Tex-Mex Border Bishops Meeting, March 1, 2016

Tex-Mex Border Bishops’ Mass, March 1, 2016, at the San Angelo Cathedral. Pictured are, kneeling, Deacon Freddy Medina, Diocese of San Angelo. Front Row, left to right, Bishop Patrick Zurek, Diocese of Amarillo; Bishop Guillermo Ortiz, Diocese of Cuautitlán; Bishop Mark Seitz, Diocese of El Paso; Bishop Ruy Rendón, Diocese of Matamoros; Bishop Emeritus Raymundo Peña, Diocese of Brownsville; Bishop Michael Sis, Diocese of San Angelo; Bishop Raúl Vera, OP, Diocese of Saltillo; Bishop Daniel Flores, Diocese of Brownsville; Rev. Lorenzo Hatch, Diocese of San Angelo; Bishop Alonso Garza, Diocese of Piedras Negras; Archbishop Gustavo García-Siller, Archdiocese of San Antonio. Back Row: Bishop Enrique Sánchez, Diocese of Nuevo Laredo; Rev. Gilberto Rodriguez, Diocese of San Angelo; Rev. José Guadalupe Valdez, Diocese of Piedras Negras; Rev. Roberto Sifuentes, Diocese of Matamoros; Rev. Martin Tejeda, Diocese of Matamoros; Rev. Alfredo Camarena, CS, Diocese of Nuevo Laredo; Rev. Msgr. Larry Droll, Diocese of San Angelo; Very Rev. Steve Hicks, Diocese of San Angelo. Not pictured: Deacon Oscar Costilla, Diocese of Matamoros (Photo by Jimmy Patterson)
Diocese first in country to begin RENEW ‘Be My Witness’ program

The Angelus

RENEW International announced that the Diocese of San Angelo will be the first in the country to launch RENEW’s newest program developed to bolster parish evangelization. Entitled ‘Be My Witness: Formation for the New Evangelization’, this process draws its inspiration from Pope Francis’ landmark document, The Joy of the Gospel. The entire process is designed to develop vibrant parishes that are “centers of constant missionary outreach” and to help parisioners see themselves as modern-day disciples.

RENEW’s pastoral staff travels to the diocese in February to train San Angelo’s parish leaders to lead Phase 1 of ‘Be My Witness.’ This first phase gathers and equips pastors, parish staff, and lay leaders to assess, discuss, and address five key areas of focus for evangelizing parishes: enhancing Sunday worship, creating a welcoming environment, fostering a sense of belonging, witnessing to faith, and reaching out in a spirit of mission.

Unique to this process, the RENEW Parish Assessment tool provides parish leaders with valuable insights by helping them view the five key areas of parish life through the lens of evangelization. The parish team recruits members of the parish community, from the most committed to the least involved, to evaluate each of the five areas on 12 specific dimensions. The online assessment tool generates analyses to guide the team on current areas of strength and opportunities for improvement.

The assessment results, along with learning videos and meeting guides, lead the teams on a journey of exploration and discussion. Reflecting on the pope’s vision for evangelizing parishes, the leaders develop a plan for the parish based on the agreed-upon priorities. In addition to attending trainings delivered by RENEW International pastoral representatives, parish leaders will receive ongoing pastoral support from RENEW’s staff as they develop their plans.

Speaking on this new initiative being rolled out in the Diocese of San Angelo, Bishop Michael Sis remarked that he sees ‘Be My Witness’—in Spanish as ‘Sean mis testigos’—as a great opportunity to “tune parishes into a missionary key.”

Sr. Terry Rickard OP, RENEW’s president and executive director, commented, “RENEW International has a longstanding and positive relationship serving the Diocese of San Angelo. We are honored to have this opportunity to work with parishes as they commit even more deeply to putting Christ’s evangelizing mission into action.”

Sal Solo returns to San Angelo in April

By Jimmy Patterson
Editor / The Angelus

SAN ANGELO — With a powerful message for high school students on the importance of Catholic social teaching in this Year of Mercy, Sal Solo will return to the Diocese of San Angelo, Saturday, April 9, from 10 a.m.-5 p.m. at the Sacred Heart Cathedral gymnasium.

A dynamic musician who left Classix Nouveaux, a popular British secular New Wave band in the 1980s to earn a Masters in Theology, Solo’s visit to the diocese will be his third. He presented his multi-media Gospel message for young adults and adolescents in the diocese in October 2009 and returned to McCamey for an interfaith event in the Spring of 2010.

“He not only opens the eyes of young people to today’s injustices, he also empowers them to make a difference,” said Sister Adelina Garcia, OSF, associate director of the Office of Evangelization and Catechesis for the diocese. “Sal traveled the world with his rock band when his eyes were opened to the suffering around him. He decided to use his gifts to bring the Gospel to people.”

Solo said part of his message will hopefully serve to educate young people about Catholic social teaching.

“A lot of Catholics in general don’t really understand about that,” he said. “Catholic social teaching is taking the good news out to the world to everybody we know. At the end of every Mass we are told to go in peace. We are not meant to go out and forget about it.”

Solo says that while no one can do everything, “Everyone can do something. Even if you just do one thing: go pray outside of an abortion clinic, donate to the Red Cross, help at the soup kitchen, whatever it is.”

(By Please See SOLO/8)
The hidden treasure of the Triduum

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

It has always puzzled me how our Catholic churches are typically very crowded on Christmas, Ash Wednesday, and Easter Sunday morning, but the three vitally important days of Holy Thursday, Good Friday, and Holy Saturday draw much smaller crowds. If you truly want to get more deeply in touch with the central realities of salvation in Jesus Christ, you should participate in those liturgies.

“The three most important days of the year on the Catholic calendar comprise the Triduum. Latin for “three days,” the Triduum is an entire liturgical season that lasts from Holy Thursday evening until Easter Sunday evening.

In the Triduum, we are observing the Christian Passover. We call it the Paschal Mystery. The Paschal Mystery is the total event of the Passion, Death, Resurrection, and Ascension of Jesus Christ.

“Paschal” refers to the Hebrew word for Passover, and a “mystery” is a reality that is both visible and hidden. While we participate in the Paschal Mystery in every Catholic Mass that we celebrate, we encounter it most profoundly in the Triduum.

The Church teaches, “Since Christ accomplished his work of human redemption and of the perfect glorification of God principally through his Paschal Mystery, in which by dying he has destroyed our death, and by rising restored our life, the sacred Paschal Triduum of the Passion and Resurrection of the Lord shines forth as the high point of the entire liturgical year.” (Universal Norms, 18)

The Triduum reveals more to us about the core doctrines of the creation, fall, redemption, Christ’s Passion, Death, and Resurrection than any other experience we might have, because the liturgy of these three days allows us to enter into these mysteries through powerful ritual. We are not just remembering them as past historical events. We are actually sharing in them sacramentally. The Triduum is a peak moment in our liturgical lives through which we enter into a personal journey with Jesus Christ in his Passover from death to new life.

Going to church on all the days of the Triduum is a great sacrifice, and it is not possible for everyone. It is not obligatory, either. However, even if you cannot attend all of these liturgies, I hope you can at least come to some of them, and open your heart to God’s action in you through these ancient prayers of the Church. Here I would like to review what happens in the liturgies of the Triduum.

Holy Thursday

Lent actually ends on Holy Thursday evening. The Paschal Triduum begins with the Evening Mass that we celebrate, we enter into a personal journey with Jesus Christ in his Passion, Death, and Resurrection sacramentally. The Triduum is a peak moment in our liturgical lives through which we enter into a personal journey with Jesus Christ in his Passover from death to new life.

(From The Bishop’s Desk)

El Tesoro Escondido del Triduo

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

Siempre me quedo perplejo cómo nuestras iglesias Católicas típicamente se llenan en la Navidad, Miércoles de Ceniza, y el Domingo de Pascua, pero los tres días de vital importancia del Jueves Santo, Viernes Santo, y Sábado Santo atraen a grupos mucho más pequeños. Sin embargo, si usted realmente desea ponernos en contacto más profundamente con las realidades centrales de la salvación en Jesucristo, ha de participar en esas liturgias.

Los tres días más importantes del año en el calendario Católico son el Triduo. El Triduo es toda una temprada litúrgica que dura desde el Jueves Santo por la noche hasta la noche del Domingo de Pascua.

“Triduo” es una palabra en latín que significa “tres días”. Estos son los tres días más sagrados del año.

En el Triduo, estamos observando a la Pascua Cristiana. Lo llamamos el Misterio Pascual. El Misterio Pascual es el acontecimiento total de la Pasión, la Muerte, la Resurrección y la Ascensión de Jesucristo. “Pascual” se refiere a la palabra hebrea para la Pascua, y un “misterio” es una realidad que es a la vez visible y oculta. Mientras que participamos en el Misterio Pascual en cada Misa Católica que celebramos, lo encontramos más profundamente en el Triduo.

La Iglesia enseña: “Puesto que Cristo llevó a cabo su obra de la redención humana y de la perfecta glorificación de Dios principalmente por el Misterio Pascual, mediante el cual con su muerte destruyó nuestra muerte y con su Resurrección restauró nuestra vida, el santo Triduo Pascual de la Pascua y Resurrección del Señor resplandece como el punto más alto de todo el año litúrgico.” (Normas universales, 18)

El Triduo nos revela más sobre las doctrinas fundamentales de la creación, la caída, la redención, y de la Pascua, la Muerte y la Resurrección de Cristo que cualquier otra experiencia que podamos tener, porque la liturgia de estos tres días nos permite entrar en estos misterios a través de un ritual poderoso. No sólo estamos recordándomolos como eventos históricos del pasado. En realidad, estamos compartiendo en ellos sacramentalmente. El Triduo es un momento cumbre en nuestras vidas litúrgicas por la cual entramos en

(Please See BISHOP/20)

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(Please See OBISPO/11)
**Alan Ames to visit Midland, Odessa**

Alan Ames is scheduled to return to West Texas in March as follows:
- Thurs., March 17 — 7 p.m., St. Ann’s, Midland
- Fri., March 18 — 7 p.m., St. Mary’s, Odessa

Ames’ story and God’s messages that he delivers are so powerful you won’t want to miss his talk to understand how we must live our lives in order to gain eternal salvation. Alan’s service and God’s messages to us are for everyone — not just those wanting to be healed. Alan lives a deeply mystical prayer life with a close relationship with the Lord and has been graced with the gift of healing. There have been many documented healings both physical and spiritual. Some healings occur immediately; others over time. Documented healings may be found on Alan’s website: alanames.org.

Please see story, Pg. 10.

**Priestly Assignments**

Beginning on February 24, 2016, Rev. Chinna Pagidela became pastor of Sacred Heart Parish in Coleman and Our Lady of Mount Carmel Parish in Winters.

Also beginning on February 24, 2016, Rev. Mamachan Joseph, CMI, became temporary administrator of St. Margaret Parish in San Angelo and St. Therese Parish in Carlsbad.

**The Healing Power of Jesus Love**

Christ Church Anglican, 5501 N. Midkiff Road in Midland, presents “The Healing Power of the Father’s Love: A Conference on the Practice of Healing Ministry in the Church.” The two-day conference, April 22-23, 2016, will be led by Dr. Joe Johnson, founder and director of Heart of the Father Ministry.

Dr. Johnson, a former Lutheran pastor turned lay Catholic evangelist, will discuss Christian ideals first introduced in the Gospels and their relevance in our modern-day society, including:
- The command of Jesus to go out and heal the sick.
- How can the healing power of love be applied to you and your loved ones?
- Healing prayer
- Hearing Jesus’ voice
- Experiencing the Father’s love as daily bread
- Getting to know the Father that Jesus knows

Johnson’s Heart of the Father Ministry focuses on healing prayer counseling, mentoring pastors and leaders, training the Body of Christ in spiritual formation and Jesus’ healing ministry.

The conference begins at 6:30 p.m., Friday, April 22. After the Friday evening session, the conference reconvenes Saturday at 8:30 a.m., and will conclude with a Healing Prayer Service, at 3:15 p.m.

St. Stephen’s and St. Ann’s are co-sponsoring the event, with First Presbyterian Church, Christ Church Anglican and ACTHeals.org.

A freewill love offering will be taken up. A box lunch will be available for $10.

Register online at www.ccanglican.com.

For registration information, contact Francis Hymel, at 432.638.2482 or fdhymel@suddenlink.com, or Jon and Dale Stasney, 432.682.5133 or two fishers@suddenlink.net.

**Rachel’s Vineyard Retreat**

If you feel like you are being crushed by the weight of abortion pain, consider a Rachel’s Vineyard retreat, a safe place to share your story and find healing. The next retreat scheduled in the area will be in Lubbock, April 15-17, 2016. For more information, call Kathy Krile, 806-577-5912.

**DRE needed in Amarillo**

St. Thomas the Apostle Church in Amarillo, Texas, is seeking a Director of Religious Education. The DRE will oversee the entire faith formation process for parishioners of all ages, including RCIA, Sacrament Preparation, Adult Faith Formation, VBS and Religious Education for school children. This full-time, salary compensated position requires night and weekend work. Candidates must be faithful, energetic Catholics in good standing with the Church. Candidates may contact the Parish Office at St. Thomas the Apostle Church 4100 S. Coulter, Amarillo, TX 79109 for further details or call us at (806) 358-2461.
Tex-Mex Border Bishops Meeting

By Jimmy Patterson
Editor / The Angelus

SAN ANGELO — Being always mindful of the mercy God has given us all, we, too, should at all times extend the same mercy to immigrants — those most in need of hope and a home, according to the Most Reverend Gustavo García-Siller, Archbishop of San Antonio.

Speaking at the bi-annual meeting of the Tex-Mex Border Bishops, García-Siller delivered his homily at a Noon-hour Mass at the Cathedral of the Sacred Heart in San Angelo.

Eleven bishops from Texas and Mexico attended the three-day meeting, addressing immigration and other issues shared by bishops on both sides of the border.

García-Siller cautioned those at the Mass not to reduce what little the immigrants have — hope, faith, family — to a political issue.

"We struggle to accept others different from us," he said. "We struggle to open our homes, our churches and our society to those different from us."

Christians should be persons always ready to forgive, always ready to give hope, always ready to trust because we have faith in God and because we ourselves are full of hope and are forgiven.

The Tex-Mex Border Bishops began as loosely formed conversations among a handful of bishops. The participants have increased and now include 24 bishops and archbishops representing 16 dioceses and archdioceses in Texas, New Mexico and Mexico.

The bishops who formed the original gathering were inspired early on by Pope St. John Paul II’s apostolic exhortation, Ecclesia in America, promulgated in 1999 and meant to teach about living with a spirit of solidarity among dioceses in the Americas.

One of the original bishops to have participated in the early conversations was the Most Reverend Michael D. Pfeifer.

Back row, left to right, Bishop Enrique Sánchez of Nuevo Laredo; Bishop Patrick Zurek of Amarillo; Bishop Guillermo Ortiz of Cuautitlán; Bishop Mark Seitz of El Paso; Bishop Raul Vera, OP, of Saltillo. Front row, seated left to right, Bishop Raymundo J. Peña, Bishop Emeritus of Brownsville; Bishop Ruy Rendón, Bishop of Matamoros; Bishop Daniel Flores, Bishop of Brownsville; Archbishop Gustavo García-Siller, MSpS, Archbishop of San Antonio, and Bishop Alonso Garza, Bishop of Piedras Negras. In photo at right, Bishop Daniel Flores, Bishop of Brownsville, left, and Bishop Ruy Rendón, Bishop of Matamoros. (Photos by Jimmy Patterson.)

Preocupación sería por la protección de los derechos humanos básicos de los inmigrantes

SAN ANGELO – Estando siempre pendiente de la misericordia que Dios nos ha dado a todos, nosotros, también, debemos en todo momento extender la misma misericordia a los inmigrantes – ellos quienes son los más necesitados de esperanza y un hogar, de acuerdo con el Reverendísimo Gustavo García-Siller, Arzobispo de San Antonio.

Hablando a la reunión bianual de los Obispos de la Frontera Tex-Mex, García-Siller dio su homilía en la Misa del mediodía en la Catedral del Sagrado Corazón en San Angelo.

Los obispos que formaron la reunión original fueron inspirados desde el principio por la exhortación apostólica del Papa San Juan Pablo II, Ecclesia in America, promulgada en 1999 y destinada a enseñar a vivir con un espíritu de solidaridad entre las diócesis en las Américas.

Uno de los obispos originales que ha participado en las primeras conversaciones fue el Reverendísimo Michael D. Pfeifer, Obispo Emérito de San Ángelo.

"Unos años después de empezar la reunión, la hermosa declaración del Papa San Juan II dio una gran inspiración para estas reuniones," dijo el Obispo Emérito Pfeifer. "Por lo tanto, el objetivo originar fue de unirnos como hermanos obispos" (Mira MISERICORDIA/24)
Honoring our elders is like honoring God

Editor’s Note: Part II of a series on older adult issues

By Fr. Knick and Sandie Knickerbocker

Just as we are to honor God our Father who created us, so we are to honor those who were His instruments in carrying out His plan for us — our father and our mother. In Exodus 20:12 we read the fourth commandment: "Honor your father and your mother, that you may have a long life in the land which the Lord, your God, is giving you" (NAB). In Proverbs 6:20 we are told to pay attention to our fathers and to listen to our mothers. The Catechism says these are reminders to grown children of their responsibilities toward their parents: "As much as they can, they must give them material and moral support in old age and in times of illness, loneliness, or distress" (#2218). Although many of us have known the blessing of godly parents, there are just as many who have known only disappointment, pain, broken relationships, and woundedness in relation to parents. Whatever our relationship with them, we can honor God by honoring them — and other older adult family members — by praying for them and with them, trying to help them even when they are difficult, modeling Jesus, exercising restraint, and forgiving them. (At times, we may need to pray for grace to want to forgive.) Each human life possesses God-given dignity, regardless of age or state of mind or body. Pray for ways to show love and respect.

What is the role of the parish in honoring older adults? The parish is called to enable older adults to be fully who God created each of us to be through our baptism. The parish needs to be intentional in providing catechesis through opportunities to experience the abundant life in Christ: by encouraging us in our tasks of growing in holiness/wisdom/Christian maturity; by meeting our needs for community and for assistance with the challenges of aging; and by providing opportunities for service, using our gifts of time, talent, and experience. "The catechesis of older people takes into account the diversity of their personal, family, and social conditions. It notes the significant contributions they make through their wisdom ... witness ...and maturity of ... faith." It also recognizes that some have not fully practiced their faith

(Please See KNICKERBOCKER/22)

‘Music connects the human heart to God, and to one another’

By Becca Nelson Sankey

SAN ANGELO — If there’s one bit of knowledge Bishop Michael Sis hoped to impart during his homily at the Diocesan Pastoral Musicians Conference on Feb. 13, it’s the critical function liturgical music serves in a spiritual celebration.

“Music in the liturgy connects human hearts to God and to one another,” Sis said following his address to the approximately 50 people gathered at the workshop at Holy Angels Catholic Church.

The music conference – the first the Catholic Diocese of San Angelo has held in recent history – was targeted toward those who serve the Church in a musical capacity and aimed at improving the quality of the liturgy throughout the parishes, Sis said.

During his presentation, Sis quoted literature and websites and provided personal examples as he discussed music’s various functions in the liturgy.

“God created everything that exists, and He blesses his creation with sound,” Sis told the group gathered. “Sound … is a way God communicates and expresses Himself.”

To be most effective, sacred music needs to take into account ritual, spirituality and culture, to be most effective, Sis said. It should add dignity to the celebration, foster the unity of the congregation and bring about spiritual enrichment, he said.

Furthermore, when presented correctly, liturgical music represents the Holy Trinity – a difficult concept to explain and understand, Sis said.

In our understanding of the Trinity, “God is three persons acting in union with one another, in harmony and in order,” he said.

Music, too, represents human persons acting in union with one another, performed in harmony and in an orderly fashion, Sis said.

“When music is done well….you’re fostering the growth of faith,” he said.

Presentation also is important, Sis said. For example, ancient hymns can be sung in a more contemporary way; contemporary music can be delivered in a dignified manner.

“…to reach the hearts of more” parishioners, Sis said.

Do what’s practical and feasible for the individual parish, he added. “The numbers of people and the financial resources are different from place to place,” he said. “If all you’ve got is one little acoustic guitar, you make do with that. You deal with the tools God’s
From the Editor

Saint Yogi: Keeper of Wisdom, Patron of Baseball

By Jimmy Patterson

There is a palpable void in the air in Florida and Arizona this month. An absence that will soon spread to the rest of the nation. On April 3, lovers of the great game will experience their first Opening Day without Lawrence Peter Berra. The first year since 1947 that baseball has celebrated a new beginning without Yogi being in some way affiliated with the game.

A lifelong Catholic and product of parochial schools, Yogi was married to wife Carmen for 65 years before her death in 2014. The perpetuality to marital longevity was alone a remarkable accomplishment.

As stellar as Yogi was as a person, as devout a Catholic as he was and as exemplary an athlete and champion as he was, he embodied one other attribute of equal note: bridge builder.

My father taught me everything I love about the great game. I suspect a good amount of the love he had for the sport came from the people of character associated with it primarily in the 1940s, ‘50s and ‘60s. In his later years, Dad woreied over high salaries, labor disputes and drug use among players and by the time he died, he had traded most of his allegiance to the Texas Rangers for a minor league team just down Tom Landry Freeway called the Grand Prairie AirHogs. His disillusionment lay with the price of a ticket, a couple of dogs and a soft swirl in the seventh.

Looking back, it seems sometimes that Dad didn’t so much as hand down a love of baseball as much as he did a philosophy of life, instilled in him and many others of his generation. That philosophy was at least partly attributed in those days to an admiration for one Yogi Berra.

Can you imagine growing up or being a young man in the 1950s with Yogi Berra as a role model? What a treat it must have been.

My dad taught me more about wisdom from Yogi than the Hall of Famer’s contributions on the field. For every statistical accomplishment noted, there were always two or three nuggets like, “It ain’t over till its over” or “When you come to the fork in the road, take it.”

It would be impossible to count for you the number of times my mom and dad and I sat down to eat pizza, and Dad would say, “You better cut the pizza in four pieces because I’m not hungry enough to eat six.” And then he would laugh.

I was for the most part a surly teenager when Dad would pass on those one-liners and probably more interested in stories about batting averages and Mantle’s home runs, but today, those memorable words my father shared are what is golden to me.

I want to share a little sidebar with you. It may seem like it has nothing to do with Yogi, but it really has everything to do with him ... because

(Please See PATTERSON/21)

Speaking of Saints

Parents played big role in forming St. Maria of the Angels

By Mary Lou Gibson

A cholera epidemic devastated Seville, Spain in 1876. Many of those who fell ill were cared for by an angel named Maria de los Angeles Guerrero y González. She and the sisters of her newly formed religious community called the Sisters of the Company of the Cross were dedicated to the care of the sick and the poor.

Maria was born in Seville in 1846 into a modest family. Her parents named her “Maria of the Angels” and called her “Angelita.” There were 14 children in the family, but only six lived to adulthood. She was greatly influenced by her pious parents who taught her how to pray the rosary at an early age.

Editor Bernard Bangley noted in “Butler’s Lives of the Saints” that Angela had little formal education and started work in a shoe factory while still a young girl. It was there that her supervisor noticed the young girl’s spiritual outlook and introduced her to Father José Torres Padilla. He became her spiritual director and confessor.

She first tried to join the Discalced Carmelites in Santa Cruz but was refused because of her bad health. She returned to her family but longed to join a religious congregation. Matthew Bunson writes in “John Paul II’s Book of Saints” that Fr. Padilla encouraged her to live according to a specific rule of life and take yearly vows while living as a religious.

She received another sign to become a religious when during a time of prayer in 1871, she saw an empty cross in front of the chapel’s crucifix. Bangley writes that she saw this to mean that God was asking her to accept the empty cross to “be poor with the poor in order to bring them to Christ.”

Angela began keeping a spiritual diary to record what she understood of the life to which God was calling her. At the same time she supported herself with her work in the shoe factory. Others were attracted to her life and in 1875 Angela and three other women rented a small room with a kitchen in Seville. They organized a 24-hour support service for the local poor.

The Sisters of the Company of the Cross as they came to be known lived an authentically recluse contemplative life when they were not among the poor. Once they were home, they dedicated themselves to prayer and silence, but it was their policy that they could always be inter-

(Please See SAINTS/22)
The Knights and Ladies of the Equestrian Order of the Holy Sepulchre of Jerusalem from the San Angelo Diocese gathered on February 13, 2016, in San Angelo for its annual section meeting. The gathering consisted of Mass at the Cathedral of the Sacred Heart, followed by dinner at Bentwood Country Club. At the dinner, the Most Rev. Michael Sis addressed the group and presented certificates to those members recently invested into the order and to those members recently promoted in rank within the order. (Photo by Becca Sankey)

SOLO

(From 2)
Just don’t try to do everything because that is impossible.”
Solo’s “We Cry Justice” multi-media project helped introduce many to Catholic social teaching in 2009, and it is an effort that continues today with his “50 Cents a Day” initiative.
“When I was creating a message about Catholic social teaching, I worked with Catholic Relief Services and discovered that 162 million people in the world live on less than 50 cents a day,” Solo said. “I was speaking in Biloxi, Mississippi once, and afterwards one of the boys said he was going to pledge $180 to the poor and he asked another boy, ‘Do you have it?’ The other boy said, ‘No, but I am going to pledge 50 cents a day.’ And it adds up to something significant. I always ask my audience if they can lose two quarters a day and not notice. If you can do that every day, by the end of the month you can make a difference at the end of the month.”
Solo is a popular evangelizer and has performed at World Youth Day, the Region X Catholic Youth Conference and the National Catholic Youth Conference.
Learn more about Solo and his message of Catholic social teaching at salsolo.com.
Midlanders recount emotional experience of seeing Francis

Editor’s Note: The following story was originally published in the Midland Reporter-Telegram and is reprinted here with the newspaper’s permission.

By Erin Stone
Midland Reporter-Telegram

Some walked for two hours; some walked for 10 hours. Some shivered in the cold winds in Mexico City; others sweated under a blazing sun in Juarez. All made the pilgrimage for one reason: to see Pope Francis.

More than 100 Midlanders made the trip. A group of 12 from San Miguel Arcángel Catholic Church and 110 with St. Stephen’s Catholic Church traveled by bus, taxi and eventually foot to see the pope in Mexico City and Ciudad Juarez respectively.

Rosario Gonzalez of the San Miguel parish traveled with her husband and 10 others to see Francis in Mexico City and receive his blessing at the Basilica of Our Lady of Guadalupe.

At 5 a.m. Feb. 12, the taxi drove the Gonzalezes to a bus stop an hour from their hotel, then stopped.

“This is as far as we can go,” the taxi driver told them.

“So what do we do?” they asked.

“Take the bus, and when you get off, just follow the crowd,” he said. “You will not get lost.”

It was a true pilgrimage, Gonzalez said.

“To see the multitude of people was an experience within itself,” she said. “To see the faith, the willingness, the sacrifice that people made to get there. ... There were stories of people walking 10 hours. The grace of God was there.”

Before the pope arrived from the airport, people lined the street to create a pathway — called “la valla” in Spanish — for him to pass through. They stood waiting for him for five hours. When he arrived, the Gonzalezes were mere feet from him.

“His blessing was just so graceful, so full of love and mercy,” Gonzalez said. “You could literally see him light up, almost as if the Holy Spirit was with him. I encountered a lot of people that shared their experiences, their faith. That really helped all of us grow in our faith. I could say we all received a spiritual awakening, a call to love, a call to mercy.”

Gonzalez took many things from her experience there, but the pope’s message of love, mercy and perseverance rang loudest.

When she returned to Midland and went to Mass the following morning, she said she still felt the glow from her time in Mexico City.

“As the priest was consecrating, something overcame me,” Gonzalez said. “I felt the blessing that God had given me through Pope Francis, the blessing that I had received in visiting Our Lady of Guadalupe, just come together. I felt that this blessing was not only for me, but it was for me to give to those who wanted to receive that blessing. It was the moment of that awareness that God is working within you, an awareness of God’s grace in you, and to have had the privilege to have been there to receive the blessing. ... To me, that is truly amazing. It might be a simple testimony, but for me it was something huge. It was something beautiful.”

And it was a feeling shared by people from across the globe.

“My experience was just overwhelming joy within myself,” Gonzalez said. “As soon as he extended his hand to give us that blessing, you could literally feel God’s presence. I felt the blessing around my face and it was just warmth and this sense of love and peace and tranquility. There are no words to describe the feeling that was there. And it was not only me; it was all those that were there.”

EDICTAL SUMMONS
February 23, 2016
CASE: RODRIGUEZ -- MONTOYA (MARTINEZ)
NO.: SO/16/02

The Tribunal Office of the Catholic Diocese of San Angelo is seeking Oralia Montoya (Martinez).

You are hereby summoned to appear before the Tribunal of the Catholic Diocese of San Angelo, at 804 Ford Street, San Angelo, Texas 76905, on or before the 31st day of March 2016 to answer to the Petition of Marcelino Cortez Rodriguez, now introduced before the Diocesan Tribunal in an action styled, “Marcelino Rodriguez and Oralia Martinez, Petition for Declaration of Invalidity of Marriage.” Said Petition is identified as Case: RODRIGUEZ -- MONTOYA (MARTINEZ); Protocol No.: SO/16/02, on the Tribunal Docket of the Diocese of San Angelo.

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

Given at the Tribunal of the Diocese of San Angelo on the 23rd day of February 2016.

Reverend Tom Barley
MSW, MBA, M. Div.,JCL / Judicial Vicar
Alan Ames’ healing ministry returns to diocese, March 17-18

By Jimmy Patterson
Editor / The Angelus

Alan Ames, who has presented his ministry of God’s healing in the Diocese of San Angelo on a number of occasions in the last several years, returns March 17 and 18, to parishes in Midland and Odessa.

Ames will be at St. Ann’s in Midland on Thursday, March 17, 2016, and at St. Mary’s in Odessa, March 18. Both services begin at 7 p.m.

During a February email interview, Ames, a layman married for 43 years, revealed his violent past and his involvement in a motorcycle gang in his London youth.

“I did not believe much in God,” Ames said. “Even though I was Baptized a Catholic, I never went to church except maybe at Christmas or, when I was young, to steal from it. Then, 23 years ago, God reached into my life and touched me with His love and from that moment on, all my addictions fell away and I began to live a life serving God.

Twenty-two years ago, Ames received permission from Archbishop Barry Hickey of Perth, West Australia, to begin to share his story and to pray for healing. Support for his ministry has continued under the episcopate of the current Archbishop of Perth, Most Rev. Timothy Costelloe.

“I only speak in a diocese where I receive permission, and by God’s grace Bishop Sis has given me permission for this diocese,” Ames said. “The healing service always has a Holy Mass first, as many are healed by this. Afterwards I speak for about 30 minutes and then I pray over people for healing.”

The service is based on healing in and through the sacraments of the Catholic Church, but Ames said many non-Catholics attend and have also been healed.

“I am part of no movement in the Catholic Church, but I support all of them as they bring many people the love of God in various ways,” Ames said. “One misconception of people is that I heal them but I do not; all I do is pray and ask God to do what is best for the person, so it is God that heals, not me. Many people have been healed of all types of illnesses and many of the healings have been long term. I meet so many people who tell me 10 or 15 years later that they were healed at one of my services by God and the healing has been permanent.”

Bishop Michael Sis said, “I have known Alan Ames for several years. I met him through some of my parishioners whose lives have been deeply changed by God through the prayer support of Alan. I find Alan to be humble, steady, and deeply committed to our faith.”

Ames has taken his ministry to more than 30 states and 50 countries. (For more information, see Diocesan Briefs, Pg. 4).
un viaje personal con Jesucristo en su pasar de la muerte a la nueva vida.

El ir a la iglesia en todos los días del Triduo es un gran sacrificio, y no es posible para todos. No es obligatorio, tampoco. Sin embargo, aunque usted no pueda asistir a todas estas liturgias, espero que al menos pueda ir a algunas de ellas, y abra su corazón a la acción de Dios en usted a través de estas antigas oraciones de la Iglesia. Aquí me gustaría revisar lo que sucede en las liturgias del Triduo.

Jueves Santo

La Cuaresma en realidad termina en la tarde del Jueves Santo. El Triduo Pascual comienza con la Misa de la Cena del Señor. Esta misa comemora la institución de la Eucaristía y el sacerdocio, así como el mandato de Jesús a seguir su ejemplo de amor y de humilde servicio. El sacerdote lava los pies a un grupo representativo de los feligreses, en respuesta a las palabras del Señor en la Última Cena, “Yo les hago un ejemplo, para que ustedes hagan lo mismo que yo les hice.” (Juan 13:15) En el Ofertorio de la Misa, se presentan ofrendas para los pobres junto con el pan y el vino, como una expresión de nuestro compromiso a la caridad Cristiana.

La Santa Eucaristía es la fuente y la cumbre de la vida cristiana por excelencia. Todo lo que hacemos como cristianos nos lleva a la Eucaristía y fluye de la Eucaristía. Esta es la noche en que el Señor Jesús nos dice este precioso don de la Eucaristía. Subsiguiente a la Oración después de la Comunión en esta Misa, traemos el Santísimo Sacramento para compartirla con nuestros hermanos Cristianos que sufren persecución y martirio en el Medio Oriente. Una colecta especial se recoge este día en nuestras iglesias alrededor del mundo para apoyar a los Cristianos en la Tierra Santa.

El Villar de los pájaros visitó varias parroquias circunvecinas y rezó en el lugar de reposición del Santísimo Sacramento. Jesús le preguntó a Pedro en esta noche, “¿Ni siquiera una hora pudieron ustedes mantenerse desiertos conmigo?”

Viernes Santo

La liturgia oficial de la Iglesia el Viernes Santo es la celebración de la Pasión del Señor. Se compone de tres partes: la Liturgia de la Palabra, Adoración de la Cruz, y la distribución de la Sagrada Comunión que se consagró la noche anterior. Este servicio no es una Misa. De hecho, no hay Misas Católicas celebradas por todo el mundo en Viernes Santo.

En este día solemne, honramos el sufrimiento y la muerte de nuestro Señor, Jesús. Ayunamos y nos abstenemos de comer carne en este día. En la liturgia, proclamamos en totalidad el recuento de la Pasión como lo hicimos el Domingo de Ramos. La experiencia de la Adoración de la Santa Cruz es uno de los rituales más inolvidables de la Semana Santa.

Devociones tales como las Estaciones de la Cruz también se pueden rezar en este día, ya sea solos o con otras personas, ya sea en la parroquia o en casa. Un hermoso Via Crucis al aire libre se encuentra a lo largo del Río Concho en los terrenos del Centro de Retiros Cristo Rey al 802 Ford Street en San Ángel. Si usted no está seguro de cómo rezar el Via Crucis, se pueden encontrar muchas versiones hermosas en el internet. Mi favorito se llama El Via Crucis Para Todos (Everyone’s Way of the Cross) por Clarence Enzler.

Junto con muchos miembros de los fieles, yo participé en una Procesión con la Cruz el Viernes Santo, empezando desde la Parroquia St. Margaret al 2619 Era Street en San Ángel a la 1:00 p.m., terminando con la Cruz en el Centro de Retiros Cristo Rey. Todos son bienvenidos e invitados a acompañarnos.

El Viernes Santo es una excelente oportunidad para reflexionar sobre el significado del sufrimiento. Recordamos las muchas cruces que nuestro prójimo carga hoy día. El sacrificio salvador de Jesús en la Cruz le da un significado profundo a la experiencia del sufrimiento humano. De una manera muy especial, el Viernes Santo es un día de solidaridad con nuestros hermanos Cristianos que sufren persecución y martirio en el Medio Oriente.

Sábado Santo

La Misa que se celebra el Sábado Santo comienza después del anochecer. Se llamaría la Vigilia de Pascua en la Noche Santa. Esta liturgia ocupa el primer lugar entre todas las celebraciones de todo el año. Es más importante que la Navidad, las fiestas de Pascua, Pentecostés, o cualquier fiesta de algún santo. Es la más grande, la más hermosa, y la más noble de todas las solemnidades.

La Vigilia de Pascua no es lo mismo a una Misa de sábado por la noche. En la Vigilia de Pascua, estamos manteniendo vigilia por la Resurrección del Señor. Se compone de cuatro partes, las cuales nos mueven a través de un despliegue gradual del Misterio Pascual de Jesucristo.

La primera parte se llama el Lucernarium, o el servicio de la luz. Se inicia con la bendición del fuego al aire libre y el canto de la Proclamación de Pascua. Todos, los jóvenes y ancianos, llevamos velas encendidas en la oscuridad, que simbolizan la luz de Cristo que disipa la oscuridad de nuestros corazones y mentes.

La segunda parte es la Liturgia de la Palabra, la cual incluye hasta nueve lecturas de la escritura, trazando la historia de la salvación, desde la creación del mundo hasta la nueva creación en la Resurrección de Cristo. Nos tomamos el tiempo para escuchar a las escrituras y responder por medio del canto y la oración.

En la tercera parte, la Liturgia del Bautismo, celebramos la iniciación de nuevos miembros de la Iglesia que han estado preparándose a través del proceso del RICA. Esta parte de la Vigilia de Pascua conduce los elegidos por las aguas del Bautismo hacia la promesa de la vida eterna, y también renueva en todos nosotros la gracia de nuestro propio Bautismo. Renovamos nuestras promesas bautismales, y somos alegremente rociados con el agua de Pascua. Junto con todos miembros del equipo de RICA de la parroquia, apoyamos a los nuevos Católicos y les invitamos a que tomen un papel activo en nuestra Iglesia.

La cuarta y última parte de la Vigilia de Pascua es la Liturgia de la Eucaristía, cuando los recién bautizados reciben la Sagrada Comunión por primera vez. Aquí todos experimentamos el punto culminante del banquete del Cordero de Dios, regocijándonos en la presencia del Cristo Resucitado.

Esta es una liturgia larga. No es obligatorio que se acabe en una hora. Se podría decir que la Vigilia de Pascua es algo como “acampar en la iglesia” para la noche. Algunos encuentran que es muy útil el tomar una siesta en casa por la tarde del sábado, a fin de mantenerse alerta durante la entera liturgia en la Iglesia esa noche. Para algunas personas, puede parecer raro el pasar tanto tiempo en la iglesia. Sin embargo, me viene a la mente mi sobrino, que una vez se sentó por 24 horas de películas de Star Wars en un teatro. La Vigilia de Pascua es infinitamente más importante que Star Wars.

Domingo de Pascua

En este día, celebramos el hecho de que Dios ha vencido la muerte y ha abierto para nosotros el camino a la eternidad. Los que participaron en la Vigilia de Pascua no tienen ninguna obligación de asistir a la Misa del Domingo de Pascua, ya que la Vigilia es otra Misa de Pascua. Sin embargo, muchos optan por asistir a Misa el Domingo, también. Los que reciben la Comunión en la Vigilia también pueden recibir el Cuerpo y la Sangre de Cristo en otra Misa en el día de Pascua. En las Misas de Domingo de Pascua, el rito de la renovación de nuestras promesas bautismales puede tomar el lugar del Credo de Nicea después de la homilía.

Conclusión

El Triduo Pascual concluye la tarde del Domingo de Pascua. Es un precioso tesoro de la fe Católica, y no debería permanecer oculto. Si usted podrá asistir a cualquiera de las liturgias del Triduo, estará participando en los días más importantes del calendario de la Iglesia.
At left and top center, images from Ash Wednesday at Midland College and Odessa College. Top right and immediate right, the Rite of Election Mass at St. Stephen’s in Midland. Above right, the adult confirmation class at St. Joseph’s Church in San Angelo.

Ash Wednesday, Rite of Election, and Adult Confirmations provide Catholics many opportunities to worship during the Lenten season.

‘Tis the Season

Tis the Season

[Photo by Alan P. Torre / aptorre.com]

[Photo by Joey Alaniz]

[Courtesy photo]

[Photo by Alan P. Torre / aptorre.com]
Celebrity chef Father Leo Patalinghug demonstrates how to cook a Lenten seafood pasta meal. (From CNS Video)

Fr. Leo Patalinghug's message begins with getting people to the dinner table

Baltimore (CNS) — For Father Leo Patalinghug, faith and food go hand in hand, or in cooking terms, they blend; there is no trick to folding one into the other.

"The idea of food in faith is implicit in our Scriptures. It's implicit in our liturgical calendar. It's implicit in our liturgical calendar," he said, also adding that without question it's a key component of the Mass.

The 45-year-old Filipino-American, known as the cooking priest, has made the blending of those two worlds his life's work with his apostolate, "Grace Before Meals," which aims, as he puts it: "to bring families to the dinner table and bring God to the table."

He not only does a cooking show on the Eternal Word Television Network called "Savoring our Faith," but he also travels across the country giving parish workshops and speaks at conferences, on radio programs and via social media about the need for families to celebrate not just Catholic feast days but everyday meals together. He also has written three books and is currently working on two more.

Without irony, he says there is a hunger for this ministry, noting that the parish workshops he gives are typically booked, filled with parishioners of all ages interested in how food and faith meet and on connecting or reconnecting with each other and God.

When Catholic News Service met Father Patalinghug at his Baltimore home Feb. 24, he had just returned from a series of parish missions in California and Chicago and was about to leave the next day for the Los Angeles Religious Education Congress.

Oh, and he also was having about 30 family members over that night for dinner, so he needed to get meat in the oven and a pasta dish started.

But noting that a busy schedule is pretty much how he rolls, he demonstrated that with some advance planning he could also easily whip up a Lenten meal of brown butter smoked paprika sauteed with cherry tomatoes and shrimp over pasta.

"If a family thinks ahead about what they're going to do in Lent -- as opposed to making it seem like a drudgery" that they have to think of something meatless to eat, he said, they can easily prepare a similar dish and not have to rely on cheese pizza or frozen fish sticks.

Case in point: His simple meatless meal seemed easy to make, looked good when plated, as he

(Please See COOKING/21)

Pope visit draws global attention to development

EL PASO — Pope Francis' visit to Ciudad Juarez, Mexico, sparked more than a one-day devotional impulse within the general Catholic population on both sides of the Rio Grande.

It also has drawn international attention to the spot where he said Mass as a future communal mega-complex anchored by a massive church.

The project began to take shape four years ago, when Sandro Landucci, a Mexico City telecom entrepreneur, had an idea that has drawn together other people who have responded to Pope Francis' call to care for the needy.

"In his travels, Landucci was heavily impacted by what he was seeing in Ciudad Juarez, a destroyed city as if there had been a war," said Cecilia Levine, who later became a key player in the complex development.

"He had heard Swiss architects Herzog & de Meuron talk about the positive impact one major architectural structure could have on a city, and remembered (Mexican financier) Agustin Coppel's wish to create a contemporary church structure in Mexico," she told Catholic News Service.

Joining their ideas, Landucci and Coppel then approached Levine, an industrialist in Ciudad Juarez, who threw in her own ideas for a place focused on social services to the poor. A native from the Mexican state of Chihuahua who was raised in El Paso, she has been running youth violence and substance addiction prevention programs in Ciudad Juarez for years.

Her place in the development team was to help secure land for the project, but she had her own conditions: "It's a great idea, and I agree 100 percent, but we must adjust our thinking and make the site not only a church, but also a community service center," she said she told the others. And they agreed.

Through her, the group secured a private trust from the local Ciudad Juarez government to use El Chamizal, a public park, plus some land annexed to it, totaling some 74,000 square yards. El Punto, as the development project is officially known, found a home, and Pope Francis' visit there has already made it an international pilgrimage attraction.

El Chamizal is a historical site, also known as El Punto. It was one of the few points where the Bravo River — as the Rio Grande is known in Mexico — was tame enough to permit safe crossings within what was then Mexican territory. El Paso del Norte — present-day El Paso — refers to this river pass.

El Punto, now as the new development site, points to the concept of a center point where religion, charity, human development, social justice, culture, education, economic development and tourism come together in an effort to improve a depressed region.
Family Life

The ashes of Wednesday are an urgent call for our souls

By Carolyn Woo
Catholic News Service

As Ash Wednesday approaches, I am puzzled by a fairly well-established statistic: Ash Wednesday Mass tends to draw a large attendance, right up there with Masses at Christmas and Easter. I asked around and never got a satisfactory answer. Someone said it is Catholic guilt and the sense of obligation.

But Ash Wednesday is not a holy day of obligation. Some bloggers have said that this is clever marketing, as the attendees are getting something for nothing. Really? Ashes?

Ashes and the intonation, "Remember that you are dust and to dust you shall return," are reminders of our mortality and sinfulness and a visible marker of our remorse. These are intended to compel us to confront our reality with an intensity and urgency meant to change our hearts and then our lives.

For me, these serve the same purpose as my primal shriek. You see, whenever I experience a potentially life-threatening accident-about-to-happen when my husband is driving, all I can manage is a guttural shriek. It is my primal alarm for danger. Another analogy comes from living in Indiana where we have tornado warnings commanding our total and immediate attention to get to safe shelter.

Though the rites of Ash Wednesday are administered through quietly spoken words and simple gestures, often in a stately church and accompanied by beautiful hymns, they are nevertheless meant to jolt us out of our daily routines and gripping priorities that lure us away from God and into the spiritual dead zone.

It is an urgent call for our souls, as close to danger as a car crash or a deadly tornado. I think we want to do the right thing, but our choices and actions are littered with the good that we postpone doing, preoccupation with success, our pride that forgets and refuses grace, desire for things that turn them into idols, self-centeredness that places our needs over others’ needs, worries that steal the joy from the present, feelings that we hurt, grudges that we nurse, gossip that inevitably diminishes others, etc.

But Lent is not primarily about what we have lost, but what we stand to gain. The ashes are not random smudges on our foreheads but trace the sign of the cross: our hope and salvation. The alternative charge from the minister is to "repent and believe in the Gospel."

The hymn, "Ashes (We Rise Again From Ashes)," calls us to rise from ashes at the beckoning of God, to start anew, to overcome our sinfulness not by our own power, but by God's power. Lent revisits the promise that Pope Francis then singles out a vital power of communication: "closeness."

Pope Francis also remarks that "closeness is an urgent call for our souls," for the Christian is called to love and help others. He explains: "The encounter between communication and mercy will be fruitful to the degree that it generates a closeness that cares, comforts, heals, accompanies and celebrates. In a broken, fragmented and polarized world, to communicate with mercy means to help create a healthy, free and fraternal closeness between the children of God and all our brothers and sisters in the one human family."

In stating this, Pope Francis is saying that if our broken world is ever to be healed, truthful, wholesome communication must be at its center.

At the moment, warring factions throughout the world are their own worst enemies. What makes them failures are their distrust and the lack of closeness, warmth and care that Pope Francis espouses. Sadly, the hateful spirit of condemnation and vengeance far outweigh a sincere desire for communion of hearts.

The same holds true in the marketplace. It can either create a hope-filled, prosperous future or turn it into turmoil and the bane of those trusting it. All depends on the ultimate mission: to either communicate true care, comfort, healing and the common good, or to communicate selfish interests and corruption.

The pulpit, too, can be a powerful tool of communication, depending on whether the message is carefully thought about and clear. A carefully crafted and prepared homily can inspire reflection on faith, hope and love among the congregation. But subpar homilies often drive people out of the church.

The wisdom of Pope Francis and history repeatedly warn: As goes the spoken word, so goes the world.
Human organs from pigs? Is it kosher?

By Fr. Tad Pacholczyk

Human beings can have a visceral reaction to the thought of growing human kidneys or livers inside the bodies of pigs or cows. A participant in a recent online forum on human/animal chimeras described this way: “Unbelievable!!! … If there was anything that was more anti-God it is the genetic formation of chimeras which is nothing more than Frankenstein monster creation.”

Although the idea of a chimeric animal is indeed unusual, several factors need to be considered in evaluating the practice of growing human organs within animals. Despite our initial hesitations, certain kinds of human/animal chimeras are likely to be justifiable and reasonable. This comes into focus when we recognize, for example, how thousands of patients who have received replacement heart valves made out of pig or cow tissues are already themselves a type of human/animal chimera. For many years, moreover, scientists have worked with chimeric mice that possess a human immune system, enabling them to study the way that HIV and other viruses are able to infect cells.

We routinely use animals to address important human needs. We eat them and make clothing out of them. We keep them in zoos. Utilizing them for legitimate and important medical purposes like organ generation and transplantation should not, broadly speaking, be a cause for alarm. As another online participant noted, only half in jest: “Think of it— a pig provides a human heart, lungs, and liver then the rest is eaten for dinner! … Plus the pig will likely be chemical free, well-fed, and humanely treated.”

If a pig were in fact able to grow a human kidney in place of its own kidney, and if it could be used for transplantation, it could provide a major new source of organs in the face of the critical shortage that currently exists. Many patients today are on waiting lists for a kidney, and a significant percentage die before an organ ever becomes available.

Yet significant technical and ethical hurdles remain before growing organs in pigs is likely to be feasible. The science is still in its infancy, and researchers have yet to figure out how to make human cells co-exist in a stable fashion with animal tissues. There are abundant concerns about the possibility of transmitting animal viruses to humans especially considering how readily other viruses like avian flu have been able to jump from birds to humans.

Even assuming these kinds of risks are able to be minimized, and pig/human chimeras could be safely produced, there would still be several ethical issues to consider. One concern involves using stem cells from human embryos as part of the process of making pig/human chimeras. Typically scientists try to generate chimeras by adding human embryonic stem cells to animal embryos, which then grow up and develop into chimeric animals. Destroying young humans in their embryonic stages for their stem cells is gravely objectionable, so creating chimeras could be ethical only if alternative, non-embryonic sources of stem cells (like adult stem cells or induced pluripotent stem cells) were utilized for the procedure.

The technology might also lend itself to other unethical practices, like trying to create a pig that could produce human sperm or eggs in its genitalia. Similarly, if human nerve cells were incorporated into a developing pig brain in such a way that the animal developed what appeared to be human brain structures, some have noted there could be questions about the occurrence of intelligence or self-consciousness or other facets of human identity in the animal. Although such concerns seem farfetched, given the dearth of knowledge about the “scaffolding of consciousness,” it seems reasonable to limit this kind of experimentation. Some scientific agencies like the National Institutes of Health have restricted the availability of research funds for the study of human/animal chimeras because of these and other considerations, seeking to levy pressure so that the needed ethical discernment and discussion occurs before researchers proceed further.

We tend to view modern scientific progress as a powerful “engine of good” for the well-being of mankind, and therefore we view most scientific research with hope. This is proper and fitting, and to reinforce and reinvigorate that hope, we should continue to insist that cutting edge biomedical research remain in active dialogue and interaction with sound ethics. The expanding study of human/animal chimeras challenges us to reflect carefully on the morally appropriate use of these novel and powerful technologies, so that human dignity will not be harmed, subjugated, or misappropriated in any way.

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.ncb-center.org
Confirmation and receiving gifts that are not yours

By Bishop Robert Barron

Just a few days ago, I had the enormous privilege of performing my first confirmation as a bishop. It took place at Holy Cross Parish in Moor Park, California, a large, bustling, and bilingual parish in my pastoral region. I told the confirmandi — and I meant it — that I would keep them in my heart for the rest of my life, for we were connected by an unbreakable bond. In preparation for this moment, I was, of course, obliged to craft a homily, and that exercise compelled me to do some serious studying and praying around the meaning of this great Sacrament.

It is sometimes said that Confirmation is a sacrament in search of a theology. It is indeed true that most Catholics could probably give at least a decent account of the significance of Baptism, Eucharist, Confession, Matrimony, Holy Orders, and the Anointing of the Sick, but they might balk when asked to explain the meaning of Confirmation. Perhaps they would be tempted to say it is the Catholic version of a Bar Mitzvah, but this would not even come close to an accurate theological description.

A survey of the most recent theologizing about Confirmation — the Documents of Vatican II, the Catechism of the Catholic Church, the 1983 Code of Canon Law, etc. — reveals that this is the sacrament of strengthening, as the term itself ("confirmare" in Latin) suggests. First, it strengthens baptized people in their relationship with the Lord Jesus and then it further strengthens them in their capacity to defend and spread the faith. The roots of it, of course, are in the great day of Pentecost when, through the descent of the Holy Spirit, eleven timorous and largely uneducated men became fearless evangelists, ready and able to spread the Gospel far and wide. Keep in mind that to proclaim Jesus publicly in that time and place was to take one's life in one's hand - and the disciples knew it. And yet, on the very day of Pentecost, they spoke out in the Temple and in the public squares of Jerusalem. With the exception of John, they all went to their deaths boldly announcing the Word. I told those I confirmed that they are, in a certain sense, successors of those first men upon whom the Holy Spirit descended and that they have the same fundamental task. Their Confirmation, I further explained, is therefore not really for them; it is for the Church and the wider world.

Now what makes this transformation possible is the third person of the Holy Trinity, who comes bearing a variety of powers, which the Church calls the gifts of the Holy Spirit. These include wisdom, knowledge, understanding, fortitude, counsel, piety, and fear of the Lord. In order to understand these more fully, we must keep in mind their relationship to evangelization and apologetics, to spreading and defending the faith. As I have argued often, a dumbed-down, simplified Catholicism is not evangelistically compelling. We have a smart tradition, marked by two thousand years of serious theologizing by some of the masters of Western thought: Origen, Augustine, Jerome, Anselm, Bonaventure, Thomas Aquinas, John Henry Newman, G.K. Chesterton, and Joseph Ratzinger. If one is going to defend the Catholic faith, especially at a time when it is under assault by many in the secular culture, one had better possess (and cooperate with) the gifts of wisdom, knowledge, and understanding.

In order to be an effective evangelist, one also needs the spiritual gift of forti...
Funeral Mass for non-baptized / When to call a priest

By Father Kenneth Doyle
Catholic News Service

Q. I am a baptized Catholic who was married in a Catholic Church with a Mass. My husband and I raised all of our children Catholic, sent them to Catholic schools and have supported the church financially throughout our married life. My husband was never baptized in any faith. (His family considered themselves nonsectarian Christians but never had any of their children baptized.)

Will my husband be allowed to have a Catholic funeral Mass when the time comes? He would have no objection to that, would actually support the idea, and I can honestly say that he is a better Christian than anyone I know. He invited my aging father to live with us and took care of him for four years until he passed away. He encouraged our children's faith throughout the years, and it seems logical that he should be allowed to have a Catholic funeral Mass. (I assume there would be no problem with his being buried in our family plot in a Catholic cemetery.) (City of origin withheld)

A. Your second question is the easy one: Your husband can certainly be buried with his loved ones in your family's Catholic burial plot, and this happens regularly.

Your first question requires a longer response. In the church's Code of Canon Law, No. 183 provides that "ecclesiastical funerals can be granted to baptized persons who are enrolled in a non-Catholic church or ecclesial community unless their intention is evidently to the contrary and provided that their own minister is not available."

Notice, though, that this permission applies specifically to those who have been baptized. The same canon makes only two exceptions: catechumens (i.e., those who, at the time of their death, had been under instruction preparing for Catholic baptism) and children who died before receiving the sacrament of baptism that their parents intended.

While I wish that these exceptions were broader (so that they could include your husband), the requirement of baptism has a certain logic. The ritual for a Catholic funeral Mass is called the Order of Christian Funerals, and some of the prescribed prayers make direct reference to the baptism of the deceased.

At the very beginning of the ceremony, for example, the priest sprinkles the casket with holy water while saying: "In the waters of baptism, (name of deceased) died with Christ and rose with him to new life. May he/she now share with him eternal glory."

One of the first petitions recommended for the prayer of the faithful also begins: "For (name of deceased), who in baptism was given the pledge of eternal life, that he/she now be admitted to the company of the saints."

Here is what I would suggest with regard to your husband: When he passes, ask your parish priest to conduct a funeral service in the funeral home. The priest will use some of the prayers customary at a funeral Mass, along with passages of your choosing.

He may also make some personal remarks about your husband's goodness and his support of your family's faith. Additionally, soon after his death, you might request that one of the regularly scheduled parish Masses be offered for the repose of your husband's soul. (A priest can pray for anyone for whom a Mass may be offered. Canon No. 901 says, "A priest is free to apply the Mass for anyone, living or dead.")

Q. My husband is very ill with cancer and it is probably terminal. He last went to confession several months ago. I would like him to go to confession once more and receive the anointing of the sick, but I am reluctant to suggest it because he is still ambulatory and is unaware of the gravity of his condition. (We decided not to tell him how sick he is, lest it cause him to despair.) What can I do? Should I just wait until the last minute?

A. No, you definitely should not wait until the last minute. (For one thing, how can you forecast when that minute will arrive?) The sacrament of the anointing of the sick, which some of us learned as kids to call the "last rites," is meant to be far more than that.

It asks first, if it be God's will, that healing take place -- and you surely would not want to deprive your husband of that opportunity. If, however, the disease is terminal, the sacrament prays that your husband's suffering will be eased and that he will feel the peace of God's presence throughout his days.

Why not look for a chance to say casually to your husband something like this: "I hate to see you not feeling well. How about if I ask (Father X) to stop by when he's out visiting homes? He could say a couple prayers for you and give you a blessing."

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

Justice Antonin Scalia was a man of the people

By John Garvey
Catholic News Service

Supreme Court Justice Antonin Scalia, God rest his soul, was routinely described as a conservative, and so he was. He held fast to a lot of traditional values. He loved his church, his wife and nine children, and his country.

He favored small government over big, and local over national. He believed that change would be gradual and difficult, if things are working right.

But as a judge, he was a democrat, not a conservative, and his death diminishes by one strong voice our commitment to constitutional democracy.

Justice Scalia perceived that the greatest threat to self-government was the Supreme Court's tendency to read into the Constitution the values it would like society to adopt. That is why he opposed the court's decision to make abortion a constitutional right. "The permissibility of abortion," he said in 1992, is "to be resolved like most important questions in our democracy: by citizens trying to persuade one another and then voting."

And that is why he opposed the court's decision to make same-sex marriage a constitutional right, notwithstanding the contrary laws in many states. "A system of government that makes the people subordinate to a committee of nine unelected lawyers does not deserve to be called a democracy," he said.

The Constitution is silent about abortion and marriage. For Justice Scalia, that was an end of the matter. Disputes over those issues should be resolved by the elected branches of government, not by courts.

The Supreme Court, by contrast, has said that its job is to identify rights through the exercise of "reasoned judgment" (the phrase it uses in the marriage case), and protect them against democratic constraint.

Time was, when pointing out that your opponent was against democracy was a trump card. What has changed? To give the court its due, its position is that the people should not be allowed to impose their will through law when it would be immoral to do so. That is also a compelling argument, especially about moral issues like abortion and homosexuality.

Maybe the real difference between Justice Scalia and the court is one of moral authority -- whom should we trust to make decisions in matters like these?

Justice Scalia's commitment to democracy did not rest on a simple belief that it gives folks more of what they want. He had more faith in the collective wisdom of the people than in the court's "reasoned judgment.

Can it be, he asked about traditional marriage, that "an institution as old as government itself, and accepted by every nation in history until 15 years ago, [is] supported by nothing other than ignorance or bigotry"?

In Employment Division v. Smith, Justice Scalia justified his narrow reading of the Constitution's religious liberty guarantee with the same faith in democracy. As he observed: "A society that believes in the [constitutional] protection accorded religious belief can be expected to be solicitous of that value in its legislation as well."

It isn't enough to say, by way of rebuttal, that majorities can be rash or mistaken. In cases where we deem sufficiently important (free speech, self-incrimination, cruel and unusual punishment), the text of the Constitution takes power away from majorities.

In other cases, the question is whether the democratic process is more likely to get the right answer than five tall-building lawyers who went to Harvard and Yale.

As Justice Scalia wrote in one of his early decisions, "it is all too easy" for such a small clique "to believe that evolution has culminated in one's own views." And as he never tired of pointing out, unlike the mistakes of democratic majorities, the "reasoned judgments" of the Ivy Leaguers can't be undone.

Garvey is the president of The Catholic University of America in Washington.
Pope Francis in Mexico

‘What kind of world do we want to leave our children?’

By Cindy Wooden
Catholic News Service

CIUDAD JUAREZ, Mexico — God will hold humanity responsible for enslaving the poor and treating people as less important than profits, Pope Francis told Mexican workers and business leaders.

“What kind of world do we want to leave our children?” the pope asked Feb. 17 during a meeting in Ciudad Juarez with 3,000 people representing the “world of work” in a border town known for its factories -- maquiladoras -- offering low-wage jobs. Mexico's minimum wage is the equivalent of about $4 a day.

"God will hold today's slavers accountable, and we must do everything to make sure that these situations do not happen again," the pope said. "The flow of capital cannot determine the flow and the life of people."

Daisy Flores Gamez, her husband Jesus Gurrola Varela and two children welcomed the pope; Flores told him the financial struggles caused by the low wages are obvious, but families also are being tested and even destroyed by the long hours workers are expected to put in to earn a pitance.

"We believe the decadence and conflict of values in our society come, in part, from an absence of parents in the home," she said, pleading with the pope to intercede for them with governments and businesses to institute eight-hour workdays.

Juan Pablo Castanon, president of a national business leaders' organization, told the pope that half of all Mexicans are poor and six out of 10 workers have no insurance or social security. "With great concern, we see that our efforts over the last decades to overcome poverty have not worked completely."

He thanked the pope for his visit, assuring him that the business leaders present are committed to a vision of human development that aims at "the sustainability of businesses and sources of jobs," as well as at promoting a "social dialogue" that will help the whole nation move forward.

Ciudad Juarez, lying on the U.S.-Mexican border, also hosts thousands of Mexicans and Central Americans hoping to cross over into the United States or who already made the crossing, but did so illegally and were sent back to the Mexican side of the border.

The city is infamous as a center of narcotrafficking, is plagued by "pandillas" or armed gangs and, since the early 1990s, has grabbed headlines around the world because of the alarming number of area women who disappeared or were murdered.

Pope Francis told the workers and business leaders that things cannot continue as they have been going and that dialogue and respect for human dignity are the only paths to a better future.

Straying from his prepared text, the pope told those present that he once knew a businessman who would go into negotiations saying, "I know I'm going to lose something so that we can all win. That man's philosophy is so beautiful. When you negotiate, you will always lose something, but everyone wins."

Business owners, just like the workers, have a stake in improving the situation for individuals and for the nation, the pope said. "We do not have the luxury of missing any chance to encounter, discuss, confront or search" for solutions that will provide opportunity while treating human beings with the respect they deserve.

Slow day at Sun Bowl turns into party, settles down for Mass

By Wallice J. de la Vega
Catholic News Service

EL PASO — By the time the action started at the Sun Bowl Stadium Feb. 17 for the simulcast of Pope Francis' Mass from Ciudad Juarez, Mexico, scarcely a few hundred people had arrived.

But by the time the sun was setting over the western stands, the crowd had peaked at more than 30,000 and settled down for the solemnity of the Mass. Later, many were heading home dancing or singing, or both.

The celebration, “Two Nations, One Faith” was an event hosted by Catholic Extension and jointly coordinated with the Diocese of El Paso. It was held simultaneously with the Mass celebrated by the pope at the Juarez fairgrounds.

Prior to the Mass, in a ceremony at the Rio Grande, he blessed immigrants, church officials, migrants, refugees, immigration activists and victims of violence gathered at a levee across the river in the U.S.

Another blessing ceremony of the crowd took place at the Sun Bowl, using holy water drawn from the river and blessed by Pope Francis. A group of "VIP children," originally scheduled to be at the river ceremony but moved to the Sun Bowl because of lack of space, were recognized and participated in the blessing.

The artistic lineup kept the slowly swelling crowd cheering and enjoying the wide variety of entertainment presented.

Tony Melendez, renowned Nicaraguan singer-guitarist had the tough spot of starting the show and enduring the afternoon's harshest heat. Melendez -- born without arms -- has performed for previous popes; his embrace by St. John Paul II electrified an audience during the pontiff's 1987 papal visit to Los Angeles.

Country star Collin Raye, together with Andrea Thomas "and a few good friends" followed with a wide variety of rock and gospel songs. Thomas' rendition of "Ave Maria" captured the silent attention of the crowd.

Father Jack Wall, president of Catholic Extension, took time at the microphone to thank everyone present and the sponsors of the event. He used an introductory video to illustrate the wide range of places where his organization serves needy families.

Catholic Extension, a Chicago-based papal society that supports under-resourced dioceses in the U.S., has been a partner to the Diocese of El Paso for the organization's entire 110-year history. It has provided assistance to the U.S. dioceses along the border totaling more than $122 million in today's dollars.

Then the on-stage heat kicked-in. Father Tony Ricard, well known for youth and young adult ministries in the New Orleans Archdiocese, brought his spicy mix of stand-up comedy, dance steps and fiery preaching. He kept the audience laughing about 15 minutes, then intertwined his jokes with Gospel messages and the crowd responded accordingly.

"I know every one of you has someone you just can't stand," he said. "But hey, you can't get mercy if you don't give mercy, so use that one person and be what the Holy Father wants you to be."
BISHOP

(From 3)

Mass of the Lord’s Supper. This Mass commemorates the institution of the Eucharist and the priesthood, as well as Jesus’ command to follow his example of love and humble service. The priest washes the feet of a representative group of parishioners, responding to the Lord’s words at the Last Supper, “I have given you an example, that you also should do as I have done to you.” (John 13:15) In the Offertory of this Mass, we present gifts for the poor along with the bread and wine, as an expression of our commitment to Christian charity.

The Holy Eucharist is the source and the summit of the entire Christian life. All that we do as Christians leads to the Eucharist and flows from the Eucharist. This is the night that Our Lord Jesus gave us this precious gift of the Eucharist. In this Mass, following the Prayer after Communion, we bring the Blessed Sacrament in a solemn procession to a specially prepared place of reposition. We then have the opportunity to spend time in silent Adoration.

I encourage you to set aside some time on this sacred evening for prolonged Eucharistic Adoration. It is very helpful to bring a Bible and read prayerfully from chapters 13-17 of the Gospel of John during this time. A beautiful custom of many Catholics on Holy Thursday evening is to visit various parishes in the area and pray at their place of reposition of the Blessed Sacrament. Jesus asked Peter on this night, “Could you not watch with me one hour?” (Matthew 26:40)

Good Friday

The official liturgy of the Church on Good Friday is the Celebration of the Passion of the Lord. It consists of three parts: Liturgy of the Word, Adoration of the Cross, and the distribution of Holy Communion that was consecrated the night before. This is not a Mass. In fact, there are no Catholic Masses celebrated anywhere in the world on Good Friday.

On this solemn day, we honor the suffering and death of Our Lord, Jesus. We fast and abstain from eating meat on this day. In the liturgy, we proclaim the entire Passion account like we did on Palm Sunday. The experience of the Adoration of the Holy Cross is one of the most unforgettable rituals of Holy Week.

Devotions such as the Stations of the Cross can also be prayed on this day, either with others or alone, either at the parish or at home. A beautiful outdoor Way of the Cross is found along the Concho River on the grounds of Christ the King Retreat Center at 802 Ford Street in San Angelo. If you are not sure how to pray the Stations of the Cross, you can find many beautiful versions online. My favorite is called Everyone’s Way of the Cross by Clarence Enzler.

Along with many members of the faithful, I will participate in a Good Friday Procession with the Cross starting at St. Margaret Parish at 2619 Era Street in San Angelo at 1:00 pm on Good Friday, ending with the Stations of the Cross at Christ the King Retreat Center. Everyone is invited and welcome to join us.

Good Friday is a prime opportunity to meditate on the meaning of suffering. We recall the many crosses that our fellow human beings carry today. The saving sacrifice of Jesus on the Cross gives profound meaning to the experience of human suffering. In a very special way, Good Friday is a day of solidarity with our fellow Christians who suffer persecution and martyrdom in the Middle East. A special collection is taken up this day in our churches around the world to support Christians in the Holy Land.

Holy Saturday

The Mass celebrated on Holy Saturday begins after nightfall. It is called the Easter Vigil in the Holy Night. This liturgy ranks highest among all the celebrations of the entire year. It is more important than Christmas, Ash Wednesday, Pentecost, or any feast of any saint. It is the greatest, most beautiful, and most noble of all solemnities.

The Easter Vigil is not the same thing as a typical Saturday evening Mass. In the Easter Vigil Mass, we are keeping vigil for the Resurrection of the Lord. It consists of four parts, which move us through a gradual unfolding of the Paschal Mystery of Jesus Christ.

The first part is called the Lucernarium, or the service of the light. It starts with the outdoor blessing of the fire and the singing of the Easter Proclamation. Young and old alike carry lit candles in the darkness, symbolizing the light of Christ that dispels the darkness of our hearts and minds.

The second part is the Liturgy of the Word, which includes up to nine scripture readings, tracing the entire history of salvation, from the creation of the world through the new creation in the Resurrection of Christ. We take our time listening to scripture and responding through song and prayer.

In the third part, the Liturgy of Baptism, we celebrate the initiation of new members of the Church who have been preparing through the RCIA process. This part of the Easter Vigil draws the elect through the waters of Baptism into the promise of eternal life, and it also renews in all of us the grace of our own Baptism. We renew our baptismal promises, and we are joyfully sprinkled with the Easter water. Along with all the members of the parish RCIA team, we support the new Catholics and we welcome them to take an active role in our Church.

The fourth and final part of the Easter Vigil is Liturgy of the Eucharist, when the newly baptized receive Holy Communion for the first time. Here, we all experience the climax of the banquet of the Lamb of God, rejoicing in the presence of the Risen Christ.

This is a long liturgy. Don’t expect it to be over in one hour. You might say that the Easter Vigil is sort of like “camping out at the church” for the evening. Some find it helpful to take a nap at home on Saturday afternoon in order to stay alert throughout the entire liturgy in the church that night. To some people, it might seem unusual to spend such a long time in the church. However, I call to mind my nephew, who once sat through 24 hours of Star Wars movies in a theater. The Easter Vigil is infinitely more important than Star Wars.

Easter Sunday

On this day, we celebrate the fact that God conquered death and unlocked for us the path to eternity. Those who participate in the Easter Vigil have no obligation to attend Mass on Easter Sunday, because the Vigil is an Easter Mass. However, many choose to attend Mass on Sunday, as well. Those who receive Communion at the Vigil may also receive the Body and Blood of Christ at a different Mass on Easter Day. In the Masses of Easter Sunday, the rite of renewal of our Baptismal promises can take the place of the Creed after the homily.

Conclusion

The Paschal Triduum concludes on Easter Sunday evening. It is a precious treasure of the Catholic faith, and it need not remain hidden. If you are able to attend any of the liturgies of the Triduum, you will be participating in the most important days of the Church year.
have parishes that have blended together from several parishes and so the idea of shared parishes is how can we help to include people from various groups especially when changes take place.”

A recent study on cultural diversity, conducted by the U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops, studied 10 parishes across the country, collecting examples of best practices on how to make parishioners feel more included and welcome.

The concept of Shared Parishes was introduced to the presbyteral council in the Diocese of San Angelo, which recommended that the bishop give the go-ahead for implementation at the parish level.

One of the parishes that has proved to be a prime example of program success is St. Joseph Church in Amarillo. Fr. Hector Madrigal, pastor at St. Joseph, will present the April 8 program at Holy Angels in San Angelo.

“Parish life is the privileged context in which Catholics experience a personal and a communal encounter with Christ,” wrote Fr. Madrigal in the Shared Parishes guide book. “It is also the spiritual home where the faithful develop a sense of belonging in the Church and where they engage in ministries of service to one another and to the broader community.”

Fr. Madrigal added that the emergence of thousands of “shared parishes” over the last few decades is an indication of a major population shift taking place in parishes across the country. These “shared parishes” are also a sign of the times, calling Catholics from different races, cultures and ethnicities to experience anew the spirit of Pentecost so we can better hear and understand one another.

One example of how churches can begin a Shared Parish program is with a bilingual Mass.

“Another great example,” said Sister Elsa Garcia, CDP, “is that the Spanish choir in our parish now has robes. They didn’t before. But when they began wearing them, the entire community felt appreciated and the music quality has been excellent, and appreciated by both Spanish and English Mass attendees.”

Sister Elsa is Social Ministry Coordinator at the Midland parish of St. Ann.

Msgr. Droll said a key to Shared Parishes is to start simply. “People need to feel welcome,” Msgr. Droll said. “We can do things within the facility, but it needs to grow from there.” Inclusion may have at one time meant just a bilingual Mass, but now it involves Spanish-language Baptisms, RCIA, youth programs and a variety of other programs in Spanish.

The need for more participation in programs is not an indication that things are not going well in a parish, just that they could go better when inclusion is practiced on a larger scale.

Examples of how we tend to segment ourselves into groups that don’t necessarily invite fellowship are sitting only with our own ethnic group during Mass or talking only to those we know.

“We often work together, but sometimes we don’t socialize unless it is just with our friends,” Sister Elsa noted. “This program is an invitation to cooperate together, and how to get people to move from one group to another, and to do that, people just have to get to know one another.”

Bishop Michael J. Sis noted that from the very beginning, the Catholic Church in West Texas has been a culturally diverse community of faith and some of its parishes have done a beautiful job of building unity in diversity.

“We can all learn something from their experience,” said Bishop Sis. “However, some parishes have struggled with challenges ministerial situations and unwelcoming attitudes. The Shared Parishes program has been developed by the USCCB to help us learn some proven successful practices based on harmonious inclusion and intercultural sensitivity. To be Catholic is to belong to the universal, worldwide Church, which transcends differences of language, ethnicity, and national origin. Jesus Christ came to save all of humanity, not just a particular group.”

Registration for the Shared Parishes workshop begins at 10 a.m., April 8. If you are interested in attending, please contact your pastor.

PROVIDED PHOTOS

it exemplifies the kind of character players from my father’s generation had.

In the 1940s, my Dad and my Uncle Bill worked the grounds for the St. Louis Cardinals’ minor league team in Springfield, Missouri. Uncle Bill was the lead hose man, my Dad, No. 2. Until one day, when a big kid came into camp, a Cardinal prospect who hadn’t yet earned his playing time, and so started by helping tend the field. The kid was Joe Garagiola, and he unceremoniously — but kindly, no doubt — dumped Uncle Bill and Dad down a spot on the hose.

Joe and Yogi grew up in the same St. Louis neighborhood. The two men are cut from the same character: Joe has always been known as a true gentleman, gracious to a fault. In the 1990s, Dad decided to write Joe a letter after he had seen him on The Today Show one morning. He wanted to ask Joe if he still remembered that day in Springfield when he knocked the two smaller non-athletic kids down the hose chain. I don’t believe Dad ever put much hope in hearing anything back. But a few weeks later, Joe wrote back, assuring Dad he did remember. I will never forget the thrill that one moment of kindness gave my dad, someone like Joe remembering and taking the time to write to him.

But back to Yogi.

As a Catholic, I understand how difficult it is to be canonized, and the reasoning and thought that makes it necessary. Not everyone’s hero will be declared a saint, no matter how much we might desire it. However, just this once, I wish the Vatican’s Congregation for the Cause of Saints would work like Baseball Hall of Fame balloting.

Were Yogi’s name to appear on a ballot of potential saints, he would be a unanimous selection, especially if we confined it to a vote of Catholic baseball writers.

St. Yogi, Keeper of Wisdom and Patron of Baseball. I can see that in a compendium of saints even as I write this. It’s a far better designation than St. Yogi of Jersey, where he lived most of his adult life. Yogi’s feast day could be either September 22 — not only the day of his death last year, but also the day he made his major league debut in 1945 — or it could be a movable feast, celebrated every opening day.

But what about three miracles?

I am quickly reminded of two: He caught Don Larsen’s perfect game in the 1956 World Series, the only perfect game in the history of the Fall Classic. Given Larsen’s reputation as a partier and his lifetime 81-91 record, a perfect game in that situation was something approaching miraculous.

Then there are Yogi’s accomplishments as a player: 18-time All-Star, 13-time World Series champion, at or near the top of most every career World Series offensive category. And Yogi did it all while standing just 5-7 and tipping the scales at 185. Not necessarily a Mantleesque frame that would suggest athletic greatness.

Yogi’s wisdom would make him a favored saint among the masses if canonization were a popularity contest among the jaded fourth estate. After all, he has more words of wisdom attributed to him than many of our more than 800 saints. He could be many things to many people:

Prophet: “The future ain’t what it used to be.”

Philosopher: “No one goes anywhere anymore, it’s too crowded” ...

“You can observe a lot by just watching.”

Economist/Mathematician: “A nickel ain’t worth a dime anymore” ...

“Pair up in threes.”

Thinker: “It gets late early out here” ...

“I ain’t in no slump, I just ain’t hitting.”

And his humility was renowned: “In baseball, you don’t know nothing” ...

“I never said most of the things I said.”

Oh, and about that third miracle: He brought fathers and sons together. He bridged generations. He gave families shared laughter. He gave us joy, and in so doing he helped heal our disappointments with a game that, as former commissioner Bart Giamatti once wrote, “is supposed to break your heart.”

Yogi Berra was quite simply a representative of Jesus on earth. As we are called to be.
or are severely wounded in body, soul, and/or spirit. To all older people it is important to proclaim the Good News by word and action and, especially, to encourage the virtue of Christian hope (National Directory of Catechesis, USCCB).

Soon the diocese will introduce an initiative entitled, "Be My Witness: Formation for the New Evangelization," developed by RENEW International. In this initiative parishes will be encouraged to gather representatives of all age and interest groups from teen to older adults to assess how the parish is implementing the five key features of evangelization: Sunday worship, welcome, a sense of belonging, opportunities for witness, and mission outreach. Within this initiative, the parish could assess older adult formation in the context of these five key features. We would add a sixth feature for reflection: opportunities for service to older adults and by older adults.

As an outgrowth of this assessment, it would be helpful for parishes to organize a body representing the three age groups of older adults (as noted in last month's article) to meet on a regular basis to discuss the challenges and needs of these age groups in general and the needs of particular parishioners, and make recommendations to the clergy and staff for meeting the needs. An up-to-date list should be kept of persons in the parish who are homebound, are in hospital/rehab/nursing home, are fulltime caregivers, and are in need of transportation and other services. In many areas of service in the parish, older adults are the best equipped to meet these needs because of the maturity of their faith, experience, and gifts.

The following are some examples of older adult involvement that parishes in our diocese are encouraging: liturgical ministries; catechesis for various ages; fellowship groups for widows and widowers and for all older adults; intergenerational activities; pro-life involvement; visitation ministries in homes, hospitals, residential care, including taking Communion on a regular basis; prayer shawl ministry; St. Vincent de Paul Society; Rosary prayer group and making rosaries; providing transportation to Mass and parish activities, as well as to medical appointments, grocery store, etc. Another much needed ministry is providing companionship for the homebound who live alone, as well as for homebound to enable the fulltime family caregiver to have time away.

A helpful resource for older adults and their families that parishes should consider having in the parish office is a directory of services/persons/agencies. In this regard, Area Agencies on Aging are extremely valuable. They offer ombudsman (for advocacy), care coordination, benefits counseling, caregiver support services, information, referral, and assistance, as well as volunteer opportunities. In our diocese, the Concho Valley Area Agency on Aging that offices in San Angelo publishes annually a Senior Sourcebook, available on request: (325) 223-5704 or (877) 944-9666; web: www.cvcog.org/cvcog/aaa.html. The area served includes the counties of Coke, Concho, Crockett, Irion, Kimble, Mason, McCulloch, Menard, Reagan, Schleicher, Sterling, Sutton and Tom Green. The Permian Basin Area Agency on Aging that offices in Midland publishes a pamphlet listing their services: (432) 563-1061 or (800) 491-4636; web: www.aapb.com. The area served includes the counties of Andrews, Borden, Crane, Dawson, Ector, Gaines, Glasscock, Howard, Loving, Martin, Midland, Pecos, Reeves, Terrell, Upton, Ward and Winkler. Information for the West Central Texas Area Agency on Aging that offices in Abilene can be obtained by calling (325) 793-8490, (800) 928-2262 or the web: www.wctcog.org/wctcog/aa. The area served includes the counties of Brown, Callahan, Coleman, Comanche, Eastland, Fisher, Haskell, Jones, Kent, Knox, Mitchell, Nolan, Runnels, Scurry, Shackelford, Stephens, Stonewall, Taylor, and Throckmorton.

Family discussion of end-of-life issues often is ignored or avoided, perhaps because of dread and fear of death as extinction or as separation from family and friends. "He rebels against death because he bears in himself an eternal seed which cannot be reduced to sheer matter. All the endeavors of technology, though useful in the extreme, cannot calm his anxiety; for prolongation of biological life is unable to satisfy that desire for higher life which is inescapably lodged in his breast" (gaudium et spes, 18). By divine revelation, the Church knows and teaches that man is created by God for a purpose beyond this life. When man fell from his original goodness, God restored him to wholeness through the life, passion, death, and resurrection of Jesus Christ our Savior. God wants us to share in His divine life for all eternity. Through the gift of faith in Jesus Christ, we are united with Him now and after death. In Him we are united with all who have gone before us in faith. "Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who according to His abundant mercy has begotten us again to a living hope through the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead, to an inheritance incorruptible and undefiled and that does not fade away, reserved in heaven for you...(I Pet 1:3-5).

Parishes should provide a venue to catechize regarding the Scriptural teachings of the Church on suffering, dying, death/eternal life, as well as other end-of-life issues. They are too numerous and complex to address in this article; however, some of the issues are palliative pain relief versus assisted suicide and euthanasia in terminal illness, hydration/tube feeding/ventilation as means of providing comfort and/or extending life, and cremation. In this context, our parishioners need to know about end of life directives that are in accord with Catholic teaching: Medical (Health Care) Power of Attorney, Living Will (both are included in an Advanced Health Care Directive), Declaration of Guardian, Declaration for Mental Health, Out of Hospital Do Not Resuscitate Order. It is also advisable to provide information about a Will and Durable Power of Attorney. Some of these forms may be downloaded from the Texas Catholic Conference website: www.txcatholic-advance-directives.org/

The National Catholic Bioethics Center website, NCBC.org, has many helpful resources for understanding the moral implications of medical and other life issues. Among them is "A Catholic Guide to End-of-Life Decisions." The Angelus publishes Fr. Tad Pacholczyk's articles, "Making Sense of Bioethics." He is the Director of Education at the NCBC. In our diocese, Peggy Hensley is a valuable resource person regarding end-of-life issues. Peggy is a Family Nurse Practitioner, with a specialty in geriatric practice, who has a Master's Degrees in Pastoral Studies with a Spirituality focus from Loyola University and a Certification in Medical Ethics from the NCBC. She is a member of Sacred Heart Parish in Coleman and has made presentations in parishes on end-of-life issues. You may email her at hensley@web-access.net.

Pope Francis, in his continuing catechesis on the family, admonishes us about the elderly. "It is a mortal sin to discard our elderly...In a short or in a long while, we are inevitably them, even though we choose not to think about it...A society where the elderly are discarded carries within it the virus of death...The quality of a society can easily be evaluated by the way it treats its older members as well as the place it gives them in community life...The Church's Tradition has always placed great value on the elderly and devoted special attention to the final stage of life...May they feel the tenderness of the Father through the kindness and gentleness all." (Gen Aud, 3-4-15)

SAINTS

(from 7)

ruptured by the poor and the dying.

People began to call Angela "Mother Angela of the Cross" and the sisters thought of themselves as "angels" called to help and love the poor and sick in their homes that otherwise would have been abandoned. During Mother Angela’s lifetime, another 23 convents were established. The congregation works with the sick, the poor, orphans, the homeless, finding them food, medicine, housing and other needs, living solely on alms, keeping only enough for themselves to continue their work. (www.catholic.org)

Mother Angela died in Seville on March 2, 1932. She was beatified in 1982 in Madrid by Pope John Paul II and canonized on May 4, 2003 by Pope John Paul II. Her shrine is at the convent of the Sisters of the Cross in Seville.
MUSIC

(From 6)

given you at your disposal.”

Bishop Sis emphasized music’s servant function in the liturgy. The attitude of musicians in the Church should be “I am here to serve God by leading this community in liturgical worship,” Sis said, adding that music should not seek to draw attention to itself or the musicians.

“We are here as humble servants; we are not here as performers,” he said.

In much the same way, music ministers should be happy to share their roles and welcome new people to the ministry, Sis said.

“The attitude of hogging it to ourselves in God’s presence (prayer), by making oneself known is an attitude of insufficiency,” he said.

In his homily, Sis presented music’s servant function in the liturgy:

“Music should not seek to draw attention to itself or the musicians,” Sis said, adding that music’s servant function in the liturgy is to serve God by leading this community in liturgical worship.

Sis, for his part, said his goal was to have congregations wherein people “are singing their hearts out.”

“When I see that happening, I say, ‘Yes, we are meeting our goal,’ ” he said.

POPE

(From 19)

respect they deserve.

"Anything we can do to foster dialogue, encounter and the search for better alternatives and opportunities is already an accomplishment to be valued and highlighted," the pope told them.

Looking for common ground, Pope Francis asked the workers and the business people to think about the future they hope for their children and their country. Almost all people would share the same general dream, he said, and they must work together to achieve it.

Responding to Flores’ plea for family-friendly work schedules, the pope told the crowd: "I invite you to dream, to dream of a Mexico where the father has time to play with his children, where a mother has time to play with her children. And you will gain that through dialogue, through negotiating, by losing so that everyone wins.”

"What kind of Mexico do you want to leave your children? Do you want to leave them the memory of exploitation, of insufficient pay, of workplace harassment?” he asked. Or, should the future be one of "dignified work, a proper roof (over one's head) and of land to be worked?"

WOO

(From 15)

that, when we fail to love and lose our way, God is there. We always have a way home. Ashes make it clear that now is the time for us to rekindle our desire for God.

We do so by making time to put ourselves in God's presence (prayer), by acknowledging and serving him in the other (almsgiving) and by learning to let God and not things fill our void and define our appetites (fasting).

I suspect that Mass attendance spikes on Ash Wednesday because we know our sinfulness and, as hard as it is, we make an explicit nod to our human mortality. But transcending all, it is the people of faith expressing the desire to make good with God and do better.

BARRON

(From 17)

titude or courage. Will the defense of the faith stir up opposition? Watch the news, read the papers, and above all surf the Internet, and the question answers itself. It would be tempting indeed to withdraw from the arena and cultivate one's faith privately, but confirmed people, endowed with fortitude, are meant to be soldiers of Christ, engaged in the fight. Some folks suggest that this phrase should not be used as it evokes the terrors of religious violence. However, the struggle of a soldier of Christ is to resist violence, not with the weapons of worldliness but with the weapons of the Spirit — peace, patience, kindness, and forgiveness. Does evangelization put the evangelizer in harm's way? Just ask Peter, Paul, Thomas More, Maximilian Kolbe, and Charles Lwanga. But also consult anyone who has been insulted, joked about, mocked, or excluded because of his faith in Christ. The gift of fortitude empowers the confirmandi to stay in the arena.

Those who would spread and defend the faith also require the gift of counsel, which is the capacity to discern right from wrong, to know what God wants us to do in any given situation. As we move through the day, we perform hundreds of acts. Are we motivated primarily by the worldly desires for wealth, pleasure, power, self-protection, and honor; or are we motivated by a desire to please God? Counsel enables one to make the right moral decisions for the right reason. It is precisely this holiness, this consistent option to follow the will of God, that makes a person radiant and compelling to others — and hence evangelically persuasive.

Finally, the confirmed evangelizer needs the spiritual gifts of piety and fear of the Lord. Though these terms carry a somewhat fussy connotation, they in fact name something strong and bracing.

They designate the capacity to place God at the absolute center of one's life, to worship God alone. The person of piety and genuine fear of the Lord (respect for God), does not run after every passing fancy, or devote herself to a variety of worldly goods; rather, her heart is set upon God alone, and every other passion or interest in her life is related to that central value. This right ordering of the self conduces toward integrity, and integrity of life makes a person saintly and deeply attractive.

I reminded those I confirmed that their Confirmation was meant to set them on fire with the Holy Spirit, precisely so that they in turn can set the world on fire. Once again, the gifts that they received were not for them.

Bishop Robert Barron is an auxiliary bishop of the Archdiocese of Los Angeles and the founder of Word on Fire Catholic Ministries.

GRN RADIO PROGRAM SCHEDULE

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
1 PM - Called to Communion
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
TEX-MEX

(From 5)

Bishop Emeritus of San Angelo.

“A few years after we began meeting, Pope St. John II’s beautiful statement gave great inspiration for these meetings.” Bishop Emeritus Pfeifer said. “Hence, the original objective was to bring us together as brother bishops shepherding God’s flock which flows back and forth along the Rio Grande River.

“Our objective was to give witness that we are one as shepherds leading Christ’s Church and to deal with common pastoral issues. A constant issue for discussion at these meetings has been the critical question of immigration.

The bishops issued a statement on immigration to the presidents of the United States and Mexico a few years ago, and a document on the Texas Catholic Conference website also includes a statement about President Obama’s 2014 executive order on immigration. (www.txcatholic.org/#!bishops-statements/cqwf)

Bishop Michael Sis, in his first occasion to host the event, said the bishops also addressed matters of deportation and serving immigrants during the meeting.

“We shared information about the current U.S. deportation practices and the effects on people,” Bishop Sis said. “For example, many of those being deported don’t have any more contact with their place of origin in Mexico. Their home, family, work, and resources are in the United States. Some of them are English-speakers who have great difficulty speaking Spanish. When they are sent back to Mexico, many of them are without roots or support there, which leads to further social and personal problems.”

The bishops also heard reports from some priests who run Catholic Immigrant Centers in Mexico, generously serving large numbers of immigrants. In their ministry, they find that there are often people who are making money off of the immigrants, including human traffickers, organized crime, and civil officials.

“This system is abusing human beings for the sake of profit,” Bishop Sis said.

Bishop Sis added that in order to serve immigrants more effectively, “We will establish a network of those in all of our dioceses who are currently providing pastoral care to immigrants. There is a real concern for the protection of the basic human rights of immigrants.”

Bishop Mark Seitz, of the Diocese of El Paso, said the humanitarian issue of immigrants is one we all must actively face and work to help find a solution.

“To be a disciple of Jesus is to have a light that influences everything we do, and every issue we face,” Bishop Seitz said. “If it is something we keep within the walls of the church or we only pray about at night, our faith is stunted. That faith that we have should give us a perspective. Change is the way we deal with big questions of the day, which is not to say these aren’t complex issues, or to suggest that the Church is going to propose an answer to every political issue, but it is to say that we should begin from the point of view of how Jesus called us to see those who are most in need, least powerful and suffering the most. And that is we should approach them with a great sense of compassion and from there we begin to wrestle with the questions that we struggle with.”

MISERICORDIA

(Para 5)

toreando el rebaño de Dios, que fluye ida y vuelta a lo largo del Río Bravo.

"Nuestro objetivo era dar testimonio de que somos uno como pastores principales dirigiendo la Iglesia de Cristo y hacer frente a los problemas pastorales comunes. Un tema constante de discusión en estas reuniones ha sido la cuestión crítica de inmigración."

Los obispos emitieron una declaración sobre la inmigración a los presidentes de los Estados Unidos y México hace unos años, y un documento en el sitio web de la Conferencia Católica de Texas también, donde incluye una declaración sobre la orden ejecutiva del Presidente Obama del 2014 tocante la inmigración. (http://www.txcatholic.org/#!bishops-statements/cqwf)

Nuestro Obispo Michael Sis, en su primera ocasión de ser anfitrión de este evento, dijo que los obispos también abordaron asuntos acerca la deportación y el servicio a los inmigrantes durante la reunión.

"Compartimos información sobre las prácticas actuales de deportación de los Estados Unidos y los efectos en las personas," dijo el Obispo Sis. "Por ejemplo, muchos de los que están siendo deportados no tienen más contacto con su lugar de origen en México. Su hogar, su familia, su trabajo, y sus recursos están en los Estados Unidos. Algunos de ellos son de habla inglesa y tienen una gran dificultad para hablar en español. Cuando son enviados de regreso a México, muchos de ellos no tienen raíces o apoyo allí, lo cual conduce a más problemas sociales y personales."

Los obispos también escucharon los informes de algunos sacerdotes que dirigen Centros Católicos de Inmigrantes en México, sirviendo generosamente a un gran número de inmigrantes. En su ministerio, encuentran que a menudo hay personas que están haciendo dinero a costa de los inmigrantes, incluidos los traficantes de personas, el crimen organizado, y oficiales civiles.

"Este sistema está abusando de los seres humanos en búsqueda de la ganancia," dijo el Obispo Sis.

Obispo Sis añadió que con el fin de servir a los inmigrantes con mayor eficacia, "Vamos a establecer una red de las que están en todas nuestras diócesis, que en estos momentos prestan atención pastoral a los inmigrantes. Hay una preocupación real para la protección de los derechos humanos de los inmigrantes."

Obispo Mark Seitz, de la Diócesis de El Paso, dijo que el problema humanitario de los inmigrantes es uno que todos debemos afrontar activamente y trabajar para ayudar a encontrar una solución.

"Para ser un discípulo de Jesús es tener una luz que influye todo lo que hacemos, y cada problema que enfrentamos", dijo el Obispo Seitz. "Si es algo que mantenemos dentro de las paredes de la iglesia o que sólo oramos por la noche, nuestra fe se atrofia. Esa fe que tenemos nos debe dar una perspectiva. El cambio es la manera en que tratamos con grandes cuestiones del momento, lo cual no quiere decir que estos no son temas complejos, o para sugerir que la Iglesia vaya a proponer una respuesta para cada cuestión política, sino más bien es decir que deberíamos comenzar desde el punto de vista de cómo Jesús nos llama a ver a los más necesitados, los más débiles, y los que sufren más. Y así es que debemos acercarnos a ellos con un gran sentido de compasión y de ahí, empezar a tratar con las preguntas con las cuales luchamos."