Bishop Sis issues statement regarding global Ebola concerns

Editor’s note: When Ebola killed a man and brought the quarantines of two nurses at Presbyterian Hospital in Dallas, many bishops in Texas, including the Most Rev. Michael J. Sis, Bishop of San Angelo, issued statements to the people of their dioceses regarding the disease. Following is Bishop Sis’s statement.

By Bishop Michael J. Sis

The Ebola epidemic has claimed more than 4,400 lives, and its destructive impact continues to expand. Since some cases have been confirmed in the United States, the disease is causing increased worry locally.

The most severely impacted countries are Guinea, Liberia, and Sierra Leone, all of which have severely underfunded health care systems. Their situation is made more complicated by a lack of clean water and basic hygiene services.

The Church is trying to give people hope in a variety of ways. Throughout Western Africa, the Catholic Church is involved in health care, treating patients in its clinics and hospitals. All churches and faith communities have a vital role to play in promoting good hygiene and safe funeral practices to prevent the spread of this virus.

Along with other non-governmental agencies such as Caritas Internationalis, Catholic Relief Services (CRS) is responding to the Ebola outbreak by working closely with local government health officials to distribute information about the virus, how it is spread, and how to prevent transmission. CRS has committed more than $1.5 million in private funds to continue its emergency response to the Ebola epidemic in West Africa.

If you would like to support this emergency work of

(Please See EBOLA/22)

50-year milestones to be celebrated by diocese, December 22

The Angelus

SAN ANGELO — Two special occasions will be celebrated at the Sacred Heart Cathedral in San Angelo, December 22, 2014. At 6:30 p.m., a Mass will mark the 50th anniversaries of the consecration of the cathedral, and the 50th priestly ordination of the Most Rev. Michael D. Pfeifer, OMI, retired bishop emeritus of San Angelo.

The current Sacred Heart Church in downtown San Angelo, was dedicated August 1, 1961. Following the naming of San Angelo as a diocese, it was named principal church and then, on December 21, 1964, raised to the dignity of cathedral, at which time it was consecrated by Bishop Thomas Drury, first bishop of the diocese.

Bishop Emeritus Pfeifer served as shepherd of the Diocese of San Angelo from 1985-2013. He was ordained a priest of the order of the Oblates of Mary Immaculate on December 21, 1964. He was succeeded by Bishop Michael Sis on January 27, 2014.

Stephen Kent, Fr. Richard Barron, Fr. Ron Rolheiser and others in “Catholic Voices” Pages 8-11

Friend the Diocese of San Angelo on Facebook for the latest news, and subscribe to DOSAMail weekly updates at flocknote.com/dosamail.

Pray for Armed Forces

“I would like to ask people to join in a moment of silent prayer, wherever they are, at Noon on Veteran’s Day, Tuesday, November 11, 2014, to honor the men and women of our Armed Forces, past and present. In this moment of prayer, I would suggest that we express gratitude for their service, pray for the repose of the souls of those who have died, and pray for the intentions of those still living. Many of our men and women who served in Iraq and Afghanistan have returned with post-traumatic stress disorder, injuries, loss of limbs, and other painful situations. They answered the call to service. They need our support and prayers.”

— Bishop Sis
Reflections on the 2014 Extraordinary Synod on Family

By Bishop Michael J. Sis

Many people have questions about the Extraordinary Synod on the Family that took place last month in Rome. After seeing a variety of different claims in the secular media, some have left wondering just what happened in this Synod regarding our teaching on marriage.

The two-week gathering at the Vatican from October 5-19 was accompanied by a dramatic media frenzy of controversy and consternation. Much of the anxiety was rooted in a misunderstanding of what this Synod was meant to accomplish. This event did not, and was never intended to, make any changes in Church doctrine. The Catechism of the Catholic Church is still valid.

The purpose of the 2014 Extraordinary Synod was to begin an extended discussion of the many complex challenges faced by marriage and the family in our world today. The reflections that were put forward in this Synod were intended to raise questions and indicate perspectives that will need to be matured and made clearer by further reflection in the year between now and the Ordinary General Assembly of the Synod of Bishops to take place in October of 2015.

Press coverage of the Synod was sometimes focused exclusively on the controversial topics of Communion for the divorced and remarried and homosexual relationships. However, those two topics were only a small part of the overall discussions. Despite the variety of observations and suggestions that came forth in the process, there emerged a common need to encourage families to live out their calling with fidelity, assuring support to those who are called to the vocation of Holy Matrimony.

The Synod affirmed the positive testimony of Christian families. It spoke of the need to restore to life the fullness of life which Jesus promised, even now to those seeking His peace.” — St. Teresa of Calcutta.

Rachel's Vineyard Retreat

A Rachel's Vineyard Retreat is scheduled for November 14-16 in the Diocese of Lubbock. For more information, contact Kathy.krule@gmail.com or 806.577.5912. Rachel's Vineyard Retreats, which are completely confidential, strive to attempt to heal the pain of abortion.

"May Rachel's Vineyard be an instrument of the thirst of Jesus to heal and restore to life the fullness of life which Jesus promised, even now to those seeking His peace.” — St. Teresa of Calcutta.

Fr. Romanus celebrates 25

Sacred Heart Church in Coleman and Our Lady of Mount Carmel Church, Winters, will celebrate the 25th anniversary of their marriage. Fr. Romanus Akamike will celebrate the 25th anniversary of his ordination in March.

Worldwide Marriage Encounter

"For God did not send his Son into the world to condemn the world, but that the world might be saved through him.” Let Christ into your marriage so it can be a greater marriage. Let God be the strength of your marriage by attending the next Worldwide Marriage Encounter Weekend on November 21-23, 2014 at the Grand Hotel in Midland. Please register online at www.mewesttexas.org. For more information, you may contact Pete & Kathleen Molina at 432-528-3324 or Val & Cindy Luna at 432-349-3690.

Retirement Fund for Religious

On December 13-14, 2014, you will have the opportunity to participate in the 2014 Retirement Fund for Religious annual appeal in the Diocese of San Angelo. Please support this collection as generously as you have done in the past. A recent study shows that while unfunded retirement liability remains profound, progress is being made toward narrowing the gap between retirement needs and available funding. Additionally, the National Religious Retirement Office is working with religious to design strategies that best support their retirement needs.

Ray to host mission in Midland

Catholic apologist Steve Ray will lead a four-night mission, culminating with the premiere of “Abraham,” part of his multipart video series. His schedule is as follows: Sunday, January 11-Tuesday, January 13, 2015 — Mission at St. Stephen’s Catholic Church. Wednesday, January 14, 2015: Social hour with Steve, dinner, "premier" showing of DVD "Abraham", comments by Steve Ray, meet Steve after dinner, video. Thursday, January 15, 2015: Knights of Columbus Clergy Appreciation Dinner, guest speaker Steve Ray at St. Stephen’s Church. The mission and dinner will include the opportunity to donate to the fundraiser for the completion of the last two DVD films in the series “Footprints of God, The Story of Salvation.” Those films will be Elijah and Elisha, and Doctors of the Church.
Edgardo Aragon

Date of Birth: April 2, 1993
Birthplace: Espanola, New Mexico
Do you have siblings: 1 sister
What seminary do you attend? Conception Seminary
What level are you: 2nd
Home parish: Holy Redeemer / Odessa
Favorite saint: Saint Ignatius de Loyola
Favorite Scripture: John 1
Favorite color: Red
Favorite music: Indie Alternative
Favorite food: Home Cooking
Favorite dessert: Pie, Cheesecake
Any hobbies: Music
Objectives: To be a holy man of God and answer his call!

Edgardo's Biography

I was born in Espanola, New Mexico, me and my family moved to Odessa, Texas on my fourth birthday. My parents are both from Chihuahua. I have one sibling, my little sister, who is eleven right now. I graduated in 2011 from Odessa High School, and went to Odessa College for three years before going to Conception Seminary College. My calling to the priesthood began after each of us in my family lived retreats. After these retreats my family and I started to develop a greater and more profound relationship with Christ. We became really involved in this group that held the retreats, Los Pequeños Hijos de María. My family and I started to volunteer and help serve in these retreats, as well as participate in the weekly gatherings. This led me to come to learn more about my faith as well as to grow closer to Christ. As I grew spiritually, the thought of the priesthood kept crossing my mind, and I began to consider it. After visiting the seminary and praying about it for a long time, I made the decision to start applying. I started my first year in seminary this semester and I really love it. Even though, it's only been a few weeks I can already see myself begin to grow. Most of the things I do in my free time revolve around music. Anything having to do with music, I will partake in; listening to music, reading about music, and playing music. I also like to read and watch good movies or TV series.

Bishop talks leadership in parishes

By Jimmy Patterson
Editor / West Texas Angelus

SAN ANGELO — Bishop Michael Sis delivered the keynote presentation at the annual Diocesan Conference Day, October 18, 2014, stressing a message of the need for effective teamwork and leadership within parishes and parish religious education programs.

Using the World Cup German Soccer team and the NBA champion San Antonio Spurs as examples of how much further teamwork will take a parish than if the focus is placed on one or two individuals, Bishop Sis said teamwork, combined with leadership are two essentials of successful programs.

Religious education volunteers and others filled the main hall at McNease Convention Center to hear the Bishop as well as Anne Comeaux, former Director of Catechesis for the Archdiocese of Galveston-Houston, speak on discipleship and evangelization.

It was also announced at the conference that the Diocese of San Angelo’s Office of Education and Formation will now be known as the Office of Evangelization and Catechesis.

The conference day has previously been presented in February.

Bishop Sis’s 10 Essentials of Leadership in Parish Ministry

1. Accountability for the good of the Church and the well-being of each person.
3. Respect for the Dignity of the Person. Respect a person’s right to say ‘no.’ Invite and propose. Don’t manipulate or coerce.
4. Balance time spent with family, work, church work, recreation, rest, fun.
5. Look to the peripheries. Look for those on the fringes of society and the Church, and reach out to them.
7. Team spirit, not turf battles. It’s not about you.
8. Train your replacements. None of us will last forever.
9. Keep good written records so your successors don’t have to reinvent the wheel.
10. Leave it better than you found it. This is an expression of good stewardship of our ministries.

SEMINARIAN
OF THE MONTH

Edgardo Aragon

Bishop Michael Sis addresses a full presentation room at the McNease Convention Center in San Angelo for the annual Diocesan Conference Day, October 8. (Photo by Jimmy Patterson)
## CALENDARS

### BISHOP SIS' NOVEMBER SCHEDULE

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Location</th>
<th>Event</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>8-14</td>
<td>BALTIMORE, 10 a.m.</td>
<td>Meeting of USCCB</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15</td>
<td>COLEMAN, Sacred Heart, Mass 10 a.m.</td>
<td>25th anniversary of Fr. Romanus Akamike</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>16 SAN ANGELO</td>
<td>St. Joseph, Pro-Life Mass, 11:15 a.m.</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>22</td>
<td>OKLAHOMA CITY, Region 10 Youth Conference</td>
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<tr>
<td>25</td>
<td>ABILENE, Holy Family, RCIA, 6:30 p.m.</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>27 SAN ANGELO</td>
<td>Sacred Heart Cathedral - Thanksgiving Day Mass at 9:00 a.m.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>30 CARLSBAD</td>
<td>St. Therese – Mass at 11 a.m.</td>
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### DECEMBER SCHEDULE

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Location</th>
<th>Event</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>MERKEL, Our Mother of Mercy – Mass at 6:30 p.m.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>CLYDE, Sts. Joachim and Ann – Mass at 6:30 p.m.</td>
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<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>SAN ANGELO, Christmas at Old Fort Concho- Mass at 11 a.m.</td>
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<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>SAN ANGELO, Sacred Heart Cathedral – Feast of the Immaculate Conception Mass, 6:30 p.m</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>SAN ANGELO, Diocesan Pastoral Center – Meeting of Diocesan Finance Council and Presbyteral Council at 11:00 a.m.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11</td>
<td>SAN ANGELO Presbyteral Council Meeting at 2:00 pm.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12 SAN ANGELO</td>
<td>Christ the King Retreat Center – Annual Christmas Party for Priests, Sisters, Deacons and Wives at 5:30 pm.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11 SAN ANGELO</td>
<td>Christ the King Retreat Center – Annual Christmas Party for Staff at 6:30 p.m.</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

### NECROLOGY DECEMBER

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Person</th>
<th>Year</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1-Nov</td>
<td>Rev. John A. Pierce</td>
<td>1979</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5-Nov</td>
<td>Rev. Angel Vizcarra, O.P.</td>
<td>2004</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12-Nov</td>
<td>Deacon Nestor Perez</td>
<td>1993</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12-Nov</td>
<td>Rev. James Aaron</td>
<td>1999</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>28-Nov</td>
<td>Rev. Nicholas Femenia, C.M.</td>
<td>1999</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>29-Nov</td>
<td>Rev. Msgr. Louis Moeller</td>
<td>2008</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
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### Breakfast with the Bishop: ASU Family Day

![Bishop Michael J. Sis (back row) gathered for breakfast with students, family and friends at the Newman Center for the annual Angelo State University Family Day on September 27, 2014. The Newman Center hosted the breakfast for families of the center’s students. (Courtesy photo)](image)

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### Christ the King Retreat Center Calendar

#### November 2014

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Event</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>Heart of Mercy Prayer Group</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11</td>
<td>Adoration</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14-16</td>
<td>Deacon Formation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>17</td>
<td>Heart of Mercy Prayer Group</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>18</td>
<td>Adoration</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>21-22</td>
<td>First Methodist, Midland</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>21-23</td>
<td>Beginning Experience</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>24</td>
<td>Heart of Mercy Prayer Group</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>27-30</td>
<td>Thanksgiving Holiday</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

#### December 2014

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Event</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Heart of Mercy Prayer Group</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Adoration</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5-7</td>
<td>Advent Men’s Retreat</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>Heart of Mercy Prayer Group</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>Immaculate Conception Observed-Office Closed</td>
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<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>Presbyteral &amp; Finance Lunch</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>DOSA-Annual Christmas Party for Clergy &amp; Religious</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11</td>
<td>Bishops Staff Christmas Party</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13</td>
<td>Deacon Formation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15</td>
<td>Heart of Mercy Prayer Group</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>16</td>
<td>Adoration</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>18</td>
<td>Bishop Sis Staff Mass &amp; Lunch</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>21-23</td>
<td>Bishop Pfeifer’s Anniversary Celebration</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>24-28</td>
<td>Office Closed Christmas Holiday</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Beginning Experience Weekend, Nov. 21-23

Beginning Experience is a weekend retreat designed to help you find your way and learn to live through the grief that comes with the end of a marriage through divorce or death of a spouse.

The next Beginning Experience weekend will be **November 21-23** at Christ the King Retreat Center in San Angelo. Plan to attend this weekend to start your healing process. The weekend begins on Friday evening at 8:00 p.m. and concludes on Sunday afternoon at 4:00 p.m. The cost for the weekend is $115 which includes your food and lodging. Please go online or call one of the telephone numbers below to obtain a registration form. For additional information about the weekend you can visit the website: beginningexperience.org or call Christ the King Retreat Center at 325-651-5352. We have team members who live in different cities, so just call one of these team members and they can put you in touch with someone in your area. Jennifer (432) 528-6243, Anna (325) 949-8967, Ruby (325) 893-4120; Brenda (432) 288-2712 or Kathy (325) 944-4746.

### PARISH FESTIVALS, FAIRS

#### SUNDAY, NOVEMBER 9

**ST. JOSEPH - ROWENA**

Flag Raising, Balloon Release - 10:30 a.m.  
Turkey and Rowena German Style Sausage Dinner with all the trimmings- 11 a.m. - 1:30 p.m.  
Country Store, Live Auction, 11:30 a.m.  
Prize Drawing, Games for all Ages 11:30 a.m. - 3:30 p.m.  
Uncooked sausage sold by the pound while supply lasts.  
Sausage Sandwich Supper - 4:30 p.m.  
Shuttle available from parking area to parish hall.

#### NOVEMBER 21-22

**SACRED HEART-ABILENE LADIES’ BAZAAR**

The women of Sacred Heart Parish in Abilene will host their annual Holiday Bazaar, **Saturday, Nov. 22** and **Sunday, Nov. 23** from 9 a.m. to 6 p.m. The women will be offering a variety of handmade gifts and decorations for the holiday season, baked goods and tamales for sale.  
Breakfast and lunch/dinner plates will be available at $5 per plate for adults, $3 for children ages 3 to 10.  
A raffle for 5 terrific gifts: a Keurig coffee maker, $200 gift certificate, a gift certificate for a day at the spa, a Kindle and a handmade prayer bench.  
Raffle tickets $1 each or 6 for $5.  
The drawing will be at 6 p.m. on Sunday.  
Our bazaar is our biggest yearly fundraiser enabling us to help our parish and provide scholarships for two of our graduating high school students each year.  
We are located at Sacred Heart Church South 8th & Jeanette.
David Kauffman movie to open in December in diocese

By Jimmy Patterson  
Editor  
West Texas Angelus

Catholic artist David Kauffman is set to release "The One I Wrote for You," a full-length motion picture about an aspiring singer, Ben Cantor (Cheyenne Jackson), who gave up a once-in-a-lifetime opportunity to be a singer/songwriter, and settled instead for a pleasant albeit less-fulfilling life as a coffee shop barista and family man who gets one more chance at his dream.

Kauffman, wrote the story and songs for the movie as well as served as its executive producer. The movie features Jackson ("United 93"), Kevin Pollak ("A Few Good Men") and Christopher Lloyd ("Back to the Future," "Taxi").

"The One I Wrote For You" will open in Midland-Odessa and San Angelo, as well as a number of other Texas cities beginning December 5.

In an interview from his San Antonio office, Kauffman said the creation of the film has taken most of the last four years of his life, from concept to delivery.

"So far, the initial reactions have been very positive," Kauffman said. "We’ve heard people come out of the movie say, ‘Gosh, I thought this was going to be a home-grown little movie, but this is a

(Please See KAUFFMAN/20)

Youths serve meal made from scratch to seniors

By Brandon McAuliffe  
Special to The Angelus

ABILENE — It was a small idea cooked out of a brainstorming session in the middle of a summer mission trip to San Antonio, but it became more than anyone ever imagined.

On October 5, the youth group at Abilene’s Holy Family put together a meal for parishioners age 70 and older that was fully made from scratch and prepared by the youth.

The idea stemmed from wanting to bridge the generational gaps that exist in today’s society and served as an expansion from a program already going on. The youth went into the mission trip sending birthday cards to the church members, but wanted to do more.

The youth expected 30-40 people to potentially show up, but Youth Director Penny Pope was amazed at the turnout. The event wasn’t all about serving others, but the youth wanted to get to know members of the church.

“There were at least 100 people there,” she said. “The kids talked to the senior citizens while they were eating and got to know them.”

The menu consisted of chicken salad, a quiche (bacon, spinach and cheese), rolls, fresh fruit and banana pudding.

Pope said she has been overwhelmed by thank you notes, and numerous kids have had parishioners thank them after mass for the event.

The meal would not have been possible without the support of Holy Family pastor, Monsignor Fred Nawarskas, and Father Sam Mattheisen.

“They came and visited with the kids beforehand and Fr. Sam helped pray (before lunch),” said Pope. “Msr. Fred sat and visited with the youth and parishioners, and, of course, they both ate.”

Pope added that there are plans for the luncheon to become an annual event in the future.

(Please See SAINTS/17)
Pregnancy Help Center Banquet

At left, photos from a recent banquet benefiting the Pregnancy Help Center in San Angelo show the volunteer waitstaff, as well as Knights of Columbus and wives from Wall, Miles, San Angelo councils, and our Christian brothers and sisters from the Brethren Church in Wall. Above, we also had some high school students helping. These are students from the Newman Center and Pro-life Rams from Angelo State University helping set up tables and serving plates to all those who attended the Pregnancy Help Center Banquet. (Courtesy photos)

Life Chain in Big Spring

The Life Chain event was Sunday, October 12 in Big Spring. Owners of Tire Time allowed participants use of their property at 5th St. and Gregg Streets. Approximately 40 people attended, including some the Holy Trinity Catholic Church youth group, Knights of Columbus in Big Spring, parishioners and younger CCE students. (Courtesy photos)
Texas nurse with Ebola supported by prayers from her home parish

By David Sedeno
Catholic News Service

DALLAS — Dallas Bishop Kevin J. Farrell said that he followed the teaching of Christ and stepped in to house the fiancee of Ebola victim Thomas Eric Duncan and three others for several weeks at a diocesan facility when no one else would.

The bishop's acknowledgement Oct. 20 coincided with the lifting of the 21-day quarantine for nearly four dozen people being screened for the Ebola virus with none showing any signs of the disease. It also capped nearly a month of a scrambling by local, state and federal officials in trying to both combat the virus and calm the public's fears about its spread.

During the time, two nurses who had contact with Duncan tested positive for the virus after his death. And with the growing health concerns, officials also faced a national public relations headache as they acknowledged missteps in the handling of the crisis, including not initially banning those self-monitoring themselves for symptoms from traveling or coming into contact with the public.

In between, there were various condemnations from nurses about the hospital staff not being properly trained to handle such a crisis, calls for travel bans to the United States from people from the four West African countries hardest hit by the virus, and prayer meetings and candlelight vigils observed at various churches in the Dallas area for Duncan and those impacted by the virus.

Still on Oct. 20, Dallas County Judge Clay Jenkins and Dallas Mayor Mike Rawlings, among other officials, spoke at an early morning news conference at the Dallas County office building, saying that 43 people being monitored for the virus had not shown any symptoms of the disease and were free to return to their normal lives without fear that they carried or would develop the disease.

They also spoke about area residents being compassionate and welcoming of those who had been self-monitoring themselves or, as in the specific case of those who came into direct contact with Duncan, that they be accepted back into the society.

"There is no question that today is milestone day, a hurdle that we need to get over, but there are other hurdles to jump," Rawlings said.

Duncan had traveled to the United States from Liberia in September to visit his fiancee and went to Texas Health Presbyterian Hospital Dallas after feeling sick. He was sent home, but was returned in an ambulance several days later and tested positive for the Ebola virus. He had been staying with his fiancee, Louise Troh, her son and two nephews in an apartment in an area of the city where many refugees from Africa make their home.

As Duncan was isolated at the hospital, officials planned to decontaminate their apartment, but the family could not be moved to a suitable location. That's when the county judge and the mayor asked Bishop Farrell about finding a place for them. He and his staff worked with local officials to transfer the family to a building at the far end of the Catholic Conference and Formation Center in South Dallas.

At a mid-morning news conference outside the gated retreat center, Bishop Farrell said that he and several other people, including Troh's pastor at Wilshire Baptist Church, had spoken with the family earlier in the day.

He confirmed that local officials called him after exhausting alternatives for a suitable place willing to take the family. He said he debated for about 15 minutes before saying that he followed the example of Christ and said "yes."

"I knew that they had tried to find other places and they just couldn't find one. I was then moved by their dedication and concern. I too was concerned," the bishop said. "I felt it was the right thing to do and am so pleased that we did."

"It is an example of what it means to care for our brothers and sisters, irrespective of where they come from, what race or what religion they are," he said. "We help people because they are people. We help people because we are Catholic, not because they are Catholic."

(Please See DALLAS/22)
**Speaking of Saints ...**

**St. Hilda oversaw monastery known as great learning seat**

By Mary Lou Gibson

Hilda was a seventh century noblewoman who became one of the most accomplished English women of her time. Perhaps the most remarkable aspect of her life and her accomplishments is how she was able to attain great influence and authority in the Anglo-Saxon church without ever being ordained.

Very little is known about her early life. Much of her story comes from an account by the Venerable Bede, historian and doctor of the Church, entitled “Ecclesiastical History of the English People.”

She was nobly born in 614 the daughter of Hereric, nephew of King Edwin of Northumbria. Her father was murdered when she was very young and she was brought up at the court of King Edwin, her great uncle. She was baptized when she was 13, when King Edwin and his entire household became Christian.

In Bede’s account, Hilda lived a normal life of a noble woman until she was in her early 30s. She then decided to live a religious life and traveled to Gaul where her sister, Hereswith, was already professed and living in the royal nunnery of Chelles, near Paris. Kathleen Jones writes in “Women Saints” that after about a year, Aidan, bishop of Lindisfarne, persuaded Hilda to return to Northumbria and follow her vocation there.

She was given a bit of land near the river Wear and lived a secluded life there for a time with a few companions. Her first experience as an abbess came some years later at a small monastery at Hartlepool. Rosemary Guiley writes in “The Encyclopedia of Saints” that during this time, Hilda received extensive religious instruction from Aidan and others. A few years later she was called on to improve the monastery at Streaneshalch (later renamed Whitby).

She was a Benedictine abbess for more than 30 years of this double monastery of men and women which became celebrated as a great seat of learning and a spiritual center. The monks were responsible for worship while the nuns led an enclosed life of prayer and contemplation. Jones writes that Hilda established a regular pattern of monastic life and taught the observance of justice, purity, peace and charity. No monk or nun had personal property. Everything was held in common. One interesting aspect of the double monastery was that the nuns were superior to the monks.

Hilda was the superior of the whole establishment which included a large landed estate. Since the monastery had to be self sufficient, it included a farm

(Please See SAINTS/23)

**Bishop Sis presides over installation of four acolytes at Assumption Seminary**

By Praveen Lakkisetti

Assumption Seminary

SAN ANTONIO — Amidst the joy and celebration of life and witness of Christian vocation, four men in formation for the priesthood were installed as acolytes during the Eucharistic celebration presided over by Most Rev. Michael J. Sis, Bishop of San Angelo.

The four men are: Freddy Martin Perez (Diocese of San Angelo), Michael Patrick English (Archdiocese of San Antonio), Joshua Stephens (Diocese of Corpus Christi) and Jean Stillson (Brothers of the Beloved Disciple).

The celebration began with the Holy Eucharist. In his homily, Bishop Sis reiterated the significance of being installed an acolyte in the Church. In reference to the priestly formation program, he insisted that being called to the ministry of acolyte is not merely jumping through hoops in formation, or the conferral of a new label, but a path of humility that is to be embraced in following Christ.

Quoting from the call narratives of the New Testament, and the Greek origin of the word, ‘akolouthos’ (one who follows or attends) the bishop highlighted the significance of the ministry of acolyte as one of service in the Church. He insisted on the need to walk the path of Christ, even when this entails sacrifice and hardship.

He invited the candidates to offer themselves to God and his people in the service of the Church and constantly grow into mature manhood. He invited the congregation to support and strengthen the seminarians as they respond to God’s invitation by ‘acolyting’ at the Altar of God with a profound love of God and His people.

As part of the seminary formation, seminarians are installed as acolytes in the second year of theological studies after due personal prayerful reflection, assessment, and application to the bishop. The formation faculty at the seminary accompanies men in formation to offer themselves to God through periodic assessment and guidance. The acolytes serve and assist priests and deacons at the Mass and offer Eucharistic services to the sick.

The celebration continued in the cafeteria with the families and friends of the newly installed acolytes. As men in formation continue to respond to God’s invitation, may they be abundantly blessed in their life of sacrifice and commitment.
Making Sense of Bioethics

Men need women; women need men; children need moms and dads

By Fr. Tad Pacholczyk

In the current debate over gay marriage, people sometimes ask: Who should define marriage? Democrats or Republicans in Congress? The Supreme Court? Should it be put to a referendum, allowing the majority to choose a definition?

We can identify two kinds of "definitions" when it comes to marriage. The first touches on the essence, the objective reality, or the truth about marriage. The second involves a legal or political position, advanced through the media, judicial decisions, or other legislative means. While these secondary definitions of marriage can be of interest, their true level of importance is properly gauged only in reference to the first and objective definition.

Notable errors are sometimes made in these secondary definitions of marriage. In the mid-1960's, to consider but one example, prohibitions existed in more than a dozen states which outlawed persons of different races from marrying one another. A white man and a black woman could fall in love in those states, but could not legally tie the knot. The Supreme Court overturned those restrictions in 1967, recognizing that the ability to enter into marriage doesn't depend on the skin color of the man and woman getting married.

Gay marriage advocates today sometimes attempt to draw a parallel between such mixed-race marriage laws and state laws that would prevent two men (or two women) from getting married to each other. They suggest that legally forbidding two men from getting married stigmatizes those men in much the same way that preventing a black man from marrying a white woman stigmatized both of them. Yet there is really no parallel at all between the two cases. While marriage as an objective reality is certainly color-blind to the racial configuration of the spouses, it can never be "genital-blind," because male-female sexual complementarity stands squarely at the heart and center of marriage itself.

To see this fundamental point about marriage, however, we have to step beyond the cultural clichés that suggest that marriage is merely an outgrowth of emotional and erotic companionship. The institution of marriage does not arise merely out of loving sentiment. It is born, rather, from the depths of the commitment assumed by a man and a woman as they enter into the total communion of life implied in the procreation and education of children flowing from their union. To put it another way, marriage arises organically and spontaneously from the radical complementarity of a man and a woman.

Sexual intimacy between men and women involves the possibility of children. No other form of sexual or erotic interaction encompasses this basic, organic, and complementary possibility. Without parsing words, Professor Jacques LeClercq put it this way more than 50 years ago: "The human race is divided into two sexes whose reason for existence is physical union with a view to continuing the species." More recently, Professor Robert P. George similarly described marriage as "a union that takes its distinctive character from being founded, unlike other friendships, on bodily unity of the kind that sometimes generates new life." There are many kinds of love, ranging from maternal love to brotherly love to love of friends to love of neighbor to romantic love, but only one that is proper and integral to marriage, namely, spousal love with its inscribed complementarity and potential for human fruitfulness.

Marriage teaches us that men need women and women need men and that children need both mothers and fathers. In this sense, marriage and the family represent foundational realities, not constructs that can be invented, defined, legislated, or determined by popular vote or culture. Marriage, in fact, is the "primordial first institution," flowing out of the intimate and creative union of male and female. It precedes other societal institutions and conventions, and is essentially ordered towards creating and caring for the future in the form of the next generation. Marriage is a given reality that we come to discover in its authentic design, not a concept for us to "define" according to our own agenda or desires.

Gay marriage proponents deny these foundational truths about marriage. Through vigorous legislative efforts, they are striving to impose a profoundly false redesign for marriage upon society so that, in the words of Professor George, marriage becomes "an emotional union for the sake of adult satisfaction that is served by mutually agreeable sexual play," thereby undermining its intrinsic connection to complementary bodily union between men and women. This forced reconfiguration of marriage is no more defensible than the efforts of those who socially or legislatively attempted to impose a notion of "racial purity" upon marriage or society in former times.

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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

Strength, peace through prayer

By Erick Rommel

Catholic News Service

When you think about it, faith and trust go hand in hand. People believe in the power of prayer because they believe they see results. They pray for strength to get through a challenge, and then they find the strength to overcome that obstacle.

Did that strength come from prayer or from inner fortitude? Or, did prayer create that inner fortitude? There's no way to tell. That's why it's called faith.

Our most basic faith is formed at the earliest of ages, before we create lasting memories. It's not religious faith but faith through family.

Watch young children when you encounter them. They are joyful with a happiness that comes from not knowing the dangers that surround them. When thrown in the air by an adult, the child doesn't cry. She laughs with excitement. That's true faith, or belief, that the adult will never let her fall.

As we grow, we learn this is not always true. Sometimes the people we trust most aren't always worthy. We believe they will catch us, but sometimes they hurt us emotionally. It hurts more than physically when they let us fall.

Each time this happens, our perception of the world changes. We no longer trust completely. Instead, we make mental lists of people we trust to catch us and those we don't.

Despite these fears, we still sometimes trust those who we think are not worthy. We hope against hope "this time will be different" because we want to recapture the innocence that comes from never having to question those in whom we have faith.

We pray for them to not let us down yet again.

When it comes to this reliance on other people, I'm more of a "God helps those who help themselves" type of a person. I'm hesitant to place faith in others because I fear disappointment. Despite this, I've learned that strength, encouragement and assistance often come more easily when you have the strength to seek encouragement and help.

This doesn't mean prayer is ineffective. There's nothing wrong with a prayer for strength, but sometimes the greatest strength is found through the humility to realize some battles can't be fought alone. Sometimes you need the support of others -- even from those who have let you down in the past -- in order to truly succeed.

This lesson is one taught many times throughout history. Back before Europeans came to North America, American Indians who inhabited the land had faith that was different, but just as strong as the beliefs many hold today. It's easy to look at these traditions through a modern eye and question their validity.

Today, we know how rain is formed. We know that a dance does not create rain. Despite that, American Indians found rain dances to be successful.

If a dance doesn't cause rain, why did American Indians believe it did? They believed because they had faith, and because they had faith, they never stopped dancing until the rain began to fall.

That is the faith we should seek in life. We need faith to always believe in the outcomes we want to achieve, faith to always believe that the people we want to trust can be trusted and faith to believe others can help us, even as we pray for the strength to help ourselves.

Through these beliefs, we can rediscover within ourselves the faith of a young child, a faith that comes from knowing someone is always there to protect us, even though we now know we must also protect ourselves.

Through this faith, we can become the people we were meant to be.
On understanding life’s most important secrets

By Fr. Ron Rolheiser

What’s life’s deep secret? Do we ever really understand life? Do we ever really get things right? What lies at the center of life?

These are the deeper questions that gnaw away inside of us and we are never really sure how to answer them. Do we ever really understand what our lives are all about?

Yes and no! I suspect that most of us go through life bouncing back and forth between knowing and not knowing, between feeling steady and feeling insecure, between having days when we feel we’re getting things right and having days when everything seems out of sorts.

As the Sufi mystic Rumi, once put it, we live “with a secret we sometimes know, and then not know.”

I suspect we all know what that feels like. Some days, it seems, we know the secret to living and feel we are inside of it, and then unsure, strong and then vulnerable; we sense that we know the secret to life and then suddenly we feel we don’t. Sometimes we stand inside of things and sometimes we stand outside of them.

I’ve always been struck by a very poignant expression in the Gospel of Mark. He tells us that Peter betrayed Jesus at his trial, ultimately cursing him in order to save himself. After that betrayal, Mark (in a stunningly cryptic statement) says simply: “Peter went outside!”

Outside of what? Obviously he is referring to much more than Peter simply stepping outside of a door and leaving a room or a courtyard. In betraying Jesus, and in betraying himself, Peter “went outside” of something else, namely, outside all that’s best inside of himself, outside of the community of life, and outside the secret of life itself.

And what is the secret of life itself?

In the Gospel of Mark, Jesus says: “To you is given the secret of the Kingdom of God, but to those outside, everything is in riddles.” To whom is he referring? Who is “you”? What is the secret? What puts you inside? What puts you outside and makes the Gospel a riddle?

In Mark’s Gospel, the answers to these questions are clear: You are “inside” or “outside” the true circle of understanding, not on the basis of being Jew or Gentile, of being man or woman, or of going or not going to church. Rather you are inside or outside the circle of true understanding on the basis of “getting” or “not getting” the secret. And what is the secret?

In essence, the secret to life is the cross of Christ or, as various scripture scholars and spiritual writers put it, the brokenness of Jesus on the cross, the wisdom of the cross, the invitation that lies inside the cross, and the willingness to live out the demands of the cross.

It’s not easy to try to summarize all that this means. To do that, one would have to summarize all the deepest challenges within in revelation, theology, and spirituality: God’s unconditional love and forgiveness, God’s loving presence inside of human twistedness, vulnerability as the path to intimacy, God’s identification with the poor and the excluded, the necessary connection between suffering and glory, the paradoxical nature of love and life (which can only be received by giving them away), the centrality of self-sacrifice as the key to love and fidelity, and the importance of giving our lives over without resentment (of not sending the bill whenever we carry someone’s cross).

There’s a lot inside this secret! And when we are at our best, when we let the demands of love, truth, and fidelity take us to where we would rather not go, we know its truth and live inside of it. On those days, we know the secret of the kingdom and the Gospels make sense. But then there are days that, like Peter when he betrayed Jesus, we “go outside”, outside of truth and what’s best inside of us, and from that perspective life, love, truth, Jesus, and the Gospels all look like an empty riddle.

Ronald Rolheiser, a Roman Catholic priest and member of the Missionary Oblates of Mary Immaculate, is president of the Oblate School of Theology in San Antonio. He is a community-builder, lecturer and writer. His books are popular throughout the English-speaking world and his weekly column is carried by more than seventy newspapers worldwide.

Philip Kitcher and the dangers of soft atheism

By Rev. Robert Barron

A very instructive exchange between Gary Gutting, a philosophy professor at Notre Dame, and Philip Kitcher, a philosophy professor at Columbia, just appeared in the pages of The New York Times.

Kitcher describes himself as a proponent of “soft atheism,” which is to say an atheism distinct from the polemical variety espoused by Richard Dawkins and Christopher Hitchens. Unlike his harsher colleagues, Kitcher is willing to admit that religion can play an ethically useful role in a predominantly secular society. I won’t delve into this feature of Kitcher’s thought, for I have explored the Kantian reduction of religion to ethics elsewhere, but I would like to draw attention to one particular move made in this interview, since it shows, with remarkable clarity, one of the fundamental misunderstandings of religion common among atheists.

Prompted by Gutting, Kitcher admits that he finds all religious doctrine incredible. Pressed for an explanation of this rather extreme position, he points to the fact of the extraordinary plurality of religious doctrines: Christians, Jews, Hindus, Muslims, animists, etc. hold to radically different accounts of reality, the divine, human purpose, etc. And since all religions rely fundamentally on the same ground—some revelation offered to distant ancestors—there is no rational way to adjudicate these differences.

Indeed, the only real reason that I am a Christian, he would maintain, is that I was born to Christian parents who passed the founding stories onto me. If you, as a Jew or Muslim or Hindu, have different foundational stories, there is no reason at all that you can or should convince me of their truth. It’s just your cockamamie myth against my cockamamie myth.

This is, of course, a variation on the standard Enlightenment view that positive religion is unethereal to reason and hence inevitably violent, force being the only way that one religion can supersede another.

The fundamental problem here is that Kitcher completely overlooks the decisively important role that a religious tradition plays in the development and ratification of doctrine. It is true that religion is usually grounded in some foundational events, but those experiences are not simply passed on dumbly like a football from generation to generation. On the contrary, they are sifted and tested through a complex process of reception and assimilation. They are compared and contrasted to other similar experiences; they are analyzed rationally; they are set in dialogue with what we know of the world on other grounds; they are subjected to philosophical investigation; their layers of meaning are uncovered through conversations that have unfolded across centuries, even thousands of years; their behavioral and ethical implications are teased out and assessed.

Let us take just one example from the Bible in order to illustrate how this process happens. The book of Genesis tells us that the patriarch Jacob one night had a dream of angels ascending and descending on a great ladder that was
US Air Force changes oath, renders God superfluous

By Stephen Kent
Catholic News Service

The U.S. Air Force no longer requires "so help me God" to be part of the oath taken upon the enlistment of airmen or the commissioning of officers.

A toll-taker on the Garden State Parkway is suing the state of New Jersey because she claims a supervisor told her to stop saying "God bless you" to motorists as they drove away from the toll plaza.

In the first situation, strapping into a fighter aircraft would seem to take all the help it can get from aerodynamics and, if necessary, divine intervention. The second situation involves offensive blessing. Cynthia Fernandez, the toll-taker, said her supervisor "told me he wanted to talk to me, that I couldn't say 'God bless you' anymore to customers because somebody might get offended."

A spokesman for the Garden State Parkway said the agency has no policy against saying, "God bless you."

"It does say, 'Provide customer service, smile' -- it does say all that," Fernandez said. "But it does not say in any line, 'Do not say, 'God bless you.'"

Off we go into the wild blue yonder with no concern for a supreme being, zipping onto a turnpike after being told to have a nice day or to drive safely but being unblessed by God.

While such nonsense does not doom the country to an ultimate fate of paganism, it is indicative of a growing trend to render God superfluous.

Washington and Oregon for some years have been among the least religious states in the country. The Fuller Theological Seminary recently held a conference in Seattle to address the subject. The challenge, said Matthew Kaemingk, conference organizer, is attracting people who focus more on alternative spirituality.

"Just as they prefer to make their own software, airplanes, music, organic food and political movements," said Kaemingk in a recent Seattle Times article, "[those who live in the Northwest] also prefer to make their own religion. They are described as freethinking, anti-institution and individualists, more inclined to participate in a yoga class or hike in the mountains."

In the comments section of the story on the Seattle Times' website, one person wrote: "Maybe those of us that live here in the [Pacific Northwest] have a greater awareness of the myth of religious beliefs!! Even if I believed in a 'supreme being' of any type, I would have far better things to do with my time enjoying the beauty of the Northwest rather than sitting in some myth-driven facility!!"

While enjoying the trees and lakes and peaks, that person might think more deeply about from where they came. Who made that beauty?

I find atheists annoying. They seem more intent on making fun of deists than in promoting what they see as the positives of their lack of belief.

Time magazine recently reported that more and more atheists are forming "churches" to adopt secular versions of religious practices. They come together in community to support a nonbelief system, much like gathering in a symphony hall to hear no music.

We should accord them the respect and dignity they deserve as creatures of a creator they don't believe in. But feel free to disdain their ideas.

Kent is the retired editor of two archdiocesan newspapers and has a master's degree in spirituality. He can be contacted at: considersk@gmail.com.

Taking another step closer to our eternal home

By Moises Sandoval
Catholic News Service

Connecticut, now that fall is here, is a time of waning. The sunlight is bright but weak; the sky is a deep blue but won't last; the garden is turning yellow. A neighbor working on her yard comments on the beauty of the day, then adds: "But winter is coming."

We are put in mind of fleeting time, the passing of our lives. Those of us who have lived long realize how much we have already lost: can't run or walk fast, see or hear as well as we once did or do things once done effortlessly. It is the autumn of our lives.

So we pray more than we used to. My brother Ray, a teacher for four decades, says his rosary and goes to Mass every day. "I must be getting ready for my final exam," he explains. We are preparing, packing up, to travel to a destination perceived as our true home.

But given the choice, what would be the port of embarkation for the journey to the afterlife? In that respect, Roger Cohen, one of my favorite columnists who writes for The New York Times, recently examined an essay in The London Review of Books by James Wood. Wood asked a fellow Englishman Christopher Hitchens, like himself a longtime U.S. resident, where he would go if he had only a few weeks to live. Would he stay in America? Long before Hitchens became terminally ill, he said he would go to Dartmoor, the English landscape of his childhood.

Cohen writes that for all of us that is the landscape "of the world in its beauty absorbed before it is understood, of patterns and sounds that lodge themselves in some ineludible place in the psyche and call out across the years." Most of us are no longer there.

Wood therefore explores a form of contemporary homelessness: "lives lived without the finality of exile, but also without the familiarity of home," Cohen wrote. It is the sense of not fitting in, an anxiety about belonging, what Cohen calls displacement anguish.

This is a widespread human condition, particularly of immigrants and U.S. Hispanic citizens like myself who have a history spanning centuries in what is now the United States, yet have at times experienced rejection in our own homeland.

But unlike the undocumented, who cannot go home out of fear that they won't be able to return, some of us native-born Latinos have our haven. For me, it is New Mexico, where we have always been more fully accepted than anywhere else. It is our metaphor for what we imagine heaven to be.

That is why my father, who moved his family to Brighton, Colorado, from our ancestral home in the foothills of the Sangre de Cristo Mountains in New Mexico always said he would return (though he never did).

It is also why my mother's last words before she died were, "I am going to New Mexico today." She and my father knew that in New Mexico, there would be no anxiety about being accepted. And that full measure of acceptance, faith tells us, will be ours in our eternal home.

For now we are left with what Wood calls a sense of "afterwardness," borrowing the word from Sigmund Freud. Cohen quotes Wood: "To think about home and the departure from home, about not going home and no longer feeling able to go home, is to be filled with a remarkable sense of afterwardness."

That is why nursing homes and hospices are such lonely places, the last places anyone would like to die in. Everyone yearns to depart from this world from home, even if it is only a humble hut in the barrio.
The Ordination of
Deacon Felix Archibong

Saturday, October 11, 2014
Our Lady of Guadalupe Catholic Church * Midland, Texas

Presided over by San Angelo Bishop Michael J. Sis, the Mass of Transitional Ordination of Deacon Felix Archibong, was celebrated in Midland’s Our Lady of Guadalupe Catholic Church on October 11, 2014. Above, Deacon Archibong gives thanks to all those who attended and made his ordination possible; bottom right, supporters, friends and family of Deacon Felix; Above right, a packed Our Lady of Guadalupe Church; at left, a prayerful Deacon Felix. Above left, Deacon Felix with Bishop Sis, and others who have been instrumental in his journey to the diaconate.

Photos by Alan P. Torre / aptorre.com
Report takes deeper look at stats about women's religious orders

By Patricia Zapor
Catholic News Service

WASHINGTON — A longtime trend of declining numbers of women in religious orders is unpacked a bit in a new study by Georgetown University's Center for Applied Research in the Apostolate.

In the report released Oct. 13, the social science researchers of CARA observed that the demographical story of women religious in the United States takes some disentangling.

Although past studies have talked about the rapid decline in the number of nuns in the country starting after the Second Vatican Council, "such studies did not provide the more nuanced narrative of what decline meant for the individual religious institute," the report said. "How, for example, did religious institutes respond to declining membership?"

From a peak in 1965 of 181,000, the number of women religious in the U.S. has steadily declined to the current 50,000. That's about how many sisters there were in the United States 100 years ago, said the report: "Population Trends Among Religious Institutes of Women," by CARA staffers Mary L. Gautier and Mark M. Gray, and Erick Berrelleza, a Jesuit scholastic at Boston College.

CARA found that as their numbers declined, some religious orders reorganized their internal structures, while others merged with other religious institutes. Some have been bolstered by sisters from other countries or women who joined a religious order later in life. Others simply stopped serving in the United States.

"In the face of diminishment," it said, "women religious have innovated by responding with new models when old models proved ineffective."

That's partly why the report refers to disentangling, Gautier told Catholic News Service. Some whole institutes disappeared from the Official Catholic Directory, a reference book published annually, whether by being folded into another organization, by leaving the United States or adapting in another way.

The report pointed to a flaw in assumptions about the growth in women's religious vocations coming primarily in orders that are "traditionalist" -- meaning for example, those whose members wear a full religious habit -- while institutes whose members do not wear a traditional habit are declining.

"One of the most striking findings regarding new entrants is that almost equal numbers of women have been attracted" to both kinds of religious orders, the CARA report quoted. Gautier's book categorized the two types of religious orders according to whether the organizations belong to one or the other of two leadership organizations, the Leadership Conference of Women Religious and the Council of Major Superiors of Women.

The LCWR's member organizations, which account for about 80 percent of the country's women religious, had among them 73 postulants, 117 novices and 317 women who had taken temporary vows in 2009. Although its member organizations account for a much smaller percentage of the nuns in the U.S., CMSWR organizations had about the same number of women in formation as did LCWR institutes, said Gautier -- 73 postulants, 158 novices and 304 who had taken temporary vows.

Among other items in the report, CARA pointed to several institutes that stood out in the data for having a "slowing rate of decline" in number of members. When the authors dug a bit, they found that such slowing sometimes was the result of one community absorbing another.

It cited the merger of the Sisters of St. Joseph of Springfield, Massachusetts, in the mid-1970s with the Sisters of St. Joseph of Fall River, Massachusetts.

"It is not that the Sisters of St. Joseph of Springfield exhibited a sudden increase in new vocations, but rather these two mergers account for the upswing," the CARA report said. "In such cases, the apparent slowing rate of decline is not related to an increase of new vocations; instead, it is these mergers that account for the increases.

Nation

Catholics concerned about bloodshed in Middle East, see need for action

NOTRE DAME, Ind. (CNS) -- San Diego resident Stephanie Celustka has prayed at Mass for an end to the Islamic State threat in the Middle East. The parishioner from San Diego's St. Anne Catholic Church is among the 53 percent of Americans who said in a September Pew poll that they support a U.S. military campaign against ISIS, as the Islamic militants in Iraq and Syria are known.

"I think that's important that we protect the people who don't have the ability to protect themselves," Celustka told Catholic News Service. "I just hope the U.S. doesn't turn into one of those countries that uses its power to take over and control, but uses the power to protect."

 Pope Francis told cardinals gathered at an Oct. 20 consistory that "we are witnessing a phenomenon of terrorism of previously unimaginable proportions," and the situation demands constant prayers and an adequate response from the international community.

Airstrikes from an international coalition led by the U.S. has driven ISIS out of some regions of Iraq and Syria, but the group has continued to dominate some other areas, and some military experts are calling for ground troops.

"I think our involvement in the Middle East, especially in Iraq, is half baked," said Felipe Dimayuga, a parishioner at Holy Redeemer Catholic Church in College Park, Maryland. "We should commit ourselves, or not at all."

Though Jerry Powers, coordinator of the Catholic Peacebuilding Network based at the University of Notre Dame, believes action needs to be taken to protect people in the Middle East from ISIS, he's not convinced all of the just-war criteria has been met for a full-throttle combat mission.

"If the popemobile had a bumper sticker, it would say, 'War is not the answer,'" said Powers, also a professor of Catholic peacebuilding at Notre Dame's Kroc Institute. "But, of course, war is not the answer is not the answer to complex problems like those that we see in Iraq and Syria."

Powers told CNS in an interview at Notre Dame that Catholic just-war criteria for the conflict have been met in the areas of just cause, last resort and right intention.

Other just-war criteria -- legitimate authority, proportionality and probability of success -- are murky in this situation, he said.

"On the one hand, the United States has been invited in by the Iraqi government, but there are serious concerns about the legitimacy of the Iraqi government," Powers said. "The Iraqi government has been a government that has not respected the rights of minorities and has not respected in particular the rights of the Sunni Muslims. It's been a very sectarian government, and it's lost a lot of legitimacy. That's one of reasons why ISIS has grown so strong, so quickly."

"My real concern is the probability of success and proportionality," he said.
Our Faith

Rosary ‘overload’; origin of ‘Catholic’; offering to Jesus, Mary

By Father Kenneth Doyle
Catholic News Service

Q. Although on occasion I enjoy saying the rosary privately, I have a problem with being "forced" to do so. My perception is that many churches are now saying the rosary aloud before Sunday Masses and even during holy hours.

I believe that these should be silent times for solitude and private prayer. The most annoying aspect is that, when they finally do finish the rosary and I think that I can get back to my own praying, then they proceed to recite still other prayers publicly -- to Mary, the angels and the saints. Do I have the wrong attitude here? (Houma, Louisiana)

A. The church’s guidelines for the celebration of the Eucharist are to be found at the beginning of the Roman Missal, the large prayer book on the altar that the priest reads from during Mass. There, in the General Instruction on the Roman Missal, in No. 45 it is stated that “even before the celebration itself, it is commendable that silence to be observed in the church, in the sacristy, in the vesting room and in adjacent areas, so that all may dispose themselves to carry out the sacred action in a devout and fitting manner.”

It would seem, then, that the public recitation of the rosary in church during the sacred moments before the beginning of Mass should be avoided.

Instead, as you point out, this should be a time for “solitude and private prayer.” As for the inclusion of the rosary during a Holy Hour, that is an open question. There are no strict rules for the structure of a Holy Hour, which takes its inspiration from Christ’s words to the apostles at Gethsemane, "You could not keep watch with me for one hour?"

It is a devotional exercise commonly consisting of times for mental and vocal prayer, for the exposition of the Blessed Sacrament and for Benediction. A Holy Hour may be arranged to include hymns, a litany or the rosary, depending on the desires of those who participate.

In our parish, following Mass on weekdays, a group prays the rosary aloud. They wait about 10 minutes before starting, which gives people a chance to make a private thanksgiving after Mass. (We also have a Blessed Sacrament chapel, and those who want to make a longer thanksgiving sometimes go there.)

Parishioners have always seemed quite accepting of this practice.

The goal, I think, should be to keep the central focus on the Eucharist while seeking also to accommodate various devotional practices, of which the rosary is a particularly worthy one. In November 2013, following a Sunday Angelus address, Pope Francis highlighted the value of the rosary as "spiritual medicine." "Don't forget to take it," he said. "It's good for your heart, for your soul, for your whole life."

Q. I’ve been wondering when and why the followers of Jesus first started calling themselves "Catholic." Can you help? (Norfolk, Virginia)

A. The first written reference to the term "Catholic" can be found in the early days of the second century. A bishop from Antioch in Syria, Ignatius, was arrested and brought to Rome by armed guards. Shortly before his martyrdom, he wrote a letter to his fellow Christians in Smyrna (the city of Izmir in modern-day Turkey) in which he said, "Where the bishop is present, there is the Catholic Church." The word "Catholic" comes from the Greek root meaning "universal."

The Catechism of the Catholic Church in No. 868 says that the church is catholic (because) "She proclaims the fullness of the faith. ... She is sent out to all peoples. ... She incorporates all nations, and many will never have a chance to go home."

You should be comforted by the memory of one of our most recent saints, Pope John Paul II. His papal coat of arms displayed a prominent Marian symbol and his apostolic motto referred to Mary with the Latin words "Totus Tuus," meaning "totally yours." The saintly Karol Wojtyla had no hesitation in offering his day and his papacy to our lady.

Helping the world ... one family at a time

By Effie Caldarola
Catholic News Service

I belong to a Catholic group that gathers for prayer and good works. At a recent meeting, we discussed a project to help a refugee family reettle in our city.

The discussion was practical until the leader asked everyone to explain what motivated them to consider the project.

That’s when my friend began to cry.

She couldn’t watch the news, she said, with its frequent reporting of misery and tragedy around the world without becoming overwhelmed and wondering, "How can I help?"

I’ll admit that my friend cries easily, but there are few of us who can handle the daily onslaught of horrific news without feeling deep emotions. We seem to move from one humanitarian crisis to another.

Whether it’s the enormous suffering of those affected by Ebola in African cities on the verge of internal collapse, or the horrors of war and beheadings in the Middle East or the sight of young children trying to find refuge from violence by making the long journey across Central America, it has been a gruesome year. The suffering of refugees is one of the most painful to behold.

Our group will be assigned a family by a local agency that handles placement of refugees through the U.S. Department of State. We have been given a list of items the family needs to begin their new life, from a refugee camp on one continent to the dizzying environment of a busy American city.

They’ll need everything, from toothbrushes to cleaning supplies, to a table and beds. They need bus tokens, towels and garbage cans. The list is long and specific. We realized that by taking on the material needs of one family, we’re making a dent, scratching the barest surface, of human troubles in this weary world.

There is a saying, "He who saves a life saves the world entire." Sometimes the news obscures individual suffering.

People are lost in a blur of huge numbers. That’s when assisting one family brings home reality.

I recently saw a news photo of a baby, a few months old, in the arms of a Turkish soldier in full battle regalia. The soldier was looking for the Syrian child’s parents in the wake of thousands fleeing a city besieged by Islamic State fighters.

The baby was cradled against a gun slung across the soldier’s chest.

I wondered: Did that baby ever find his mom? That picture brought the war to my home reality.

a "lucky" ones will be sent by the
Family synod’s dynamics recall Second Vatican Council

By Francis X. Rocca
Catholic News Service

VATICAN CITY — Even before the start of the Oct. 5-19 Synod of Bishops on the family, observers were likening it to the Second Vatican Council of 1962-65.

In both cases, an innovative and charismatic pope called an assembly in the first months of his pontificate, seeking to preach the Gospel in terms of contemporary culture and apply Catholic teaching with what St. John XXIII called the "medicine of mercy."

As it turned out, history also repeated itself in the institutional dynamics of this year’s event, as bishops from around the world asserted their collective authority, leading the assembly’s organizers in Rome to revise some of their best-laid plans.

A classic history, "The Rhine Flows into the Tiber," recounts the first tumultuous week of Vatican II, when bishops rejected the Vatican’s handpicked candidates for the commissions that would write the council documents.

"It was not a revolutionary act, but an act of conscience, an act of responsibility on the part of the council fathers," recalled Pope Benedict XVI in 2013.

Then-Father Joseph Ratzinger attended Vatican II as a theological adviser to Cardinal Josef Frings of Cologne, Germany, one of the leaders of the bishops' resistance.

More than 50 years later, bishops at the synod on the family reacted strongly after the Oct. 13 presentation of an official midterm report by Hungarian Cardinal Peter Erdo of Esztergom-Budapest.

Cardinal Erdo’s report, which was supposed to summarize the assembly’s first week of discussions, made headlines with its strikingly conciliatory language toward people with ways of life contrary to Catholic teaching, including divorced and remarried Catholics, cohabitating couples and people in same-sex unions.

Immediately after the cardinal spoke, 41 of the 184 synod fathers present took the floor to comment. A number objected that the text lacked certain necessary references to Catholic moral teaching, particularly regarding homosexuality and cohabitation. Bishops also remarked on the midterm report’s scarce references to the concept of sin.

"Three-quarters of those who spoke had some problems with the document," Cardinal George Pell, prefect of the Secretariat for the Economy, told Catholic News Service. He called the report tendentious, skewed and without sufficient grounding in Scripture and traditional doctrine.

Cardinal Wuerl: Family synod came to a ‘real consensus’

By Francis X. Rocca
Catholic News Service

VATICAN CITY — Cardinal Donald W. Wuerl of Washington said the Oct. 5-19 Synod of Bishops on the family came to a "real consensus" after two weeks of animated debate, and that its final report will serve as a solid basis for the world synod on the family in 2015.

"What we saw and what we ended up with was the result of a free and open process. The pope at the very beginning said speak with clarity and charity and listen with humility and that's what happened," Cardinal Wuerl told Catholic News Service Oct. 20.

The cardinal said the only "glitch" in the process came with the synod’s Oct. 13 midterm report, which made headlines with its strikingly conciliatory language toward people with ways of life contrary to Catholic teaching, including divorced and remarried Catholics, cohabitating couples and people in same-sex unions.

The midterm report was "seen by many as not being as balanced as it should have been. At least from their perspective, it wasn't as reflective of the balance in the discussions," the cardinal said.

As a result, he said, "it was really important that that final (report) be a consensus document."

Cardinal Wuerl, who served on the 11-member team that drafted the final report, said "there were a number of things that you see in this final document that were only lightly touched upon (in the midterm report), and then there were things you see in that (midterm report) that aren't in here at all."

He said the synod’s working groups commonly objected to the theological concept of "graduality," which the midterm report used, among other ways, to suggest the positive value of "irregular" relationships such as cohabitation.

"You don't see that in the final document because the small language groups said, 'Yes, it was said, but it didn't garner support,' " the cardinal said.

The synod's leadership, under Cardinal Lorenzo Baldisseri, who served as general secretary, planned not to publish the working groups' individual reports but provide them only to the drafters of the final report, along with their approximately 450 suggested amendments.

But on Oct. 16, the bishops insisted
Sisters serving in South Texas 'colonia' win Lumen Christi Award

CHICAGO (CNS) -- Three members of the Missionary Sisters of the Immaculate Heart of Mary ministering in Texas were named the winners of the Lumen Christi (Light of Christ) Award given each year by Catholic Extension.

The three winners -- Sisters Carolyn Kosub, Emily Jocson and Fatima Santiago -- arrived in the South Texas "colonia" of Penitas, located in the Diocese of Brownsville, in 2003 after a tornado ravaged the poverty-ridden community, and since then have worked with residents to help meet some of their most basic needs.

They created Proyecto Desarrollo Humano (Project for Human Development), an outreach center dedicated to evangelization, health, social services and education. And in 2009, the sisters worked to acquire land and donations of labor and materials to build St. Anne Church for the townspeople. The church sits on what had once been a drug-smuggling corridor. The church was given to the diocese in 2013.

As one Penitas resident said, "Having this church, the community center and these sisters here with us is to have the presence of God among us."

Sister Carolyn, in a Sept. 16 blog posting, "The Cowgirl Missionary," wrote about being a Lumen Christi recipient. "My sisters and I are overwhelmed by the great honor that Catholic Extension has bestowed on our ministry here. The Lumen Christi Award is a strong affirmation of what we have been doing since we began this ministry 10 years ago," she wrote.

"When our Bishop (Daniel E.) Flores (of Brownsville) nominated us, never in our wildest dreams did we think that such recognition would come our way! In reality, the award recognizes not only us but the many people who share in this ministry: staff, Board members, colonia residents and numerous volunteers. As we often say, 'All of us together are Proyecto Desarrollo Humano!''"

A Texas native, Sister Carolyn said, "The old idea that missionaries go to a place to bring God's message is usually overshadowed by the realization that they also find God incarnated in that place. As Pope Francis reminded us in 'The Joy of the Gospel,' the church is not limited to one cultural expression."

Despite what seems like nine-month summers in South Texas, she added, "there is another kind of warmth that trumps the weather. It is the loving kindness and deep faith of our Hispanic immigrant people. Yes, they are what most would call materially poor, but they are rich in qualities that matter much more: family, helpfulness, sharing, joy and -- energizing it all -- the solid conviction that God is with them."

Catholic Extension has presented the Lumen Christi for the past 37 years to an individual or group who has demonstrated how the power of faith can transform lives and communities.

The award is accompanied by a $50,000 grant to support the recipients' ministry.
support families in raising their children well, the role of grandparents, and challenges such as violence and human trafficking. They Synod Fathers called on governments to support the rights of the family. They affirmed the profound beauty of marriage as well as the fertility and generativity of marital love. They spoke of the family as the domestic Church.

The Final Report of the 2014 Synod is a document of 62 paragraphs. Each paragraph was voted upon separately. The second paragraph was unanimously agreed upon by the Synod Fathers. It reads, “Despite the many signals of crisis of the institution of the family in the diverse contexts of the ‘global village’, the wish for a family is still alive, especially among young people, and this motivates the Church, expert in humanity and faithful to her mission, to tirelessly and with profound conviction announce the ‘Gospel of the family’.”

The written summary of the Synod discussions will be presented to the national bishops’ conferences around the world for their continued study and reflection. The Final Report will function as a working document for the 2015 Synod of Bishops. After the 2015 Synod, Pope Francis will issue a post-synodal apostolic exhortation on the Church’s call to help families face the challenges of today.

In his closing speech of the 2014 Extraordinary Synod, Pope Francis reflected on the animated speeches and discussions of the Synod, where the participants spoke with frankness “without ever putting into question the fundamental truths of the Sacrament of Marriage: its indissolubility, unity, faithfulness, fruitfulness, and openness to life.”

Pope Francis reminded everyone that we still have one year before the next Ordinary General Assembly of the Synod of Bishops, in October of 2015, to mature the proposed ideas with spiritual discernment, to find concrete solutions to so many difficulties that families face, and to give answers to the many discouragements that surround and suffocate families.

He reassured us that the Holy Spirit is the true promoter and guarantor of the unity and harmony of the Church – the Holy Spirit who throughout history has always guided the Church through her ministers.

At the conclusion of the Synod, the Synod Fathers asked for prayers as the Church walks together toward the next Synod. They offered this prayer for all the families of the world:

Father, grant to all families the presence of strong and wise spouses who may be the source of a free and united family.

Father, grant that parents may have a home in which to live in peace with their families.

Father, grant that children may be a sign of trust and hope and that young people may have the courage to forge life-long, faithful commitments.

Father, grant to all that they may be able to earn bread with their hands, that they may enjoy serenity of spirit and that they may keep aflame the torch of faith even in periods of darkness.

Father, grant that we may all see flourish a Church that is ever more faithful and credible, a just and humane city, a world that loves truth, justice and mercy.

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**OBISPO**

(From 2)

la Asamblea General Ordinaria del Sínodo de los Obispos en octubre de 2015.

A pesar de las muchas señales de crisis de la institución de la familia en los contextos diversos de la ‘aldea global’, el deseo de una familia aún está vivo, especialmente entre los jóvenes, y motiva a la Iglesia, experta en humanidad y fiel a su misión, a anunciar incansablemente y con profunda convicción, el ‘Evangelio de la Familia’.

El resumen escrito de las discusiones del Sínodo será presentado a las conferencias nacionales de obispos alrededor del mundo para su estudio y reflexión continua. El Reporte Final funcionará como un “documento de trabajo” para el Sínodo de Obispos 2015. Después del Sínodo 2015, el Papa Francisco emitirá la exhortación apostólica post-sinodal sobre la llamada de ayudar a familias quienes se enfrentan a los desafíos de hoy día.

En su discurso de clausura del Sínodo Extraordinario 2014, el Papa Francisco reflejó sobre las pláticas y discusiones animadas del Sínodo, donde los participantes hablaron con franqueza “sin poner nunca en discusión las verdades fundamentales del Sacramento del Matrimonio: la indisolubilidad, la unidad, la fidelidad y la procreatividad, es decir la apertura a la vida”.

El Papa Francisco les recordó a todos que aún tenemos un año antes de la próxima Asamblea General Ordinaria del Sínodo de Obispos, en octubre del 2015, para madurar las propuestas ideas con discernimiento espiritual, para encontrar soluciones concretas a tantas dificultades que las familias se enfrentan, y para dar contestaciones a los muchos desafíos que rodean y sofocan a las familias.

El nos aseguró que el Espíritu Santo es el verdadero promotor y garante de la unidad y armonía de la Iglesia – el Espíritu Santo quien a través de la historia siempre ha guiado a la Iglesia mediante sus ministros.

A la conclusión del Sínodo, los Padres Sinodales pidieron oraciones mientras la Iglesia camina reunida hacia el próximo Sínodo. Ofrecieron esta oración para todas las familias del mundo:

Padre, regala a todas las familias la presencia de esposos fuertes y sabios, que sean manantial de una familia libre y unida.

Padre, da a los padres una casa para vivir en paz con su familia.

Padre, concede a los hijos que sean signos de confianza y de esperanza y a jóvenes el coraje del compromiso estable y fiel.

Padre, ayuda a todos a poder ganar el pan con sus propias manos, a gustar la serenidad del espíritu y a mantener viva la llama de la fe también en tiempos de oscuridad.

Padre, danos la alegría de ver florecer una Iglesia cada vez más fiel y creíble, una ciudad justa y humana, un mundo que ame la verdad, la justicia y la misericordia.
Family Life

Sometimes less news is good news

By Bill Dodds
Catholic News Service

One of my earliest memories of my late father-in-law is his watching the national news during weeknight family dinners. Since he watched, we all watched. A complete broadcast on one channel and then, switching to a different station, a complete broadcast on another.

It seemed a little strange to me. Hadn't we pretty much seen everything in the first one? But he was, you know, really "old" at age 58, and I loved his daughter. Showing great wisdom for a 20-year-old, I kept my mouth shut.

Given a choice, and without his knowledge, I would have preferred a "Twilight Zone" rerun. Or, in a pinch, even a "Gilligan's Island."

It would be eight years before CNN became the first 24-hour cable news channel and more than a decade after that, with the first Persian Gulf War in 1991, that it gained a large number of viewers.

Fast forward some 20-plus years -- and, my, how those years did fast forward -- and ... you know the story. Networks, local stations, newspapers, cable, satellite, Internet, cellphone ... countless options all day and all night.

And that increased competition has led to "entertainment" (shock value) trumping news that's truly valuable. News that's important. Valuable and important can have a tough time competing with racy or lurid because we humans love gossip. The junk food of the news world.

With that in mind, these are a few points to consider:

- I took a step away from the news last year after my wife died of uterine cancer. I didn't have the physical or emotional energy for it. Over time, I discovered I could stay informed by reading through story headlines on local television websites. I could skip whatever I wanted to.

- And I could avoid the dramatic music, overblown artwork and ominous tones of the news anchor. It seems that fear sells, and more news outlets are relying on it in so many ways.

- Even before this, I stopped viewing the video clips and listening to the audio files that brought bad news, horrifying news, to life. Sad news. Deeply disturbing news.

In recent months, that has included videos and photographs of beheadings. I don't want to see them because I can't "unsee" them. In the same way, I don't listen to the 911 calls from recent tragedies because I can't "unhear" them. I don't need to see or hear those to know what happened. They're presented not to further inform me but to increase viewership, which translates into higher ad rates, which means greater profit for a corporation.

- It can be easy to think there's nothing we can do about all that happening, but that's not true. We can always pray for those people and those situations. Prayer always makes a difference.

- And there can be the sense that things are getting worse. That may be true. What I know is true is that the immediacy, repetition and global scope of the news can make it seem things are worse. So can the ever-increasing news hole that constantly has to be replenished.

These days, there's just too much for one person to absorb. Even an old news junkie like my father-in-law couldn't do it.

When God says no it can often be painful, life changing

By Father John Catoir
Catholic News Service

What do you do when God, your friend and protector, suddenly turns you down and says "no"?

A tragic event, such as a death, can topple your childhood dreams about a heavenly Father who will help you through the trials and tribulations of life. Deaths happen all the time. However, when someone you love dies, even though you pray and plea to save them, it can be heart-wrenching.

The anger and confusion that an unwanted death unleashes can be devastating. You begin to doubt the very existence of God. Ultimately, the experience will either lead you to a reluctant acceptance of God's will or a rejection of his will.

We see examples of this in the Bible, in those disillusioned that God, their protector, would allow others to enslave them, and in those who remained faithful and praised God for their subsequent liberation.

We hear of this when some question why God would allow unthinkable atrocities such as the Holocaust to occur.

In the Bible, God reveals his answer to such questions. A man named Job had his world turned upside down by numerous tragedies. One misfortune after another devastated him, and yet he remained steadfast in his faith. He put on the will to honor God, no matter how great the miseries of his life affected him. In the end, God rewarded him for his deep devotion.

Upon prayerful reflection of the Job story, you may gain some perspective on the simple concept: Life is a test.

We all have drama in our lives, things that we can't understand and sometimes take out on God. I had my own drama when I was in the seminary. My mother was very sick, and I prayed incessantly that God would heal her and let her live to see me ordained.

Was that too much to ask?

I was confident that God would grant my plea, but God did not answer. He took her home two years before my ordination. Needless to say, I was deeply shaken, not because I needed motherly care. After all, I had been on my own throughout my college years and in the Army. I was shaken because I suddenly had serious doubts about God as a helper and protector.

How could I go on as a priest if I could not depend on God's promise to help when I needed it?

I began to doubt my vocation. Was God really calling me to be a priest, or was it all a figment of my pious imagination? In the weeks that followed, I endured a state of distress and continued with my classes, putting on as brave a front as I could muster.

Then gradually, in a month or two, I began understanding the whole experience as a test of faith. I thought about the fact that my mother's suffering, which had lasted for many years, was at last over. This was a good thing. I could see her sitting in a front-row seat, in heaven, on my ordination day.

I began to realize that time does heal and that God's will takes into account the suffering of others, not just the pain of one person.
KAUFFMAN

(From 5)

real movie, with real production values, a real score, real editing. People love the movie.”

Kauffman said what the film’s principal actors are doing on screen — their interaction and the messages they convey as a family and what is important to a family — are strengths of the film.

“This is a story that has been told a million times, but not like this,” Kauffman said. “It’s just a beautiful little family film about a guy who gets a second chance at being a songwriter, and he gets lost in the production and determines that he is going about this for all the wrong reasons and he has to ask himself, ‘Do I really want to win this contest?’”

Kauffman wrote 14 songs for the movie, story songs that he says have their own arc in the larger story told in the picture itself.

“The One I Wrote For You” is also more realistic than many films of this genre, Kauffman said. His intent was to make it gritty and believable, and include situations with which all families can identify.

“Husbands and wives get into arguments,” Kauffman said. “But we wanted to show that part of reality without going crazy but still be identifiable.

Kauffman said the film’s first two weekends and how it performs in a limited opening will be critical to the movie’s long-term success. It will open on screens in more than a dozen Texas cities before being given the opportunity for a wider release.

“This has truly been my life for the last few years,” Kauffman said. “But it’s like Christopher Lloyd tells his son in the movie, ‘You’ve gotta follow your heart, kid. You’ve just gotta follow your heart.’

Kauffman’s hope is that people will walk out of the movie and think to themselves, either consciously or subconsciously, about the balance of what they are called to in life. Balancing dreams with family life is essential because, as Kauffman said, “family is core to everything we are.”

For himself, Kauffman said it has been tough at times to balance this dream with his family life. Working on the film sometimes necessitates rising and hitting the office as early as 5 a.m. and working side by side with his children — while they were doing homework he would be writing or editing himself — when they were in high school.

The sacrifices made by his wife have been, he said, critical to the film becoming the reality it is today.

“I look at what I have done, the width and depth of what you have to learn and do it well, and we believe we have acted with integrity every step of the way with this movie,” he said.

Kauffman said he is now reviewing three treatments he will explore in hopes of turning them into screenplays as well.

“Music has been all consuming for me for most of the last 25 years. This is even more difficult, but for some reason I have developed a passion for it. For the last six years this has been our mission,” he said. “We feel like it has been a godsend as well: with this movie we have been able to combine song and story for healing and hope on stage and screen. The work is hard. Joyful, but hard. There has to be a mission of hope behind it. If I am somehow able to make a second film, I’ll probably do this for a long time.”

Theatres in these cities will screen “The One I Wrote For You”: Austin, Beaumont, Corpus Christi, Dallas/Ft Worth, El Paso, Houston, Lubbock, Midland/Odessa, Rio Grande Valley-Brownsville/McAllen, San Angelo, San Antonio.

Our website is: theoneiwroteforyou.com

Trailer: youtube.com/watch?v=UIta0cUd0EE

CARA

(From 14)

in membership.”

There are some institutes that show consistent growth even without such mergers, the report said.

“These communities do not exhibit the growth-followed-by-decline pattern and seem to point to even further expansion into the foreseeable future,” it said. For instance, the Religious Sisters of Mercy of Alma, Michigan, was established in 1973 with nine members. The community has continued to grow gradually, and its membership will approach 100 by the end of the decade, the report predicted.

In some cases statistically significant growth actually represents very few people, Gautier noted.

Six institutes that have been cited in anecdotes and news reports as evidence of a reversal of the trend toward decline, have increased their membership by a combined total of 267 people since 1970. That number, the report said, is "too few to have an effect on the overall picture."

"Whatever these institutes have done or are doing is unlikely to offset losses in the tens of thousands elsewhere. It is simply not enough."

SYNOD

(From 16)

that the working-groups' reports be made public.

"We wanted the Catholic people around the world to know actually what was going on in talking about marriage and the family," Cardinal Pell said.

On the same day, the drafting committee was expanded to increase its geographic diversity, with the addition of Cardinal Wilfrid F. Napier of Durban, South Africa, and Archbishop Denis Hart of Melbourne, Australia. Just as bishops from a cluster of northern European countries had been leaders of change at Vatican II, some of the more outspoken synod fathers this year were from the English-speaking countries and Africa.

The synod's final report, which the pope ordered published almost immediately after the assembly finished its work Oct. 18, featured many more citations of Scripture, as well as new references to the Catechism of the Catholic Church and the teachings of Blessed Paul VI, St. John Paul II and Pope Benedict XVI.

Synod fathers voted on each of the document’s 62 paragraphs. All received a simple majority, but three -- on especially controversial questions of homosexuality and Communion for the divorced and civilly remarried -- failed to gain the two-thirds supermajority ordinarily required for approval of synodal documents.

"What I think Pope Francis succeeded in doing was letting the synod fathers, letting the synod participants, actually come to a real consensus, even though it's a weak consensus in some areas," Cardinal Wuerl said. "The process worked, even though there were bumps along the way."
They come to a strange place, to live cities like mine. They come from graduated from the Fashion Institute of New York and Miss Black America and won Miss Black Russell, Therese, now 63, in the '70s you.”

mean every single one of those paragraphs received a majority and only a handful didn’t receive the two-thirds.”

“Between now and next October, I think there is going to be so much fruitful discussion in the church,” Cardinal Wuerl said.

Following the often-contentious discussion of sexual ethics and how to reach out to people in “irregular” unions during the synod, preparation for the next assembly, the cardinal explained, would give more attention to the challenges and virtues of traditional families.

“Are we going to be able to celebrate that and find there are a lot of people living it, struggling to live it, and I think they’re going to be witnesses to the next synod. They’re going to be the ones in the next synod who will be bearing witness to what’s ahead of us and what we can be.”

meaning of Therese’s vows of poverty, chastity and obedience, Mount Carmel Hermitage’s hermits unfolded a rug on the ground. Therese laid face down on it, her white robes spread out like wings on either side of her.

As Therese lay motionless, the hermits named each saint, and parishioners responded “Pray for us.”

Upon Therese’s recitation of her vows to her fellow sisters, Bishop Sis held his hands above her bowed head and prayed for grace of chastity, warmth of love and that she will continue to love God above all else.

His voice breaking with emotion, Sis said, “May she love you and fear you, may she love you and serve you. Be her comfort in sorrow...her patience in adversity, her riches in poverty, her food in fasting. May she find all things in you.”

Under her birth name Arniece Russell, Therese, now 63, in the '70s won Miss Black Manhattan, Miss Black New York and Miss Black America and graduated from the Fashion Institute of Technology. She worked at Dell and Whole Foods in Austin before answering her calling as a nun.

“I had gone to the funeral of John Paul II,” Therese said after the ceremony, taking a brief moment between posing for pictures with friends and family, each of whom she embraced with the jubilance of a bride greeting guests at her wedding. “Even though I was protestant, I was so drawn to him. When I went to the cathedral (where his funeral was held), something happened. I began to feel pulled. The next thing I knew, I was taking RCIA,” to convert to Catholicism.

Four nuns live at the monastery, said the Rev. Steve Hicks, priest at Cathedral Church of the Sacred Heart in San Angelo, who attended the event to support Therese and his sister friends.

“They come in as a postulant; they’ve made no vows,” he said. “Then they become a novice and make their first profession.”

When the other sisters have made the determination that the novice is ready to become a nun, she makes her final profession, Hicks said.

“It’s a big deal for them to devote their lives completely to God,” he said.

The event also was remarkable for Sis, who had never before in his career presided over a solemn profession of vows.

“I knew her before she entered into this,” said Sis, who also lived in Austin before moving to San Angelo. “She went on a retreat with us in Belton. I met her when she was first looking into (becoming a nun). This is like going full circle.

“She brings a lot of life to this community. She exudes joy. She’s had a long journey of faith. I’m very excited for her, and I’m very grateful to God to know her, and I hope many more follow in her footsteps.”

Beaming and unable to contain her enthusiasm, Therese is the antithesis of the archetypical quiet nun. “This morning I could not stop crying; I was so overwhelmed,” she admitted. “When you love God...he gives you more love. How can you out-give God? All I have to give him is my life.”

There are few fairy-tale endings here. But there is a chance, one family at a time, to tell them that we care about a suffering world.
BARRON
(From 10)
rooted in the earth and stretched into the heavens. Upon awakening, he declared the site where he had slept holy and consecrated it with an altar. As the tradition has received this story and drawn out its implications, it has come to see a manifold of profound metaphysical and spiritual truths: that finite being and Infinite being are intimately connected to one another; that every place is potentially a place of encounter with the power that sustains the cosmos; that there is a hierarchy of created reality stretching upward from God to the earth and downward from God to the earth; that the worship of God is enlivening to human beings; etc. These conclusions are the result of the very sifting process I referenced above, and they provide the basis for something that Kitcher and his colleagues evidently find inadmissible, namely, a real argument about religious matters. It is not simply a question of pitting one ancient story against another; it is a question of analyzing, marshalling evidence, and testing against experience. And when this takes place between interlocutors from different religious traditions, provided that they are people of intelligence and good will, serious progress can be made. The conversation partners will discover, perhaps, that they hold a remarkable number of truths in common, that there are points of contact between doctrines that seem utterly at odds, and that there are some of their teachings that are indeed mutually exclusive. And in regard to the points of contention, authentic arguments can be launched from both sides.

As I hinted above, what bothers me about Kitcher’s proposal is that it effectively relegates all religion to the arena of the irrational. It is interesting to note that several times in the course of his interview he compares religious experience to the experiences of people suffering from psychosis. And this shows the real danger of such a proposal, namely, that a society dominated by advocates of Kitcher’s brand of atheism might tolerate religious people for a time but will, eventually, seek to marginalize them—or even hospitalize them for insanity. If you think this last suggestion is paranoid, take a good hard look at the policy of the Soviet Union in regard to those who disagreed with its regnant ideology. In the mid-nineteenth century, John Henry Newman fought tenaciously to defend the rationality of religious claims. Kitcher’s interview—as well as the voluminous writings of his intellectual allies—convinces me that the same battle needs to be joined today.

EBOLA
(From 1)
Catholic Relief Services, you can donate to the CRS West Africa Emergency Fund through the following website: www.crs.org/donate or you may call 1-877-435-7277.
In a September 23, 2014, letter to the National Security Council, spokespersons for the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops and CRS welcomed the U.S. Government’s commitment to respond to the Ebola crisis and encouraged the United States to do the following:
• Urge other donor nations to increase their commitment to send disaster response teams and resources.
• Ensure that the availability of treatment centers, medical equipment, materials and trained personnel keeps pace with the epidemic.
• Make a long-term commitment to resolving the underlying problem of the severe lack of capacity in the health systems of the affected countries.
• Collaborate with Church health structures and other community-based organizations to develop public education programs to help halt the spread of the virus.
• Prepare for the growing humanitarian and long-term impacts of the outbreak.
I encourage everyone to pray for those who have been infected, for healthcare workers, for those who have lost loved ones, and for the repose of the souls of those who have died, among whom are priests, sisters, missionaries, and health care workers who contracted the disease while caring for their people.

To all, my ongoing advice is to be aware, do not panic, and always use good hygiene practices to prevent the spread of viruses and other communicable diseases.
which produced several different crops, a vegetable garden, beehives and boats for fishing. Local workers were hired as farm laborers since the monks and nuns did not do any of the manual labor, according to Jones.

Sarah Gallick writes in the “Big Book of Women Saints” that Hilda trained many future bishops at Whitby. The most famous of her monks was Caedmon, an elderly cowherd whose gift of song and poetry was encouraged by Hilda. She soon became famous for her wisdom and kings and princes came to her for advice. At Whitby, Hilda built a library of manuscripts that included all of the New Testament and parts of the Old Testament. These manuscripts were available in various translations and had to be copied by hand on parchment or vellum.

The vellum came from the skins of calves on the farm while parchment was produced from sheepskin. All of this work was done on tablets made from beeswax.

Bede tells us that Hilda insisted that all the monks and nuns should make a thorough study of Scriptures and engage in good works as well. He describes Hilda as a woman of great energy and a skilled administrator and teacher. Whitby followed the practices of the Celtic Church brought to northern Britain by St. Columba. At that time, Gallick explains, all the religious houses in the north of England followed Celtic traditions.

There were distinct differences between the Celtic system and the Roman Church such as the date of Easter and the degree of authority attached to the papacy. In 664, the bishops and clergy held a synod to determine these questions and they met at Hilda’s monastery. Rodney Castleden writes in the “Book of Saints” that Hilda was a great champion of the British church services when they were debated at the synod.

The final decision taken at the synod was to adopt the Roman system and acknowledge the supremacy of Rome. Although this ruling went against Hilda’s wishes, she accepted it and the rites and practices of the double monastery at Whitby were changed accordingly.

Hilda became ill with a fever and chronic pain during the last seven years of her life. She died at dawn on November 17, 680. Guiley describes an interesting legend related to Hilda’s death. When the bell was rung to announce her passing, it was heard by a nun, Begu, in a monastery 13 miles away. Guiley writes that Begu had a vision in which she saw the soul of Hilda borne up to heaven by angels in a radiance of light.

Gallick credits Hilda with being a decisive factor in uniting the English church. Her feast is kept on the Roman Calendar on November 17 and in the Church of England on November 19. She is the patron of education and the patron saint of the National Cathedral School for Girls in Washington, DC. The Whitby Monastery was abandoned in the ninth century following the Danish raids. It was refounded as a Benedictine Monastery after the Norman Conquest in 1066. The monastery continued to operate as a religious house until the dissolution of monasteries by King Henry VIII in 1539 (www.english-heritage.org.uk).

SANDOVAL

(Para 11)

Por eso, Wood explora una forma contemporánea de carencia de hogar: “vidas vividas sin la finalidad de exilio pero también sin la familiaridad de hogar”. Es el sentido de no ser adecuado, de ansiedad de no pertenecer, que Cohen llama la angustia de desplazamiento.

Esta es la condición humana general, particularmente entre inmigrantes y ciudadanos de países de habla hispana que han sido expulsados por la política de repatriación. Cohen habla de que se sienten como si estuvieran emparentados con un cielo que no puede ser alcanzado.

En Nuevo México, la situación es aún más dramática. Cohen habla de la sensación de no ser aceptado, de no tener una casa, de no poder sentirse parte de una comunidad. En Nuevo México, la sensación de no tener un hogar es más intensa que en otros lugares, y eso crea un sentido de inseguridad y ansiedad.

Por eso, Cohen señala que la casa es un concepto fundamental en la vida de los inmigrantes, especialmente en Nuevo México. La casa es donde se siente seguro, donde se puede expresar de manera auténtica y donde se puede tener una identidad propia.

A pesar de que la vida en una ciudad de habla hispana puede ser difícil, la sensación de pertenencia y de hogar es fundamental para la vida de los inmigrantes. La casa es un lugar donde se puede sentir seguido, donde se puede expresar de manera auténtica y donde se puede tener una identidad propia.

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Sister Theodore’s Solemn Profession

Images from Sister Mary Theodore Therese’s solemn profession of vows, October 4, 2014.

With Sister Mary Grace Erl, Superior of the Our Lady of Grace Monastery in Schleicher County, above, and at left as The Most Rev. Michael J. Sis, Bishop of San Angelo, and Fr. Fabian Maria Rosette, of the Mt. Carmel Hermitage, near Christoval, pray over Sister Theodore.

Photos by Alan P. Torre / aptorre.com

Former Miss Black America makes solemn profession of vows as Carmelite Nun

Editor’s Note: The following story originally appeared in the San Angelo Standard-Times and is reprinted here with permission.

By Becca Nelson Sankey

SCHLEICHER COUNTY — The singing voices of a choir, angelic in cadence, filtered from the stone chapel tucked away on secluded acreage in Schleicher County.

On Sunday afternoon at Our Lady of Grace monastery, Mary Theodore Therese officially closed the chapter on her life as a 1970s beauty pageant queen, fashion institute of technology graduate and big-city career woman, and began anew as a Carmelite nun.

Therese, who has lived at the monastery the past five years, marked her spiritual milestone with a solemn profession of vows, an event that filled the chapel with sisters, hermits, church officials including The Most Rev. Michael Sis, and Therese’s family and friends.

“What we celebrate with you this day...can be described in these words: vision, risk, wonder, hope, struggle,” said the Rev. Dave Simpson, who traveled out of state to deliver the homily.

Risk, Simpson said, is the energy force that allows Therese “to be ordinary, but for God to do the extraordinary in her life.”

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After Simpson discussed the