Martin County Convent
A group of longtime residents of Martin County have begun an effort to restore the Carmelite convent in Stanton. Find out what they’re doing and how you can become involved in their effort to preserve the history of the structure and grounds in Stanton / Pgs. 12-13. (Photo by Karen J. Patterson)

Living the Faith in the Home: The Domestic Church
Rev. Knick and Sandie Knickerbocker (at right) write as the Catechism of the Catholic Church teaches, the Christian family is a domestic church, a community of faith, hope, and love that is of singular importance in the Church (CCC, #2204). Pg. 5

Speaking of Saints ...
Mary Lou Gibson, at left, writes this month on Venerable Mother Casimira Kaupas helped spread faith in Lithuania. / Pg 8

Catholics descend on Austin for Advocacy Day

On Tuesday, March 24, Catholics from across the Lone Star State united for the Texas Catholic Conference's 2015 Texas Catholic Faith In Action Advocacy Day.

The bi-annual rally was hosted by the Texas Bishops to promote the Church's values of Life, Justice, Charity, and Religious Freedom to members of the 84th Texas Legislature.

Bishops and event participants addressed a broad range of diverse issues including advance directives reform, school choice tax credit scholarships, payday...
By the Most Rev Michael J. Sis
Bishop of San Angelo

The fifty days from Easter Sunday, April 5, to Pentecost Sunday, May 24, constitute the Easter Season. We celebrate this joyful season as if it were one great feast day. We don’t call these fifty days “after Easter;” we call them “of Easter.”

The experience of the Death and Resurrection of Jesus Christ is such a profound mystery that it takes time to digest, unpack, and ponder its powerful meaning. During Easter Time, we reflect upon the Easter mysteries and the effect they have in our own lives today.

The Mass readings in this season include many passages from the Book of Acts, telling of the activity and growth of the early Christian communities in the first century. We encounter the joy and enthusiasm of the early Christians as they were guided by the Holy Spirit to live out their faith in Jesus.

Just as the first Christians were emboldened by the Spirit to profess their faith in the midst of persecution, we are assured by our Easter faith that death, evil, and worldly tragedies will not have the last word. Christ risen from the tomb gives us hope.

In our churches during the Easter season, we continue to enjoy the symbols of Easter, including Easter lilies. The lily rises each year from a bulb deep in the earth, like a little resurrection from the tomb. The shape of the lily blossom reminds us of a trumpet, proclaiming the joyful message of Christ’s victory over death.

Another symbol that is very important in this season is the paschal candle. Throughout the Easter Season, this candle is located on a tall stand in a prominent place in the sanctuary near the altar or the ambo. It is a symbol of the presence of the risen Christ among the people of God. We light it during our liturgical celebrations throughout this great season until Easter Sunday.

(Please See BISHOP/22)
From the Editor

Words to help our children live by

By Jimmy Patterson

Twenty-nine years ago this year, my wife gave birth to our first child. Jennifer has been a blessing to our lives in many ways, most recently when she told us that she and our son-in-law were expecting their first child, making the baby our first grandbaby.

Twenty-nine years ago in March of this year, our daughter was baptized. Karen and I asked my Uncle Bill Patterson, then of Columbus, Ohio, to be Jennifer’s Godfather. We come from a family of faithful, good-hearted Protestants, and Uncle Bill, Aunt Loretta and their family, longtime Catholics. It only made sense to ask for him to participate in our daughter’s life in this way.

Uncle Bill was a good, good man. I’ve written about him often. I will never stop admiring his diligence at simply getting up every day. He suffered from a lifetime of brittle bones and lived much of that life on crutches and an occasional wheelchair. He didn’t complain about his life. He just lived it and brought happiness to others. He and his brother, my dad, were firmly committed to the Golden Rule and that is how they lived their life.

Uncle Bill taught me my love for writing when my mother and father would read his witty letters that he would write to our family from his home in Ohio. I first discovered the power of the word to entertain by listening to those letters my parents would read as I sat attentive on the living room floor. His words always made me smile.

A couple of weeks ago, while rummaging through a box of items and his brother, my dad, were firmly committed to the Golden Rule and that is how they lived their life.

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‘You are now free to move about the (Big) Country’

Bishop Michael Sis, top photo, standing in front of a B-1B on the flightline with Col. Steven Beasley (7 BW Vice-wing Commander), Bishop Neal J. Buckon and Father Luis B. Hernandez. Bishop Sis, at right, goes solo. Above, Capt Philip Gommesen, B-1 WSO; Ch Maj Martin Booth, Ch; Lt Col Calvin Dixon; Bishop Sis; Bishop Neal Buckon; Father Luis Hernandez and Capt Nathan Gavic, B-1 Pilot. Bishop Sis helped welcome Bishop Buckon, Episcopal Vicar for the Western Half of the United States for the Archdiocese of the Military Services, USA, to Our Lady of Grace Catholic Community and Dyess Air Force Base in Abilene, March 6, 2015.
Living the faith in the home: The domestic church

By Fr. Knick and Sandie Knickerbocker
St. Theresa Church, Junction

As the Catechism of the Catholic Church teaches, the Christian family is a domestic church, a community of faith, hope, and love that is of singular importance in the Church (CCC #2204). In the family, parents have the primary responsibility for the moral education and spiritual formation of their children (CCC #221). This primary responsibility cannot be passed along to pastors, teachers, and coaches. As parents, our children’s formation begins before their birth with our own formation in Christ. Do we know in our hearts that we are God's beloved? Do we take seriously our baptismal vows? Is our family a true Christian community, a family with a common unity of heart, will, and mind? Are we as parents creating a home where spiritual formation in Christ is the focus of all that we say and do? Do we understand our home as the living heart of our parish church?

The Holy Family in Nazareth shows us that the home is the heart of the Church. The Holy Family is the proto-icon of the Holy Trinity where the love of two persons is perfected when they love a third person together. In the Holy Family love was seen in their home through the love of Mary and Joseph for God, for each other, for Jesus, for their neighbors, and for the Jewish community. Too often we forget that Jesus was spiritually formed in his home and faith community for thirty years before his public ministry began. God is telling us about the importance of marriage and family, home life, and the faith community.

Looking at the Holy Family, we may be awed by the perfection that was there; God does not want this to intimidate us but to inspire us. As Mark Shea writes in a 2001 essay on "The Family as an Icon of the Holy Trinity": "Families--those great roystering messes of praise and poop, panic and pleasure--give flesh to the vision of the Trinity in the lovely, painful, and beautiful expressions of real human beings living out the gospel under grace."

To make our home fully the domestic church, we will consider how our children can be nurtured in the faith within the home. In a later article we will consider how family life in the home is part of the life of the parish church. The domestic church and the parish church are inseparable.

First, help your children to have a personal relationship with Jesus as their savior, brother, and friend. Pray with your children every day and have a specific time for daily family prayer. Pray the Our Father and the Rosary with them every time they can talk. Talk about Jesus. Say, "I love you and Jesus loves you." Say, "I think that makes Jesus happy (or unhappy)." Sing about Jesus. Music is a powerful means of communicating the faith. Listen to Christian music in the home and the car. Read the Bible with your children in age-appropriate versions. Choose books and quality DVDs about Jesus and New Testament characters. When making family decisions or helping your child or teen make a decision about what to do or how to treat someone, ask, "What would Jesus want me to do?" and pray with them about it. Simply be available for your children and teens. Do not underestimate their problems and needs. Encourage them to share with you their fears, disappointments, frustrations, failures, aspirations, and peer pressures.

Bedtime is a good time to do this. You may be surprised at how willing your teen is to have you sit on their bed and have conversation and prayer. If they are not open to conversation, then provide a ministry of loving presence. Most important of all, we must have a personal relationship with Jesus ourselves. If we know in our hearts and give witness in our lives that Jesus is our savior, brother, and friend, then he will become that for our children. In all of this, both fathers and mothers must be involved. Parental ministry in the domestic church involves both parents. However, single parents have the same responsibilities. The witness of grandparents and other extended family is very important.

Second, use Christian symbols in your home. Hang a crucifix in every room in your house as a reminder that we are to love unconditionally as we bear the cross daily and to provoke us to ask, "Would Jesus want us to watch this program or DVD, play this game, or access this website?" Place a statue of the Blessed Virgin Mary in a prominent place in the center of the home to remind all members of the family that Mary was the heart of the home in Nazareth, and the mother of the family is the heart of the home, even as the father is the head of the home. Display the candle given at baptism as a reminder that we have put on Christ whose light is burning in our hearts and lives for others to see. Light a candle during family devotions as a symbol of the light of Christ that casts out the darkness of sin and Satan and lights our way.

Put a container of holy water by the door and touch the water and make the sign of the cross when entering or leaving as a way of renewing our baptismal covenant. Provide opportunities to use and teach about Christian symbols to counter the secular use of symbols as marketing tools.

Third, plan family celebrations such as anniversaries of birthdays, baptisms, confirmations, and marriage. Ask your priest to bless your home, car, and pets. In this context, it is imperative to have sit-down, all-together meals, when everyone is disconnected from media devices. This is an ideal time for family prayer as well as conversation.

(Please See FAMILY/22)
Peace through understanding
An inter-faith journey

By Becky Benes

Most of my life, I have been attracted to the "other." People of different ethnicities, cultures, and religions have been my best friends. Learning about them, their religions, and their cultures is fascinating. The more of the "other" I met, the more I wanted to meet and the more I wanted to know. This took me down many paths and afforded me great adventures.

Unbeknownst to me, I was being prepared for a great mission, a greater purpose.

In 1999, I was invited by Sister Joan Markus, SSND and the Diocese of San Angelo to engage in the Loyola Institute of Ministry Extension (LIMEX) program, a four-year Master’s Degree program. This was a gift from heaven. During the first courses of LIMEX, we studied the Old Testament, the New Testament, and World Religions. I found my bliss. I loved studying my faith and finding the common ground within other faith traditions. My understanding of my friends deepened as I knew more about their faith and how it was similar to my faith.

We also studied the teachings of the Catholic Church about the importance of interfaith dialogue. This was a powerful insight to me because, I had the mistaken idea that it was against my Catholic faith to engage with others from different religions. This false information kept me in a sense of dis-ease, because I felt I was not being a true Christian/Catholic by having friends from so many different faiths. My friends were such good, kind, and loving people, I often questioned the validity of the teachings of my faith and Jesus, if the "others" were not to be valued, honored and included.

Needless to say, my LIMEX experience liberated me from this false information and gave me room to grow and be true to myself within Catholicism.

In the winter of 2006, Bishop Michael Pfeifer, OMI invited two Christians, two Muslims, and two Jews to come together in dialogue to discuss how their Holy Books viewed peace. From this meeting, the group formed the Peace Ambassadors of West Texas. In 2008, this group of people invited me to speak at one of their monthly gatherings. I was intrigued with their mission which was to bring people of different faiths together, to seek common ground, and to come together as One in community activities and charitable ventures.

Within a few months of meeting the Peace Ambassadors, another organization asked me to serve on a committee for the 11 Days of Global Peace, a worldwide movement to promote peace through Interfaith Dialogue. I instantly had a vision of an 11 day event where we featured people from the major faith traditions speaking each evening as well as an opening and closing ceremony; thus 11 Days of Global Peace. The committee loved the idea but was clueless of how we would gather the people of different faiths.

I informed them of the Peace Ambassadors, and mentioned that I knew a Baha’i, a Buddhist, a Native American, and a Hindu. Interestingly, when we all gathered, I found out that there were so few people of these different faiths in San Angelo that the odds of me not only knowing them, but also being good enough friends to ask them to participate was fascinating.

This is when I realized that I had been being prepared for this moment. It seemed like the forces of the universe came together and everything fell into place. Since that one event, I have been actively involved in the vision and the growth of the Peace Ambassadors.

St. Joseph’s celebrates saint’s feast day

St. Joseph Church in San Angelo celebrated the Feast of St. Joseph by having its annual festival, March 14-15, 2015. Activities included food, games, bingo, silent auction, music and of course the raffle.

Raffle prize winners were:
1st prize ($2,000 Visa gift cards) – Tulia Juarez;
2nd prize ($1,500 Visa gift cards) – Mary Reyes;
3rd prize ($1,000 Visa gift cards) – Micaela Gutierrez;
4th prize ($500 Visa gift card) – Hortencia Martinez.

The annual festival has been held in the courtyard outside the old mission building, now the parish hall. This year the festival was held in the church parking lot. It was a huge success with a great crowd and lots of fun and fellowship.

Entertainment was provided by Sonido Logico (DJ Luis Ibarra), Ballet Azteca led by Mary Lou Robbins, The Sounds of San Angelo, and other talents. Many thanks to the parishioners and sponsors who made the festival such a success. Special thanks to this year’s chairperson, Socorro Esquivel, who put in long hours and hard work to organize the event.

Pictured: Top, Fr. Emilio Sosa, St. Joseph’s pastor. At left, Two young parishioners give chase toward Fr. Sosa. Above, Ballet Azteca.
Reflections, Repentance, and Remembering the Suffering of Others

Students at St. Ann's prepare for Easter

By Heather Hughes Bredimus
St. Ann's-Midland

More often than we would like to admit, Lent is used as a time of superficial sacrifice. Perhaps it is seen as a second-chance opportunity at forgoing carbs, chocolate, or other empty-calorie treats after New Year’s resolutions have failed and self-discipline has been lost. Wasted are 40 days and 40 nights on faith that we will abstain from unhealthy treats because, this time, we would be letting God down, not only ourselves.

Essentially, we are using God as a personal trainer and nutritionist. And for what purpose?

That is the question Kathy Jones, the Middle School Language Arts teacher at St. Ann’s School, asks students at the beginning of Lent. “For what purpose is your Lenten sacrifice serving God?” For the faculty of St. Ann’s, it is important that students reflect on the suffering of our Savior and use Lent as an opportunity to repent for the sins that He has saved them from, offer a sacrifice in which they are used by God to serve others, and remember the suffering of those hurting and in need.

Every Wednesday morning, the second graders of St. Ann’s School pray the Divine Mercy Chaplet. Joe Sanchez, a second grade teacher, says that, “The children use this time to pray for special intentions. They pray for those who are hungry, sick, or hurting. It helps the kids keep in mind others’ suffering, as they remember Christ’s suffering for us during Lent.”

Once a week, as the school prepares for the resurrection of our Lord, the third grade classes study the Stations of the Cross. Each pilgrimage focuses on the Stations from a different perspective of a participant in Christ’s suffering. Tracy Owen, a third grade teacher at St. Ann’s, notes that the study of Mary’s position during the event of her Son’s persecution has been especially effective as her class begins to prepare for the May Crowning Mass on May 8, 2015. Joan Wilmes, Principal of St. Ann’s School, along with the assistance of Monsignor Droll, Father Francis, and Father Bala, encouraged the entire student population of grades 3rd through 8th to participate in the Sacrament of Reconciliation. Fourth grader, Kendall Harrington, noted that Lent is the perfect time to attend confession saying, “During Lent we remember that Jesus carried our sins on the cross, so we want to be forgiven.”

As students return to school from Easter break, an epic celebration will be shared by all who attend St. Ann’s. The “Alleluia” will return and once again be shouted, sung, and rejoiced at weekly Mass; and humility, gratitude, and joy will abundantly fill the Catholic school walls. All of this could not be made possible without the foundation of reflection, repentance, and remembrance of others’ sufferings that the faculty of St. Ann’s School teach during Lent.

We must remember that although Lent comes only once per year, offering sacrifices and serving God is what we are called to do daily. Coming full circle and going forward, students will be continually asked, “For what purpose are you serving God?” Imagine what we all could be if we reflected on this question with every word we spoke, every action we took, and every thought we had. Maybe then, we could feel the “Alleluia” in our hearts every day.
West Texas Angelus

MIDLAND — Renew Theology on Tap continues to grow and inspire many young adults and adults from our diocese.

Held every 3rd Thursday of the month at La Mision Mexican Restaurant, 1008 S. Big Spring, in Midland, Theology on Tap is an outreach to and collaboration with young adult Catholics in pursuit of spiritual growth. It is a method of invitation, based on a spirit of hospitality, which creates a space for people in their 20s and 30s to explore how faith in Christ can speak to their circumstances.

On March 19, Liz Zenteno, graduate of the Loyola University Institute for Ministry Extension, presented “The Myth surrounding Catholic Social Teaching.” Zenteno addressed how Catholic Social Teaching is a vital part of our Catholic faith.

“As Catholics we are called to spread the gospel message of hope to the oppressed,” Zenteno reminded those in attendance.

The seven themes of Catholic Social Teaching include:

- Life & Dignity of the Human Person
- A Call to Family, Community and Participation
- Rights and Responsibilities
- Option for the Poor and Vulnerable
- Dignity of Work and the Rights of Workers
- Solidarity
- Care for God’s Creation

All seven pillars were discussed by Zenteno and the Theology on Tap students.

Examples of social justice role models include Archbishop Oscar Romero, Dorothy Day, and Fr. John Ryan for more than 30 years, will give a short talk about Maria de Agreda prior to the Mass.

Refreshments will be served in the retreat center following the Mass. Trudo’s Religious Store will be there to sell the famous book written by Sor Maria, “The Mystical City of God” and the book about her life, “Maria of Agreda: Mystical Lady in Blue,” written by Marilyn H. Fedewa.

The Maria de Agreda rosary and other items will also be available.

Bishop Sis encourages people of all ages to attend the event.

“It is fitting that we honor the Lady in Blue. Her first appearances in the early 1600’s led Spanish missionaries to come to the San Angelo area in 1629 and 1632, marking the birth of our Catholic faith in West Texas,” Bishop Sis said. “Sor Maria helped change our way of life forever. We owe a debt of gratitude to our Jumano brothers and sisters who opened their hearts to the instruction of this mystical lady who appeared over 500 times throughout the Southwest.”

West Texas Angelus

Bishop Michael Sis will join people in San Angelo and around the world to recognize the 350th Anniversary of the death of Sor Maria de Agreda, the “Lady in Blue,” on Sunday, May 24.

While the Lady in Blue Day has been celebrated in San Angelo for a number of years on June 20, the date of May 24 has been selected this year in solidarity with a major anniversary celebration taking place on the same day in her town of Agreda, Spain.

The seventh annual celebration in San Angelo will begin with the Procession of Flowers at 6:00 p.m. at the Christ the King Retreat Center, 802 Ford Street, followed by the Mass of Pentecost at 6:30 p.m. celebrated by Bishop Sis in the retreat center chapel.

The procession will start by the Concho River on the retreat center grounds. As members of the Jumano tribe did in 1629, the procession then will follow the crosses of flowers to the chapel.

Everyone is invited to join in the procession; honored guests will be any person with Native American heritage.

Historian Gus Clemens, who has written about and given talks about the Lady in Blue for more than 30 years, will give a short talk about Maria de Agreda prior to the Mass.

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It is appropriate to have the procession start at the banks of the Concho River where, it is said, Maria appeared to the Jumanos at various locations along the river. After time, when Maria had finished her Catholic instruction, she told a group of Jumanos to travel to the Isleta Mission in New Mexico where Franciscan priests had established missions in the late 1500s.

Sor Maria told the Jumanos to ask the padres for a mission; the missionaries came to the Jumano homelands in response. When the priests followed the Native Americans back to the San Angelo area, they baptized over 2,000 Jumanos in the Concho River. Also, the retreat chapel so close to the river, is reminiscent of the Isleta mission chapel where the Indians made their petitions to the padres.

If you have any questions, please call The Lady in Blue Line (325) 657-7099 and leave your name and number. Event organizers will return you call, and they hope to see you and your family at the event on May 24.

350th anniversary of death of Sor Maria de Agreda, May 24

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ADVOCACY DAY

March 25, 2015

State Capitol

Austin

lending, Medicaid expansion, and abortion facilities regulation.

The day began with the Texas Bishops and participants joining together in a massive rally at 11:30 a.m. on the south steps of the historic Texas State Capitol.

Throughout the day, participants made visits to their state senators and representatives and media from across Texas were on hand to chronicle this historic event.

A bus left Midland at 4 a.m. on March 24, picked up more passengers in San Angelo, and arrived in Austin mid-morning. A second bus made the trip from Abilene.

The trip was organized by Deacon Freddy Medina, Director of the Diaconate in the Diocese of San Angelo. Bishop Michael J. Sis was among those who traveled to the capitol, and he addressed those in attendance from the capitol steps.

Above, a group of Catholics from throughout the Diocese of San Angelo made the trip to Austin for Advocacy Day 2015.

Top right, Bishop Sis does an interview with a representative of RED-C Catholic Radio

Middle right, Most Rev Michael D. Pfeifer, Bishop Emeritus of San Angelo, also attended the Austin event.

At right, Bishop Sis with two parishioners who made the trip to Austin.
Speaking of Saints ...

**Venerable Mother Casimira Kaupas helped spread faith in Lithuania**

By Mary Lou Gibson

Casimira Kaupas was 17 years old when she left Lithuania to begin the harrowing journey to America. The year was 1897 and the Czarist government that governed Lithuania forbade any youth to leave the country. So Casimira traveled by train at night and under a canvas on a wagon filled with grain bags during the day. Sister Margaret Petcavage, SSC, described Casimira’s trip in “Journeys,” a magazine of the Immaculate Heart of Mary Sisters.

Young Casimira, called “Kaze” by her family, was making the trip to serve as housekeeper to her brother, Anthony, a priest ministering to the Lithuanian immigrants in Scranton, Pennsylvania. Thousands of Lithuanians had immigrated to America in the late 1800s and priests were needed to minister to them in their native language.

The family’s farm home in Ramygala, Lithuania was a secure stopover for “book smugglers,” men who secretly carried manuscripts to and from Germany to be printed in the forbidden Lithuanian language. This was dangerous work and could result in imprisonment by the Russian Cossacks. “Kaze” loved her father and admired his leadership in keeping the Lithuanian language and customs alive. She learned the importance of national identity and of keeping her Christian faith alive. So she heeded her parents’ wishes and went to help her brother.

It was in Scranton that Casimira saw Sisters for the first time. She asked her brother who they were. He told her they were women who lived for God alone.

Casimira’s prayer life was growing strong at this time, but her heart remained lonely. Overcome by homesickness, Casimira returned to Lithuania in 1901.

She was attracted to the work of the Sisters she saw in Scranton, but was still unsure of what her call in life was. Meanwhile, the Lithuanian priests in Pennsylvania wanted to build schools for their youth but only if they had Lithuanian Sisters. Casimira’s brother wrote and told her of plans to establish a new Congregation to be teaching sisters and asked if she would be interested. Casimira accepted an invitation to go to Ingenbohl, Switzerland to study with the Holy Cross Sisters with the plan to establish a congregation of Lithuanian sisters.

Casimira entered the novitiate of the Holy Cross Sisters in 1903. In 1905, she and two companions traveled to New York and then to Scranton where the small group was accepted into the novitiate of the Sister Servants of the Immaculate Heart of Mary. She was now Sister Maria and the new Congregation of the Sisters of St. Casimir was established.

Bishop Jeremiah Shanahan of Harrisburg, PA sponsored the new congregation and suggested the name be that of St. Casimir, the patron saint of Lithuania. The Sisters began to work in the parochial schools of the region. In 1911, they established their mother house in Chicago which had a large Lithuanian population. Mother Maria was elected Superior General in 1913, an office she held for 27 years.

Over time, the Sisters went to teach in many parishes across the United States. They also engaged in social work and established a mission in Instow, Switzerland. They opened the St. Casimir Convalescent Home in Chicago and helped spread faith in Lithuania.

Venerable Mother Casimira Kaupas

**Pastor’s Day**

Bishop Michael J. Sis, far right, Fr. Sam Matthiesen, second from right, and Fr. Michael Rodriguez, far left, with Conception seminarians, from second left, Adan Castillo, Edgardo Aragon, Kevin Lenius and Nick Ruiz. The bishop, Fr. Rodriguez and Fr. Matthiesen joined the seminarians for Pastors Day at Conception, March 20-21, 2015. (Courtesy photo).

**New diocese in Mexico could give boost to migrant ministry**

By Nancy Wiechec

Catholic News Service

PHOENIX — Those working on behalf of migrants said they hope to have more advocates and support with the creation of the Diocese of Nogales in Mexico.

"It's a great blessing that has the potential to facilitate more binational cooperation as church, especially in regard to migrant ministry efforts," said Jesuit Father Sean Carroll, who directs the Kino Border Initiative.

"We hope to be able to invite the new bishop (of Nogales) to see our work and to draw more attention to migrants, their lived reality, the abuses they endure and the challenges that they face."

The Vatican announced the formation of the new diocese March 19. Its 17,000 square miles was carved from northern portions of the ecclesiastical territory of Hermosillo and includes 17 municipalities, including Nogales.

Pope Francis named Bishop Jose Leopoldo Gonzalez Gonzalez, 60, to head the new diocese. He has been an auxiliary bishop of the Archdiocese of Guadalajara, Mexico.

Since its establishment in 1882, Nogales has served as a gateway for goods and people moving in and out of Mexico. Known collectively as "Ambos Nogales," (Both Nogales), the cities in Arizona and the Mexican state of Sonora are split at the international border by a towering border fence. Nearly 10 million people and an estimated $20 billion in trade cross the Nogales ports of entry each year.

Nogales, Arizona, is within the Diocese of Tucson.

Numerous church and other action groups exist in Nogales to serve scores of migrants. Those making their way unlawfully into the U.S. face dangerous desert crossings in their attempts. They risk heat stroke, dehydration and other perils and often are victims of abuse and violence by human smugglers, gangs and thieves.

The Kino Border Initiative operates on both sides of the border. In Nogales, Sonora, it runs a support center, soup kitchen and first-aid station for deported migrants and a shelter for migrant women and children.

(Please See SAINTS/23)
Undoing a chemical abortion

By Fr. Tad Pacholczyk

In 1978, Charles E. Rice, a former Professor of Law at Notre Dame Law School made this prediction in his book Beyond Abortion: The Theory and Practice:

“The abortion of the future will be by pill, suppository, or some other do-it-yourself method. At that point the killing of a baby will be wholly elective and private. We have, finally, caught up with the pagan Romans who endowed the father, the pater familias, with the right to kill his child at his discretion. We give that right to the mother. But it is all the same to the victim.”

His prediction was prescient, given that “chemical abortions” are now widely available in the form of the French abortion pill, RU-486. The abortion pill has been available in the U.S. since 2000. By 2008, approximately 25 percent of abortions prior to 9 weeks relied on RU-486, also known as mifepristone. A 2010 scientific review on RU-486 noted that chemical abortion “has been used successfully in the medical termination of pregnancy for over 25 years, and the method is registered in 35 countries.”

In recent years, there has been a small but important glimmer of light piercing through this dark backdrop of widespread RU-486 utilization, namely, that it is sometimes possible to reverse a chemical abortion if a woman comes to regret her decision soon after taking the abortion pill.

Carrying out a chemical abortion actually requires two different pills to be taken sequentially. RU-486 is administered prior to reaching the 10th week of pregnancy, and about two days later, a hormone called misoprostol is given that causes contractions and expels the unborn child. Reversal may be possible when the second pill has not yet been taken.

RU-486 itself is often described as a “progesterone antagonist” or an “antiprogesterone.” These names indicate the extent of its hostility towards the vital hormone, progesterone. What this means is that RU-486 blocks progesterone, a hormone needed to build and maintain the uterine wall during pregnancy. Thus, RU-486 can either prevent a developing human embryo from implanting in the uterus, or it can kill an implanted embryo by essentially starving her or him to death.

The reversal technique relies on using progesterone itself to counteract the effects of the abortion pill. In a study published in the Annals of Pharmacotherapy in December, 2012, successful reversal was reported for four of six women who took RU-486; these women were able to carry their pregnancies to term after receiving an intramuscular injection of progesterone. Since 2012, dozens of other women have successfully reversed their chemical abortions. Thus far, no side effects or complications associated with reversal of the abortion pill have been reported.

On the other hand, the abortion pill itself has notable side effects and risks associated with its use. Common side effects include: uterine cramps, high blood pressure, bleeding not related to the menstrual period, overgrowth of the uterine lining, stomach cramps, dizziness, reduced blood potassium, and nausea. Some women also experience fever, chills and infection.

Among the more serious possible side effects would be death of both mother and child arising from endomyometritis (infection of the uterine lining) and septic shock. A December, 2005 article in the New England Journal of Medicine indicated that women are about ten times more likely to die from RU-486 abortions than surgical abortions in early pregnancy, partly because of the risk of infection.

Another complication of using RU-486 is incomplete abortion, with embryonic/fetal parts remaining. In the first six years of RU-486 availability in Australia, for example, there were 792 reports of adverse effects, 579 of which pertained to parts of the embryo/fetus remaining, and 126 of these required follow-up surgical abortion.

Time is clearly of the essence: the longer a woman waits after taking RU-486 before attempting a reversal, the lower the likelihood of success. Health care professionals should become informed about the possibility of using progesterone to reverse the effects of RU-486 in women who have begun the chemical abortion process and then changed their minds. The website for the Abortion Pill Reversal Program, a national effort to encourage and support abortion pill reversal, can be found at: http://abortionpillreversal.com/. As noted on the site, “The Abortion Pill Reversal Program has a network of over 200 physicians worldwide that assist the women that call our hot line. This hotline is manned of over 200 physicians worldwide that assist the women that call our hot line. This hotline is manned.

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
Much work to be done

Restoring historic convent will take much effort, funding

By Jimmy Patterson
Editor / West Texas Angelus

STANTON — Paul G. McHenery, a historical architect in Albuquerque, N.M., once said of the Carmelite Convent in Stanton that few examples of its type of architecture still exist and all steps should be taken to preserve it.

There has been no shortage of efforts to renovate the building through the years. Funding and volunteers have been what’s lacking.

Now, a group of dedicated lifelong Martin County residents, including former mayor Lester Baker, his wife, Kimberly, former director of the Martin County Chamber of Commerce, and Reggie Baker, brother of the mayor and president of Martin County Convent, Inc., hope to renew interest in preserving the historic building.

The Bakers figure it will take $1.4 million to restore the monastery inside and out. What’s needed almost as much as funding, though, is people power. In order for it to work best, the effort must be comprised of both Protestants and Catholics. But committed Catholic volunteers have been in short supply through the years, and the Bakers hope this new effort will turn that around.

Organizers admit the monastery looks like a money pit. That itself has probably been enough of a deterrent to keep away potential volunteers, Reggie Baker said.

“We’re doing what we can to maintain the facility we have currently,” he said. “We’re not really looking for funds as much as we are participation. There are other churches in the area with the right connections who might have some funds that would be helpful. Getting the Catholic community involved would be huge.”

The building has fallen victim to an assortment of enemies, including wind, storms, neglect, exposure, pigeons and vandals. All have worked together to hasten the convent’s present state of disrepair.

The new board has spent the last one to two years formulating a plan and meeting with potential funders. That plan includes identifying the most pressing restorative needs, and there are many: Peer and porch reconstruction, interior work, and window and door replacement will likely be the starting points.

Lester Baker says increasingly the vandals have knocked out windows and destroyed the convent’s historic doors just to get inside the building. Once inside, generally there has been no vandalism.

“A recent Crimestopper video showed criminal mischief as it was happening. ‘I daresay there are probably people who live in Stanton that don’t even know this convent is here.’

— Lester Baker, former mayor, board member of the Martin County Convent, Inc.

Top left, opposite page, pigeons frequently peck holes in the adobe at the monastery. Above, on the reconstruction list is replacing the first-floor porch and sprucing up the structure’s Gothic windows. Below, the state of disrepair is evident at the structure’s main entrance, a relatively new door that replaced an earlier entryway which had been vandalized.
Catholic Voices

Seeing in a deeper way softens and enhances the soul

By Fr. Ron Rolheiser

Sometimes you can see a whole lot of things just by looking. That's one of Yogi Berra's infamous aphorisms. It's a clever expression of course, but, sadly, perhaps mostly, the opposite is true.

Mostly we do a whole lot of looking without really seeing much. Seeing implies more than having good eyesight. Our eyes can be wide open and we can be seeing very little.

I've always been intrigued by how scripture describes Paul immediately after his conversion. We always assume that it tells us that Paul was struck blind by his vision, but, I think, the text implies more. It tells us that Paul got up off the ground with his eyes wide open, seeing nothing. That doesn't necessarily equate with physical blindness. He may well have been seeing physically, but he wasn't seeing the meaning of what he was getting himself into. Someone had to come and open his eyes, not just so that he could see again physically but especially that he could see more deeply into the mystery of Christ. Seeing, truly seeing, implies more than having eyes that are physically healthy and open. We all see the outer surface of things, but what's beneath isn't as automatically seen.

We see this, for instance, in what's contained inside the healing miracles of Jesus. In the Gospels, we see Jesus perform a number of healings. He heals lame people, deaf people, mute people, people with leprosy, and two women who for different reasons are unable to become pregnant.

What's important to see in these various miracles is that, almost always, there's more at issue than mere physical healing. Jesus is healing people in a deeper way, that is, he is healing the lame so that they can walk in freedom and in service of God. He is healing the deaf so that they can hear the Good News. He is healing the mute so that they can open their mouths in praise. And he is healing those who are hemorrhaging internally so that they can bring new life to birth.

We see this most clearly at those times when Jesus heals people who are blind. He's giving them more than just physical sight; he's opening their eyes so that they can see more deeply. But that's only an image. How might it be unpackaged? How can the grace and teachings of Jesus help us to see in a deeper way? Here are some suggestions:

- By shifting our eyes from seeing through familiarity to seeing through wonder. G.K. Chesterton once affirmed that familiarity is the greatest of all illusions and that the secret to life is to learn to look at things familiar until they look unfamiliar again.

We open our eyes to depth when we open ourselves to wonder.

- By shifting our eyes from seeing through paranoia and self-protection to seeing through metanoia and nurture.

It is not incidental that the first word out of Jesus' mouth in the Synoptic Gospels is the word "metanoia", a word that opposes itself to "paranoia". We open our eyes to depth with we shift from a posture of self-protection to a posture of nurture.

- By shifting our eyes from seeing through jealousy to seeing through admiration.

Our perception becomes distorted whenever we move from the happy state of admiration to the unhappy state of envy. Our eyesight is clear when we delight in admiration.

- By shifting our eyes from seeing through bitterness to seeing through eyes purified and softened by grief. The root of bitterness is wound and the way out of bitterness is grieving. Tears clear our eyesight because they soften a heart hardened by wound.

- By shifting our eyes from seeing through fantasy and auto-eroticism to seeing through appreciation and prayer.

One of the key movements within our spiritual lives is the movement from fantasy to prayer, a movement that ultimately frees us from wanting to press to ourselves all that's beautiful to appreciating beauty for its own sake. We can only really see and appreciate beauty when we stop lusting for it.

- By shifting our eyes from seeing through anger to seeing through forgiveness.

That doesn't necessarily equate with physical sight. Our eyes can be clear when we delight in admiration, with we shift from a posture of self-protection to seeing through metanoia and nurture.

- By shifting our eyes from seeing through paranoia and self-protection to seeing through jealousy to seeing through admiration.

Nothing taints our eyesight as much as anger. It's the most debilitating of all cataracts. And nothing cleanses our vision as much as forgiveness. Nobody holding a grudge sees straight.

- By shifting our eyes from seeing through longing and hunger to seeing through gratitude. Longing and hunger distort our vision. Gratitude restores it. It enables insight.

The most grateful person you know has the best eyesight of all the people you know.

Love is the eye! So say the medieval mystics, in wisdom that needs to be added to the medical vocabulary of contemporary optometry. Seeing straight has more dimensions than we normally imagine.

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

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www.facebook.com/ronrolheiser

A message in blood: IS and the meaning of the Cross

By Very Rev. Robert Barron

Recently, the attention of the world was riveted to a deserted beach in northern Libya, where a group of twenty one Coptic Christians were brutally beheaded by masked operatives of the ISIS movement. In the wake of the executions, ISIS released a gruesome video entitled “A Message in Blood to the Nation of the Cross.” I suppose that for the ISIS murderers the reference to “the Nation of the Cross” had little sense beyond a generic designation for Christianity. Sadly for most Christians, too, the cross has become little more than an anodyne, a harmless symbol, a pious decoration. I would like to take the awful event on that Libyan beach, as well as the ISIS message concerning it, as an occasion to reflect on the still startling distinctiveness of the cross.

In the time of Jesus, the cross was a brutal and very effective sign of Roman power. Imperial authorities effectively said, “If you cross us (pun intended), we will affix you to a dreadful instrument of torture and leave you to writhe in agonizing, literally excruciating (ex cruce, from the cross) pain until you die. Then we will make sure that your body hangs on that gibbet until it is eaten away by scavenging animals.” The cross was, basically, state-sponsored terrorism, and it did indeed terrify people. The great Roman statesman and philosopher Cicero once described a crucifixion but only through a convoluted circumlocution, for he couldn’t bring himself to characterize it directly. After putting down the great slave uprising of Spartacus, the Roman government lined the Appian Way with hundreds of crosses so as to dissuade any other would-be revolutionaries. Pontius Pilate had much the same intention when he nailed dozens of Jewish rebels to the walls of Jerusalem. That same Pilate arranged for Jesus to be crucified on Calvary Hill, a promontory situated close to one of the gates of ancient Jerusalem, guaranteeing that his horrific death would not be missed by the large Passover crowds moving in and out of the city.

From the crucified Jesus, all of the disciples, save John, fled, precisely because they wanted with all their hearts to avoid his dreadful fate. After Good Friday, the friends of Jesus huddled in terror in the Upper Room, petrified that they might be nailed up on Calvary as well. The disciples on the road to Emmaus were, understandably, heading out of Jerusalem, away from danger, and they were utterly convinced that Jesus’ movement had come to naught. In a word, the cross meant the victory of the world, and the annihilation of Jesus and what he stood for.

And this is why it is surpassing strange that one of the earliest Apostles and missionaries of the Christian religion could write, “I preach one thing, Christ and him crucified!” How could Paul—the passage is taken from his first letter to the Corinthians—possibly present the dreadful cross as the centerpiece of his procla-

(Please See BARRON/23)
Catholic Voices

Story of the prodigal son a reminder of nonjudgmental love

By Effie Caldarola
Catholic News Service

It was a chilly March night, but as we gathered around the fire pit on the patio, it seemed that winter's back had been broken and we were on the cusp of spring.

Our three children, and our new granddaughter, were home for a long weekend, and we were observing our family tradition of sipping a libation under the moonlight even if it meant bundling up against the Midwest's persistent north wind.

We and our kids live in four different time zones, so we must observe traditions when we can. There's nothing like the warmth of fire in the darkness to bring out laughter and good conversation.

The next day, with my guests asleep upstairs, I was struck that the day's Lectionary reading was the story of the prodigal son. It's a favorite of mine, filled with valuable lessons about parenting and family and forgiveness. The prodigal's father is one of Jesus' most descriptive portrayals of God, and how can we not marvel at such a description as we gasp at the idea of such a God?

If you haven't spent time with the story of the prodigal son this Lent, I suggest it would be worthwhile (see Luke 15:11-32).

The father rejoices even as he sees his son in the distance, the son who has done everything we parents would be appalled at. He has squandered his share of the family wealth in a life of debauchery. He has resorted to tending pigs -- unclean in his tradition -- and even coveting their food.

How does the father feel when he sees this disappointing offspring far off on the horizon?

He feels unbridled joy and forgiveness.

Often, when I read this story, I picture myself as the son, stumbling home starving, embarrassed and well aware of my sinful stupidity. Sometimes, I identify with the older brother. I've been so faithful, I've stayed the course. Why not kill the fatted calf for me and not this spoiled brat of a brother?

But anyone who has ever been a parent can also identify with the prodigal's father.

Parenting teaches you a lot about love. Jesus uses the father to say: This is how God loves you, and this is how you should love.

My kids are all adults now. I love them dearly, but like any parent, I've occasionally disagreed with a lifestyle choice or been tempted to offer direction where none was appropriate. How many of us have scars on our tongues from the times we've refrained from ill-timed nagging or disapproving comments or the unhelpful "I told you so"?

As I sat at morning prayer and thought about the prodigal's family relationships, my eyes drifted out the window to the cold fire pit and the empty patio. I thought of how proud I am of the love that my children have for one another. I appreciated how they work to arrange their schedules so that they can visit at the same time. They love to be together. They keep in touch. They extend this loving attitude to extended family and to large networks of friends.

I can't imagine any one of them as the older brother. Instead, I imagine them running down the road to welcome a sibling home, ring and sandals in hand, lots faster than I would. Like the father, no questions asked.

St. Ignatius of Loyola reminds us to find God in all things. Sometimes, in this weary world, that's tough to do. But I realized God had been in our circle that night around the fire pit, and I felt a lot of gratitude for simple, nonjudgmental love.

When going slower means better

By Moises Sandoval
Catholic News Service

It's doubtful that we really know inattention and distraction. We speed through our day trying to do many tasks at the same time. Indeed our lives are a testament to inattention and distraction. We boast about the many places where we have lived, worked or seen. But it's doubtful that we really know them.

In a recent column in The New York Times, Roger Cohen begins: "I came up to this small Welsh village the other day to celebrate one life lived in one place over 83 years at one with the land and with God -- the kind of life that is dying out in a restless world."

Cohen was there for the funeral of Alun Jones, born on a farm in central Wales called Ystradlwyn. Jones seemed to know every inch of the valley and every one of its sheep. He spent his entire life there. Cohen notes that "London, a five-hour drive away, was a remote universe."

As urbanization increases from 30 percent of the world's population in 1950 to 60 percent in 2030, Cohen sees a danger as "humanidad desprendida de la naturaleza, inconsciente de los ritmos de las estaciones y el ciclo de lo pasajero, enredado en materiales de construcción y en el ritmo de las cosas, desmaterializado en esta etapa de la modernidad."

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"¿Qué es mejor? ¿Lento o rápido"? Los niños gritan: "rápido."

"Vivimos en un tiempo que idolatra la velocidad -- en computadoras, teléfonos inteligentes o smartphones, autos que aceleran a 60 millas por hora en segundos, y fíbulas que disparan docenas de balas por minuto."

Corremos todo el día tratando de hacer muchas tareas a la misma vez. Ciertamente inatención y distracción definen nuestras vidas. Presumimos de los lugares donde hemos trabajado, vivido o visitado. Pero hay duda de que verdaderamente los conozcamos.

En una reciente columna en el periódico The New York Times, Roger Cohen nos cuenta de un hombre joven entrevistando a un grupo de niños sentados alrededor de una mesa. Le pregunta: "¿Qué es mejor? ¿Lento o rápido"? Los niños gritan: "rápido."

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"Londres, a unas cinco horas por auto, era un universo remoto", notó Cohen. En 1950, menos de un tercio de la humanidad era urbana y se espera que ese número llegara a un 60 por ciento para el 2030. Por estos cambios Cohen ve un peligro en una "humanidad desprendida de la naturaleza, inconsciente de los ritmos" (Mira SANDOVAL/23)
Our Faith

Was crucifixion necessary? How do you define a homily?

By Father Kenneth Doyle
Catholic News Service

Q. I have been a Catholic all my life, but I have never really understood why Jesus had to die for our sins. Couldn't God have just forgiven us? (Eagan, Minnesota)

A. Your question is one that has occupied theologians over the entire history of Christianity. I side with your position: God is God, and he could have done anything he wanted.

What is clearly the church's teaching (Catechism of the Catholic Church, No. 615) is that "Jesus atoned for our faults and made satisfaction for our sins to the Father." But whether that atonement had to occur in the way that it did has been a matter of theological debate.

One theory, sometimes referred to as "substitution," "satisfaction" or "ransom" theology, was championed by St. Anselm in the 11th century.

He believed that Christ's sacrificial death was necessary in order to liberate humanity from sin and restore communion with the Father, that the blood of Jesus was "payment" to God for human sin. (The manner of Christ's death reflected Old Testament sacrifices, where a "payment" to God for human sin was required.)

Anselm's theology prevailed, even though it was challenged by scholars such as Peter Abelard, a contemporary of Anselm, who insisted that Christ's death on the cross had been an act of love, not payment.

Even St. Augustine, 700 years before, had reservations and asked in his "De Trinitate": "Is it necessary to think that being God, the Father was angry with us, saw his son die for us and thus abated his anger against us?"

A fair number of modern-day scholars, too, find the satisfaction theology bothersome because of the way it images God. What kind of loving God, they argue, would demand such horrific suffering from his own Son in order to secure divine justice?

What seems to me a reasonable explanation is this: God decided to send Jesus to live among us, to be fully human so that he could teach us and show us the ways of the Lord. Once he became human, death was inevitable; and because his teaching challenged both the religious and secular authorities of his day, a violent death was likely.

So we are, in fact, redeemed by the life, death and resurrection of Jesus, but we are not compelled to believe that God deliberately willed the suffering of his Son. Jesus asked at Emmaus (Lk 24:26): "Was it not necessary that the Messiah should suffer these things and enter into his glory?"

Yes, it was necessary -- but not because God willed it to happen exactly in that way.

Q. Recently we moved to another military parish. For the last four weekends, the priest here has been doing a book study for the homily -- not breaking open the word of God. (On the feast of the Baptism of Our Lord, there was a baptism during Mass. But instead of talking about the Gospel and the baptism, he talked about the book.)

A. Your question is one that has long puzzled me. But I agree with you; but more important, you have the law on your side. The General Instruction of the Roman Missal (the prefatory "guidebook" for the priest-celebrant) says in No. 65 that the homily "should be an explanation of some aspect of the readings from Sacred Scripture or of another text from the Ordinary or the Proper of the Mass of the day and should take into account both the mystery being celebrated and the particular needs of the listeners."

The purpose of the homily, then, is to relate the biblical passages assigned for that day's Mass to the challenges that that particular congregation faces in daily living. (One professor of homiletics -- the quote is variously attributed -- said that a priest should prepare his homily with the Bible in one hand and the daily newspaper in the other.)

To bypass the Scripture readings -- especially for four Sundays -- in order to speak instead about a different book (however worthwhile) seems hard to justify.

What the priest could do, though, is to use some of that book's themes and stories to illustrate the day's Scriptures and recommend that the congregation follow up by reading the book at home.

Am I wrong? Isn't the homily supposed to be used for explaining the Scripture readings as they relate to our lives rather than discussing a book about how to be a better Catholic? (Name of city withheld)

A. I agree with you; but more important, you have the law on your side. The General Instruction of the Roman Missal (the prefatory "guidebook" for the priest-celebrant) says in No. 65 that the homily "should be an explanation of some aspect of the readings from Sacred Scripture or of another text from the Ordinary or the Proper of the Mass of the day and should take into account both the mystery being celebrated and the particular needs of the listeners."

The purpose of the homily, then, is to relate the biblical passages assigned for that day's Mass to the challenges that that particular congregation faces in daily living. (One professor of homiletics -- the quote is variously attributed -- said that a priest should prepare his homily with the Bible in one hand and the daily newspaper in the other.)

To bypass the Scripture readings -- especially for four Sundays -- in order to speak instead about a different book (however worthwhile) seems hard to justify.

What the priest could do, though, is to use some of that book's themes and stories to illustrate the day's Scriptures and recommend that the congregation follow up by reading the book at home.

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

An idea for helping the poor in Philly might take off

By Father William J. Byron, SJ
Catholic News Service

Recently, The Philadelphia Inquirer ran a story by Phil Goldsmith on the alarming extent of people living in poverty in that city -- close to 400,000. The report prompted me to think of ways to move the urban poor back and forth each day from their neighborhoods to the suburbs where jobs are opening up.

I began to think of the federally funded food stamp program (now known as SNAP -- the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program) that has been around for a long time. It works well to feed the poor. Eligible poor people originally got paper stamps that they could use to purchase food. Now the program provides an Electronic Benefits Transfer (EBT) card. It works like a debit card and can be used at most grocery outlets and farmers markets.

Based on the food stamp model, I wonder if something that might be called a "Transcard," could now be introduced. It would have to be funded by the city, and that, of course, is a major challenge. It would be used on any public transportation line to move around the metropolitan area at little or no cost to the job-seeking cardholder. Recipients would, of course, have to be poor and ready for work.

Philadelphia has an Office of Community Empowerment and Opportunity. If that name means anything at all, it seems like the logical place to begin exploring the Transcard idea.

Perhaps federal and state funds could be attracted. Public-private cooperation is possible. The city could surely look to the many faith communities in the area for help. Special collections for this purpose could be taken up regularly in churches, synagogues and mosques. Corporate philanthropy is a possibility.

If city government is unable to meet the administrative challenges of a program like this, you have to wonder about city government's ability to serve the poor.

There is a little-known principle of economics that says "to move is to produce." The Transcard program would move potential producers to settings where products and services would emerge as a result of their labor.

Not all movement need be in the direction of the suburbs. It could be crosstown or uptown and downtown to service, retail and construction employment opportunities. No reason to exclude manufacturing employment, although it is on the decline in most cities.

It just might happen that replacement and repair of abandoned housing in high-poverty neighborhoods might become a reality, thus putting properties back on the tax rolls and enhancing both the quality and quantity of low-income housing.

The count of 400,000 poor people in Philadelphia represents many who are elderly and children and not expected to work, but there are plenty who are able and willing to work but simply unable to find jobs.

Something clearly needs to be done. Transcards could be helpful in the search for a solution to a problem not unique to Philadelphia. The program could be tried in other cities and, indeed, it could trigger federal legislation that, like food stamps, would help the poor wherever public transportation is within their reach.

Jesuit Father Byron is university professor of business and society at St. Joseph's University. Email: wbyron@sju.edu.
Why doesn’t Jesus pay my taxes?

By Bill Dodds
Catholic News Service

It was a little more challenging filling out this year’s federal income tax forms. I had to include information on the Affordable Care Act (a boon for some of us who are self-employed). And for the first time since my wife, Monica, died in early 2013, I had to list myself as single, not married.

That was tough emotionally and financially.

It ended up I had underestimated my quarterly tax contributions through the year and had to include a check when I sent in my material. Funny how the mind sometimes works (or doesn’t), but as I wrote that check, I thought of the story of Jesus and the temple tax and how Our Lord demonstrated the point.

You probably remember the story. "Go to the sea," he told Peter, "drop in a hook, and take the first fish that comes up. Open its mouth and you will find a coin worth twice the temple tax. Give that to them for me and for you" (Mt 17:27).

When I thought, "Why doesn’t Jesus pay my taxes?" I remembered what a friend used to point out: "Jesus doesn’t do your laundry for you."

I suppose that’s in the same category as the time the apostles told Jesus the crowd was hungry and the people should head to town to get some food. He answered, "Give them some food yourselves." (That’s Matthew 14:15-16.)

I don’t know what Scripture scholars call that, but in modern lingo, Jesus lobbed the ball right back in their court.

Which, at times, is how Jesus answers my prayers. And yours.

Yes, he gives us the grace and strength we need to accomplish a task or grow spiritually but ... we’re the ones who have to get better at being patient by being patient. Get better at being more understanding by being more understanding. Get better at eating right, or quitting smoking or adapting to living with loss after the death of a loved one by ...

You get the point.

"Dear Jesus, clean my clothes!"

"Dear beloved son or daughter, you have a washing machine and detergent. Get at it!"

There’s another well-known reference to taxes in the Gospel. Jesus tells the Pharisees who are trying to trip him up: "Repay to Caesar what belongs to Caesar and to God what belongs to God" (Mk 12:17).

Apparently, Jesus isn’t going to write a check to the U.S. Treasury for me. (Yes, yes, my income and abilities are gifts from God but ... you know what I mean.) He is, however, going to pick up the tab for repaying what belongs to God.

I belong to God. Created, sustained and always, always loved by him infinitely and unconditionally.

And I, time and again, fall short of "repaying" him. That’s what Jesus did at the crucifixion. Yes, for all of us but absolutely for each of us.

For me. And for you, singular.

Bill Dodds and his late wife, Monica, were the founders of the Friends of St. John the Caregiver (www.FSJC.org). Contact:

BillDodds@YourAgingParent.com.
WASHINGTON (CNS) — President Barack Obama and first lady Michelle Obama will welcome Pope Francis to the White House Sept. 23.

"During the visit, the president and the pope will continue the dialogue, which they began during the president's visit to the Vatican in March 2014, on their shared values and commitments on a wide range of issues," said a statement released March 26 by the Office of the Press Secretary at the White House.

Those issues, it said, include "caring for the marginalized and the poor; advancing economic opportunity for all; serving as good stewards of the environment; protecting religious minorities and promoting religious freedom around the world; and welcoming and integrating immigrants and refugees into our communities."

The statement added, "The president looks forward to continuing this conversation with the Holy Father during his first visit to the United States as pope."

Last year, in their first encounter, Pope Francis received the president at the Vatican for a discussion that touched on several areas of tension between the Catholic Church and the White House, including religious freedom and medical ethics.

During an unusually long 50-minute meeting, the two leaders discussed "questions of particular relevance for the church in (the U.S.), such as the exercise of the rights to religious freedom, life and conscientious objection as well as the issue of immigration reform," the Vatican said in statement afterward.

While in Washington, Pope Francis will address a joint meeting of Congress Sept. 24, making him the first pope to do so.

The Archdiocese of Washington said it would host the pope for his visit, but did not announce dates. On his flight from the Philippines to Rome in January, Pope Francis said he would canonize Blessed Junípero Serra at Washington's Basilica of the Shrine of the Immaculate Conception.

On March 18, the United Nations announced Pope Francis will visit there the morning of Sept. 25 to address the U.N. General Assembly. The pope also will meet separately with U.N. Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon and with the president of the General Assembly. The pontiff also is scheduled to a town hall gathering with U.N. staff.

In a statement, Ban noted that the pope's visit came during the United Nations' 70th anniversary, in which its members would make decisions about sustainable development, climate change and peace. He said he was confident the pope's visit would inspire the international community to redouble its efforts for social justice, tolerance and understanding.

The United Nations did not release the detailed itinerary for the meetings, part of a larger papal visit to Washington, New York and Philadelphia. The Vatican is expected to release the official itinerary about two months in advance of the trip, unless local officials release it earlier.

Pope Francis already had announced his participation Sept. 26 and 27 for the World Meeting of Families in Philadelphia.

During his pontificate, St. John Paul II visited the United States seven times -- two of which were fuel stopovers -- making the country his most frequent foreign destination after his native Poland. He addressed the U.N. General Assembly in 1979 and 1995; Blessed Paul VI did so in 1965 and Pope Benedict XVI addressed the assembly in 2008, during his one U.S. visit as pope.

With committees, planning for WMOF, papal visit in high gear

By Matthew Gambino
Catholic News Service

PHILADELPHIA — Organizing for the World Meeting of Families and the visit by Pope Francis to Philadelphia in September has taken a major step forward with the announcement of the 15 committees and leadership charged with spearheading operations in hospitality, liturgy, volunteers and more.

Executives for the events including Auxiliary Bishop John J. McIntyre and Independence Blue Cross CEO Daniel Hilferty, who is a co-chairman of the World Meeting of Families-Philadelphia, unveiled the committees and introduced their chairpersons at the IBX headquarters March 11.

The congress has already registered approximately 7,500 attendees, according to officials. Between 10,000 and 15,000 people from the United States and 150 countries are expected to register for the Sept. 22-25 congress. Up to 2 million people are also anticipated for the papal events, including a cultural celebration and Mass celebrated by the pope, Sept. 26-27.

To manage such big crowds, planners intend the committees to begin working now on multiple issues six months ahead of the September events.

The World Meeting of Families, held every three years, will come to the United States for the first time since it was begun by St. John Paul II in 1994. The aim of the congress is to strengthen the bonds of family life and highlight its value to society throughout the world.

Some committees address obvious needs of accommodating and moving large numbers of visitors to the city, such as the Welcome Committee, the Government Outreach Committee and the Visa and Immigration Committee.

Others, however, point to the unique nature of the families' congress such as the Hunger and Homelessness Committee, the Parish and School Preparation Committee and the Youth Congress Committee.

In addition to discussions and activities about families at the congress, attendees also want to see the sights of the Philadelphia region, details of which will be handled by the "GO PHILADELPHIA!" Committee. It will highlight the special programs to be provided for the congress and papal visit by the numerous cultural, historical and family-friendly organizations in the region.

The Papal Events Committee is an obvious need, as is the Volunteer Committee. Many volunteers have already contacted the World Meeting of Families organization, whose officials expect to need about 10,000 volunteers to meet the many needs of the events.

Since each volunteer will need to be vetted for security and assigned to tasks that match the person's skill set, an online registration system will be set up in the spring at the World Meeting of Families website, www.worldmeeting2015.org, which continues to accept registrations for the congress.

At least two committees not included in the announcement but alluded to in a statement from the Archdiocese of Philadelphia involve two of the biggest concerns: moving people around and making sure all those people, and especially Pope Francis, are safe.

A view of the Benjamin Franklin Parkway is seen from the steps of the Philadelphia Museum of Art looking toward City Hall in Philadelphia Nov. 17. Pope Francis confirmed he will attend the 2015 World Meeting of Families. The weeklong event in Philadelphia will end with a papal Mass on the city's Benjamin Franklin Parkway and is expected to draw over 1 million worshippers. (CNS photo/ Tom Mihalek, Reuters)
The Guadalupe Radio Network (GRN) operates 3 English language Catholic radio stations in the Diocese of San Angelo:

• Abilene - **91.7 FM**, KQOS
• Midland-Odessa - **1150 AM**, KLPF
• San Angelo - **91.5 FM**, KPDE

The GRN (*Radio for Your Soul*) is an EWTN Affiliate. The Top 10 weekday programs (most are “live” call-in shows) are:

- 7 AM  -  Mass (EWTN Chapel)
- 8 AM  -  Catholic Connection
- 9 AM  -  Fr. Ricardo
- 10 AM  -  Women of Grace with Johnnette Benkovic
- 11 AM  -  More to Life
- 12 PM  -  The Doctor Is In (Except Mon.)
- 1 PM  -  Called to Communion (Mon./Tues./Thurs.)
- 2 PM  -  EWTN Open Line
- 3 PM  -  Divine Mercy Chaplet; Kresta in the Afternoon
- 5 PM  -  Catholic Answers Live

Schedule Exceptions

The GRN produces 2 other shows:

• Mon., 12 PM  -  We Sing Our Faith
• Wed., 1 PM  -  A Good Habit

For a complete schedule, or to listen live, please go to: www.grnonline.com

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Growing with God

Scholastic Book Fair/Open House
April 15, 5:30 pm – 7:30 pm

Multi-Cultural Festival
May 8, 9:30 and 10:30 performances
RSVP: 325-949-1747

ACS is planning a Middle School (Grades 6, 7, 8) component. Current fifth grade students who register for sixth grade at ACS will be in the first Middle School Class.

ACS Mission Statement: Our mission as a Catholic school community is to create an atmosphere inspired by the Gospel of Jesus, thus enabling our students to live in a community of faith, knowledge and service.

www.angelocatholicschool.org
**OBISPO**

(Para 2)

recuerda de una trompeta, proclamando la buena nueva de la victoria de Cristo sobre la muerte.

Otro símbolo que es muy importante en esta temporada es el cirio pascual. A lo largo del Tiempo Pascual, esta vela está localizada en un soporte alto en un lugar prominente en el santuario cerca del altar o el ábside. Es un símbolo de la presencia de Cristo resucitado entre el pueblo de Dios. La encendemos durante nuestras celebraciones litúrgicas por toda esta gran temporada hasta Pentecostés.

Para los que se han unido a la Iglesia Católica a través del Rito de Iniciación Cristiana de Adultos, el Tiempo Pascual es un tiempo de la catequesis continua o mistagogia. Después de su iniciación en los sacramentos, reciben instrucción continua sobre cómo vivir la nueva vida de un cristiano. Este es un tiempo para que puedan crecer en profundizar su comprensión de la Muerte y Resurrección de Cristo, aplicar su significado a su propia vida, participar en la Eucaristía, y hacer obras de caridad.

En muchas de nuestras parroquias, el Tiempo Pascual es la temporada para los sacramentos de la Primera Comunión y Confirmación para los que fueron bautizados como infantes. Esto muestra la conexión de esos sacramentos con el Misterio Pascual de Cristo y la acción del Espíritu Santo. Es importante recordar, sin embargo, que la Confirmación puede ser celebrada también en otros tiempos del año, y un número creciente de parroquianos están eligiendo fechas en el verano o el otoño. Esto quita un poco de presión del calendario de primavera.

En este año el Tiempo Pascual trae una oportunidad sorprendente por medio de la televisión. La cadena NBC emitirá su nueva serie AD: The Bible Continues (AD: La Biblia Continua) por medio de doce sucesivos episodios cada domingo comenzando el Domingo de Pascua. Esta serie cuenta la historia de los Hechos de los Apóstoles, presentando la cuenta de los orígenes históricos de la Iglesia en medio de las dificultades y persecuciones. Muchos obispos católicos alrededor del país han recomendado este programa con entusiasmo.

Siendo que esta serie de televisión presenta la misión de la Iglesia de un modo tan inspirador, es una buena oportunidad para la reflexión y la catequesis. La Arquidiócesis de Washington ofrecerá videos cortos para proporcionar una perspectiva católica sobre la serie de NBC. Estarán disponibles en línea en [www.adw.org/adtheseries](http://www.adw.org/adtheseries) a partir del estreno de este programa de televisión. Otra ayuda Católica muy útil para integrar esta serie con nuestra formación continua en la fe es un libro por Michael Aquilina nombrado: AD: Ministers and Martyrs: The Ultimate Catholic Guide to the Apostolic Age (AD: Ministros y Mártires: La Guía Definitiva Católica de la Época Apostólica), ofrecido por Sophia Institute Press.

Una de las prácticas de oración más poderosas del Tiempo Pascual es la Novena de Pentecostés. Son nueve días de oración que conducen a la Solemnidad de Pentecostés, modelada sobre los nueve días que los apóstoles y discípulos pasaron en oración entre la Ascensión de Jesús y la venida del Espíritu Santo en Pentecostés. Recomiendo ampliamente el rezar una Novena de Pentecostés cada año, abriendo nuestros corazones cada vez más profundamente a la acción del Espíritu Santo. En este año los nueve días de esta Novena son del 15 de mayo al 23 de mayo inclusivo. Hay muchas diferentes maneras de rezar una Novena de Pentecostés. La forma ideal es simplemente orar las Vísperas, la Oración de la Tarde de la Liturgy de las Horas, en cada uno de esos nueve días. Esto se puede encontrar fácilmente en aplicaciones telefónicas gratuitas como iBreviari.

Mucho tiempo después que nuestros centros comerciales y tiendas de comestibles han removido la mercancía de Pascua de sus estanterías, nosotros los católicos seguiremos reflexionando sobre el profundo significado de la Pascua. Como los primeros cristianos en el primer siglo, vamos a seguir edificando la Iglesia con la ayuda del Espíritu Santo.

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**MONASTERY**

(From 12)

at the monastery, and promised any vandalism would result in prosecution. The Bakers say incidents of criminal behavior have curtailed.

Board members say they hope to raise $400,000 this summer and next summer. Fundraisers, including an annual soup cook off, clay shoots and the sales of crosses made from the wood of the convent have helped spur the capital effort.

Once the restoration project is completed, phase two will begin, which would include a native rock garden, an interpretive center that tells the story of the convent and Martin County and pruned up landscaping.

Ultimately, organizers hope to be able to rebuild a school and a third building, believed to be a dormitory, that were destroyed by a tornado in 1938.

“We would like to rebuild those two structures and have a community room in it with a courtyard that could be used for weddings, and community events,” Lester Baker said.

Historian John Kennedy said he received information that the school was actually a reform school from a man who said he was somewhat of a troublemaker and was sent to the school on the convent grounds. Kennedy said the man today credits the nuns at the convent with turning his life around.

According to Kennedy and the group’s historical information, “In the summer and fall of 1882, six German friars from St. Boniface Monastery in Scio, Kansas, under the direction of Fr. Anastasius Peters, founded a new monastery at Grelton Station, halfway between Fort Worth and El Paso on the Texas and Pacific Railroad. They immediately changed the settlement’s name to Marienfeld (German for Mary’s Field) in honor of their patron.

“The name Marienfeld was later changed to Stanton in 1890 in honor of Lincoln’s Secretary of War. The friars soon built a small, wooden monastery and church, dedicated respectively to the Most Pure Heart of Mary and St. Joseph. This was the first parish church between Ft. Worth and El Paso. The Carmelites were soon followed to West Texas by immigrant settlers, attracted by the friars’ and the railroad’s offer of cheap land.

“The Carmelites hoped to build a German Catholic Colony, the only one of its kind in West Texas. By 1886, the little German community was thriving. But the historic drought of 1886-1887 left many settlers destitute and unable to pay for their farms. Many families moved or faced starvation.

The last Carmelite priest, Fr. Albert Wagner, left Stanton in 1901.

“From 1894-1938, the convent was occupied by the Sisters of Mercy, who worked alongside the Carmelites since 1894 and operated the school. The building and grounds were sold to the sisters in 1897.

“The Sisters of Mercy used the building that remains today as their living quarters and chapel. They went on to improve the property by building a center structure connecting the two original buildings. The sisters operated Our Lady of Mercy Academy and nursery for the next 44 years, until a tornado struck the area in 1938.

“The buildings were severely damaged and a decision was made to sell the property.

“Today, the only building still standing, the monastery, is listed on the National Register of Historic Places and is a Registered Texas Landmark. With its four foot thick adobe walls and Gothic pointed windows, the building has been described as one of the finest historic buildings in the American Southwest.

For more information, or to help in this restoration, contact Lester Baker at baker_lester@hotmail.com; Reggie Baker at 432.553.0693 or John Kennedy at john.kennedy@pxd.com.
Catholic group shares the good news at spring training

By Nancy Wiechec
Catholic News Service

GLENDALE, Ariz. -- The crack of the bat is a sure sign of spring, one that calls Ray McKenna to the field.

"How's the team looking this year?" he asked the top trainer for the Texas Rangers.

"Anything we can do? Please let us know," he told catcher Tyler Flowers of the Chicago White Sox.

The Washington-based attorney was busy checking in with baseball players, coaches, trainers and fans at spring training camps in Arizona and Florida.

McKenna though was not dispensing batting tips or offering legal advice. He was there to make sure Catholic players have access to the sacraments and to share the good news.

A former minor-league baseball chaplain, McKenna is the founder and president of Catholic Athletes for Christ. He said the 10-year-old sports ministry has a two-fold mission of service and evangelization.

"The service is to provide the sacraments to the players so the players are able to practice their faith," he said.

Evangelization, he continued, "is simply a fancy word for going out and sharing the good news and telling people that God is good."

McKenna said he saw a need for the formal sports outreach while working as a lay chaplain. He could impart spiritual messages and support to athletes, but he could not provide the sacraments.

"The result of that logically was that players were leaving the Catholic faith and becoming so-called non-denominational, born-again Christians and not understanding and receiving the fullness of our Catholic faith," he said.

Catholic Athletes for Christ now has a cadre of priests it works with to make sure that athletes can go to confession and celebrate Mass at stadiums, club houses and practice fields, accommodating their game schedules. It also coordinates events with the Vatican's Church and Sports office within the Pontifical Council for the Laity and with the Knights of Columbus.

Msgr. Ned Brockhaus, a priest of the Diocese of San Diego, is active with the Catholic group and is the chaplain for the Padres. He celebrates Sunday Mass in the Padres' press room when they are in town.

A baseball fan since he was a boy, the priest considers himself a missionary to the sport. He said he helps players to "keep their faith alive" and gives them some reason to come to Mass.

He said pro athletes have a lot of demands and pressure -- and unique needs. "I try to help them in the unusual life that they lead."

Spring training, the yearly passage to opening day, is just one stop on the Catholic Athletes for Christ's annual agenda. The organization holds a yearly retreat for baseball players and is also working to build stronger relationships and initiatives with the national football, hockey and basketball leagues.

It has a program for middle school and high school athletes. With more than 100 chapters in formation, "it's growing like wildfire," McKenna said.

If baseball mirrors religion in its rituals, then for Catholics one might say that Mike Sweeney of the Kansas City Royals is a key evangelist.

Sweeney, the team's former first baseman and now special assistant, was recently named to the club's Hall of Fame. He is chairman of the athletes advisory board for Catholic Athletes for Christ and sponsors a Catholic baseball camp for kids. With his wife, he runs the Mike and Shara Sweeney Family Foundation, which supports youths and pro-life initiatives and encourages unity between Catholics and Protestants.

On a practice field in Surprise, Arizona, McKenna caught up with Sweeney and they chatted with Royals relief pitcher Ryan Madson, who will become a fully fledged Catholic at Easter. A talk given by Sweeney had inspired Madson to learn more about Catholicism and enter the Rite of Christian Initiation for Adults program.

Their conversation was interrupted by fans calling out to Sweeney for autographs. He graciously accommodated them, and with his signature added a Bible reference. "We got a good Scripture for 'em," Sweeney said as he signed and passed back a fan's souvenir baseball.

McKenna watched most of the Royals-White Sox matchup from the Kansas City dugout. It ended with a White Sox 6-2 win.

On his second day in Phoenix, McKenna met up with Bishop Michael F. Olson of Fort Worth, Texas, one of 22 bishops who serve on Catholic Athletes for Christ's board. He was taking some vacation time and had tickets for that day's game between the Chicago White Sox and the Texas Rangers.

When asked which team he was rooting for, Bishop Olson answered with prudence. "I'm rooting for a well-played game."

"I am a loyal lifelong Chicago White Sox fan," he admitted. But said as bishop of Fort Worth he also cheers for the Rangers. And his third-favorite team? "Whoever plays the Cubs," he quipped.

McKenna, Bishop Olson, catcher Flowers, Msgr. Brockhaus and Jaime Reed, the senior director of medical operations for the Rangers, stood talking near home plate at the Camelback Ranch ballpark. The White Sox-Rangers game was to start in about an hour.

Reed told Catholic News Service that he often prays the rosary using a knotted string made by his daughter. On his way to work or on the way to the ballpark, "it just kind of balances me a little bit, kind of puts my priorities in the right place," he said. "It lets me know that I don't have to worry about a lot of things, but God's got it under control."

Flowers said he appreciates the work of Catholic Athletes for Christ and the chaplains.

"They do a great job helping us," he said. "We can have Mass at the stadium at the majority of places we go." He added that Sunday Mass is a "good refresh, a good reset" for the beginning of his week.
Transportation will be coordinated by regional authorities including SEPTA, Amtrak, NJ Transit, PATCO and Philadelphia International Airport. Security concerns will be managed by a large and diverse group of governmental agencies including at least the Philadelphia and Pennsylvania State Police departments, state and federal agencies such as the Secret Service, plus security details from Italy and the Vatican.

Philadelphia Archbishop Charles J. Chaput said in a statement that he was grateful to the people serving on the committees. "I'm confident that we will create a beautiful and memorable week for our families here in the Philadelphia region -- and for families from around the world," he said.

The archbishop praised "the willingness of business, civic and cultural leaders to become engaged. Whether Catholic or of another faith tradition, they have responded equally with open hearts, great enthusiasm and strong commitment," he said.

A key leader of the Philadelphia congress, executive director Donna Crilley Farrell, called the meeting and papal visit a "once-in-a-generation event" and thanked the committee leaders giving their time and talent. "It is encouraging to see our community come together to deliver such an important event for our city, our state and our nation," she said. "Truly, we are indebted to those who have agreed to lead committees for the World Meeting of Families and to all who will serve on these committees moving forward. It is their efforts which will make this event so incredibly special."

Gambino is director and general manager of CatholicPhilly.com, the news website of the Archdiocese of Philadelphia.

**FAMILY**

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**BISHOP**

"Long after the malls and grocery stores have removed the Easter merchandise from their shelves, we Catholics will continue to reflect on the profound significance of Easter."

— Bishop Michael J. Sis

of prayer leading up to the Solemnity of Pentecost, modeled after the nine days the Apostles and disciples spent in prayer between the Ascension of Jesus and the descent of the Holy Spirit on Pentecost. I highly recommend praying a Pentecost Novena every year, opening our hearts ever more deeply to the action of the Holy Spirit.

This year the nine days for this Novena are May 15 to May 23, inclusive. There are many different ways to pray a Pentecost Novena. The ideal way is simply to pray Evening Prayer from the Liturgy of the Hours on each of those nine days. This can easily be found on free telephone applications such as iBreviary.

Long after our malls and grocery stores have removed the Easter merchandise from their shelves, we Catholics will continue to reflect on the profound significance of Easter. Like the early Christians in the first century, we will continue building up the Church with the help of the Holy Spirit.

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**FAMILY**

Sociologists tell us that a major factor in the breakdown of the family and in serious teen problems is the neglect of family meals. This time of community is essential for communicating the worth of the next generation. Our state and our nation," she said. "Truly, we are indebted to those who have agreed to lead committees for the World Meeting of Families and to all who will serve on these committees moving forward. It is their efforts which will make this event so incredibly special."

"It is encouraging to see our community come together to deliver such an important event for our city, our state and our nation," she said. "Truly, we are indebted to those who have agreed to lead committees for the World Meeting of Families and to all who will serve on these committees moving forward. It is their efforts which will make this event so incredibly special."

Gambino is director and general manager of CatholicPhilly.com, the news website of the Archdiocese of Philadelphia.

**BISHOP**

"Long after the malls and grocery stores have removed the Easter merchandise from their shelves, we Catholics will continue to reflect on the profound significance of Easter."

— Bishop Michael J. Sis

of prayer leading up to the Solemnity of Pentecost, modeled after the nine days the Apostles and disciples spent in prayer between the Ascension of Jesus and the descent of the Holy Spirit on Pentecost. I highly recommend praying a Pentecost Novena every year, opening our hearts ever more deeply to the action of the Holy Spirit.

This year the nine days for this Novena are May 15 to May 23, inclusive. There are many different ways to pray a Pentecost Novena. The ideal way is simply to pray Evening Prayer from the Liturgy of the Hours on each of those nine days. This can easily be found on free telephone applications such as iBreviary.

Long after our malls and grocery stores have removed the Easter merchandise from their shelves, we Catholics will continue to reflect on the profound significance of Easter. Like the early Christians in the first century, we will continue building up the Church with the help of the Holy Spirit.
SAINTS

(From 8)

States. Their service also came to include home missions in New Mexico and a health care ministry with the opening of Holy Cross Hospital in 1928 in Chicago.

Sister M. Helen, SSC, Mother Maria’s secretary, wrote that the number of sisters increased through the years and more schools were established. Mother Maria returned to Lithuania in 1920 and established a Sisterhood there. The foundation of the Sisters of St. Casimir was at Paziulis, near Kaunas. The relationship with the Chicago contingent lasted for about 12 years when the Paziulis Sisters of St. Casimir chose to become independent from the American Community. Mother Maria felt the loss deeply and left the Lithuanian Motherhouse never to return.

According to her Sisters, Mother Maria loved celebrations, including folk dancing and comical skits. She enjoyed jokes, told humorous stories and played card games. She took a personal interest in her students and her community and visited the Sisters’ family members whenever possible. She affirmed the joy of family gatherings and often attended a wedding at a parish Mass and go out of her way to greet the newlyweds. In 1933 Mother Maria was diagnosed with a malignant condition, but made a recovery for a few years. She continued her work in new directions opening schools in New Mexico in non-Lithuanian parishes. On one visit to New Mexico where the Sisters often worked with the poorest of the poor, a child offered her a grimy piece of candy. Sister Petcavage, SSC, writes that Mother Maria ignored the protests of a companion and ate the candy to honor the child’s gift. She encouraged the Sisters to respect the children’s heritage and not try to impose a new culture upon them.

As her cancer returned, she prepared well for death and longed to see her “best friend, Jesus.” She breathed her last on April 17, 1940 in the Motherhouse in Chicago.

In 2010, Mother Maria Kaupas was found to have lived a life of heroic virtue by the Congregation for the Causes of Saints in Rome and was declared “Venerable” by Pope Benedict XVI. This is the first of three major steps in the process of making a saint in the Roman Catholic Church. The next step is the beatification process and involves gathering, reviewing and authenticating miracles attributed to Mother Maria.

BARRON

(From 14)

He could do so only because he knew that God had raised the crucified Jesus from the dead, proving thereby that God’s love and forgiveness are greater than anything in the world. This is why his exaltation of the cross is a sort of taunt to Rome and all of its brutal descendants down through the ages: “You think that scares us? God has conquered that!” And this is why, to this day, Christians boldly hold up an image of the humiliated, tortured Jesus to the world. What they are saying is, “We are not afraid.”

How wonderful this is, by the way, in light of the Charlie Hebdo tragedy and the controversy over the Dutch cartoonist’s mocking depictions of the prophet Muhammad. Christians don’t fuss particularly about insults to Jesus, for we reverence a depiction of the insulted Christ as our most sacred icon. We can say, with Paul, “I am certain that neither death nor life, neither angels nor principalities, neither height nor depth, nor any other creature will be able to separate us from the love of God in Christ Jesus our Lord” (Rom. 8:38-39), for we know that the world killed Jesus but God raised him from the dead.

Just before their throats were cut, many of the murdered Coptic Christians could be seen mouthing the words “Jesus Christ” and “Jesus is Lord.” The first of those phrases is a rendering of the Aramaic Ieshouah Maschiach, which means “Jesus the anointed one” and which hearkens back to King David, the paradigmatic anointed figure of the Old Testament. The second phrase is one that can be traced to St. Paul’s kerygmatic cry Jesus Kyrios (Jesus Lord!), which was intended to trump a watchword of the time, Kaiser Kyrios (Caesar is Lord). In short, both declarations assert the kingship of Jesus, but what a strange kingship! The new David reigns, not from a throne, but from a cross; the one who trumps Caesar doesn’t lead an army, but embodies the divine forgiveness.

The ISIS barbarians were actually quite right in entitling their video “A Message Written in Blood.” Up and down the centuries, tyrants and their lackeys have thought that they could wipe out the followers of Jesus through acts of violence. But as Tertullian observed long ago, the blood of the martyrs is the seed of the Church. And St. Ignatius observed long ago, the blood of the martyrs is the seed of the Church. And they were furthermore right in sending their message to “the Nation of the Cross.” But they should know that the cross taunts them.

Father Robert Barron is the founder of the global ministry, Word on Fire, and the Rector/President of Mundelein Seminary. He is the creator of the award winning documentary series, "Catholicism" and "Catholicism: The New Evangelization.

SANDOVAL

(From 15)

mos de las temporadas y el ciclo de muerte y renovación, ligada sólo a lo material, incomoda con la soledad y el silencio y la oscuridad, empujada por la multitud, el ruido y neón”.

Hacer muchas cosas a la vez, lo que la escritora María Konnikova llama “la plaga de la existencia moderna”, sacrifica la calidad de nuestra atención. Con mi smartphone puedo navegar el Internet al mismo tiempo que estoy hablando con otra persona. Como resultado, el sentido de conexión se debilita y nunca estamos completamente presentes con nadie o nadie. Hay que pensar en todo esto al enfrentar otra Cuaremas. A los niños del anuncio de televisión, les podremos decir que lento es mejor que rápido si es que vamos a avanzar en nuestra vida espiritual. Konnikova sugiere que podemos beneficiar del ejemplo del señor Sherlock Holmes, el gran detective ficcional, quien ella señala como el más puro ejemplar en el mundo para concentrarse en una sola tarea a la vez.

“Más común que no”, escribió Konnikova, “cuando un nuevo caso se presenta, Holmes hace nada más que sentarse en su silla de correa, cierra sus ojos y pone los largos dedos de sus manos en una actitud que pide silencio.” Tal pensamiento de meditación cambia la actividad del cerebro a un modelo que nos “capacita para entablar al mundo en lugar de retirarse de él.”

Quizás debemos abrazar similarmente el silencio y la soledad, sentarnos solos en la oscuridad y contemplar el cielo brillando con estrellas, reflexionando sobre la grandezza de Dios y su universo y nuestro lugar en el.

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A full house, top left, worships at Holy Thursday Mass, April 2, 2015. Bishop Sis, above, during the Washing of the Feet. At left, a single candle leads the way to a Sacred Heart Cathedral filled with the light of the Holy Spirit before the baptism of those new Catholics who entered the church at Easter Vigil, Saturday, April 4, 2015. (Photos by Becca Sankey for the West Texas Angelus).