Fortnight for Freedom
Opening Mass
5 p.m.
Saturday, June 21, 2014
St. Stephen’s Church-Midland

Selfie with the Bishop

Bishop Michael J. Sis, right, shares a moment for a ‘selfie’ with Alexia Aguirre, a confirmation student at St. Stephen’s in Midland.

On May 15, 2014, San Angelo Bishop Michael Sis delivered the following homily to Confirmation and first Holy Communion students (mostly second-graders) at St. Vincent Pallotti Church in Abilene.

How many of you have ever heard of the emperor Napoleon? He was the emperor in France a long time ago. He was a very famous ruler, and a very important person in the history of the world. Toward the end of his life, somebody asked Napoleon what was the happiest day in his whole life, and he said, “Believe it or not, the happiest day in my life was the day of my first Holy Communion.” Isn’t that fascinating?

For you young people here today who are making your First Communion and Confirmation, some very big things are happening today in this

(Please See CONFIRMATION/19)
Two-week observance of religious liberty set for June 21-July 4

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

The American bishops have established a two-week observance of prayer, education, and action called the Fortnight for Freedom from June 21 to July 4. This practice began in 2012, and we will carry it out again this year. We are all called to thank God for the freedoms we enjoy as Americans, especially the freedom to practice our faith. If we do not vigilantly defend our freedom of religion, we will lose it.

Background

In the Bill of Rights of the American Constitution, the first words of the first amendment are, “Congress shall make no law respecting an establishment of religion, or prohibiting the free exercise thereof.” Thus, the freedom of religion is our first freedom. This amendment guarantees our freedom from an established state church and our freedom to exercise our religion without state interference. The first English settlers in the New World came in order to be able to be free to prac-

Diocesan Celebration

Our diocesan observance of the Fortnight for Freedom will be kicked off with a Mass at 5:00 p.m. on Saturday, June 21, 2014, at Heart of San Angelo Catholic Church. In this Saturday Vigil Mass, I will preside and preach about religious freedom. All are invited. Each parish in the diocese will choose how they will observe the Fortnight at the local level.

Help Wanted

ODessa. Full-time DRE or CRE: St. Elizabeth Ann Seton in Odessa is seeking a full-time person to direct its CCD program (K-6). The work includes a Children’s Catechumenate and a Vacation Bible School. For more information or to submit a resume, contact Fr. Mark Woodruff at mwwoodruf46@yahoo.com or call 432-202-0336.

Bishop blesses ABC Ministry

ST. LAWRENCE — Diane Eggemeyer, center, and parish council president Russell Halfmann, left, present Bishop Michael Sis with a donation in his honor to the ABC Ministry.

The ABC Ministry serves six hospitals in Midland, Odessa, San Angelo and Lubbock. We have recently been asked to start an ABC Branch at the University of Iowa Children’s Hospital in Iowa City. The ministry has now made close to 200 Angel Bears and representatives of the ministry have traveled to 17 different cities in Texas. The ministry has also gone to Michigan, Utah, Illinois, Louisiana, Indiana, Pennsylvania, Florida, North Carolina, Tennessee, Arizona, Missouri, and Colorado.

ABC now has 58 members who help create items and pray for our Angel families. The ministry’s numbers are also growing because we have Angel moms who call us and want to help.

The Angelus
This last semester, I had the opportunity to travel to the Holy Land with my class at Mundelein Seminary. Being there for 10 weeks, we spent much time praying with the Scriptures, visiting the holy sites, and taking a number of classes. One class was even taught by a local Jewish woman on the Megillot, or the five Books of the Old Testament used during their liturgy on the highest holy days.

Enough cannot be said about how great it was to experience all of those sites. This experience has already helped me more fully understand the context and the places spoken of in the Bible. I now have, for example, an idea of what it means to go “down from Jerusalem to Jericho” (Lk 10:30). More impressive than the places and breathtaking landscape, however, was the experience of the people living in the Holy Land. I have lived in the United States my entire life, and I have oftentimes heard about the tremendous grace involving the Jewish people returning to the land they had been promised in the Bible (Ex 3:17). Yod Vashem, the Holocaust memorial on the edge of Jerusalem, portrays the horrendous sufferings that millions of Jews endured during the atrocities World War II.

Towards the end of the museum, you encounter some history involving the founding of Israel in 1949 as a refuge for the Jewish people who hoped to never experience anything comparable to the terrible events of the Shoah. There is no doubt that the suffering is indescribable, and the Jewish people have a legitimate claim on that land. If that were the end of the story, I wouldn't have anything else to say about it.

We had the opportunity, however, to visit Bethlehem University, a college campus run by the Christian Brothers in that not-so-little-town of Bethlehem. Bethlehem is now in the Palestinian occupied West Bank just seven miles from Jerusalem. Even though this is a Catholic institution, about seventy percent of the students are Muslim. The remaining thirty

San Angelo blogger writes on appreciation of life, faith

On behalf of the Seminarians and the Vocations Office for the Diocese of San Angelo, we want to thank everyone for your support. We ask that you continue to keep all of our seminarians in your prayers throughout their continued discernment. As we approach the summer many of them will be traveling and learning more about their vocation. We also ask you to keep Adam Droll, Ryan Rojo, and Felix Archibong in your intentions as they will be ordained as Transitional Deacons. Pictured, top row, from left, Tony Franco, Timothy Hayter, Ryan Rojo, Reggie Odima, Josh Gray. Front row, from left, Adam Droll, Bala Govindu, Kevin Lenius, Freddy Perez, Praveen Lakisketti. Not pictured Felix Archibong.

San Angelo blogger writes on appreciation of life, faith

By Sharla Ynostrosa

My husband and I will be married 31 years next week! I think about all the things that have changed during our marriage, different jobs, different homes, all the different stages of our children's lives, and now we have eight amazing grandchildren, Gifts from God! So many blessings, so much love, and I am so thankful!

The one thing that has stayed the same all of these years, is our Parish home, Sacred Heart Cathedral. This is where we raised our children, this is where we grew as a family. Many wonderful memories are from when we were at Mass. Not only did we celebrate the joy of Baptisms, First Communions, Confirmations, and Weddings, we also mourned the death of many loved ones at Funeral Masses.

We didn't, and don't just attend Mass, we were, and are involved. My children became Altar Servers just as soon as they could. My husband has been an usher for years, and I have been honored to serve as a lector, a commentator and humbled to serve as a eucharistic minister. Many times over the years I would be standing at the front of the cathedral waiting to lector, and Jim would be standing at the back where the ushers are, but I could always spot him in an instant. I remember one time he was in the balcony, and I looked up and saw him, my heart stopped for just a second and I just thought how blessed I was to be married to such a wonderful man.

Continue reading at adoptedandblessed.blogspot.com.
2014 Education & Formation Awards Banquet

‘To be a little pencil in God’s hand’

The Angelus

The Diocesan Office of Education and Formation hosted the 5th Annual Awards Banquet on Sunday, April 27 at the Cathedral Church of the Sacred Heart Gymnasium. Nineteen parishes/missions participated in this event which recognized catechetical and youth ministry leaders from around the diocese. Young people were also nominated from the parishes/missions for their leadership, service and witness of their faith to their peers, parish and community.

Bishop Michael Sis welcomed the group and led the opening prayer.

Roselva Ruiz, Young Adult Minister from San Miguel Arcangel in Midland was the guest speaker for the evening. Roselva focused her talk on Mother Teresa’s quote that we are called, “to be a little pencil in God’s hand.”

Roselva challenged the group to be open to God’s will and allow ourselves to be those pencils that write down God’s plan with our lives. She also challenged us as adults to invite young people to service and leadership. We need to make room for the future leaders and not cling to our roles. Young people present were also challenged to not be afraid to take the risk and utilize the talents, gifts, and skills when the need arises in their communities.

Certificates of recognition were presented to catechetical and youth ministry leaders. Parishes/missions also identified young people who were presented with certificates of recognition. Three diocesan awards were also presented. The Diocesan Companion on the Journey Award for catechetical leadership was presented to Delia Samaniego from St. Ann in Sonora. Delia has served in this ministry for over 35 years. She has attended education and formation workshops, classes and opportunities throughout the year and participated in diocesan events.

The second Companion on the Journey Award went to Brent and Beatrice Canning from St. Mary in Brownwood. They were recognized for their leadership and commitment in the area of youth ministry. They have developed the youth ministry in their parish and have involved their youth in diocesan and regional events. The final diocesan award was the Timothy Award which is presented to a youth who has been an outstanding example of Christian witness, leadership and service. The award was presented to Zane Rosales from Sacred Heart in Coleman.

To conclude the evening, a power-point presentation of different programs and events was shown to the group accompanied by the song “Live to Love” by Stephen Curtis. Bishop Sis gave some closing remarks of gratitude and appreciation and ended with a prayer.

Catholic Twitterverse

DioceseCorpusChristi
@dioceseccc
Holy Father, keep them in your name that you have given me, so that they may be one just as we are one. Jn 17:11

ArchdioceseMilwaukee
@archmil
Good morning! =D Share a smile & make someone’s day! #BeTheLight

Catholic Digest
@CatholicDigest
There can be no harmony in our being except when our happiness coincides with our duty. ~William Whewell

Rocco Palmo
@roccopalmo
Again on the Spirit. Pope's Audience: "Pity helps us grow in communion with God... and pour out His love on others" bit.ly/1nO3Wm6

Bp Christopher Coyne
@bishopcoyne
Notable last words, St. John Paul II: "Let me go to the Father's house." fb.me/1gBkkqxs
Standing in support of farmers, ranchers

Bishop Sis leads Rural Life Mass, then climbs atop horse for a short ride to dinner

By Brandon McAuliffe
Special to the Angelus

WINTERS – Bishop Michael Sis got one of his first authentic tastes of what life in a rural diocese is like during the June 3 celebration of the annual Seed & Soil Rural Life Mass at Bobby and Joyce Myers’ ranch.

With the Diocese of San Angelo covering over a half-million square miles, being in rural areas comes with the territory. Bishop Sis was even convinced to mount a horse following the Mass for a ride to the Myers’ house for dinner.

“It’s a great honor to us,” Bobby Myers said of hosting the Mass. “We feel like we are greatly blessed to have this place and to have the bishop here.”

Ballinger’s St. Mary’s Church was the driving force behind the annual event and Myers said without the support of their home parish, the event would not have been possible.

“They were great,” Myers said. “Father (Hugh) Wade was great with everything he does.”

While Bishop Sis presided over the mass, Fr. Wade and Fr. Sam Matthiesen concelebrated the short Mass. Fr. Matthiesen is from Olfen and comes from a family of farmers making the Mass something that really hits home to him.

“You all know that rural life has a very dominant place in the diocese,” Bishop Sis told the congregation. “It has from the very beginning and it always will. This Mass is a chance for us to stand with our farmers and our ranchers in the rural way of life.”

During the Mass, Bishop Sis blessed numerous items from cotton seed to wheat to fertilizer to even the chapel on the Myers property.

Bishop Sis asked those in attendance, most of whom were in lawn chairs, how many people had attended the annual event before.

With the mix about 50-50, the bishop jokingly said “Well, this is my first one, too! Of course, it’s my first time doing everything that I’m doing here.”

Having seen massive amounts of rain in the preceding week, Bishop Sis alluded to the fact that it was truly a blessing to have that in West Texas leading to the event.

“It allows us to be that much more thankful to God for his blessings,” the bishop said of the rain. “This place was covered in rain.”

As part of his homily, Bishop Sis alluded to the fact that we are all followers of Jesus who was raised in a rural life setting in Nazareth.

“Where did he die? In the big city,” said Bishop Sis to a hearty laughter. “So remember that when we are celebrating a rural life mass, Jesus lived a glorious life in the countryside and it’s the city where he died.”
Confirmation 2014

St. Ann’s-Midland

St. Mary’s-Odessa

St. Lawrence

St. Ann’s, St. Mary’s photos by Alan P. Torre; St. Lawrence, courtesy photo
Holy Week in Ballinger

Below left, on April 16, 2014, Father Hubert Wade led the congregation at St. Mary Star of the Sea in its annual Seder Meal ceremony at St. Mary’s Parish Center in Ballinger. Picture shows (left to right) Deacon David Workman, Fr. Wade and Deacon Enrique Martinez.

At left and below, on April 17, 2014, Father Wade and Deacon Workman celebrated Holy Thursday services at St. Mary. Services included washing of the feet, blessing of the bread and a procession from the church to the parish center parlor where the Blessed Sacrament was exposed for continuous Adoration from 8 p.m. till midnight.

(Courtesy photos)
Speaking of Saints ...

Irenaeus: Greatest early threat to Christianity was Gnosticism

By Mary Lou Gibson
The Angelus

Sometimes it’s the people we meet when we’re just beginning our work career or family life whose influence stays with us the longest. And so it was with St. Irenaeus, a second century priest, who studied Holy Scripture under the guidance of St. Polycarp, a disciple of St. John the Evangelist. Years later, Irenaeus wrote that he could remember the very spot where Polycarp sat when he “recounted the conversation with John and with another who had seen the Lord.”

Irenaeus was born in about 130. His parents were Christians and were living in Smyrna, Asia Minor (known today as Izmir, Turkey). After Irenaeus finished his priestly formation at Rome, he was ordained and sent as a missionary to the church of Lyons in Gaul (France). Lyons was called Lugdonum in the second century and was a flourishing trade center and most populous city in east central France. Editor Michael Walsh writes in “Butler’s Lives of the Saints” that priests and missionaries came with the traders and brought the Gospel to the pagan Gauls. Irenaeus served the church in Lyons under its first bishop, Pothinus.

In 177 or 178, Irenaeus was sent to Rome by his bishop to deliver a letter to Pope St. Eleutherius urging leniency toward a heretical sect of Christians in Phrygia (in Asia Minor) for the sake of peace and unity. While Irenaeus was in Rome, the church in Lyons suffered vicious persecution under Emperor Marcus Aurelius. Upon his return to Lyons, Irenaeus found that his bishop, Pothinus, was among the martyrs. He was elected to succeed the bishop and spent the next twenty years preaching and traveling rebuilding the church in the Rhône valley and evangelizing adjoining areas.

Irenaeus found his greatest challenge to the Church came not from the Roman persecutions, but from the rapid spread of Gnosticism, the first major Christian heresy. He became a fierce opponent of this heresy which denied the goodness of the flesh and held that revelation or saving knowledge was available only to an elite few. Bernard Bangley writes in “Butler’s Lives of the Saints” that Irenaeus produced the concept of apostolic succession to oppose the Gnostics. He traced true Christian doctrine back to the original apostles. He argued that there is nothing inherently evil about God’s creation. Human sin is the source of its corruption, he wrote, not as the Gnostics claimed, evil in itself.

Irenaeus produced a treatise in five books, “Adversus Haereses” (“Against the Heretics”) that set forth fully the inner doctrines of the various sects and contrasts them with the teaching of the Apostles and text of the Holy Scripture. He underscored the links between the God of creation and the God of salvation. Irenaeus was convinced that a great part of the attractiveness of Gnosticism lay in the veil of secrecy with which it surrounded itself according to Bangley. He wrote his books in Greek and they were

June 2014: The Fourth Period (1965)

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

On November 18 there were the ceremonial votes for the Constitution on Divine Revelation and the Apostolate of the Laity. In his address, Pope Paul asked the Council to look ahead, to the implementation of what the Council had enacted. He had set up three commissions: Liturgy, revision of Canon Law, and communication media. He also set up three secretariats: Christian Unity, non-Christian religions, and non-believers. He would hold the first Synod of Bishops in 1967. Speaking of changes in the Roman Curia, his message was: “There are no serious reasons for changing its structure.” Cardinal Suenens had told the pope in October that it really was necessary to make some changes. He feared the consequences if changes were not made, at least in the leadership of the various offices. Paul interrupted him, defended the Curia, said no major changes were needed, and indicated that he did not intend to change any of the cardinal presidents of the Congregations.

The pope also warned against exaggerated interpretations of what the Council had enacted. The time for debate is over. He ended his speech with 3 announcements: 1) He had initiated the beatification process for Pius XII and John XXIII. 2) In memory of the Council, he would build a new Church in Rome called Mary, Mother of the Church 3) He proclaimed a Jubilee from December 8 to Pentecost 1966. He had not said a word about the two documents he had promulgated. One of the significant things is that he stressed the responsibility and prerogatives of the papacy with little attention given to the episcopacy in a council at which collegiality was a central and defining issue.

It was thought that day that the rest was just a matter of tying up loose ends and getting ready to go home. However, during the period of November 20-30, trouble erupted. The commission dealing with marriage and the family, headed by Cardinal John Dearden of Detroit, had completed its work and it had consulted with the papal commission on birth control. It was then that individuals began to pressure the pope to change the text to absolutely forbid the use of contraceptives. Otherwise, it would be seen as questioning earlier Church teaching. Not to be explicit would say that change is possible. This happened on November 24, Paul did so, insisting that the text be changed and that a specific reference to Casti Connubii be made. Also, news of this had reached the press. This was a crisis: 1) How could the Council make a statement on an issue that the pope had removed from its competence? 2) How could it make a statement on an issue it had not discussed? How could it

Junio de 2014: El Cuarto Período (1965), parte 6

El 18 de noviembre hubo votaciones ceremoniales por la Constitución Sobre la Revelación Divina y el Apostolado de los Laicos. En su discurso, el Papa Pablo pidió que el Concilio a mirar en frente a la implementación de lo que el Concilio había hecho. Había instituido tres comisiones: Liturgia, la revisión de Derecho Canónico, y medios de comunicación. También instituyó tres secretariados: La Unidad de los Cristianos, Religiones no-Cristianas, y no-Creientes. Iba a tener el primer Sínodo de Obispos en 1967. Cuando habló de los cambios en la Curia Romana, su mensaje fue: “No hay razones graves para cambiar su estructura.” El Cardenal Suenens le había dicho al papa en octubre que en verdad era necesario hacer unos cambios. Tenía miedo de las consecuencias is no hubiera cambios, al menos en el liderazgo de las varias oficinas. Pablo le interrumpió, defendió la Curia, dijo que no se necesitaba ningún cambios, e indicó que no iba a cambiar a ningún cardenal presidente de las Congregaciones.

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Making Sense of Bioethics

The danger, immorality with editing our own genes

By Fr. Tad Pacholczyk

A number of serious diseases are known to occur because of defects or mutations in our DNA. Curing such diseases could in principle be carried out by rewriting the DNA to fix the mutated base pairs. Yet until recently scientists have remained largely stymied in their attempts to directly modify genes in a living animal.

Findings described in the March 30, 2014 issue of Nature Biotechnology, however, reveal that a novel gene-editing technique, known as CRISPR (Clustered Regularly Interspaced Short Palindromic Repeats), can be used successfully in mice to reverse disease symptoms for a liver defect known as type I tyrosinemia. In humans, this potentially fatal ailment affects about one in 100,000 people. CRISPR, which enables researchers to snip out the mutated piece of DNA and replace it with the correct sequence, holds the potential for treating other genetic disorders as well. As the MIT Technology Review explains, the recently-developed CRISPR technique is proving to be remarkably versatile in the hands of biomedical researchers:

“This technology could allow researchers to perform microsurgery on genes, precisely and easily changing a DNA sequence at exact locations on a chromosome. ...CRISPR could make gene therapies more broadly applicable, providing remedies for simple genetic disorders like sickle-cell anemia and eventually even leading to cures for more complex diseases involving multiple genes. Most conventional gene therapies crudely place new genetic material at a random location in the cell and can only add a gene. In contrast, CRISPR and the other new tools also give scientists a precise way to delete and edit specific bits of DNA — even by changing a single base pair. This means they can rewrite the human genome at will.”

Correcting mutations in the DNA to remedy a serious medical defect would certainly be desirable and permissible. In 2008, in a document called Dignitas Personae, the Vatican’s Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith (CDF) agreed that trying to restore “the normal genetic configuration of the patient or to counter damage caused by genetic anomalies” would be morally acceptable as long as the person being treated will not “be exposed to risks to his health or physical integrity which are excessive...”

Our ability to rewrite the human genome at will through precise DNA editing techniques, however, does raise substantial concerns about misusing the technology. In fact, researchers are already discussing the possibility of going beyond therapies and treatments, and instead, using CRISPR and other gene-alteration technologies to enhance human characteristics. For example, one possible direction would be to engineer changes in the genes of human muscles so that they could be worked harder and longer, thereby enhancing the performance of athletes and soldiers.

This kind of human re-engineering would cross an important line: instead of helping human beings who are struggling against serious diseases, scientists would now begin manipulating human beings for ulterior motives. As Dignitas Personae puts it, “such manipulation would promote a eugenic mentality and would lead to indirect social stigma with regard to people who lack certain qualities, while privileging [others].” The document also notes how attempting to create a new type of human being could unmask a dark and troubling ideology “in which man tries to take the place of his Creator,” resulting in an “unjust domination of man over man.”

Yet the line separating a therapy from an enhancement is not always an obvious one. Some researchers have claimed that the most common versions of genes that many people carry are not necessarily the ideal versions from the standpoint of health. Thus researchers might be able subtly to improve matters, for example, by rewriting normal genes so that people could better fight off infectious diseases. Would such a step be enhancement or therapy?

Even as scientists move forward with the project of rewriting our own genes to cure grave diseases, some will be tempted to go further and use techniques like CRISPR to engineer designer human embryos during in vitro fertilization; genetically modified monkeys have already been produced using this method in China. A prior CDF document called Donum Vitae unequivocally describes the grave problems with subjugating embryonic human beings for research purposes: “To use human embryos or fetuses as the object or instrument of experimentation constitutes a crime against their dignity as human beings having a right to the same respect that is due to the child already born and to every human person.”

The remarkable tools becoming available not only for genetic therapies but also for human enhancement projects and embryonic manipulation raise daunting ethical concerns about the subjugation of man to his own technology, and call for thoughtful measures and vigilance to ensure the proper use of these techniques now and in the future.

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

Learning from the unstoppable force of time

By Erick Rommel
Catholic News Service

When we think of our careers and future endeavors, there’s one moment that’s often overlooked: retirement.

When I graduated from college, my focus was on finding and starting a job. Once hired, I spent no time during my first day of work imagining the last day of my career, 40 or 50 years into the future.

Even today, retirement is still decades away. It’s no more real to me than reports that say we’ll soon be able to buy airline tickets to fly into space.

Recently though, life forced me to consider the concept of retirement. A co-worker chose to retire after 27 years of doing the same job. I found I couldn’t easily put her decision into perspective.

Looking back, I realize why.

There was little connection between her first day on the job and her last. When she started, most businesses, including ours, completed their work on typewriters, not computers. They relied on phone calls and fax machines. Email was unheard of. It made me feel young and made her feel old. I wasn’t a teenager when she had completed her first day of work.

With the evolution of any job over time, what lessons are learned or lost? When you realize yesterday’s mountains almost always become today’s molehills, does a view of the bigger picture create a broader vision?

Should we ask those same questions about our lives outside of our employment?

As soon as I earned my first paycheck, life became divided into “work time” and “free time.” When I was in high school and working in a food court at the mall, dividing the two was simple. If I was earning money, I was working. If I was spending money, the time was free in every sense except cost.

Today, the division of time is nowhere near as simple. The hours previously called free include “family time,” the extremely scarce “sleeping time,” and the ever-unpopular “paying-the-bills” time.

If you’re not careful, free time is spent before you have time for yourself. If it were an option, many people would opt to buy more. Instead, since we can’t buy what’s free, we’re left with the task of better identifying its use.

That brings us back to the questions I asked earlier. What if we looked at our free time like a long-lasting career?

It’s hard finding time to spend with friends and family plus do the things we want if we’re trying to do it all in one day. But with a long-term view of what we want to do, we can get a lot accomplished.

With a long-term approach, that video game sitting on your shelf is playable. That book on your end table is readable. And, that date you want to make with someone who could potentially play a big role in your future is possible.

When we think of retirement, we think of an end. In reality, it’s a beginning. It’s a chance to take what we learned while working and apply it to life outside of work.

If we apply those lessons now, we can improve our lives while still on the job. We can maximize our personal, free time. We can learn the lesson many don’t fully understand until they’re retired.

The best time is time well spent.
By Fr. Ron Rolheiser

Thirty years ago, before the airline hijackings of September 11, 2001, before the shoe-bomber and others like him, it was simpler to travel by air. You didn't need to take off your shoes to pass through security, you could carry liquids with you, laptops and other electronic devices, if you had any, did not have to be brought out of your carry-on bags, the door to the cockpit wasn't barricaded with steel, and there was much less paranoia in general about security. You even got to see the pilot occasionally.

I remember such an occasion thirty years ago when I did see the pilot, and heard him engage in conversation with a particular passenger. It was an early morning flight from Dublin to London in a small, commuter-type plane with no business-class section. I was seated in the aisle-seat in the first row and directly across the aisle from me, in the first row of seats, sat a middle-aged woman who, very soon, made it clear that she had a phobia about flying. Shortly after we were seated she called the airline attendant over and told her that her family had talked her into taking this flight but that she was terribly frightened and was having second thoughts about staying on the plane. The attendant gently tried to reassure her that everything was safe; indeed statistically she was safer in the air than on the ground. But logic doesn't so easily quiet a phobia. The woman was reassured for the moment, aided no doubt by the fact that she was sitting ten feet from the door which was still wide open and that our plane was, for the moment, obviously not going anywhere.

But she began to be progressively more panicky after the doors were closed and the plane began to back away from the gate. The airline attendant reappeared to calm her and, for a few moments again, her reassurance worked. The woman grew calm and our plane took its place in the queue of planes waiting to take off.

Suddenly, the woman broke out in a full-scale anxiety-attack, shouting to the airline attendant that she needed to get off the plane. The attendant, having already twice failed to effectively calm her, opened the door to the cockpit to talk to the pilot and, within a minute, the pilot emerged and began to speak to the panicked woman.

He might have been a professional counselor, given the patience and empathy with which he treated her. He took her hand and gently gave her reassurances: "It's okay to feel like this! Lots of people have these fears. You're perfectly safe here. I have flown this route countless times in this very airplane; I guarantee it's safe. Your family will be waiting for you in London, think of how happy they'll be! And once you've done this, you'll be free from this fear for the rest of your life. I will personally escort you off the plane in London!"

His words seemed to work a magic, the woman calmed down and nodded to him that she was ready. Yes, she was going to do this. The pilot returned to his seat in the cockpit, and I sat in awe of his patience.

But a phobia is what it is. After several minutes, just as it was our turn to move out for takeoff, the woman went into another anxiety-attack, worse than the first. The airline attendant got up and quickly opened the cockpit door, sharing the situation with the pilot. The door closed without a word and our plane turned round and slowly taxied back to our gate. Upon arrival, the pilot announced that we had returned to the gate because a passenger was experiencing "an emergency" but that we wouldn't be too long at the gate. A jetway bridge came out from the gate and the door of the plane opened. The airline attendant opened the door to the cockpit and I could hear the pilot's voice clearly. Irritated, angry, sharp in tone, he said to the attendant: Get her off! Just get her off this plane! Gone were his patience, gentleness, warmth, and empathy. He had already tried these, to no avail. The woman had had her chance. It was time to move on: Get her off! Just get her off this plane!

We all sympathized with his loss of patience. We'd run out of patience too. We needed to get on with our trip. It wasn't like he hadn't tried. He'd just run out of patience, got worn-down, had had enough. That's understandable and forgivable. He'd done well, pretty well in fact ... but, in the end, not well enough.

Ultimately he had given in to weariness and scripture tells us that we must never grow weary of doing what's right. Of course, we mostly don't have the strength to do that. Mostly we do the right thing until our patience runs out, and then it's: Just get her off this plane!

Oblate Father Ron Rolheiser, theologian, teacher, and award-winning author, is President of the Oblate School of Theology in San Antonio, TX. He can be contacted through his website www.ronrolheiser.com.

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Sts. John Paul II and John XXIII: How two saintly popes modeled virtue

By Very Rev. Robert Barron

On April 27, Angelo Giuseppe Roncalli (Pope John XXIII) and Karol Jozef Wojtyla (Pope John Paul II) were recognized as saints of the Catholic Church, and may God be praised for it! No one with the slightest amount of historical sensibility would doubt that these men were figures of enormous significance and truly global impact. But being of world historical personage is not the same as being a saint; otherwise neither Therese of Lisieux, nor John Vianney, nor Benedict Joseph Labre would be saints. So what is it that made these two men worthy particularly of canonization, of being “raised to the altars” throughout the Catholic world?

Happily, the Church provides rather clear and objective criteria for answering this question. A saint is someone who lived a life of “heroic virtue” on earth and who is now living the fullness of God’s life in heaven. In order to determine the second state of affairs, the Church rigorously tests claims that a miracle was worked through the revered person’s intercession. It would be the stuff of another article to examine these processes in regard to the two Popes: both are, in fact, fascinating, but I want to focus on the extraordinary virtues that these two men possessed, moral and spiritual qualities so striking that they are proposed to all for emulation.

When the Church speaks of the virtues, it is referring to the cardinal virtues of justice, prudence, temperance, and courage, as well as the theological virtues of faith, hope, and love. It wouldn’t be possible, within the brief scope of this article, to examine our two new saints in regard to all seven of the virtues, but let us make at least a beginning. Justice is rendering to someone what is due to him, or in more common parlance, doing the right thing. When he was nuncio to Turkey and stationed in Istanbul in the early years of the Second World War, Archbishop Angelo Roncalli saved the lives of many Jews who were threatened by the Nazi terror. Taking advantage of Turkey’s neutral status and the Vatican’s diplomatic connections, Roncalli arranged for transit visas and in some cases forged baptismal certificates in order to facilitate the transit of Jews from Eastern Europe to Palestine. In the process, he rescued around 24,000 people who otherwise would certainly have found their way to the death camps.

That this act of extraordinary justice also called, furthermore, for considerable courage goes without saying.

Roncalli became nuncio to France at an extremely delicate and dangerous period of French history. Charles de Gaulle and his Free French forces had just liberated their country from the Nazis and had begun to settle scores with the collaborationist Petain government and its sympathizers, some of whom were churchmen in high positions. At the time of Roncalli’s arrival in Paris, de Gaulle and Pope Pius XII were in sharp disagreement as to how best to resolve the situation, since the General and the Pope were not entirely on the same page regarding the relative guilt and innocence of certain bishops. All of this is to suggest that the new papal nuncio was stepping into a situation sticky and complicated in the extreme. By all

(Please See BARRON/21)
Natural law and same-sex marriage a big collision

By Stephen Kent
Catholic News Service

The prospect for continuing to define marriage as between one man and one woman in this country may appear to be dim as one state after another finds its laws rejected by federal judges.

In less than a year, state bans on same-sex marriage have been struck down about a dozen times. Pennsylvania and Oregon were the last two states to do so.

At first glance, it would appear that the proponents of traditional marriage -- including the Catholic Church -- have failed to influence public opinion.

Decisions favoring same-sex marriage are received by a society that greatly relies on "it's not fair" to make its judgments. Proponents of traditional marriage, between one man and one woman, have a more complex concept to sell.

The philosophers and the lawyers are passing in the night on different levels. The courts are treating the meaning of marriage as a matter of due process and equal protection.

"Marriage is rooted in nature: two people of the same sex are no more being denied the 'right' to marry than a man is 'denied' the 'right' to gestate and nurse a child," the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops says on its website.

"Authentic human rights flow from the nature and the dignity of the human person, a nature that includes sexual difference," the bishops say.

Their statement continues: "The 'right to marry' is not the right to enter a relationship that is not a marriage, and then force others by law to treat that relationship as if it were a marriage."

Last year, the Supreme Court of the United States declared unconstitutional the federal Defense of Marriage Act, defining marriage between one man and one woman, for violating the equal protection clause. The case involved federal benefits, and the court did not rule that all states must allow such marriages to take place.

However, same-sex marriage proponents were encouraged by the decision. In Pennsylvania, U.S. District Judge John E. Jones cited due process and equal protection in striking down that state's law. His decision came with his opinion as well. "In future generations the label same-sex marriage will be abandoned to be replaced simply by marriage," he wrote. "We are a better people than these laws represent, and it is time to discard them into the ash heap of history."

No, it is precisely because of laws recognizing marriage that we are a better people. In Texas, where the ban also was ruled unconstitutional, U.S. District Judge Orlando Garcia said explaining his ruling that "without a rational relationship to a legitimate government purpose, it [the ban] denies same-sex couples the benefits, dignity and value of celebrating marriage."

The USCCB says "The government has the responsibility of promoting the common good and the best interests of all people, especially the most vulnerable, and upholding authentic marriage does precisely that."

The Constitution originally didn't address many things because they were self-evident. If there is ambiguity which makes natural law seems unconstitutional, change the Constitution. It has been amended for purposes much less grave.

Change the paradigm to recognize the conflict but insist that it be resolved in favor of natural law. Natural law is immutable, man-made law is not.

Something about Easter that pulls people toward home

By Moises Sandoval
Catholic News Service

Recently when we went to Easter Sunday Mass at St. Peter Claver in West Hartford, Connecticut, the church was filled and overflowing. Chairs had been set up in a large assembly room of the parish hall so the overflow could view a live video feed of the altar in the main building. I had not realized there were so many Catholics in the area.

Later, in the solitude of a quiet afternoon, I wondered why people who will not come to Mass on a regular Sunday are there for Easter. As I pondered this, my eye focused on a paperback on my bookshelf, published 40 years ago, titled: "The God who comes," written by Carlo Carretto. The cover described it as a uniquely appropriate book for our chaotic times.

On the first page, Carretto, the author of the international classic, "Letters from the Desert," asks whether the collapse of institutions will drag everything into chaos or set free a profound new life in the world and in the church.

He acknowledges this is a difficult question but asserts that it is good for us as Christians to lose a little self-assurance that "made us think it is enough to be in the boat, which made us feel that faith was so firm that it could suffer no darkness whatsoever."

There is something about Easter that makes people want to return home, and if the overflowing church responds to that yearning, it is certainly gratifying. Similarly, Latinos from the Caribbean and Central America often go home for Holy Week.

When I was a boy growing up in the Sangre de Cristo Mountains in New Mexico, we lived too far from the parish church and thus were without a priest on Good Friday. But the people had their own way of the cross, celebrated outside in the wind-swept valley where we lived.

I remember the penitents, one carried a heavy cross, and met the people processing from the chapel of San Isidro. I will never forget the cold, the dusk, the haunting hymns. I have often thought I would like to experience that again. Unfortunately, those popular liturgies are gone.

The Latinos who make the yearly trek to their homelands in the Caribbean and Central America are a living parable of crucifixion and resurrection. They fled crucifixion by cruel dictators who killed hundreds of thousands in the last quarter of the 20th century. Then they were sometimes crucified on the way north, robbed and raped.

Some not only survived but thrived and did not forget their suffering kin back home. Yearly, these immigrants collectively send many millions of dollars home. One example is the community of Guatemalans in Los Angeles who have established a small hospital in their home village in the mountains.

When this happens, the suffering poor in the home countries know there is a resurrection. Or, as Carretto wrote, they hear the sound of God as Adam and Eve heard him in the garden. Carretto added: "God is always coming and we, like Adam, hear his footsteps. God is always coming because he is life, and life has the unbridled force of creation. God comes because he is light and light may not remain hidden. God comes because he is love and love needs to give of itself. God is always coming."
A flock meets its Shepherd

Clockwise from above, Bishop Michael Sis poses for a photo with a young parishoner prior to confirmation. The bishop gives a high five to a young girl at Midland’s Our Lady of Guadalupe. At St. Mary’s in Odessa, Bishop Sis delivers his “glove homily” to a group of confirmation students. Bishop Sis, with Fr. David Herrera, pastor of Our Lady of Guadalupe in Midland, before the bishop blesses the church’s new crucifix, and the bishop addresses a group of confirmation students at St. Mary’s in Odessa. All photos by Alan P. Torre / aptorre.com.
Church must embrace digital to spread good news

By Jim Mancari
Catholic News Service

BROOKLYN, N.Y. — The Catholic Church must establish a presence in the digital world of communications or risk being at the margins of people's lives, said the president of the Pontifical Council for Social Communications.

"If the church is not present and does not share the good news of God's love for all people in this world, then we risk becoming marginal to the lives of many and are failing our mission to bring the Gospel to the ends of the earth," Archbishop Claudio Maria Celli told more than 250 people at the Brooklyn Diocese's annual celebration of World Communications Day.

The May 22 event was organized by the DeSales Media Group, the parent company of The Tablet, the diocesan newspaper.

Many dioceses mark World Communications Day June 1. This year's theme is "Communication at the service of an authentic culture of encounter."

Before the archbishop's keynote address, Bishop Nicholas DiMarzio and Msgr. Kieran Harrington, president of DeSales, presented Archbishop Celli with the group's St. Francis de Sales Award.

Archbishop Celli was honored for being instrumental in starting Pope Benedict XVI's Twitter account (@Pontifex), now handled by Pope Francis. He also oversaw the creation of the Pope App, which allows followers to receive updates regarding important papal events.

Archbishop Celli said that so much has changed in the field of technology in the last decade, and he encouraged church leaders and media organizations to reflect on these changes and to develop appropriate forms of engagement with the target audience.

In what Pope Benedict has called the "digital revolution," Archbishop Celli said that it's easy to focus solely on the technological developments themselves, such as smartphones and all modern forms of social media.

"The truth is that the most significant change is not technological but cultural," he said. "The real challenge is to appreciate how much is changing in the ways people, especially young people, are gathering information, are being educated, are expressing themselves and are forming relationships and communities."

He echoed Pope Benedict's words from 2012 in that "new technologies are not only changing the way we communicate but communication itself."

Moreover, he said he is reluctant to use the term "new media," since these forms of technology have become the norm around the globe, especially in developing countries.

"To talk of new media is to date oneself and to risk failing to appreciate the ordinariness in the lives of so many," the archbishop said.

The church's goal, Archbishop Celli said, is to embrace this new culture of modern communication, which has become ingrained in the daily lives of people everywhere, especially young people.

He challenged church media organizations to produce engaging content that sparks conversation.

While words and text are still important, he said, multimedia content -- including images, video, music and gestures -- can be much more effective in conveying the message of a particular medium.

Photos and videos especially garner the most attention on social media websites, and the church must use these platforms to its advantage, he added.

The church also must recognize that some of its vocabulary might be problematic for its contemporaries, he said, urging those in media to rediscover simple words and metaphors with the goal of capturing the attention of a broader audience.

New forms of technology can be effective for the church in spreading its mission, Archbishop Celli said, but the church's presence in the digital age can only work if "we are authentic witness to our faith."

The religious media must concentrate their efforts on how to become an evangelizing presence in this new technological world.

Bombarding an audience with information should not be the goal, he said, rather media must prompt audiences to take an active role in the content and have an opportunity to explore an issue further.

That desire for more content keeps them coming back for more, Archbishop Celli said.

"New technologies are not only changing the way we communicate but communication itself," says Archbishop Claudio Maria Celli. The president of the Pontifical Council for Social Communications addressed journalists and executives from faith-based and secular news agencies May 22 at the Diocese of Brooklyn, N.Y.'s 23rd annual World Communications Day. (CNS photo/Sebastiao Moreira, EPA)

Mancari is on the staff of The Tablet, newspaper of the Brooklyn Diocese.
Our Faith

Missing Mass on cruise ship; Celebrating Mass in mortal sin

By Father Kenneth Doyle
Catholic News Service

Q. Every summer, my husband and I go on a cruise. Only one cruise line (Holland America) continues to have a priest on board to say Mass. When we travel on other cruise lines, frequently we have missed Sunday Mass because there was no priest on board and we could not get to a Catholic church if we happened to be in port. Is missing Mass in such circumstances a mortal sin? (Millersville, Maryland)

A. Most moral theologians, I am certain, would say that you have incurred no sin. If no priest was available, you simply had no opportunity to participate in a Sunday Mass and so the obligation does not apply.

I am aware that there might be rigourists who would say that you were not compelled to go on the trip in the first place, or that you were bound to choose the one cruise line which did have Mass aboard or that you could have selected a shorter cruise that did not conflict with a day of obligation.

But those people, I believe, are being stricter than God. Recreation and relaxation are legitimate physical and mental needs, as well as gifts from God. God is reasonable, and I don't think one cruise annually without Mass is an abuse of a privilege.

But here is what I would suggest as the safest solution, and it's one that is envisioned by the church's official teaching documents. The Catechism of the Catholic Church in No. 2181 says that Catholics "are obliged to participate in the Eucharist on days of obligation, unless excused for a serious reason (for example, illness, the care of infants) or dispensed by their own pastor." And the Code of Canon Law in No. 1245 allows a pastor, in individual cases, to dispense from the Mass obligation "for a just cause." (Note that the code says "for a just cause" rather than for a "grave" or "serious" cause.)

As a pastor, I would consider a once-a-year cruise to be a "just cause." The same provision of the code allows a pastor, when granting a dispensation, to assign some other "pious work." It could be, for example, reflecting on the Scriptural readings for that day's Mass, reciting the rosary or, after you have returned home, attending a Mass on a day when you are not obliged.

So my recommendation is to consult your pastor next time for such a dispensation. That way, you will be fulfilling the letter of the law as well as its spirit.

Q. Please help settle a discussion I have been having with some friends. The question is whether a priest can celebrate Mass (and, necessarily, take Communion) while in a state of mortal sin, if the Mass is already scheduled and people are waiting for it to begin. First, can he do so if confession is easily available to him? Next, if confession is not easily available, can he just try to make a perfect act of contrition and go ahead with the Mass? (Houma, Louisiana)

A. If the priest in question has the opportunity to confess his sins before celebrating Mass, of course he is obliged to do so. (A priest is bound by the same requirement as other Catholics: to be in the state of grace in order to receive the Eucharist worthily.)

But what if there is no opportunity to confess before a Mass for which the priest is scheduled? The church's Code of Canon Law speaks to that situation directly in No. 916: "A person who is conscious of grave sin is not to celebrate Mass or receive the body of the Lord without previous sacramental confession unless there is a grave reason and there is no opportunity to confess; in this case the person is to remember the obligation to make an act of perfect contrition which includes the resolution of confessing as soon as possible."

If a congregation is expecting a Mass and there is no practical opportunity to recruit a substitute-celebrant, for the good of souls the priest may profess his sorrow privately to the Lord ("perfect contrition" is based on the love of God rather than the fear of punishment), celebrate the Mass and go to confession later.

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

Responding to those whose words mark them as racists

By Carole Norris Greene
Catholic News Service

Los Angeles Clippers owner Donald Sterling and Nevada cattle rancher Cliven Bundy have been in the news recently because their racist remarks have ignited public condemnation.

In a phone conversation recorded by a female companion, Sterling said to the woman: "You can sleep with [black people]. You can bring them in; you can do whatever you want. The little I ask you is not to promote it publicly and not to bring them to my games."

Clint was fined $2.5 million.

Interestingly, Sterling and Bundy differ significantly in their sense of culpability for their heinous remarks.

Sterling's remarks were made in a private conversation taped without his knowledge. He was humiliated when they were revealed, and he has lawyered up to prevent from being banned for life by the NBA, from attending its games and practices, and having any decision-making privileges pertaining to the team. Sterling also was fined $2.5 million.

Bundy, in contrast, adamantly denied being a racist and faulted The New York Times for "making it a racist-type thing."

What do we do with these guys?

They are not alone in their mindset. Others in the private and public sectors are likewise hateful and ignorant in their thinking about human beings who are different from themselves.

I favor taking away their privileges to serve in capacities where their racial outlook could potentially be detrimental. The NBA was right to punish Sterling as severely as it did. He had submitted himself to its authority and it acted accordingly.

There is no leadership position that Bundy can be stripped of, but the loss of supporters of his cattle grazing cause can still hit him where it hurts: in his pocketbook. Punishment for those infected with racism, however, is not enough. Christians have a duty to pray for their healing and to work to halt the spread of such a toxic mindset.

One of the best blueprints for dealing with racists is outlined in the U.S. bishops' 1979 pastoral letter on racism, "Brothers and Sisters to Us."

After teaching that racism is "evil" and "a sin," the bishops offer concrete steps for combating racism.

They say others should reject racial stereotypes, racial slurs and racial jokes and influence family, especially children, to be sensitive to cultural contributions of other ethnic groups.

The bishops also ask that we educate ourselves and others on "how social structures inhibit the economic, educational and social advancement of the poor."

It is time to dust off this 35-year-old pastoral, read it again, implement it, and perhaps even send a courtesy copy to the likes of Sterling and Bundy.

Greene was an associate editor at Catholic News Service for nearly 22 years prior to her retirement in December 2011.
**Catholic Foundation Grants for 2014 awarded**

The Angelus

The Catholic Charitable Foundation for the Roman Catholic Diocese of San Angelo was established in 2010. Generous donors have made tax-deductible contributions to establish endowments at the Foundation. Some have established designated endowment funds where they have named Catholic beneficiaries to receive grants paid out from the funds each year. This year $12,007 was paid to named beneficiaries from those funds.

Others have established unrestricted endowment funds that allow the Board of Trustees, with the concurrence of Chairman Bishop Michael Sis, to determine annually how funds from the Unrestricted Endowment are distributed in grants to meet current needs in our diocese. This year $27,160 was available for grants from those funds.

Grant applications are due each year by April 15th. In this second cycle of grant making, 14 grant applications were reviewed by the Board of Trustees. Grants totaling $27,160 were awarded as follows:

- Sacred Heart Catholic Church in Abilene ($3,000) towards the cost of an Interconnected Fire Alarm system for Little Saints Early Childhood Center;
- Our Lady of Guadalupe Catholic Church in Eldorado ($2,000) to assist in the purchase of appliances and/or tables and chairs for their expanded kitchen and hall;
- Immaculate Conception Catholic Church in Knickerbocker ($1,250) to upgrade their current PA system;
- Our Lady of Guadalupe Catholic Church in Midland ($1,000) for refurbishing the Shrine area of their parish;
- St. Elizabeth Ann Seton Catholic Church in Odessa ($1,000) to assist cantor to attend National Association of Pastoral Musicians annual convention;
- St. Mary’s Central Catholic School in Odessa ($2,000) for books for their Non-fiction Reading Center;
- St. Joseph Catholic Church in Rowena ($500) to purchase laptops for the CCD and Youth Coordinator;
- Angelo Catholic School in San Angelo ($5,000) to purchase a new phone system to allow communication with all teachers at once especially in case of an emergency;
- Christ the King Retreat Center ($1,000) to replace the fountain in the courtyard;
- St. Margaret Perpetual Adoration Chapel ($950) to recover the seat and back of pews and kneelers;
- St. James Catholic Church in Sanderson ($1,460) toward the high school youth trip to Steubenville Youth Conference in Arizona;
- St. Pascal Catholic Church in Sterling City ($1,000) for repairs at church and parish hall;
- St. Vincent de Paul Society in Abilene ($2,000) to assist in their ministry to the poor;
- St. Vincent de Paul Society in Midland ($1,000) to assist in their ministry to the poor;
- Catholic Charities of Odessa ($2,000) to assist in their ministry to the poor; Catholic Outreach Services of San Angelo ($2,000) for client rental assistance.

In addition, this year $111,998 was distributed to the agencies who have management agreements with the Foundation for the management of their endowments.

Trustees appreciate the support of all foundation donors. A gift to the foundation is a gift that will serve our Catholic community forever! The foundation is legally separate from the Diocese of San Angelo and is governed by an independent board of trustees who manage the assets and approve all grants and gifts. All funds in the foundation are managed by professional money managers. The goal of the foundation is to preserve and maintain the real purchasing power of the principal gift. Trustees determine the appropriate percent that can be paid out to the beneficiary of each endowment fund on an annual basis while still preserving the value of the original gift. The rate established to be paid out in 2014 was four and one half (4.5) percent.

No bishop will ever be legally able to close the foundation or use the funds for reasons other than the purpose for which they were given. For additional information on how to establish an endowment or leave a legacy gift to the foundation in your will please visit our website catholicfoundationsanangelo.org or contact Kathy Webster, President, at 325-698-7206, or Regina Bodiford, Secretary Treasurer at 325-651-7500.

**La Fundación Católica Otorga Subvenciones para el 2014**

The Angelus

La Fundación Caritativa Católica de la Diócesis Católica Romana de San Ángelo se estableció en el 2010. Donadores generosos han hecho contribuciones deducibles de impuestos para establecer fondos de donaciones en la Fundación. Algunos han establecido fondos de donaciones donde han nombrado ciertos beneficiarios Católicos para recibir subvenciones de ese fondo durante cada año. Este año $12,007 han sido pagados a estos beneficiarios nombrados de estos fondos. Otros han establecido fondos de donaciones sin restricción el cual permite que el Consejo Directivo, con la concurrencia del Presidente Obispo Michael Sis, determine anualmente como los Fondos de Donaciones sin Restricción serán distribuidos en subvenciones para cumplir con las necesidades actuales de la diócesis. Este año, de estos fondos, $27,160 estuvieron a disposición para subvenciones.

Aplicaciones para subvenciones se reciben hasta el 15 de abril de cada año. En este segundo ciclo de otorgar subvenciones, catorce aplicaciones fueron revisadas por el Consejo Directivo. Subvenciones en el total de $27,160 fueron dadas como sigue:

- Sacred Heart Catholic Church in Abilene ($3,000) hacia el costo de un sistema de Alarma Interconectada de Incendios para Little Saints Early Childhood Center;
- Our Lady of Guadalupe Catholic Church en Eldorado ($2,000) para asistir en el proyecto de remodelación de la cocina y el salón;
- Immaculate Conception Catholic Church en Knickerbocker ($1,250) para mejorar el sistema de sonido actual;
- Our Lady of Guadalupe Catholic Church en Midland ($1,000) para renovar el área del santuario de su parroquia;
- St. Elizabeth Ann Seton Catholic Church in Odessa ($1,000) para asistir al cantor que atenderá la Convención Anual del National Association of Pastoral Musicians (Asociación Nacional de Músicos Pastorales);
- St. Mary’s Central Catholic School in Odessa ($2,000) para libros para su Centro de Leer de no ficción (Non-fiction Reading Center);
- St. Joseph Catholic Church in Rowena ($500) para comprar computadoras portátiles para el CCD y el Coordinador Juvenil;
- Angelo Catholic School in San Ángelo ($5,000) para comprar un nuevo sistema telefónico que permita comunicación con todos los maestros al mismo tiempo especialmente en caso de emergencia;
- Christ the King Retreat Center ($1,000) para reemplazar la fuente en el patio;
- St. Margaret Perpetual Adoration Chapel ($950) para reemplazar los asientos y respaldos de los bancos y arrodilladores;
- St. James Catholic Church in Sanderson ($1,460) hacia el viaje para jóvenes en la secundaria a la Conferencia Juvenil de Steubenville (Steubenville Youth Conference) en Arizona;
- St. Paschal Catholic Church in Sterling City ($1,000) para reparaciones a la iglesia y salón parroquial;
- St. Vincent de Paul Society in Abilene ($2,000) para asistir a su ministerio de ayudar al pobre;
- St. Vincent de Paul Society in Midland ($1,000) para asistir a su ministerio de ayudar al pobre;
- Catholic Charities of Odessa ($2,000) para asistir a su ministerio de ayudar al pobre;
- Catholic Outreach of San Ángel ($2,000) para asistencia de renta a los clientes.

Además, este año se distribuyeron $111,998 a las agencias que tienen acuerdos de manejo con la Fundación para que pudieran manejar sus donaciones. Los Administradores aprecian el apoyo de todos los donadores a la Fundación. Un donativo a la Fundación es un regalo que servirá a la comunidad Católica para siempre. La Fundación es legalmente separada de la Diócesis de San Ángel y es dirigida por un Consejo Directivo independiente que maneja los valores y aprueba todas las subvenciones y donativos. Todos los fondos en la Fundación son manejados por administradores de dinero profesionales. La meta de la Fundación es la de preservar y mantener el poder adquisitivo real del donativo principal. Los Administradores determinan el porcentaje apropiado que se le puede pagar al beneficiario de cada fondo de donación cada año mientras tanto mantiene el valor del donativo original. La tasa establecida que será pagada para el 2014 es de cuatro y medio (4.5) por ciento.

Ningún obispo jamás podrá legalmente cerrar la Fundación o usar los fondos para otros motivos más que por las cuales se han designado. Para información adicional en cómo establecer un fondo de donación o dejar un regalo legado a la Fundación en su testamento, favor de visitar la página web www.catholicfoundationsanangelo.org o póngase en contacto con Kathy Webster, Presidenta al 325-698-7206; o con Regina Bodiford, Secretaria Tesorera al 325-651-7500.
The Faith in Texas

Pope names DiNardo, others to Council for Economy

VATICAN CITY (CNS) -- Pope Francis appointed an international group of eight cardinals -- including U.S. Cardinal Daniel N. DiNardo of Galveston-Houston -- and seven lay experts in the fields of business, management and finance to be the first members of the Vatican's new Council for the Economy.

The new Council for the Economy was established Feb. 24 by Pope Francis to consider the policies and practices of the Holy See and devise appropriate policies and best practices. The members were announced March 8.

The council is an independent “authority for policy decisions and not merely an advisory organ” to the new Secretariat for the Economy, which will have authority over all economic and administrative activities within the Holy See and Vatican City State, the Vatican announcement said. The secretariat, headed by Cardinal George Pell, implements the policies determined by the council and answers directly to the Holy Father.

The pope established the council and the secretariat as part of efforts to simplify, consolidate coordinate and oversee management structures throughout the Vatican and to improve the governance, control and reporting of the financial activities of the Vatican’s different offices and bodies.

Of the seven lay members named, five are members of the Pontifical Commission for Reference on the Economic-Administrative Structure of the Holy See, an eight-person commission of lay experts the pope established in July 2013 to study accounting practices among all Vatican offices and devise new strategies for greater fiscal responsibility and transparency.

The lay members of the Council for the Economy are:
- Joseph Zahra, a Maltese business consultant and former director of the Central Bank of Malta, who helped clients “improve corporate performance,” according to a Vatican press release.
- Jean-Baptiste de Franssu, a French expert in business administration and asset management.
- John F. Kyle, who holds both U.S. and Canadian citizenship, is a retired vice-president and treasurer of Exxon-Mobil’s Imperial Oil company in Canada. He taught economics at Northwestern University in Evanston, Ill., and New York University, and worked on various audit committees and finance councils in Canada, including for the Archdiocese of Toronto.
- Enrique Llano Cueto, a Spanish economist, accountant and business consultant.
- Jochen Messmer, a German manager with experience in the health care, insurance and financial service industries. He has also served since 2009 as an international auditor of the Prefecture for the Economic Affairs of the Holy See — the Vatican’s budget management office.
- Francesco Vermiglio, an Italian expert in accounting and corporate finance.
- George Yeo, former finance minister of Singapore, former chief-of-staff of the Singapore armed forces and director of joint operations and planning in the defense ministry.

Each member has been appointed to serve a five-year term. The Vatican said the council would begin its work “immediately” and hold its first meeting in May.

The council “is a key step toward the consolidation of the current management structures of the Holy See, with the aim of improving coordination and oversight of economic and administrative matters,” said Jesuit Father Federico Lombardi, Vatican spokesman.

TEXAS CATHOLIC BRIEFS

Texas Catholic Briefs are presented by The Angelus to exhibit the wide range of opportunities and activities among Catholic churches in Texas as well as other news-related items.

Lubbock: Shallowater, Anton parishes declare Year of Unity

In an effort to renew spiritual unity within families and within the parish community, Saint Philip Benizi Parish in Shallowater and Saint Anthony of Padua Parish in Anton embarked on the Year of Unity. The commemoration began with the beginning of Lent on Ash Wednesday, 2014. During the Year of Unity, each parish will celebrate a campaign offering programs throughout the year to help parishioners begin the process of renewal. The programs will help prayerfully foster the formation of a family of disciples around the Eucharistic table. With the beginning of Lent, each parish began weekly Adoration of the Blessed Sacrament half an hour prior to weekend Masses, in addition to Friday’s Holy Hour. Each parish offers Sunday Masses for families of the parish, and encourages the blessing of the homes. — South Plains Catholic

Dallas: Pro-Life Boot Camp set for June, July in Irving

Boot Camp is a total Pro-Life immersion experience for High School and Homeschooled Students ages 14 to 17. Participants are welcome to come for the entire boot camp or just the weekend.

Session One: June 27-29, 2014
Session Two: July 25-29, 2014
Registration Deadlines:
June 20 (Session One)
July 18 (Session Two)
Age 18-20 can apply online to be Jr. Staff
Jr. Staff and Chaperones must attend mandatory training prior to camp
Information: Sue Laux, Youth for Life Coordinator, 817-939-8595, slaux@fwdioc.org

Fort Worth: Diocesan Youth Conference set for July

The Annual Diocesan Catholic Youth Conference (DCYC) is a dynamic weekend held at the Hyatt Regency Hotel at DFW Airport. This conference offers youth a variety of exciting opportunities such as: Daily Mass, keynote presentations from nationally known speakers, workshops to deepen faith and build life skills, a music ministry pre-conference, Adoration, hands on activities, service experiences, games, dancing and more...with a thousand other Catholic youth! This year’s theme is "Transform me." Don’t miss out on this amazing opportunity!
Big Spring
Bishop Michael J. Sis joined Msgr. Bernard Gully and parishioners at Holy Trinity Catholic Church in Big Spring for the dedication and opening of the church’s new Our Lady of Guadalupe Family Center, Wednesday, May 14. At left, Bishop Sis and Msgr. Gully cut the ribbon to the new center. At right, Bishop Sis poses with Holy Trinity Confirmation students in the new center, and above center, Bishop Sis nails a shot at the facility’s new basketball court. (Courtesy photos)

Menard
At left, Bishop Sis, center, and members of the Sacred Heart Knights of Columbus during an April 27 visit by the bishop. At right, the annual San Saba Mission celebration, April 27. Bishop Sis, center, is photographed with parishioners at the Mission Shrine in Menard.

Abilene
A Fourth Degree Exemplification Mass was celebrated at St Francis of Assisi Parish in Abilene last Sunday, May 18. (Photo by Alan P. Torre)
CONFIRMATION

(From 1)

Mass. That’s why you’ve been preparing for two years now, and that’s what you got all dressed up for today.

What’s happening to you is very important, because for the first time in your life you are going to be receiving Holy Communion, the Body and Blood of Christ dwelling in you. That’s an amazing privilege.

Also, you are going to be receiving the gifts of the Holy Spirit in your Confirmation. I am going to extend my hands over you as a group and pray that the Holy Spirit enter into your lives and fill you with his gifts.

These are amazing things that are happening to you tonight. That’s why we’re all here. All these servers, relatives, deacons, family and friends are all here for you, because we are excited for what’s happening to you tonight spiritually.

The Gospel reading that we heard in the Mass tonight takes place at the Last Supper, when Jesus was with his twelve Apostles on the night before he died. That’s when he celebrated the first Mass. He took the bread and wine of the Jewish Passover meal and he transformed it to become the first Eucharist. He took the bread, blessed it, broke it, gave it to his disciples, and said, “Take this and eat of it. This is my body.” Then he took the cup of wine, and after giving thanks he gave it to them, saying, “Drink from it, all of you, for this is my blood of the covenant.”

That’s why you have to keep coming back to Mass. This is your First Communion, not your last Communion. At least once a week, come back to receive Jesus into your heart at Holy Communion. It’s a great privilege.

Throughout the rest of your life you need to keep inviting the Holy Spirit to be active in you. What all of us need to do to as Catholic Christians is to develop a devotion to the Holy Spirit.

I ask the adults here tonight to think about this: When you pray, to whom do you direct your prayer? Most of you will say, “Well, I pray to God the Father, and I pray to Jesus.” But how many of you adults on a regular basis are praying to the Holy Spirit? If not, why not? The Holy Spirit is just as much God as Jesus. He is just as much God as God the Father. All three persons of the Holy Trinity are completely, absolutely God.

When you young people are anointed tonight with the Holy Spirit, you are receiving the fullness of the gifts of the Holy Spirit. You are completing what you received when you were baptized. And I want all of you to think about what the Holy Spirit does for us as Catholic Christians. We often talk about God the Father and God the Son, but sometimes we forget the Holy Spirit. So think about what the Holy Spirit does for us as members of the Church.

To help understand this, think about a car. When you came to church tonight, I suspect most of you came in some kind of a car or a truck. You got in the vehicle, the driver turned the key and drove. I don’t know if this has ever happened to you, but it’s happened to me: running out of gas. When you run out of gas, you can’t go anywhere, right? You are stuck until you put more gas in the car.

That car or truck is very useful to you. You can get to work on time, or take the kids to school. You can get to Mass, or go to the grocery store. There are a lot of things you can do with that beautiful invention of a car. But if you don’t have gas in the tank, what good is that car? You’re not going to be able to do much with it.

The car is a symbol of us. The gas is a symbol of the Holy Spirit. We need the Holy Spirit in us if we are going to get anywhere as Christians. Without the Holy Spirit in us we’re not very useful to the Kingdom of God. We need the Holy Spirit flowing in us, giving us the energy to accomplish what God calls us to do in this world.

(Please See GLOVE/23)

VATICAN II

(From 8)

make a statement when another body appointed by the pope himself was examining the matter? How could the subcommission at this last minute present for a final vote a text in which such a radical change had been made? The furor in the press made the situation even more diffi-

cult. The bottom line, after heated debate behind the scenes: it was announced that Paul was making a suggestion. Finished! A suggestion it is! Artificial birth control was not explicitly forbidden. It stated that Catholics were forbidden to use methods that the church had condemned. In the final vote, only 155 were against the document. The papal council continued to function and on July 25, 1968 Paul issued his encyclical Humanae Vitae, officially settling the matter.

The Council resumed on November 30 and in two days finished the work on the four documents still awaiting promulga-
The work of the Council was over. Paul presided over a prayer service at St. Paul Outside the Walls on December 2 with non-Catholic observers, something that would have inconceivable four years earlier. On December 6, Paul issued a decree changing the name of the Holy Office to the Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith to “protect the teaching on faith and morals throughout the world.”

(Para 11)

SANDOVAL

estar en el buque, que nos impulsa a sen-
tir que la fe esta tan firme que no puede sufrir cualquier oscuridad”. Hay algo que pasa durante la Pascua que nos da el anhelo de volver a nuestro hogar, y la cantidad de feligreses durante la Misa Pascual nos muestra eso. Similares, Latinos del Caribe y Centro América a menudo regresan a su patria para la Semana Santa.

Cuando era niño, en la cordillera Sangre de Cristo en Nuevo México, vivíamos demasiado lejos de la iglesia parroquial para asistir al Vía Crucis. Pero el pueblo tenía su propia liturgia, celebrada en el ventoso y polvoroso valle donde vivíamos.

Cantando alabanzas, los penitentes cantan el rosario, el Baray y las alabanzas. A menudo se sentir el deseo de experimentar de nuevo esa liturgia, pero ya no se celebra.

Los Latinos que hacen su peregrinación anual hacia su patria en el Caribe o Centro América son una parábola viva de crucifixión y resurrección. Se fugaron de la amenaza de crucifixión cuando crueles dictadores masacraron a cientos de miles en los últimos 25 años del siglo veinte. En seguida, a veces sufrían crucifixión en la jornada hacia el norte, robos y violaciones.

Sin embargo, no sólo sobrevivieron sino que avanzaron, sin olvidarse de sus familias en su patria. Cada año, estos inmigrantes colectivamente envían millones de dólares de ayuda. Un ejemplo es la comunidad de guatemaltecos en Los Ángeles que estableció un pequeño hospital en una aldea en la sierra.

Cuando esto sucede, los pobres sufrien-

(Please See 1965/20)
El Papa también dió una advertencia contra interpretaciones exageradas de lo que había hecho el Concilio. El momento para debate ya terminó. Terminó su discurso con tres anuncios: 1) Había comenzado el proceso de beatificación para Pio XII y Juan XXIII. 2) Como memorial del Concilio, iba a construir una nueva iglesia en Roma llamada María, Madre de la Iglesia. 3) Proclamó un año de jubileo desde el 8 de diciembre hasta el Pentecostés de 1966. No dijo ni una palabra de los dos documentos que había promulgado. Una de las cosas significantes es que puso énfasis en la responsabilidad y prerrogativas del papado con poca atención al episcopado en un concilio en que la colegialidad era un asunto central.

Se pensaba ese día que el resto era no más que atar los cabos sueltos y prepararse a volver a casa. Pero... durante el período del 20 al 30 de noviembre, los problemas erupcionaron. La comisión que trataba de la familia y el matrimonio, encabezada por el Cardenal Juan Deardon de Detroit, había completado su trabajo y había consultado con la comisión papal sobre el control de la natalidad. En ese entonces individuos comenzaron a presionar al papa que cambiara el texto para prohibir absolutamente el uso de contraseptivos. Si no, se vería como cuestionar la enseñanza anterior de la Iglesia. No estar explícito sería indicar que es posible un cambio. Esto pasó el 24 de noviembre. Pablo lo hizo, insistiendo que se cambiara el texto y que se hiciera una referencia específica a Custí Connubii. También la noticia de esto había llegado a la prensa. Esto llegó a ser una crisis: 1) ¿Cómo podría hacer el Concilio una declaración sobre un asunto que el papa había quitado de su competencia? 2) ¿Cómo podría hacer una declaración sobre un asunto que no había debatido? ¿Cómo podría hacer una declaración cuando otro grupo, apuntado por el papa mismo, estaba examinando el asunto? ¿Cómo podría la subcomisión en este último momento presentar por un voto final un texto en que un cambio tan radical se había hecho? El furor en la prensa hizo que la situación aún más difícil. La conclusión, después de un debate acalorado bajo cuerda: se anunció que Pablo estaba haciendo una sugerencia. ¡Ya! ¡Una sugerencia es! La control artificial de natalidad no estaba prohibida. Dijo que los católicos no podían usar métodos que la Iglesia había condenado. En el voto final, solamente 155 estaban en contra del documento. La comisión papal seguía funcionando y el 25 de julio de 1968 Pablo publicó su encíclico Humanae Vitae, determinando finalmente el asunto.

El Concilio comenzó de nuevo el 30 de noviembre y en dos días terminó el trabajo en los cuatro documentos que no habían sido promulgados. El trabajo del Concilio había terminado. Pablo presidió en un servicio de oración en San Pablo Fuera de las murallas el 2 de diciembre con los observadores no-católicos, algo que habría sido imposible cuatro años antes. El 6 de diciembre, Pablo dio un decreto cambiando el nombre del Santo Oficio a la Congregación Para la Doctrina de la Fe para “proteger la enseñanza sobre la fe y moral para el mundo católico entero, e investigar nuevas enseñanzas y nuevas opiniones. El papa estaba tratando de hacer el trabajo más positivo, en vez de no más condenar. Los medios fueron creados para darles a los acusados una oportunidad de defenderse.

El 7 de diciembre vio la Misa en que el papa Pablo habló del significado religioso del Concilio y lo que significaba para la Iglesia y el mundo. Tal vez el aspecto más notable del discurso fue la relación unidireccional que el papa describió entre la Iglesia y el mundo, omitiendo la correspondencia evidente en Gaudium et Spes. También vio la promulgación de los cuatro últimos documentos: Libertad Religiosa, Actividad Misionera, Ministerio y Vida de los Sacerdotes y La Iglesia en el Mundo Moderno. También hubo la eliminación formal del excomunicación por Pablo VI y el Patriarca Athenagoras que había tenido lugar en 1054.

El día siguiente hubo la Misa de clausura junto con salutaciones especiales a los pueblos de todo el mundo. La ceremonia entera se cerró con una carta del papa que leyó el Arzobispo Felici que cerró el Concilio y mandó que todos los fieles observaran que el Concilio mandó. Pablo VI entonces dio la bendición final y la despedida. “En el nombre de nuestro Señor Jesucristo, vaya en paz.” Y la inmensa muchedumbre respondió, “Demos gracias a Dios. – Deo gratias,” y entonces comenzó a aplaudir y gritar de alegría.


1965

(From 18)

the entire Catholic world, and investigating new teachings and new opinions.” The pope was trying to make the work more positive, rather than just condemning. Machinery was also set up to give the accused a chance to defend themselves.

December 7 saw the closing Mass in which Pope Paul talked about the religious significance of the Council and what it meant for the Church and the world. Perhaps the most striking aspect of the talk was the unidirectional relationship that the pope depicted between the Church and the world, bypassing reciprocity that was notable in Gaudium et Spes. It also saw the promulgation of the last four documents: Religious Liberty, Missionary Activity, Ministry and Life of Priests and The Church in the Modern World. There was also the formal removal of excommunication by Paul VI and Patriarch Athenagoras which had taken place in 1054.

The following day was the closing Mass together with special greetings to people from all over the world. The entire ceremony closed with Archbishop Felici reading the pope’s letter which closed the Council and enjoined on all that “everything the Council decreed be religiously and devoutly observed by all the faithful.” Paul VI then imparted the final blessings and dismissal.

“In the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, go in peace.” To which the vast crowd responded, “Thanks be to God. – Deo gratias,” and then broke into applause and cheers.


SAINTS

(From 8)

translated into Latin and widely circulated. After his books were published, Gnosticism lost its appeal. Paul Burns writes in “Butler’s Lives of the Saints” that although Irenaeus’ treatises destroyed Gnosticism as a serious threat to Christianity, it has resurfaced in various guises in later centuries.

In 190, Irenaeus again acted as peacemaker when he urged Pope Victor I to take a more moderate stance toward the Quartodecimans of Asia Minor who observed Easter on a different day than Rome. The followed their own traditions and celebrated Easter on the day of the Jewish Passover instead of on the following Sunday with all other Christians. According to editor Michael Walsh writing in “Butler’s Lives of the Saints,” there was a real danger of schism before Irenaeus intervened on behalf of the Christians in Asia Minor. Good relations were restored and after the Council of Nicaea in 325, the Quartodecimans voluntarily conformed to the Roman usage.

Rosemary Guiley writes in the “Encyclopedia of Saints” that Irenaeus was the first great Christian theologian. Many other biographers agree and say he was the first systematic theologian in the church. Biographer Richard McBrien agrees that Irenaeus was an important theologian but writes in “Lives of the Saints” that his work was not fully appreciated until early in the 20th century when one of his principal works, “The Demonstration of Apostolic Preaching” was discovered in 1904.

Another of his writings is the “Account of Apostolic Doctrine,” a simple and direct presentation of Christian beliefs. Even though Irenaeus wrote passionately and vigorously defended his beliefs against the heretics, he continued to treat them charitably. Omer Englebert writes in “Lives of the Saints” that to those against whom he fought, he wrote: “We hold out hope to you with all our hearts and will never cease to offer it to you.”

According to Wikipedia, Irenaeus’ writings together with those of Clement and Ignatius are taken as among the earliest signs of the developing doctrine of the primacy of the Roman see. Irenaeus is also credited with perhaps being the first to speak of the Church as “Catholic” (universal).

Irenaeus died in 200 and is usually venerated as a martyr but there is no reliable evidence for this belief. His tomb was destroyed by the Calvinists in 1562 and all trace of his relics is lost. His feast on June 28 is on the General Roman calendar and is celebrated by the Church of England, the Episcopal Church in the U.S. and the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America. The Russian Orthodox Church commemorates his feast on August 23.
(From 10)

accounts, Roncalli handled it with remarkable grace and deftness of touch. Keeping all parties more or less satisfied, and resolving the difficulties with a minimum of pain, he honored the demands of both the French state and the Church. In performing this impressive high-wire act, Roncalli was demonstrating, with extraordinary clarity, the virtue of prudence, which is knowing how best to apply moral norms in concrete situations. Prudence is a feel for the right thing to do in the present circumstance, and nuncio Roncalli clearly had it.

Turning to the theological virtues, let me say just a word about Roncalli’s faith and his hope. Anyone who reads John XXIII’s spiritual diary called Journal of a Soul is struck by the late Pope’s simple and profound faith. Prayer structured his day, from the time he was a young seminarian to the end of his life. Rosary, benediction, novenas, frequent retreats, confession, prayers to favorite saints, Eucharistic adoration, and of course the Mass were absolutely fundamental. His episcopal motto—Obediencia et Pax (Obedience and Peace) signaled his abiding faith that the Holy Spirit spoke unambiguously through his religious superiors. He consistently read his life through the lens of revelation, and that is the virtue of faith.

Pope John XXIII also exhibited the virtue of hope to a heroic degree, and the best evidence for this is the greatest of his public acts, namely, his summoning of the Second Vatican Council. Roncalli was a church historian by training, and it was precisely his acquaintance with the roiled ecclesiastical story—involving much stupidity, sin, and deep corruption—that convinced him of the Holy Spirit’s guidance of the Church across the centuries. He knew in his bones that, despite all human attempts to destroy it, the Church had prevailed and would prevail, because the Spirit was present to it. And this gave him hope. Upon becoming Pope in 1958, John XXIII resolved to make the Church that he loved a more apt vehicle for the proclamation of Christ to modernity. Hence he called a council of all the bishops of the Catholic world. He said that he wanted this great gathering to be “a new Pentecost,” an occasion for the outpouring of the Holy Spirit. Many pundits and experts, both inside and outside the Church, strongly urged him not to undertake such a daunting project, but he pressed ahead, precisely because of his radiant hope.

And now to John Paul II. As all of his biographers remind us, Karol Wojtyla came of age at one of the darkest moments of the twentieth century. When he was 19 years old and just commencing his university career, the Nazis rolled through his native Poland and instigated a reign of terror over the country. Almost immediately, the conquerors decapitated Polish society, killing the intelligentsia outright or sending them to concentration camps. All distinctive forms of Polish culture were cruelly suppressed, and the church was actively persecuted. Young Wojtyla displayed heroic courage by joining the underground seminary run by the Cardinal of Krakow and by forming a small company of players who kept Polish literature and drama alive. Many of his colleagues in both of these endeavors were killed or arrested in the course of those terrible years of occupation. Sadly, the Nazi tyranny was replaced immediately by the Communist tyranny, and Fr. Wojtyla was compelled to manifest his courage again. In the face of harassment, unfair criticism, the threat of severe punishment, etc., he did his priestly work, forming young people in the great Catholic spiritual and theological tradition. Even as a bishop, Wojtyla was subject to practically constant surveillance (every phone tapped; every room bugged; his every movement tracked), and he was continually, in small ways and large, obstructed by Communist officialdom. And yet he soldered on. Of course, as Pope, he ventured into the belly of the beast, standing athwart the Communist establishment and speaking for God, freedom, and human rights. In doing so, he proved himself one of the most courageous figures of the twentieth century.

That Karol Wojtyla was a man who exhibited the virtue of justice to a heroic degree is impossible to contest. Throughout his papal years, John Paul II was the single most eloquent and persistent voice for human rights on the world stage. In the face of a postmodern relativism and indifferentism, John Paul took the best of the Enlightenment political tradition and wedded it to classical Christian anthropology. The result was a sturdy defense of the rights to life, liberty, education, free speech, and above all, the free exercise of religion. More persuasively than any other political figure, east or west, John Paul advocated for justice.

Next, it’s worth noting that George Weigel titled his magisterial biography of John Paul II, Witness to Hope, by identifying Karol Wojtyla with a theological virtue. In October of 1978, the newly elected Pope John Paul II gave his inaugural speech to a packed St. Peter’s Square. This man, who had witnessed at first hand the very worst of the twentieth century, who had intimate experience of how twisted and wicked human beings can be, spoke over and over again this exhortation: “Be not afraid.” There was, of course, absolutely no political or cultural warrant for that exhortation, no purely natural justification for it. It could come only from a man whose heart was filled with the supernatural sense that the Holy Spirit is the Lord of history.

Finally, was Karol Wojtyla in possession of love, the greatest of the theological virtues? The best evidence I can bring forward is the still breathtaking encounter that took place in a grimy Roman jail cell in December of 1983. John Paul II sat down with Mehmet Ali Agca, the man who had, only a year and a half before, fired several bullets into the Pope. John Paul spoke to him, embraced him, listened to him, and finally forgave him. Love is not a feeling or a sentiment. It is, Thomas Aquinas reminds us, an act of the will, more precisely, willing the good of the other. This is why the love of one’s enemies—those who are not disposed to wish us well—is the great test of love. Did John Paul II express love in a heroic way? He forgave the man who tried to kill him; no further argument need be made.

Saints exist, not for themselves, but for the Church. They are models and intercessors for the rest of us here below. We can only give thanks to God who has provided the world with these two new heavenly friends. Sts. John XXIII and John Paul II, pray for us.

Father Robert Barron is the founder of the global ministry, Word on Fire, and the Rector/President of Mundelein Seminary. He is the creator of the award-winning documentary series, "Catholicism" and "Catholicism: The New Evangelization." Learn more at www.WordOnFire.org
percent are Christian with most of these being Eastern Orthodox. While we were there, some of the students shared with us how difficult life has been in the occupied territory. There is a massive wall that was built some ten years ago as a divider between Israel and the Palestinian Territory as a protective measure against acts of terrorism. They spoke of discrimination that they feel at the hands of Israeli citizens, and they shared the countless problems they have crossing the checkpoints at the separation wall. Trips that would typically take 15 minutes are now multiple hour ordeals. It is still shocking to think how easily our tour bus passed through those checkpoints almost unhindered while Palestinian peoples are not allowed to cross for seemingly arbitrary reasons.

There are so many barriers between the Israeli and Palestinian people: language, religion, ethnicity, and most obvious is a literal concrete wall. Some of the Palestinian people living in the occupied territories can trace back their ancestry to the Byzantine Empire that conquered the Holy Land in the Fifth-century. These same people now feel that they are being forced out of their land to make room for a population that claims ownership based on biblical constructs and ideas.

What is most difficult for me to see, moreover, is how the Christian population suffers the most in the West Bank. In the minds of many, their being Palestinian is synonymous with terrorism and extremism. Yet, because they are Christian, they are a minority religion in the midst of a Muslim world. Being a double minority, therefore, hinders their own growth and well-being. In all fairness, the Muslims do not even deserve to be called radicals just because a few have taken extreme measures. This idea would be comparable to suggesting that all Christians are bad because of what happened during the Crusades in the Holy Land.

I realize that this is a very negative portrayal of the political situation of the Holy Land, but it is a side of the situation that does not receive much attention. When asked by one of my classmates what the they wanted from us as we go back to the United States, the students of Bethlehem University responded, “Tell them that we are not all terrorists.”

“Who is at fault” in this situation is beyond my ability to judge. All I can do is recall what I saw for those who might be interested. These people are enduring pain that is a violation of basic human rights. If you ever get a chance to go to the Holy Land, I encourage you to make your own judgment about the situation. My encouragement to everyone who reads this is to pray for peace. Like the prayer of the angels who appeared to the shepherds on the outskirts of Bethlehem, “peace to those on whom his favor rests.”

(Lk 2:14)
El tema del 2014

El tema de la Quincena por la Libertad de este año es Libertad para Servir. Concentremos en como la libertad religiosa permite que florezca el servicio de la Iglesia al pobre y vulnerable de acuerdo con la dignidad humana y la enseñanza de la Iglesia.

Para Estudio

Si gusta aprender más acerca de las enseñanzas de la Iglesia sobre la libertad religiosa, recomiendo que estudien La Declaración sobre la Libertad Religiosa del Segundo Concilio Vaticano, Dignitatis Humanae, publicado el 7 de diciembre del 1965. Es fácilmente disponible en el sitio web del Vaticano, www.vatican.va. Otro documento útil es Our First, Most Cherished Liberty (La Primera y Más Preciada de Nuestras Libertades), publicada en abril del 2012 por el Comité Ad Hoc de Libertad Religiosa de la Conferencia de Obispos Católicos de los Estados Unidos.
St. Mary’s Star of the Sea
Ballinger

On May 4, 2014, Bishop Michael Sis officiated over the administration of the Sacrament of Confirmation on 17 young men and women at St. Mary Star of the Sea Catholic Church. Celebrating the Eucharistic Service were Bishop Sis, Father Hubert Wade, Deacon Enrique Martinez and Deacon David Workman. Following the Eucharistic Service, Bishop Sis, the 17 members of the Confirmation Class of 2014 and parishioners were treated to a meal at the parish center. Picture featured Bishop Sis, Father Wade and the Confirmation Class of 2014. ( Courtesy photo)

St. Margaret Of Cortona
Big Lake

St. Francis of Assisi
Iraan

The confirmation classes of St. Margaret of Cortona in Big Lake and St. Francis of Assisi in Iraan. (Courtesy photo).

Our Lady of Perpetual Help
Ozona

The 2014 Confirmation Class at Our Lady of Perpetual Help in Ozona. (Courtesy photo).