of their donors. The donors’ generosity has made it possible for the foundation to make investments and achieve the growth that has allowed us to continue making grants from our endowment funds on an annual basis.

Donations given to the foundation are tax deductible to the full extent allowed by law. A gift to an Endowment Fund is a gift that will serve our Catholic family in perpetuity. The value of the principal of the original gift will be preserved and the growth and earnings on the investment may be distributed out in grants on an annual basis. Additional information on how to set up an endowment fund is available on the foundation website, catholicfoundationsanangelo.org.

‘Beginning Experience’ retreat set for April

The Angelus

Did your marriage end because of death or divorce? Are you separated and wondering how to make the right decision so you can go on with life with no regrets? Beginning Experience is a Catholic program that addresses all the hurts and losses you are feeling and helps you find new strength to go on with life within a spiritual context. The next opportunity to participate in a Beginning Experience is April 4-6, 2014.

There is hurt, loss, and a feeling of emptiness that sweeps over you when you lose your spouse whether it is to death, divorce or separation. In the midst of this overwhelming pain, most people wonder how they will be able to go on living. As days turn into weeks and weeks into months, people find themselves going through their daily routines. Nearly each person experiencing this type of loss express a sense of being ‘numb’ and merely ‘going through the motions’ of daily life. Many wonder how others seem to be enjoying life while they just exist.

The Beginning Experience weekend can help you look deep inside, help you to start to heal those hurts and help you to begin living again…not just existing. The Beginning Experience Team has walked where you are walking and have experienced the same hurts, loss and anxiety you are experiencing.

Having experienced a Beginning Experience weekend, they are able to help others embrace their struggles and help them to begin anew. A former participant puts it this way, “It had been four years since my husband’s sudden death. I was left with a 19-year-old son and fifteen year old daughter. My children and I were devastated and I spent the first few years helping them deal with the loss of their father. I put my grief on hold, making sure my son and daughter were on their way to recovery first. When my daughter left home, I found myself with an empty nest and unable to move forward in the grief process. Feeling lost and lonely, I attended a Beginning Experience weekend and, at that weekend, I came to understand that I was not alone. I learned to start to live anew as a single person and put closure to my marriage of twenty-three years. I became a team member and continue to be a part of this wonderful healing ministry.”

The Beginnings Experience weekend is held in the Diocese of San Angelo at Christ the King Retreat Center in San Angelo. It begins on Friday night at 8:00 p.m. and ends on Sunday afternoon at 4:00 p.m. The cost of $115.00 includes a room and meals. All you need for the weekend is some comfortable clothes and a willingness to heal. The Beginning Experience weekend is open to men and women of all faiths who have suffered the loss of a spouse. If you are a single parent and need assistance to come to the weekend, please go to your priest or minister and tell him about your situation.

For more information you can visit www.beginningexperience.org or call (432) 386-3504 or (325) 651-5352.

The Beginning Experience Team is committed to serve and bring the healing of Christ to the divorced, separated and widowed and their families.
Making Sense of Bioethics

**Thomson’s ‘Famous Violinist Problem’ nothing but fiddle-faddle**

By Fr. Tad Pacholczyk

In her still-widely-read 1971 article, A Defense of Abortion, Judith Jarvis Thomson sets up a thought experiment known as “The Famous Violinist Problem” to argue that abortion ought to be morally justified when a pregnancy arises out of sexual assault:

“You wake up in the morning and find yourself back to back in bed with a . . . famous unconscious violinist. He has been found to have a fatal kidney ailment, and the Society of Music Lovers has canvassed all the available medical records and found that you alone have the right blood type to help. They have therefore kidnapped you, and last night the violinist’s circulatory system was plugged into yours, so that your kidneys can be used to extract poisons from his blood as well as your own. To unplug you would be to kill him. But never mind, it’s only for nine months. By then he will have recovered from his ailment, and can safely be unplugged from you.”

Most people would share the intuition that they should be able to unplug themselves from the violinist, since they didn’t consent to being hooked up in the first place. Others would suggest an analogy with becoming pregnant from rape, so the mother could “unplug” herself from the child by abortion.

At least two serious problems, however, exist with this analogy.

First, the famous violinist is not a good parallel for the child conceived by sexual assault. The violinist in Thomson’s thought experiment is basically a stranger to us. But the child conceived in rape is not, properly speaking, a stranger at all, and the analogy should probably be corrected to indicate this: “When the woman wakes up, she finds herself connected to a prodigy violinist who also happens to be her 12 year old son.” In such a scenario, she would far more easily admit an obligation to remain attached to him, even for an extended period of time. Following a rape that results in pregnancy, a woman likewise finds herself connected to her own progeny, her own child in utero, with similar natural moral obligations to nurture and care for her own flesh and blood.

The second problem with Thomson’s analogy is that abortion is not like “unplugging” a tube connecting one person to another, and allowing the dependent individual to expire from a condition like kidney failure. Instead, abortion invokes various surgical and obstetrical procedures that directly end the life of, and even dismember, the in utero child.

Norma McCorvey, the former “Jane Roe” of the Roe vs. Wade Supreme Court decision, herself once worked in an abortion clinic and later described what happened there:

“When a later abortion was performed, workers had to piece the baby back together, and every major part – head, torso, two legs, and two arms – had to be accounted for. One of our little jokes at the clinic was, “If you ever want to humble a doctor, hide a leg so he thinks he has to go back in.” Please understand, these were not abnormal, uncaring women working with me at the clinic. We were just involved in a bloody, dehumanizing business, all of us for our own reasons. Whether we were justifying our past advocacy (as I was), justifying a previous abortion (as many were) or whatever, we were just trying to cope – and if we couldn’t laugh at what was going on, I think our minds would have snapped.”

McCorvey’s comments remind us that abortion is essentially a violent and deadly act, not an euphemistic “unhooking” or “separating” of mother and child. Thus we might wish to modify Thomson’s analogy once again in order to maintain parallelism: “A woman wakes up in the morning and finds herself attached to a violinist. To free herself from any further involvement with him, she asks a doctor to come in with a knife and to dismember the renowned musician.” The absolute wrongness of such direct killing would remain beyond dispute, as would the wrongness of any direct killing actions by a raped woman directed against her unborn son because of the sins of his father.

In reflecting on the specifics of “The Famous Violinist Problem,” we begin to appreciate the importance of never subjecting an innocent third party, whether a musician or an in utero child, to direct lethal harm simply because they find themselves in a state of radical dependence upon another human being. Although we aren’t obligated to use extreme or extraordinary measures to try to save the violinist in Thomson’s thought experiment, we shouldn’t make the error of supposing that the state of pregnancy itself is somehow extraordinary or extreme, even in the tragic case of sexual assault, given that it objectively embodies the natural and familial line of duty to care for our own offspring.

Rev. Tadeusz Pacholczyk, Ph.D. earned his doctorate in neuroscience from Yale and did post-doctoral work at Harvard. He is a priest of the diocese of Fall River, MA, and serves as the Director of Education at The National Catholic Bioethics Center in Philadelphia. See www.ncbcenter.org

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**Addiction: Destroying futures for our people**

By Erick Rommel

Catholic News Service

In the hours following the news of Philip Seymour Hoffman’s death from a suspected drug overdose, I saw a question online that made me think. Why do we excuse celebrity addiction by saying those affected are talented people who lost their way, but we dismiss the nonfamous as nothing more than junkies?

On the surface, the question made sense. Then I realized our emotions about death aren’t based on fame. They’re based on familiarity.

When celebrities die, we feel a loss because we know we’ll miss the enjoyment we get from their talent. When a family member dies, we feel a loss because a connection that goes beyond friendship is lost forever.

When a stranger dies, there is no bond, just cold facts. Timothy Ian Miller is one of those strangers.

More than a decade ago, he overdosed on drugs and died. Those are the facts. If you didn’t know him, he’s nothing more than a stranger and another tragic statistic. To me, he was a friend, one of my best friends.

Tim was a romantic. He would buy flowers and give them to random women, just to cheer them up. He was a dreamer. He never let others place limits on what he thought was possible. He was an artist. He could create emotions with words and music.

In the end, I think Tim’s talent led to his destruction. After graduating from college, Tim felt trapped in his small town. He knew he had a gift and didn’t understand why others didn’t appreciate it. He found an escape through recreational drug use and never noticed the transition to addiction.

At Tim’s memorial, his parents asked why no one ever told them he was doing drugs. If they had known, they would have done something to help him.

At the time, I had no answer. After many years of thinking, I have an answer: We were in denial.

Looking back, the signs were there. I remember the last time I saw Tim. A group of friends had gathered for homecoming. We went out for dinner at a nice restaurant. My memories of that evening are anything but pleasant.

Tim was short-tempered, nasty and rude. At the time, I thought it was because most of us had found jobs and he was still searching. Looking back, I wonder how I didn’t see the real cause.

I have the same question when I read the news articles about Hoffman. He had dozens of bags of drugs in his apartment. Why didn’t anyone intervene? Why didn’t they become involved?

I know it’s because they probably didn’t realize there was a problem, or if they did, they didn’t realize its severity.

Every time Hoffman’s family and friends think of him or see one of his movies, they’ll question whether they could have done more. The question will never go away, but, fortunately, as time diminishes the pain, they’ll think less about what could have been and more about what was.

Today, when I think of Tim, I no longer wonder who he would have become or imagine the art he could have created. I listen to his music and I let it return me to a moment of time that moves further into the past. My memories are clearer. No matter how old I become, Tim remains.

And I still miss him every day.
Living in a vale of tears and bewailing our virginity

By Fr. Ron Rolheiser

Scripture is often shocking in its earthiness. The Book of Judges gives us an example: A certain king, Jepthah, is at war and things are going badly. He prays to God in desperation, promising that if God lets him win this battle he, Jepthah, upon returning to his kingdom will offer on the altar of sacrifice the first person he meets. God takes him at his word. Jepthah wins his battle and is overjoyed. His joy quickly evaporates. Upon returning home, he sees his own daughter, in the bloom of her youth, running out to meet him and he, conscious of his promise to God, now faces a horrible dilemma - break an oath to God or sacrifice his own daughter.

He tells his daughter of the promise and is ready to break his vow. She, however, offers to die in sacrifice... except there is one thing (as there always is in every great story of the soul). What is the one thing in her case? She's a virgin and will now die in non-consummation and barrenness, never having achieved wholeness and never having given birth. So she asks her father to grant her a period of two months to go into the desert and bewail her virginity. Her father agrees and she and her maiden companions go out into the desert to grieve the fact that she will die unwhole, barren, never having been granted the full symphony. She does her grieving in the desert, returns, and dies on the altar of sacrifice.

On one level this is an awful story - a terrible commentary on God, patriarchy of a bad sort, and religion at its worst. At another level, though, it's a profound story, worth meditating. Biblical stories of this genre, as we know, are neither historical nor meant to be taken literally. Rather they depict the inner dramas of the soul, of every soul, in every age. This is our story. We too are invited to mourn our virginity. What's our particular virginity?

Henri Nouwen once said that here, in this life, "there is no such thing as a clear-cut pure joy, but that even in the most happy moments of our existence we sense a tinge of sadness. In every satisfaction, there is an awareness of limitation. In every success, there is the fear of jealousy. Behind every smile, there is a tear. In every embrace, there is loneliness. In every friendship, distance." That's an important insight.

There is no such thing as a clear-cut, pure joy. This constitutes a kind of virginity. We are always somewhere unwhole, barren, unable to give full birth to what's pushing for life inside us. This frustration takes various forms during the course of our lives, but it's always there. Sometimes it's there in the area of sexuality, irrespective of whether we are married or celibate. I remember a former colleague of mine, a married woman, challenging a group of priests: "You, celibates, feel too sorry for yourselves," she said. "Do you know what's worse than sleeping alone? Sleeping alone when you're not sleeping alone!" Everyone, in some areas of life, is deeply alone.

More deeply though our frustration is with the limits of life itself. Art too has its martyrs, Iris Murdoch once remarked, and there is no greater pain in life than the inadequacy of self-expression. None of us ever finds adequate self-expression. This stems not from idiosyncratic pathology, but from the way we are built. We are made for the infinite and are, as John of the Cross says, caverns without a bottom, infinite canyons that nothing can ever fill in. With a depth and a capacity for the infinite, we shouldn't be surprised that we don't find all we need within the finite. We're over-charged for this life.

We experience this in our daydreams. There we feel the discrepancy between what we yearn for and what we can actually have, though there comes a day when we realize that, this side of heaven, our yearned-for consummation is not to be had. But the fire doesn't die. We ache just as much after the realism soaks in. It's then, when we realize that so much of what we yearn for is not to be, that, like Jepthah's daughter, it's time to head for the desert to make peace with our souls and with God for the infinite patience that is asked of us.

Carl Rahner once said that "in the torment of the insufficiency of everything attainable we come to realize that here in this life all symphonies remain unfinished." Former spiritualities called this living "in a vale of tears." There is nothing morbid about such a statement.

In the end, one way or the other we all die as virgins, never having fully experienced consummation, barren, never having given birth. Celibate or married, we all sleep alone. There comes a time to mourn this so as to find the joy that lies on the other side, after the grief, on the altar of sacrifice.

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

Baptism makes the baptized an ‘alter Christus,’ or another Christ

By Fr. Robert Barron

A classic characterization of Jesus is that he is priest, prophet, and king. As priest, he sanctifies, that is to say, he reestablishes the lost link between divinity and humanity; as prophet, he speaks and embodies the divine truth; and as king, he leads us on the right path, giving guidance to the human project. You might say that, as priest, he is the life; as prophet, he is the truth; and as king he is the way.

Not only is this manus triplex (triple office) a rich way to characterize the Lord; it is also a very good way to designate who the baptized are supposed to be. According to Catholic theology, baptism is much more than merely a symbolic sign of belonging to the church. It is the means by which a person is incorporated into Christ, becoming a member of his mystical body. Baptism, accordingly, makes the baptized an alter Christus, another Christ. This is precisely why, for example, every candidate for baptism is anointed with oil, just as, in the Old Testament, priests, prophets, and kings were anointed upon assumption of their offices.

So what does this look like in practice? How does it show itself in the lives of ordinary believers? Let us look at priesthood first. A priest fosters holiness, precisely in the measure that he or she serves as a bridge between God and human beings. In ancient Roman times, the priest was described as a pontifex, bridge-builder, and this remains a valid designation in the Christian context. The reconciliation of divinity and humanity produces in human beings a wholeness or integration, a coming together of the often warring elements within the self. The same dynamic obtains on a grander scale as well: when cities, societies, cultures rediscover a link to God, they find an inner peace. And therefore baptized priests are meant, first, to embody the harmony that God wants between himself and those made in his image and likeness. They affect this through their own intense devotion to prayer, the sacraments, and the Mass. In their cultivation of a real friendship with the living Christ, they act out their priestly identity and purpose. Then, they are sent out into families, communities, places of work, the political and cultural arenas, etc. in order to carry the integration they have found like a holy contagion. If baptized priests stop praying, stop going to Mass, stop frequenting the sacraments, they will become, in short order, like salt that has lost its savor.

What does it mean for the average baptized person to be a prophet? A person is a prophet in the measure that he or she bears the truth of God. G.K. Chesterton said that in an upside-down world such as ours, the prophet is the one who stands on his head so that he might see things aright. This is why, of course, prophets have always appeared more than a little insane. In fact, the Hebrew word for prophet, "nabi", has the over-tone of madman. Well, of course: in a world that has lost its bearings, those who speak the divine truth will, perforce, appear unhinged. How does one cultivate this salutary madness? Baptized prophets should exercise their brains by studying philosophy, theology, spirituality, church history, and the lives of the saints. And they can't be satisfied with reading superficial tracts designed for children. Augustine, Origen, Bernard, Thomas Aquinas, Ignatius, John Henry Newman, Chesterton, and Ratzinger (Please See BARRON/22)
U.S. citizens to U.S. Congress: Time to do your job

By Stephen Kent
Catholic News Service

Take heart, not everything in Washington, D.C., moves at glacial speed. Important legislation may be stuck in the swamp of partisan politics, but the political ploys and posturing that surrounds it volleys back and forth like a ball in the world tennis championships.

Look at the latest in the ongoing plight of immigration reform, which everyone says is vital but no one wants to touch.

The U.S. Senate, in June, passed a bipartisan bill that would have tightened border security and offered a path to citizenship for millions of undocumented immigrants. But the bill stalled in the House of Representatives. Republicans, who control the House, have generally remained opposed to working with President Barack Obama on the issue.

In late January, House Republicans released a set of principles they said they would consider for immigration reform. Auxiliary Bishop Eusebio Elizondo of Seattle, the chair of the U.S. bishops’ Committee on Migration said he was "strongly encouraged" that they might bring some action.

But at the same time, he noted that the plan did not include a path to citizenship, a consistent call by the bishops.

The bishop’s encouragement was short-lived. Subsequently, House Speaker John Boehner, a Republican, withdrew his support of moving immigration reform forward because of "widespread doubt about whether this administration can be trusted to enforce our laws."

Sen. Chuck Schumer, a Democrat from New York, and the sponsor of the immigration bill passed by the Senate later suggested that Congress pass the bill, but not implement it until 2017, after President Obama leaves office.

A day later, a spokesman for the speaker shot down the idea, saying it would eliminate the incentive to the president to enforce immigration laws for the rest of his term. This appears not to be a problem given that the Obama administration deported 369,000 people in 2013 -- an increase of nine times from the number of people deported 20 years ago.

Immigration reform has been the subject of seminars, studies and research for decades. There can be little left to learn in order to make a decision. Supporters have organized prayer vigils, letter-writing campaigns and protested by fasting while camped out near the U.S. Capitol in support of passage of a reform bill.

Comprehensive immigration reform must include, among other things, a path to citizenship, a worker visa program and reduced waiting time for family reunification.

Failure to act on this issue for decades might explain why 82 percent of people disapprove of Congress. Pundits say little will happen before midterm elections in 2014. The day after those elections are over, the presidential election cycle for 2016 will begin, and there won't be much interest in taking action on immigration reform. We have a constant, two-year cycle of excuses for inaction.

The House doesn't trust the Senate. The Senate doesn't trust the House. And the public doesn't like either one very much.

There should be no more patience for these face-saving, game-playing politicians. The message to them is simple: Do your job.

Kent is the retired editor of archdiocesan newspapers in Omaha and Seattle. Contact him at: considersk@gmail.com.

Sister Irene: One life, marvelously lived, with no regrets

By Moises Sandoval
Catholic News Service

The distribution of ashes on Ash Wednesday reminds us of our mortal destiny: "For you are dust, and to dust you shall return." Death is all around us. We do not like to think about it or talk about it, but we have an appointment with it that we cannot avoid.

We can only hope that we can meet it with the grace and faith I saw in a religious sister I met in Indiana last year.

Her name was Sister Irene DeMeulenaere, 90, a native of Iowa and a member of Our Lady of Victory Missionary Sisters for more than 60 years. When I met with her, she had been told by her doctor that the cancer that had been in remission had returned.

She faced the only options available: to do nothing or to suffer through chemotherapy or radiation, with uncertain results.

She chose to do nothing. So her doctor and his staff gave her a party and sent her home with flowers. Shortly after, she sat in her wheelchair and, gesturing skyward, said, "It is time for me to go up there."

She was at peace, with no sense that she had missed anything important in life.

When she entered the congregation in 1950, a monthly newsletter published a picture of her and the other 21 young women who entered along with Sister Irene. Below it was the following text:

"There may be reasons to complain of the youth of our day, but pictured above are 22 proof that generosity, self-sacrifice and nobility of soul are characteristic of the youth of America today even as in former ages. These young women -- our new postulants -- have not hesitated to answer the call of the Master to dedicate their lives to the religious instruction of his little ones, even though it means giving up home and loved ones and all the comfort and pleasures of our modern world."

Sister Irene's face was bright with expectation.

The congregation was founded in 1922 to teach religion to children in public schools who were not getting formal religious instruction and to provide the poor with social services and health care. Sister Irene led an eventful life, working in various places.

She and another sister would get in the car and drive long distances from one sparsely populated settlement to the next. In some places, with only a few Catholic children and no place to hold a class, they taught them from the car. In another place, they taught them in a bar. The owner closed the place while the sisters gave their class.

These sisters taught in all sorts of places: under trees, in funeral homes, garages, storm cellars, trailers, homes under construction and even in a pool hall. Nothing was going to keep them from carrying out their mission.

Often, getting to the teaching site was the most challenging. "Our first encounter with Nevada alkali was bespattering, literally bespattering," states one report in a newsletter. "We were trying to find a schoolhouse 35 or 40 miles off the highway and the narrow road though the sage seemed firm enough for the first 10 miles. And then we came upon trouble. Ahead of us suddenly appeared a nice large mud puddle, no place to turn, and, well, we were stuck."

They finally got out by putting sagebrush under the wheels.

This marvelous woman left for her eternal home in August 2013.

Una vida sin arrepentimientos

By Moises Sandoval
Catholic News Service

El miércoles de ceniza nos recuerda de nuestro destino mortal: “Polvo eres y al polvo volverás.” La muerte se encuentra dondequiera. Evitamos pensar o hablar de la muerte, pero todo el mundo tiene una cita inevitable con ella. La única esperanza es que podamos recibirla con la gracia y esperanza que vi yo en una religiosa quien conocí el año pasado en Indiana.

Se llamaba hermana Irene DeMeulenaere, de 90 años, originaria de Iowa, fue una de las Hermanas Religiosas Misioneras de Nuestra Señora de La Victoria.

Cuando la conocí, su médico le había dicho que su cáncer, antes en remisión, estaba activo nuevamente. Las únicas opciones disponibles: hacer nada o sufrir quimioterapia o radiación, con resultado incierto.

(Mira IRENE/21)
Philippines ravaged by 1-2 punch

Family of Midland pastor loses much when earthquake, typhoon visit destruction on islands

By Jimmy Patterson

ANTIQUEA, BOHOL — Antonio Getigan and thousands like him were forced from their homes in the days following a massive earthquake October 15, 2013, in the Philippines.

Two weeks after the earth shook and in the midst of the considerable damage that had been inflicted, Catholics in the town returned to their parishes in Antequera, Bohol, a town of about 10,000 that took a direct hit from the quake.

They had been advised to stay away. But it was the last Saturday of the month, the day the Filipino Catholics in Antequera celebrate their Feast Day: Our Lady of the Holy Rosary. With October also being the month of Mary, the Feast Day on that last Saturday is made an even more significant celebration. Antonio and his fellow Catholics at Our Lady of the Holy Rosary would not be kept away from their church.

“Even though they had had this huge earthquake, they gathered together that day, with the help of their priest,” said Fr. Bernard Getigan, pastor of San Miguel Arcangel, and son of Antonio Getigan. Three of Fr. Bernard’s siblings lost their homes in the massive destruction. His father was struck by falling debris and narrowly missed being seriously injured.

“We evacuated my dad to where it was safer,” Fr. Bernard said. “Two days before Feast Day, my dad told me he was going home. I asked him why he was so insistent on returning, there was no home for him to go to. He told me he was going home to pray to God for the people. He went home and stayed there and did not leave again.”

Three weeks after the 7.8 earthquake, Typhoon Haiyan brought utter, widespread devastation on the island chain, but largely spared Fr. Bernard’s hometown. Although the winds in the town were considerable, Antequera avoided the devastating floods and massive waves that came ashore, destroying coastal and inland cities and killing many of the more than 5,200 who perished.

“For me it was like a double jeopardy for the people there,” Fr. Bernard said. “It was tough on me, but more so, it was tough on the people of the Philippines. What I really admire about them is their resiliency and their faith in God.”

A native of the Philippines, Fr. Bernard said his father was a farmer, his mother a shopkeeper. He has two brothers and four sisters. A third brother died at the age of three.

Fr. Bernard visited his homeland following the earthquake and typhoon and said what he found reinforced his faith in the people of his country. He also reported that Catholic Relief Service workers and volunteers were hard at work clearing debris and performing the many other necessary chores that would help return some sense of normalcy to his homeland.

“I witnessed the parish pastoral council stocking food and other items to be given to people in need, especially in the barrios and far away areas that were badly damaged,” Fr. Bernard said. “On the same Sunday, one family of three died after literally being swallowed by the earth. Their home was completely missing because of the earthquake and the way the ground opened up. One of their sons was able to climb out and that boy came to the church asking for help. He talked to the priest at his rectory to get the aid. I watched that priest give him not only aid, but comfort. The priest was injured himself and limping from an injury suffered in the earthquake.”

The generosity of of his own people at San Miguel Arcangel has amounted to a considerable monetary figure and many prayers. Parishioners at the church in Midland’s south side responded to the critical needs by donating $6,000 over two Sunday special collections. Many others have taken part in the help sent to those reeling from the after-effects of the Filipino quake and typhoon, including a $1 million anonymous donor-led effort that was helped by a $500,000 matching amount raised by people not just in the San Angelo diocese but, after word spread of the donation, across the country.

The generosity also included the donation of $15,000 by the people of St. Lawrence parish. That money has gone toward the purchase of a generator to bring power to a seminary in Fr. Getigan’s province of Bohol.
With an assist from Catholic shelter, family hopes to get back on its feet

By Mark Pattison
Catholic News Service

FORT MEADE, Md. — According to Census Bureau estimates released in September 2013, there are 46.5 million poor people in the United States.

This is the story of one of them.

Samantha — she asked that her last name not be used — and her family are currently staying at Sarah's House, an emergency and transitional shelter run by Catholic Charities of the Archdiocese of Baltimore.

The story of Samantha, 30, and her family is not one of abject desperation. But it is a story of how one small setback after another piles up and has a snowball effect.

Samantha grew up in a Maryland suburb that borders Washington. Her husband grew up in another border suburb just east of her own.

Her husband has woodworking and cabinetry skills. Samantha stayed at home, raising the couple's four children while her husband worked.

Then came the recession of 2008. The woodworking business slowed; orders for cabinetry dropped off. Samantha's brother-in-law invited them to live with him in a city about midway between Washington and Baltimore.

While they lived there, Samantha had two more children, now ages 2 and 3. But the distance from her husband's network of connections and clients, coupled with unreliable transportation, made getting jobs tougher. In the meantime, the brother-in-law started demanding that his down-on-their-heels... (Please See POOR/22)

A boy looks on as meals are served to residents of a Salvation Army shelter for homeless women and children in early January in Detroit. There are 46.5 million people living in poverty in the United States. About one third are children under 18. (CNS photo/Jim West)

He used to be poor ... but that was a long time ago

By Mark Pattison
Catholic News Service

WASHINGTON — Contrary to the beliefs of some, it is possible for people who are poor to break out of poverty.

Clarence Simmons is one of them. Few people know him as Clarence. "Call me Clay," he says.

Simmons grew up in southern Pennsylvania, near Gettysburg and Chambersburg. But, as he neared his 30th birthday, Simmons, now 54, moved to Washington to be closer to his mother -- who had amyotrophic lateral sclerosis, also known as Lou Gehrig's disease -- and his brother.

Simmons found the pace of life in Washington circa 1988 too hectic for his liking. And, despite the number of opportunities it seems would be available in a big city, he could not find a job for himself.

"The D.C. government, as far as employment services, it was just a mess," Simmons told Catholic News Service in a Sept. 24 interview. But the one thing a city job counselor advised him was to visit Samaritan Ministries in a more pastoral area of the city, located in a large house close to Rock Creek Park and the Carter Barron Amphitheater.

If the Samaritan Ministries of 1988 was anything like the Samaritan Ministries of 2013 -- featuring a Washington-area map with red-tipped pins showing the location of "member parishes," and file folders affixed to bulletin boards showing "this week's jobs" and "last week's jobs" -- then it was Samaritan that found a job lead for Simmons as a caterer's assistant for a small firm downtown; he even remembers the address.

He worked there for a few years but found the work too cyclical for his liking. "There'd be times when you had to get up at two-thirty in the morning to get to work, and you'd be working until nine o'clock in the evening," Simmons said. "Other times, you'd have enough work for maybe four hours a day."

But, in the quest to improve himself and his stand... (Please See CLAY/22)
On the frequency of priest's confessions; non-Catholic saints

By Father Kenneth Doyle
Catholic News Service

Q. I have often heard priests encouraging Catholics to go to confession more regularly, and I’m wondering how often priests themselves go to confession. Is there a rule on this? And if there is no rule, what is the general practice? (Toms River, N.J.)

A. The church’s Code of Canon Law in No. 989 notes the obligation of Catholics to confess grave sins at least once a year. (Of course, if you are conscious of having committed a grave sin, you should not wait for an annual confession but instead confess as soon as reasonably possible in order to rejoin your pathway to God and render yourself eligible to receive the Eucharist.)

Technically, if you are not aware of having sinned gravely (i.e., “mortal sin”), you are not obliged to seek the sacrament of penance. That having been said, it would be foolish to ignore this very helpful means of pardon, spiritual progress and peace. Almost universally, spiritual writers have encouraged Catholics to confess regularly, perhaps monthly.

Beyond that general norm, there is no specific requirement as to how often priests must confess, although Canon No. 276.5 urges the clergy “to approach the sacrament of penance frequently.”

At a weekly audience in November 2013, Pope Francis revealed that he receives the sacrament of penance every two weeks and considers confession to be the best path to spiritual healing and health. “My confessor hears what I say, offers me advice and forgives me,” said the pope. “We all need this.”

I’ve not seen any studies on this, but it’s safe to say that most priests do not confess their sins nearly as often as the Holy Father. Probably, several times a year would be a reasonable estimate, generally on their annual retreat, sometimes at clergy days of recollection or gatherings of priest support groups, or when time allows.

One of the sad consequences of the shortage of priests is that the frenzied pace of pastoral duties can induce us to ignore our spiritual growth. In this, as in many things, we would do well to look to Pope Francis as a model.

Q. In some Catholic churches, I have heard Martin Luther King, Gandhi and Dietrich Bonhoeffer invoked during the chanting of the Litany of the Saints. Are they saints we can pray to? (Grand Island, Neb.)

A. By canonization, the Catholic Church declares with the fullness of its authority that a person is in heaven and worthy of veneration. Theoretically, I suppose that the church could make that judgment of a non-Catholic, but to date it has not done so.

This is not because we believe that heaven is populated only by Catholics; to the contrary, the teaching of the church is that heaven may be granted through God’s grace to people who live morally and follow the promptings of God.

There is a reluctance on the church’s part to usurp another religion’s role in evaluating the life and works of its members. Additionally, classical Protestantism, while it sets up historical figures as worthy of admiration (Martin Luther, for example, or John Wesley), does not invoke their prayerful intercession.

To enroll Dr. King or Pastor Bonhoeffer formally in our own Litany of the Saints could be seen as an ecumenical faux pas - although I would have no problem enlisting such heroes (along with Gandhi) in private prayer, as I do with members of my family who have gone before me.

Q. Why are pronouns referring to Jesus no longer capitalized? Using uppercase would add clarity to many passages when a reader is trying to determine whether the word “he” refers to Christ or to another person in the account. We have no compunction about capitalizing “I.” Yet the name at which every knee should bend is relegated to lowercase. (Decatur, Ill.)

A. Whether to capitalize pronouns referring to the deity is largely a matter of personal preference and conviction, and there really is no “right” or “wrong.” In the original languages of the Bible, the issue never arose.

In Hebrew, there was no such thing as capital letters, simply an alphabet; and in the original Greek manuscripts, the text was written entirely in capitals. So it is not a matter of conforming to original texts.

Publishers must look for consistency and English-language book and magazine publishers, for the most part, follow the Chicago Manual of Style, a widely-regarded authority on grammar and usage. The style guide of the U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops notes that deity pronouns are lowercase in USCCB publications.

Similarly, Catholic News Service uses lowercase, as does the Associated Press.

Most of the English-language translations of the Bible follow that same practice, including The New American Bible, which is the text used at Catholic Masses. Similarly, the Catechism of the Catholic Church uses lowercase for such pronouns. That having been said, you are free, of course, to write it as you wish.

Read your diocesan newspaper: It should be a tool for evangelization

By Denise Bossert

One morning last spring, I caught my older daughter flipping through a diocesan newspaper while eating breakfast. I had to smile. On that particularly morning, she wasn’t officially Catholic. She entered the Church later that day at the 2:30 Mass at the Cathedral Basilica in St. Louis, Missouri. It was Pentecost Sunday and soon, my second child would be entering the faith I had chosen less than a decade earlier.

“Did you read the diocesan newspapers when you lived here? Or is this a new thing for you?” I asked her. She looked up from the paper and smiled. “When there was no catalog or magazine on the table, I would read it. It was something to do.” She laughed and closed the paper.

Those were rough years. She had moved into our house with her little boys and was trying to juggle them and full-time employment. She was also trying hard to avoid God.

But on this particular Sunday, the fight against God ended. On that day, she was received into Mother Church.

My husband also used to scan diocesan newspapers and magazines before he converted. He’s the kind of guy that goes through withdrawal when he doesn’t have a book to read. In the years after my conversion (before his own conversion), he would read the Catholic papers that were on the table – the random complimentary copies I received as a columnist. This is the same man who promised he would never become Catholic. He was born Southern Baptist, and he would die Southern Baptist.

He’s been Catholic since 2008.

I don’t know if there is a cause and effect relationship between conversions and subscriptions to diocesan periodicals, but at the very least, there is some correlation. I believe families that have subscriptions to diocesan papers are the very families most likely to experience conversion and ongoing conversion – even among families in which some members actively resist God. There are times that the diocesan newspaper on the kitchen table is the only remaining voice for Mother Church in the lives of those who stubbornly resist grace.

I am blessed to write for diocesan papers and magazines, but I am even more blessed to have those periodicals in my home and on my kitchen table. There was a time when my husband told me to stop talking about my newfound faith – but he would still read the diocesan newspaper. My daughter tuned me out for years. But last spring, she entered the Church.

Diocesan papers are tools of evangelization. Sometimes, they are the only evangelization tool left in a household.

If you are reading this, you understand how important this magazine or newspaper is. You know that it assists you in your journey – and you know that it assists those who live under your roof and sit at your kitchen table.

In a world that is filled with many voices and so many words, it is a blessing to have faithful media coming into our homes, sharing words that matter – words that bring life.

Denise Bossert distributes a column, “Catholic By Grace.” This article ran in diocesan newspapers in the United States and in the Catholic Press Association paper The Catholic Journalist.
Sweetwater Celebrates 50

Priests, parishioners honored at golden jubilee of Immaculate Heart of Mary

SWEETWATER — Holy Spirit Catholic Parish in Sweetwater celebrated the 50th Anniversary of the Dedication of Immaculate Heart of Mary on Friday, December 13, 2013. The celebration began with a Friday Mass in which all former pastors from the last 50 years were invited to attend, as well as all past and present parishioners. The mass was well attended by local parishioners and former parishioners from neighboring towns.

We were honored to have Fr. Michael Rodriguez from Holy Redeemer in Odessa, as well as Fr. Joe Uecker from St. Joseph’s and St. Anthony’s in Odessa, in attendance. Also celebrating the Mass with us was Bishop Michael D. Pfeifer and our present pastor, Fr. Charles Okonkwo.

During the mass, Bishop Pfeifer recognized 45 parishioners who were faithful attendees of Immaculate Heart of Mary for the last 50 years by giving them a small medallion. Following the celebratory mass, a covered-dish reception was held for everyone, along with music and dance performances.

Bishop Pfeifer, Fr. Joe and Fr. Michael were all given a special thanks by Pastoral Chairman David Mendez, and the pastoral council members presented them each with a plaque in honor of their service.

Holy Spirit Catholic Parish looks forward to another 50 years of fellowship with our parishioners.
Another day .... another episcopal ordination

While bishops aren’t necessarily ordained every day, that was nearly the case in January when Most Rev. Michael Olson became the Bishop of Fort Worth two days after Bishop Michael J. Sis took over for Bishop Michael Pfeifer in San Angelo — two dioceses that border each other.

(Story, photo reprinted courtesy of the Diocese of Fort Worth)

By Joan Kurkowski-Gillen
Correspondent

“We’re in good hands.”
That’s how the Considine family of Wichita Falls reacted to the Ordination Mass and Installation of Michael Fors Olson as the fourth bishop of Fort Worth. More than 8,500 Catholics and members of communities from across North Texas gathered inside the Fort Worth Convention Center Arena Jan. 29 to witness one of their own priests ascend to the episcopacy of the fast-growing diocese.

“He’s such a deserving priest. I wasn’t surprised at all they made him a bishop,” said Evelyn Considine who became acquainted with a young Michael Olson when he was a seminarian assigned to Our Lady of Peace Church. She attended his ordination to the priesthood in June 1994 and years later would see him at the annual Fr. Donlon Vocation Dinner sponsored by Knights of Columbus Council 1473 at Wichita Falls’ other parish, Sacred Heart. The event raises money for the education of seminarians.

Monsignor Olson was rector of Holy Trinity Seminary in Irving before Pope Francis appointed him bishop of Fort Worth on Nov. 19. The 28-county diocese has been “sede vacante” — without a leader — since Fort Worth’s third bishop, Kevin Vann left to become the bishop of Orange, California in December 2012.

Jose and Gloria Frias arrived early at the convention center hoping to secure an unobstructed view of the Ordination Mass. Both are lectors at St. George Church in Fort Worth.

“We’re here to see the new bishop,” Jose said, sporting a tie with the image of Our Lady of Guadalupe. “He’s a gift from God to all of us.”

The swell of parishioners, Catholic school children, and out-of-town visitors who turned out for the solemn, majestic ceremony shared that sentiment. Included in the congregation were more than 50 relatives and friends from the Chicago area where 47-year-old Bishop Olson was born and attended school.

The bishop’s cousin Bill Ackermann said his cousin was destined for this day. The new bishop comes from a large extended family, and cousins often got together to bowl or enjoy each other’s company.

“From the day Michael was born, he was meant to be here,” said the visiting relative. “He never had a mean bone in his body. He’s a kind person with a great sense of humor who was always special — in a good way.”

For Ronald and Janice Olson, their son’s ordination day couldn’t arrive fast enough.

“The weather has been bad, but they still made it in,” said Ronald Olson, referring to the travel plans of their Chicago guests.

“Friends and family are supporting Michael and that’s tremendous.”

Sitting with his wife, Janice, and daughters, Patty, Mitzi, and Liz, the high-spirited dad described the eldest of his four living children as a “people person” who cares about everybody.

“We’re just very, very proud of him,” added his mother Janice Olson. “It’s a wonderul feeling.”

The Ordination Mass began with a long and impressive liturgical procession led by the Knights of Columbus, the Knights and Ladies of St. Peter Claver, the Equestrian Order of the Holy Sepulchre of Jerusalem, and the Order of Malta. As the diocesan choir sang “St. Patrick’s Breastplate” and other inspiring hymns, more than 100 seminarians, 230 priests, 60 deacons, and 43 bishops entered the arena-turned-worship space.

Ferns, coupled with rows of blue hydrangeas, delphiniums, and coral-colored azaleas, lined the raised altar. Roses, artfully arranged in vases, symbolized the new bishop’s devotion to Our Lady of Guadalupe and St. Thérèse of Lisieux, “The Little Flower.”

Hanging from a white monolith, a large crucifix, designed by architect Jim Bransford, served as an appropriate backdrop for the sacred setting. The 8-foot corpus, carved from linden wood, and a statue of the Blessed Mother placed on the altar, belong to the Discalced Carmelites Nuns in Arlington.

“The Carmelites don’t leave their enclosure, so they are participating in the liturgy by loaning the crucifix and statue of the Madonna from their chapel,” explained Father Jonathan Wallis, who served as master of ceremonies.

As the metropolitan archbishop of the San Antonio Province, Archbishop Gustavo Garcia-Siller served as principal consecrator for the sacred Rite of Ordination. Assisting as principal co-consecrators were former Fort Worth Bishop Kevin Vann and Archbishop Emeritus Joseph A. Fiorenza of the Archdiocese of Galveston-Houston.

Principal co-consecrator San Antonio Archbishop Gustavo Garcia-Siller is laying hands on Bishop Michael F. Olson during the rite of ordination. Co-consecrator Galveston-Houston Archbishop Emeritus Joseph Fiorenza is to the right, Co-consecrator Bishop Kevin Vann, third bishop of Fort Worth, and current bishop of the Diocese of Orange in California, stands behind Archbishop Garcia-Siller (Photo by Jerry Circelli).
Culture

‘Son of God’ a love story, say movie’s producers

By Mark Pattison
Catholic News Service

WASHINGTON — The recently released movie "Son of God" should be seen as "a love story," according to two of its executive producers, the husband-and-wife team of Mark Burnett and Roma Downey.

"This really is a love story -- the greatest love story ever told," Downey said.

The couple brought the 10-hour miniseries "The Bible" to television last year, garnering sizable ratings on the History cable channel.

Among those 10 hours was the story of Jesus. But Burnett and Downey decided even before the miniseries was televised that they would make a separate movie focusing on Jesus.

"When we were in Morocco filming," Downey said. "I said to Mark, 'We should have been making a film here."

Downey, perhaps best known for her starring role for nine seasons on "Touched by an Angel," plays Mary, mother of the adult Jesus.

Burnett, whose TV successes have been primarily in reality programming from "Survivor" to "Shark Tank" to "The Voice" to "The Apprentice" to "Are You Smarter Than a Fifth Grader," concurred, but noted, "It wasn't shot any differently" for multiplexes than "The Bible" had been for TV. "We use different camera angles. We shoot so much film of every scene it's easy to make alternate choices."

"Son of God" premiered in theaters Feb. 28. It tells the story of Jesus through the eyes of an elderly St. John -- the only apostle who did not meet a martyr's fate -- on the isle of Patmos.

The film portrays the same kind of brutality seen in "The Passion of the Christ" a decade ago, although it's concealed or suggested, as it had been in the miniseries. "Son of God" is rated PG-13 by the Motion Picture Association of America.

"Son of God" should be seen as "a love story," according to two of its executive producers, the husband-and-wife team of Burnett and Roma Downey. (CNS photo/Fox)

After a full day of interviews, Downey and Burnett went to the Basilica of the National Shrine of the Immaculate Conception to show clips from the movie and to talk with students from the adjacent Catholic University of America. On Feb. 5, they hosted an invitation-only preview screening at the 1,200-seat Lincoln Theater in Washington.

A year ago, on a similar tour to promote "The Bible," Downey said she wished they had 20 hours to tell Bible stories instead of the 10 that was eventually settled on for the TV audience. Now, with two-plus more hours, they were able to go into a bit more depth with Jesus' story. "It could have just as easily been three hours, 20 minutes," Burnett said.

The success of "The Bible" also produced another spinoff: "A.D." a 12-hour miniseries to be shown on NBC, taking the story of the Apostles and the early Christians to the small screen.

Editor's Note: A related video has been posted at http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=2UW8
OBISPO

(From 2)

no son con la intención de probar nuestra propia santidad o de ganar el amor de Dios por nosotros. Dios aún ya nos está amando y salvando. Él nos ama primeramente. Entonces, al responder a su amor incondicional, felizmente entramos en las actividades de oración, ayuno y caridad con el fin de darle gracias a Dios y para abrimos más completamente al don de la gracia de Dios.

ORACIÓN

Cualquier relación necesita tiempo de calma para buena comunicación. Nuestra relación con Dios no es fomentada cuando paramos un tiempo de silencio específico para hablar con Dios y dejar que Dios también nos hable. Esto quiere decir a veces apagar el ruido constante de la televisión, del radio, y el sistema de sonido.

Recomiendo escribir en nuestros calendarios algunas horas especiales de oración durante esta Cuaresma. Esto, por cierto, ha de comenzar con la hora de oración más importante —la Santa Misa del domingo. Si tomamos algún tiempo para prepararnos personalmente para la Santa Misa, será mucho más fructífero. Esta preparación podría incluir el leer de antemano los pasajes de las Escrituras, recordar a las personas por quienes queremos pedir durante la Santa Misa, y a propósito llegar temprano.

Recuerda leer en nuestro sitio web diocesano, www.sanangelodioce.se.org. ¿Cuándo fue la última vez que fue a Confesión? Cada pecado, no importa que privado, afecta nuestra relación con Dios y nuestro próximo. Al confesar nuestros pecados a un sacerdote clarifica la dimensión social del pecado y nos reconcilia por medio del ministerio de la Iglesia.

He aquí otra idea para la Cuaresma la cual enlaza nuestra oración personal y nuestra relación con otros. Podemos dedicarnos a mandar correos electrónicos, mensajes de texto o llamadas telefónicas, a individuales particulares que conocemos, dejándoles saber que estamos rezando por ellos durante esta temporada santa.

AYUNO

El ayuno y la abstinencia son marcas distintivas de la Cuaresma. El ayuno significa consumir menos cantidad. Abstinencia significa el refrenar de consumir ciertas comidas, bebidas, tipo de entretenimiento, lujurias, tiempo de pasar en frente de una pantalla, etc. No hay una forma espiritualmente productiva el ser minimalistas, solamente obedeciendo a la letra de la ley. Es mejor dejar que nos afecte el corazón. El hecho es que todos estamos llenamente repletos en nuestra sociedad dirigida por el consumidor. Es una felicidad librante el poder vivir más simple y decir, “Estoy bien con menos.”

Nuestras prácticas de abnegación durante la Cuaresma son un manera de decir que Dios es nuestro más grande tesoro, y que no hay otras hambres que nos distraigan de esta hambre más profunda. San Agustín dijo: “Tu nos has hecho dinámicamente orientados hacia ti, O Dios, y tus corazones están inquietos hasta que descansen en ti.”

CARIDAD

A su centro, la caridad es la práctica de dar dinero o bienes al pobre. No solamente incluye el compartir de nuestro tiempo, espacio y recursos materiales con los necesitados, sino también las buenas actas que hacemos por otros. Es el poner el amor en acción. San Pablo dijo que hay tres cosas duraderas —la fe, la esperanza y el amor, y la más grande de estas es el amor.

La caridad, últimamente, trata con edificar relaciones. Nos pone al tanto con las necesidades de otros. Cuando ponemos un poco de dinero cada día en nuestras alcancías para el Plato de Arroz (CRS Rice Bowl), por ejemplo, nos recordamos que estamos conectados con esas personas alrededor del mundo quienes se benefician de estos fondos. Cualquier cosa que hacemos con el más pequeño de los hermanos y hermanas del Señor, eso es lo hacemos al Señor Jesús mismo.

Nuestras prácticas de caridad durante la Cuaresma se pueden hacer en diferentes formas. Estas tal vez podrían incluir, por ejemplo, darnos de voluntarios y poner nuestros talentos al servicio a otros, visitar a los enfermos o los encarcelados, aumentar el diezmo a nuestra parroquia, donar dinero o bienes al pobre. No solamente comemos menos, sino también las buenas actas que hacemos por otros. Cualquier cosa que hacemos con el más pequeño de los hermanos y hermanas del Señor, eso es lo hacemos al Señor Jesús mismo.

TEACHERS

(From 8)

Aubrey most often takes the role of teacher and “forces her sister, Sophie, to do assignments and then grades them.”

Mrs. Jones is confident in Aubrey’s potential as a future great educator, and describes her daughter as an “outside-the-box thinker” who has a history of using manipulatives to better teach lessons to her younger sister. Aubrey, on the other hand, is most looking forward to “getting to teach about Jesus and God.” She looks forward to one day teaching at a Catholic elementary school and gives credit to her mother for helping to lead her in this direction. Aubrey says she most admires how her mother shows her love for each student every day.

Kendall Harrington, daughter of the Middle School Religion teacher at St. Ann’s, describes her mother as “a really nice person who helps people learn.” On “Dress for Success” Day, the physical similarities between Mrs. Janice Harrington and her daughter were absolutely uncanny. It was obvious to everyone in school who she had dressed up as, but it is Kendall’s spirit and desire to one day teach her future children about God that made her costume truly inspired.

While both girls look forward to teaching children in the same school where their mother’s work, it was easy to see how all of the students at St. Ann’s School, dressed as future leaders and members of our society, will also be able to teach and share God’s love in everyday life. They helped to conclude the celebration of Catholic Schools Week in an encouraging way that has shown one doesn’t need to be an educator in the classroom in order to teach about what’s most important, God.
with God is fostered when we set aside specific quiet time to talk with God and let God talk to us. This will mean sometimes turning off the constant noise of the TV, the radio, and the sound system.

I recommend writing into our calendars some special prayer times during this Lent. This should begin, of course, with the most important prayer time -- Sunday Mass. If we will take some time to prepare personally for Mass, it will be so much more fruitful. This preparation can include reading the Scripture passages ahead of time, recalling the persons you need to pray for in the Mass, and purposefully arriving early in order to settle into a spirit of prayer. At the end of Mass, rather than rushing out of the church, it is spiritually beneficial to remain in place for a few minutes, sitting or kneeling, silently thanking God for the gift of the Eucharist.

It is very helpful during Lent to pray at home with the daily Mass readings, and to attend daily Mass when possible. Some other prayer forms to consider for your Lenten practice might be Eucharistic Adoration, Morning Prayer, Evening Prayer, the Rosary, or the Way of the Cross. The Internet has some beautiful versions. One of my favorites is called Everyone’s Way of the Cross by Dr. Clarence Enzler.

Speaking of prayer, Lent is always a great time to celebrate the Sacrament of Penance, or Reconciliation. There are many extra opportunities in the parishes throughout our diocese, and they are listed for your convenience on the diocesan website, www.sanangeloarchdiocese.org. When was the last time you went to Confession? Every sin, no matter how private, affects our relationship with God and neighbor. Confessing our sins to a priest clarifies the social dimension of sin and reconciles us through the ministry of the Church.

Here is another idea for a Lenten practice that weaves together our personal prayer and our relationships with others. We can dedicate ourselves to sending e-mails, text messages, or phone calls, to particular individuals we know, letting them know that we are praying for them in this holy season.

**FASTING**

Fasting and abstinence are hallmarks of Lent. Fasting means consuming less quantity. Abstinence means refraining from certain types of food, such as meat or dessert or television. These disciplines help us to get in touch with our deep inner hunger and thirst for God. They connect us in solidarity with our poor and malnourished brothers and sisters around the world.

When we eat less and allow ourselves to feel some physical hunger, we are reminded that only God will ultimately satisfy the deepest longing of our heart. We join more closely to Jesus Christ, whose suffering in the body gave life to the world. Jesus said, “If you want to be my follower, you must deny yourself, take up your cross, and follow me.” If we want our hearts to be filled with Jesus, then we need to make some room to let him in.

Fasting and abstinence can be practiced in many different ways. The Church has minimum expectations for Catholics. Ash Wednesday and Good Friday are obligatory days of fasting and abstinence from meat. In addition, all Fridays during Lent are obligatory days of abstinence from meat. For members of our Latin Catholic Church, the norms on fasting are obligatory from age 18 until age 59. When fasting, a person is permitted to eat one full meal. Two smaller meals may also be taken, but not to equal a full meal. The norms concerning abstinence from meat are binding upon members of the Latin Catholic Church from the age of 14 onward.

Some choose additional forms of fasting or abstinence, such as refraining from consuming certain other foods, drinks, forms of entertainment, luxuries, time spent in front of screens, etc. It is not spiritually fruitful to become minimalists, just obeying the letter of the law. It is better to let it affect your heart. The fact is that we are all stuffed pretty full in our consumer-driven society. It is joyfully liberating to be able to live more simply and say, “I’m fine with less.”

Our acts of self-sacrifice during Lent are a way of saying that God is our greatest treasure, and that no other hungers should distract us from this deepest hunger. St. Augustine said: “You have made us dynamically oriented toward yourself, O God, and our hearts are restless until they rest in you.”

**ALMSGIVING**

At its core, almsgiving is the practice of giving money or goods to the poor. It includes not only the sharing of our time, space, and material resources with the needy, but also the practical good deeds we do for others. It is putting love into action. St. Paul said that there are three things that last -- faith, hope, and love, and the greatest of these is love.

Almsgiving is ultimately about building relationships. It puts us in touch with the needs of others. When we put a little bit of money each day into our containers for CRS Rice Bowl, for example, we remind ourselves that we are connected with those people around the world who will benefit from those funds. Whatever we do for the least of the Lord’s brothers and sisters, that we do for the Lord Jesus himself.

Our Lenten practices of almsgiving could take many different forms. These might include such things as, for example, volunteering to put our talents at the service of others, visiting the sick or imprisoned, increasing our tithing to our parish, forgiving someone’s debt to us, picking up trash in public areas, or supporting a charitable agency.

As we go through life, each of us has times when we are the one helping, and other times when we are the one being helped. No one is an island. We are not isolated robots. We need one another.

Almsgiving is a concrete expression of that perennial truth.

**CONCLUSION**

With all of these things -- our Lenten practices of prayer, fasting, and almsgiving -- what counts the most is the interior motive of conversion of heart to loving God and loving our neighbor. As your new bishop, I invite you to strengthen those relationships by observing a holy Lent that draws you to a more abundant and joyful life.

**EDICTAL SUMMONS**

February 3, 2014
CASE: THOMPSON -- McCORKLE
NO.: SO/14/01

The Tribunal Office of the Catholic Diocese of San Angelo is seeking Ashley McCorkle.

You are hereby summoned to appear before the Tribunal of the Catholic Diocese of San Angelo, at 804 Ford Street, San Angelo, Texas 76905, on or before March 31, 2014, to answer to the Petition of Chad Thompson, now introduced before the Diocesan Tribunal in an action styled, “Chad Thompson and Ashley Thompson, Petition for Declaration of Invalidity of Marriage.” Said Petition is identified as Case: THOMPSON -- McCORKLE: Protocol No.: SO/01/14, on the Tribunal Docket of the Diocese of San Angelo.

You may communicate with the Tribunal in person or in writing. Failure to communicate within the prescribed period of time will be considered your consent for the Tribunal to continue its proceedings in the above-named case.

Given at the Tribunal of the Diocese of San Angelo on the 3rd day of February 2014.

— Reverend Tom Barley, MSW, MBA, M. Div., JCL, Judicial Vicar

**EDICTAL SUMMONS**

February 20, 2014
ASE: LUJAN -- MATTA (FREGIA)
NO.: SO/14/03

The Tribunal Office of the Catholic Diocese of San Angelo is seeking Sylvia Maria Matta (Fregia).

You are hereby summoned to appear before the Tribunal of the Catholic Diocese of San Angelo, at 804 Ford Street, San Angelo, Texas 76905, on or before the 31st day of March 2014 to answer to the Petition of Robert Acosta Lujan, Jr., now introduced before the Diocesan Tribunal in an action styled, “Robert Acosta Lujan and Sylvia Maria Matta Fregia, Petition for Declaration of Invalidity of Marriage.” Said Petition is identified as Case: LUJAN -- MATTA (FREGIA): Protocol No.: SO/14/03, on the Tribunal Docket of the Diocese of San Angelo.

You may communicate with the Tribunal in person or in writing. Failure to communicate within the prescribed period of time will be considered your consent for the Tribunal to continue its proceedings in the above-named case.

Given at the Tribunal of the Diocese of San Angelo on the 20th day of February 2014.

Reverend Tom Barley, MSW, MBA, M. Div., JCL, Judicial Vicar
ZEAL

(From 5)

“We are called to the joy of Easter,” Sr. Bolinski said. “A deep-seeded joy of knowing God and in knowing that we are loved by God. Do we long, do we ache for others, for our families, our coworkers and our friends to know Jesus? Is it our mission to introduce others to Jesus and to walk the Christian way, day in and day out, with joy in presenting that message.”

Living that joy and fully realizing God in our life often helps nurture the joy needed to spread the Good News to others with joy.

“Pope Francis says my mission of being in the hearts of the people is not just part of my life, or a badge I can take off. It’s not an extra or an add-on or just another moment of my life. It is something that I cannot uproot from my being without destroying my very self. I am a mission on this earth. And that is why I am here in this world,” she said.

Sr. Bolinski’s afternoon session focused on vocations in the church, primarily the vocation of marriage and single life.

“The church needs people in all different kinds of roles to witness to the different aspects of the Gospel,” she said. “Especially for those of you who teach: you help younger people reflect on the fact that there are a number of different vocational choices available for them.”

Marriage, Sr. Bolinski reminded, is not merely a civil, legal contract, or something done for social reasons so that someone will have another someone to go out with, for instance.

“It’s a call from God to a place in life where two people in their oneness represent the nuptial love of God. That love is not just for those two people, it’s for the children, the families, the church.”

Sr. Bolinski said the call to a vocation of single life is too often neglected. Our society, she said, tells us that everyone must pair up.

“Why won’t society let us be alone?” she asked. “Why can’t people perceive that being a person by yourself is a grace you bring to the life of the church?”

Sr. Bolinski acknowledged the continuing need for priests and said her vocation as a religious woman is “becoming extinct.”

IRENE

(Para 11)

Optó por hacer nada. Entonces su médico y sus asistentes le celebraron una fiesta y la despidieron a su hogar con flores. Poco después, sentada en su sillón, apuntó hacia el cielo y me dijo: “Ya es tiempo de irme para allá”. Estaba en paz, sin luto. La congregación empezó en 1922 con la misión de enseñar catecismo a niños en escuelas públicas que no recibían instrucción religiosa formal y para proveer servicio social y cuidado médico para los pobres. La hermana Irene disfrutó de muchas experiencias, trabajando en varios lugares en los Estados Unidos. En particular recordó lo que contó sobre su experiencia de catequista sobre un área enorme de Wyoming.

Ella y otra religiosa viajaban largas distancias en un auto, a lugares con poblaciones pequeñas. En algunos lugares donde habían pocos niños católicos y sin casa para dar clase, enseñaban desde su auto. En otros lugares, se reunían con sus alumnos en un bar. El dueño cerraba el establecimiento mientras ellas daban su clase. No importaba donde se encontraran en el país, estas religiosas buscaban espacio para enseñar: bajo la sombra de un árbol, en funerarias, garajes, sótanos, casas móviles, edificios en construcción, y hasta en un salón de bilar.

No había obstáculo que les negara llevar a cabo su misión.

A veces el desafío más grande era el viaje. “Nuestro primer encuentro con el álcali de Nevada fue manchoso, literalmente manchoso”, dice un reporte publicado en un boletín. “Estábamos tratando de encontrar una escuela a 35 o 40 millas de la carretera y el camino era estrecho a través de la artemisa. Durante las primeras 10 millas, el piso parecía firme pero de repente nos encontramos en un charco grande de lodo sin lugar para dar vuelta y, bueno, nos atascamos”. Por fin, salieron del lodo usando ramos de artemisa bajo las ruedas.

Esta maravillosa mujer entró a su hogar eterno en Agosto de 2013.
beckon. If those classic authors are a bit intimidating, Fulton Sheen, C.S. Lewis, Peter Kreeft, George Weigel, and Robert Spitzer provide more accessible but still meaty fare. Having been illumined, these prophets are then sent out into their worlds as beacons of light. God knows that in our increasingly secularized society, such illumination is desperately needed, but if baptized prophets stop studying and stop speaking, they are like lamps over which a bushel basket has been placed.

Finally, what does it mean for the ordinary Catholic to be a king? In the theological sense, a king is someone who orders the charisms within a community so as to direct that community toward God. In this way, he is like the general of an army or the conductor of an orchestra: he coordinates the efforts and talents of a conglomeration of people in order to help them achieve a common purpose. Thus, a Catholic parent directs her children toward the accomplishment of their God-given missions, educating them, shaping them interiorly, molding their behavior, disciplining their desires, etc. A Catholic politician appreciates the moral dimension of his work, and legislates, cajoles, and directs accordingly. A Catholic private equity investor saves a company that provides indispensable jobs in a declining neighborhood, etc. How does one grow in the capacity to exercise kingly leadership? One can do so by overcoming the cultural prejudice in favor of a privatized religion. Most of the avatars of secularism would accept religion as a personal preoccupation, something along the lines of a hobby. But such an attenuated spirituality has nothing to do with a robustly Biblical sense of religion. On the Catholic reading, religious people—the baptized—come forth boldly and publicly and are more than willing to govern, to be kings, out of religious conviction. If you are looking for examples of what I’m describing here, look no further than William Lloyd Garrison, Dorothy Day, Martin Luther King and Fulton Sheen. Baptized kings who refuse to reign are like a hilltop city covered in clouds.

The key to the renewal of our society is a recovery of the deepest meaning of baptism, to become priestly, prophetic, and kingly people.

BARRON

(From 10)

POOR

(From 14)

CLAY

(From 14)

"It was quiet, it was really nice. It was clean," she said.

"Some of you might have read a blog on the Internet called 'Whispers in the Loggia.' It is written by a Catholic man in Philadelphia who is really committed to the Church and knows quite a lot about the Catholic faith. When he wrote a blog about my ordination, he wrote, 'Merry Sismas,' although that word is not in our traditional language.'"

The bishop’s comments were again greeted with laughter throughout the cathedral before he turned to the more spiritual and solemn part of his homily regarding how Christ desires us all to become not just like candles, but like lit candles, so that we might carry the light of Christ’s love and his message through-out the world in our daily lives.

"It was long after Labor Day when the family realized they had no place to go. They sought help at the Department of Social Services in Anne Arundel County, in which Fort Meade is located, and were referred to Sarah's House.

Samantha dreaded the shelter because she knew the stereotype: rows and rows of cots, lots of noise and chaos, and the fear of unwittingly stirring trouble with other homeless residents -- of which she was now one.

She also hated the prospect of being forcibly separated from her husband. But Sarah's House accepts adult men as well as women. And the atmosphere was far removed from the stereotype.

"If asked if they felt any stigma about being at a shelter, she dismissed the question, instead practically bubbling over with enthusiasm. "They're all doing great. They really love the hot lunch" at school, she said. And when they came back from school one mid-September afternoon, Samantha asked them, "What did you have for lunch today?"

With a job, Samantha and her family would be eligible for transitional housing, where the family can build up its income and savings while looking for suitable housing once they leave Sarah's House. And it just so happened that a three-bedroom apartment had just been vacated the day before. The furnishings are hardly lavish -- they resemble something that might have been part of a college dormitory lounge in the 1970s -- and the beds are nothing to write home about, but the beds can be bunked, and the apartment has a washer, dryer and stove.

Despite all the indignities that can come with poverty, said Joyce Swanson, director of client services for Sarah's House, "the one thing people say they miss most about not having a place to live is not being able to cook for your family."

"It's a lot easier," Simmons said, "to prop you up than to pick you up."
Biografía del Reverendísimo Michael J. Sis

El Obispo Michael J. Sis es hijo de Raymond y Janice Sis. Nació el 9 de enero del 1960, y es el cuarto de cinco niños. Sus hermanos/as son Susan Sis-Boyd de Georgetown, TX; Valerie Bourque de Salado, TX; Mark Sis de Broomfield, CO; y Amy Short de Pearland TX. Él tiene siete sobrinos y sobrinas y dos sobrinos nietos.


A través de los años, Obispo Sis ha servido como miembro del Consejo Presbiteral, de la Mesa del Personal de Sacerdotes, el Collegio de Consultores, el Equipo de Vocaciones, el Comité de Admisiones al Diacanato Permanente, y el Consejo Asesor del Obispo. También ha servido como Dean del decanato de Bryan-College Station.

Algunas de las experiencias más formativas que han ayudado a formar su vida de fe Cristiana han sido las siguientes: el entrenamiento que recibió de sus padres en el hogar; su participación en los programas de educación religiosa y de CYO durante su adolescencia en la Parroquia St. Anthony en Bryan; su servicio de voluntariado con Big Brothers/Big Sisters of America; sus estudios académicos y seminarios; un verano, su servicio de misionero voluntario en Tanzania, East Africa; el trabajar con refugiados de Ethiopia en Roma; haciendo los Ejercicios Espirituales de St. Ignatius de Loyola; celebrando los sacramentos Católicos como sacerdote parroquial, especialmente en Confesión y la Eucaristía; el ministerio pastoral con inmigrantes Hispanos en Texas; en el ministerio del complejo educativo con los estudiantes de Texas A & M; la colaboración ecuménica y entre-religiosa; en los retiros de Cursillo y Awakening; el asistir en la formación de seminaristas; el bueno ejemplo de sus hermanos sacerdotes; la influencia de sus amigos; y la experiencia de la direción espiritual. Él considera que su tesoro más precioso es su relación personal con Cristo Jesús.

Explicación del Escudo del Most Rev. Michael J. Sis

En los rasgos del escudo del Obispo Sis se halla una canasta que contiene cinco barras de pan, con dos peces, uno hacia arriba y otro hacia abajo de la canasta. Enraizado en iconografía antigua cristiana, se recuerda el milagro de la multiplicación de las barras de pan y los peces, la única historia milagrosa documentada en los cuatro Evangelios. Tal como él hizo a través de la orilla del Mar de Galilea, Jesús continuó tomando lo que parece ser recur sos insuficientes y multiplicándolos milagrosamente por medio del poder de su gracia, y utilizándolos para llenar las necesidades espirituales y materiales de su pueblo.

La cruz de oro en lo alto del escudo es la Cruz Celta, el cual tiene un anillo circundando la intersección. El círculo es símbolo de la eternidad, siendo que Jesucristo es el hijo eterno de Dios. Ilustra el amor infinito de Dios que fue derramado por medio de la gracia rebosante de Cristo en la Cruz. Las cinco gemas representan las cinco heridas de Cristo.

Para su lema, el Obispo Sis seleccionó la frase, “DEI SUMUS ADIUTORES.” Esta frase latina, tomada de la Primera Carta de San Pablo a los Corintios (1 Cor. 3:9), es traducida en inglés, “We are God’s co-workers” y en español, “Somos colaboradores de Dios.” Expresa la profunda verdad bíblica en la cual Dios nos llama a cooperar con él en su acción en el mundo. Jesucristo es el mediador único entre Dios y la humanidad, pero en su gran misericordia él libremente escoge a seres humanos como sus colaboradores subordinados. Cristo trabaja en nosotros por medio del poder del Espíritu Santo. Por medio de la gracia rebosante de Cristo Jesús, miembros de la Iglesia son dados el privilegio de cooperar en su trabajo en varias maneras. Esto incluye, por ejemplo, la celebración de los sacramentos, administración responsable, actos de justicia y caridad al servir nuestro prójimo necesitado, la vocación de ser padres, la intercesión de los santos, y la misión de evangelización. En muchas maneras maravillosas, somos colaboradores de Dios.

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

-- U.S. Congressman K. Michael Conaway (District 11 -- San Angelo, Midland-Odessa, Andrews, Stanton, Crane, Rankin, Big Lake, Colorado City, Sterling City, Robert Lee, Bronte, Ballinger, Winters, Miles, Christoval, Eldorado, Junction, Menard, Eden, Melvin, Brady, Coleman, Brownwood, Sonora, McCamey, Mertzon, Sweetwater)

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Eola

St. Philip's Catholic Church in Eola celebrated its 50th anniversary on Sunday, December 15th. Deacon Leroy Beach, Msgr. Larry J. Droll and Fr. Yesu Mulakaleti celebrated the Mass. Parishioners, both past and present, were in attendance. The 8 a.m. Mass was followed by brunch and visiting. St. Philip’s was dedicated on Sunday, December 15, 1963, by Bishop Thomas J. Drury.

Rowena

ROWENA — Parishioners, former parishioners and guests of St. Joseph Catholic Church in Rowena gathered, December 22, 3013, for the rededication/blessing of the newly restored church. Bishop Michael D. Pfeifer officiated at the Eucharist, with pastor, Fr. Ariel Lagunilla and Deacon Stanley. Special guest for the occasion was Crystal Goodman, the artist whose breathtaking work renewed the interior of the church. A Power Point program showing the different phases of work done to the church was shown throughout the meal that followed Mass. The renovation of the church has taken well over a year and has involved everything from repairing and cleaning the stained glass windows by Church Art Glass of Clinton, Ky., to cleaning and marbleizing the main altar and side altars, repairing and refreshing statues; major infrastructure work and replastering parts of the interior were necessary before painters could paint the interior, doors and lighting, and repair the floor surface before laying new carpet. Plans are underway to replace the old heating and cooling system. Crystal plans to do a mural of St. Joseph, the church’s namesake, above the members’ mailboxes in the entryway. Parishioners are anticipating another beautiful “work of art” that will match all the magnificent work she has done in the “renewing” of the church.

Odessa

The group “Pequenos Hijos De Maria,” attended a weekend retreat at St. Elizabeth Ann Seton from January 31-February 2. Groups from Odessa, Midland, Pecos, Ft Stockton, Presidio, Snyder, Carlsbad, Brownwood, Brady and other smaller towns were represented at the retreat.

Photo by Alan P. Torre / aporter.com.