School's In!

Midland St. Ann’s School students Crystal Chukwuma, left; Theron Racho, right, and Micaela Paez, kneeling, pose with a statue of the school’s namesake shortly after the start of the 2017-2018 school year. There are three Catholic Schools in the Diocese of San Angelo — St. Mary’s in Odessa, Angelo Catholic School in San Angelo and St. Ann’s in Midland.
Discipleship: Meeting cultural changes in our parishes

By Alison Pope
Special for The Angelus

ORLANDO, Fla. — I’ve been accused of being many things over the years — mostly crazy. It’s hard to deny that title when I willingly chose to attend a break-out session entitled “Identifying and Meeting the Changing Needs of All Parishioners” at the Convocation of Catholic Leaders in Orlando, in early July. Only a crazy person would want to learn about something seemingly impossible.

At the root of the Convocation of Catholic Leaders was an awareness that all of us, as baptized Catholics, are called to be missionary disciples. Yet, too often, we are more focused on what we get out of our faith than how we can share it with others. I know I’ve been guilty of walking into a full church on Christmas, Easter, or even Ash Wednesday, and wondering where all these people came from and why they had to take my seat.

Maybe our frustration comes when a new Bible study or faith sharing group starts up and wants to meet in our meeting room on our night. For some, it could be that we think the younger generation should be stepping up to take on a leadership role, yet we want them to continue doing things the way we’ve always done them, rather than allowing them to implement new ideas.

(Please See CULTURE/23)

Visiting priest investigates cause for Sor María

By Jimmy Patterson
Editor / The Angelus

SAN ANGELO — Fr. Stefano Cecchin, OFM, postulator for the cause of sainthood for Sor María de Agreda, described above as part of the formation of people who go on mission experiences.

The fifth resolution is to bring new people onto the Diocesan Partnership Team for the next generation of leadership.

The fourth resolution is to look for other opportunities for sharing in mission experiences beyond parish-to-parish partnerships, for example, between university apostolates, Catholic schools, and parish catechists.

The third is to follow a program of “accompanying” the people in the parish in mission exchanges, walking with and working with the people in the local parish in their ministries and sacramental celebrations. In the encounter with one another, we encounter the living Christ; this “new evangelization” leads to personal conversion, desire for communion with one another, and solidarity in working together.

The fourth resolution is to look for other opportunities for sharing in mission experiences beyond parish-to-parish partnerships, for example, between university apostolates, Catholic schools, and parish catechists.

The fifth resolution is to bring new people onto the Diocesan Partnership Team for the next generation of leadership.

To learn more about these opportunities, contact Msgr. Larry Droll at St. Ann’s Parish in Midland, 432-682-6303 or ldroll@sanangelodiocese.org.
Learning the faith a lifelong process

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

Jesus had a special place in his heart for children. One day he sat down, called his twelve apostles around him, and taught them a very important lesson.

He took a little child in his arms and told them, “Whoever welcomes one child such as this in my name welcomes me.” (Mark 9:36)

He said, “Let the children come to me. It is to just such as these that the Kingdom of God belongs.” (Mark 10:14)

In our diocese, one of our major priorities must be to provide a quality program of religious education, to form children, young people, and adults in the ways of our faith. Catechesis is the process of handing on faith tradition, helping another person to grow in intimate communion with Jesus Christ through the active practice of our Catholic faith. This happens gradually, over time, as we progressively unfold the message.

Those who teach religious education in our parishes are called catechists. They are answering the call from God that comes with their baptismal mission to proclaim the Word of God.

I am very grateful for all our catechists, youth ministers, and volunteers who are involved in the evangelization and catechesis activities of our parishes. If you have never tried helping in this way, I highly recommend it. When we teach the faith to others, we end up learning a lot ourselves.

Parents also have a catechetical vocation, living out their baptismal call as the primary catechists of their children. Our Catholic Church teaches that the family is the “domestic Church.” God has given to parents the task of being their children’s first and primary educators in the faith.

Parents have the responsibility to evangelize their children in a variety of ways teaching them the faith, teaching them to pray, and involving them in the life of the Church, bringing them to Mass, and giving good example of living a good moral Christian life.

Children learn in the family how to practice the virtues that they will later live out in society.

Some parents say, “How can I teach my children the faith, if I don’t know the answers myself?” A good first step is to equip your home with good Catholic resources. You yourself don’t have to be experts. Just use a Catholic encyclopedia, but you can stock your home bookshelf with some helpful reference materials.

Look at the books that sit on the bookshelf in your home. What do you see? Maybe some cookbooks, photo albums, car repair manuals, children’s books, novels, or popular magazines? Why not also have some books that help you and your family grow closer to God?

I would recommend any of the following resources for Catholic home bookshelves:

• Bible: I recommend the New American Bible, the Revised Standard Version, the Jerusalem Bible, or the International Catholic Bible.

(From The Bishop’s Desk)
Midland Workshop to feature Christian Writers

Writer's Workshop 2017, that genre differs. They are dynamic and will inspire it takes to be a successful Christian writer and how meet your objectives. Sunday’s is a team-up of two a day’s worth of breakout session with topics that September 29-30, 2017

The Catholic Women’s Conference has moved this year to the McNease Center, 501 Rio Concho in San Angelo. Bishop Sis will preside at Mass on Saturday morning. The Catholic Women’s Conference has moved this year to the McNease Center, 501 Rio Concho in San Angelo. Bishop Sis will preside at Mass on Saturday morning. The Catholic Women’s Conference has moved this year to the McNease Center, 501 Rio Concho in San Angelo. Bishop Sis will preside at Mass on Saturday morning. The Catholic Women’s Conference has moved this year to the McNease Center, 501 Rio Concho in San Angelo. Bishop Sis will preside at Mass on Saturday morning. The Catholic Women’s Conference has moved this year to the McNease Center, 501 Rio Concho in San Angelo. Bishop Sis will preside at Mass on Saturday morning.

Applications accepted for Msgr. Droll Scholarship

The Vatican will mark the day Jan. 14, while in the United States, the message for the annual event was released Aug. 21, which is earlier than normal, to stimulate Catholic involvement in the U.N. process for developing and adopting a Global Compact for Migration and a Global Compact on Refugees.

Since the U.N. General Assembly voted in September 2016 to draw up a Global Compact on Refugees to cross their borders safely and legally, the pope said. “We cannot simply return to countries which cannot accept refugees are not suitable solutions, "For Catholics, he said, "every stranger who knocks at our door is an opportunity for an encounter with Jesus Christ." — Pope Francis.

Pope urges respect for the life and dignity of migrants and refugees
**ST. THERESE CATHOLIC CHURCH**

**CARLSBAD**

**Annual Fall Festival**

**Sunday, September 17, 2017**

**Knights of Columbus Hall**

**3636 N. Bryant, San Angelo**

St. Therese Catholic Church of San Angelo will hold its Fall Festival on Sunday, September 17, at the Knights of Columbus Hall, 3636 N. Bryant, in San Angelo. A meal featuring homemade german sausage, homemade potato salad, pinto beans, coleslaw, dessert, and tea/coffee will be served from 11:00 a.m. to 1:00 p.m. Adult Plates: $10; Children Plates (Age 10 and Under): $6. Drive-Thru To-Go plates will also be available for $10. Raffle tickets are $1.00 each for a chance to win 1/2 a side of beef, an iPad, or a $250.00 gift card to the restaurant Salt Grass. Sausage sandwiches available in the evening. Carnival hours are 6-10 p.m. on September 28th & 29th, 10am – 6pm and September 30th, and 1 – 6pm.

The festival is the only fundraising event for our parish. A large portion of the proceeds from the festival go to the Parish Hall. The ‘Live Auction,’ which is the principal fundraising event, is scheduled to begin at 12:30PM. Parishioners will be selling raffle ticket $5 each for a chance to win a 1/2 side of beef, an iPad, or a $250.00 gift card to the restaurant Salt Grass. Parishioners will also be selling tickets for a handmade quilt at $1.00 per ticket or 6 tickets for $5.00. Other entertaining activities will include a Carnival, a Country Store, a Bounce Castle with a big Air Slide, Bingo, and lots of family fun. Thanks!

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**DISCIPLES**

**From (7) to (From) mercy of Christ but fail to be good examples.**

Sometimes we are only worried about building, expanding, and maintaining churches instead of building our church communities, making them stronger and reaching out to the Christians who are lost. “I hope that all communities will devote the necessary effort to advancing along the path of a pastoral and missionary conversion which cannot leave them as they presently are. “Mercia administration” can no longer be. Throughout the world, let us be “permanently in a state of mission” (paragraph 25). The parish is not an outdated institution; precisely because it possesses great flexibility, it can assume quite different contours depending on the openness and missionary creativity of the pastor and the community. While certainly the call to the new institution which evangolizes, if the parish proves capable of self-renewal and constant adaptation, it continues to be the Church living in the midst of the homes of her sons and
A Message to all Parishes from Bishop Michael J. Sis
Emergency Collection for Hurricane Harvey Victims

Hurricane Harvey has caused a widespread path of destruction. Our prayers and material support are urgently needed to help rebuild lives.

The people of the Diocese of San Angelo have always been very generous in reaching out to help others in time of need. Any contribution, large or small, is an expression of the corporal works of mercy and the Christian virtue of solidarity.

In a united effort of all Catholic dioceses in the U.S., all parishes and missions are asked to take up an emergency special collection in the Masses of September 2-3, 2017, and to provide pastoral support to impacted dioceses and rebuilding support to Catholic Charities USA and recovery efforts of the memo line.

On any day, the following may be used in the prayers of the faithful:

For our brothers and sisters who have been impacted by Hurricane Harvey, that they may have the strength to rebuild their lives; we pray to the Lord.

Por nuestros hermanos que han sido afectados por el Huracán Harvey, para que tengan las fuerzas para reconstruir sus vidas, rogamos al Señor.

WASHINGTON (CNS) — Catholic dioceses and charities are quickly organizing to help in the aftermath of a Category 4 hurricane that made landfall with heavy rains and winds of 130 miles per hour late Aug. 25 into the Rockport, Texas area, northeast of Corpus Christi. The National Weather Service said in a tweet Aug. 27 that the rainfall expected after the hurricane and storm are over “are beyond anything experienced before.”

The hurricane, named Harvey, is said to be the strongest one to hit the United States in more than a decade and perhaps the strongest one to make landfall in Texas.

Catholic Charities USA, as well as the Society of St. Vincent de Paul Disaster Services, announced early on Aug. 26 that they’re mobilizing to help an as-yet-unknown number of persons affected by the hurricane. The Texas Catholic Conference of Bishops has a list of charities helping with the disaster listed on its website at https://txcatholic.org/harvey.

Authorities reported at least five casualties as of Aug. 27, but because of safety issues, not many emergency teams have been yet able to respond to the aftermath and much of the damage is unknown. Texas Gov. Greg Abbott declared the state a disaster area, which will allow federal money to help in reconstruction. Catholic groups said they want to help with the immediate needs of the communities affected.

“We will be sending in rapid-response teams to help our impacted areas throughout the region,” said the cardinal in an Aug. 27 news release.

“The effects of this storm continue to put people in harm's way, with horrific scenes playing out all around, such as those of people trapped on their rooftops as water continues to rise around them. Many dioceses of the church in the United States have been affected; many others will be as the storm continues.”

He asked for prayers but also for assistance for those affected. One of the first to pledge help was the Diocese of Brownsville, Texas, where Bishop Daniel E. Flores authorized a second collection to be taken up at the diocese’s local churches on the weekend of Aug. 26-27 to send to Catholic Charities in nearby Corpus Christi and “other places hardest hit by loss of power, storm damage, flooding.”

People walk through floodwaters from Hurricane Harvey, left, Aug. 27 after being evacuated in Dickinson. Interstate 45 is seen submerged from the effects of Hurricane Harvey Aug. 28 in Houston, below. (CNS photos / Richard Carson, Reuters)
From the Editor

In August we all became Houstonians, Southeast Texans

By Jimmy Patterson

It struck with an intensity rarely seen. Like a visitor who knocks on a door and barges in at the same time, that was Harvey. Harvey gave Texans little warning. Only several hours before landfall it was a minor disturbance, a tropical depression in the Gulf. It was not terribly alarming for awhile.

Forecasters had said the hurricane — by that morning a tropical storm — would produce a lot of rain, but there was nothing dire. Then something happened. Harvey sat a few hundred miles off the coast. And didn’t move. The bathtub-warm water of the Gulf fed its intensity and the eye became tight and distinct. And only then did everyone realize this wasn’t a storm, it was a monster. Forecasters began using phrases — “never seen anything like this before,” “catastrophe in the making” and “epic flooding” — that certainly didn’t help anyone’s comfort level.

I pray for those who suffer because of the storm, for those who lost anything and for those who lost everything. My family escaped the worst, but our story was one that was both unique and similar to many others. I was stuck in Midland while my wife, our daughter and her family rode out some tense hours with a new addition.

Ten days before Harvey stormed ashore, our daughter had a healthy baby boy, Nolan Edward, our first grandson (Nolan was named after the Hall of Famer who pitched for the Texas Rangers, not the Astros).

Our grandson’s birth was recorded at Methodist Willowbrook Hospital, on Hwy. 249 in North Houston. For weeks earlier, the plan had been that Karen would remain in Cypress (northwest Houston) to help our daughter and her husband in the first couple of weeks with chores that made life with a newborn a little easier, or such was the plan. So on August 18, I returned to West Texas and would plan a return over the Labor Day weekend to pick up Karen and bring her back home to Midland.

The storm’s first 24 hours were uneventful for our family — but not for so many millions of other people. We kept in touch through texts and phone calls, but there was nothing out of the ordinary. (Likewise for so many millions of other people. We kept in touch through texts back home to Midland.

And then came Sunday and Monday. And the rain that seemed to go on forever.

“Tornado on the ground, headed our way,” the next text came as I was at the convenience store just down the street. “Seconds (minutes?) ticked by. Finally, a call. The funnel cloud had lifted over the neighborhood, rotating angrily as it passed. They were spared.

Eight o’clock that same night.

“Tornado on the ground, headed our way,” the next text came as I was in a meeting, thinking the worst had passed hours earlier.

Again long stretches of nothingness alerted the committee in my head. I left my meeting and tried calling. Nothing. Finally, another text. “Turned and headed west.”

It was a long day for millions who suffered first hand and millions more who watched, hoped and prayed from a distance. Our family was spared, thank God, especially given that a 2-year-old granddaughter and 2-week-old (almost) grandson were oblivious to what was happening outside. They survived Saturday. And then came Sunday and Monday. And the rain that seemed to go on forever.

Maintaining a church to missionary discipleship, building the Body of Christ

By Fr. Bala Govindu

St. Anthony/St. Joseph-Odessa

ORLANDO, Fla. — It was a great honor and privilege to be chosen by Bishop Michael Sis to be one of the delegates of our Diocese of San Angelo to the great event called “The Convocation of Catholic Leaders: The Joy of the Gospel in America.”

The event brought together many of the cardinals, bishops, delegate priests, deacons, religious, and lay leaders in different movements and groups of the Church.

Taking into consideration the exhortation of Pope Francis’ Evangelii Gaudium: Joy of the Gospel, “Pastoral ministry in a missionary seeks to abandon the complacent attitude that says: ‘We have always done it this way.’ I invite everyone to be bold and creative in this task of rethinking the goals, structures, style and methods of evangelization in their respective communities” (paragraph 33).

There were lots of motivational and inspirational speeches by key leaders of the Church. The main focus in their talks were how to bring the joy of the Gospel to our society in the USA as missionary disciples in our socio-cultural-political-economic environment. What are our growing and pressing challenges and concerns of the Church today? This is a wakeup call for our Catholic Church to rise from our deep sleep and complacency. “Each baptized person is called to be a missionary disciple to proclaim the Gospel of Jesus Christ to our brothers and sisters in our surroundings, especially the lost, poor, youth, vulnerable, immigrants and people on the margins.” The key things that we need to keep in mind as missionary disciples are:

1. Personal Encounter with Jesus. Our deep and personal relationship with the Holy Trinity through prayer and frequent participation in the Sacraments. When we are profoundly rooted in Jesus Christ, we will start proclaiming and telling everyone our deep experience of Christ. We should not be a lighted candle under the bushel but on the lampstand, which means sharing that joy and light of Christ to our brothers and sisters so that they can come to that light and receive the same joy and walk in the light of Christ.

2. Living Witnesses as Missionary Disciples. We not only preach the Word of God but also become the embodiment of the Word by living it. What are our challenges, concerns and priorities in our Church communities? Can we (priests and parishioners) work together to bring joy, love and mercy of Christ through our words, deeds and actions? “For Christ came to seek and to save the lost” (Lk: 19:10). As missionary disciples, are we seeking the lost members of the Church or expecting them to come to us?

3. Joy of the Gospel and Pastoral Care. The Gospel invites us to experience the joy and love of God. In the same way the Church — we should emulate the joy and love of God through our interactions with our fellow brothers and sisters. God has given us commandments and his teachings for our benefits and well being. Even the Church has the rules and laws for spiritual benefit of the people. When we, priests and lay leaders, deal with the pastoral situations, we have to be merciful and loving like Christ not to be too rigid and hard on people which turns them away from love and the mercy of God. What is important for a Christian is to know, love and serve God and each person made in the image of God. As instruments of God, we should never miss our focus of seeking and saving the lost souls. In my personal experience, I have seen priests and lay leaders or ministers who lack a personal relationship with Christ and who always talk beautifully about the love and...
The gifts of the Holy Spirit

By Fr. Knick and Sandie Knickerbocker

There are so many references in Scripture to gifts of the Holy Spirit! How are we to distinguish among them, and, most of all, how are we to receive them and allow the Holy Spirit to manifest them in our lives?

The Motivational Gifts or Roman Gifts (12:6-8) are talents given when God forms us in the womb. One or more of these gifts may be dominant in our temperament, character, and vocational decisions. These talents are referred to as gifts because they are given to us freely by God so we can contribute to our family, parish, and society and bring glory to Him as we utilize them: prophecy (perceiver), ministry (server/doer), teaching, exhorting (encourager), contributing (giver of alms), leading (administrator/facilitator), showing mercy (person of compassion).

The Traditional Gifts or Isaiah Gifts (11:2) are poured out by the Holy Spirit at Baptism and renewed at Confirmation to enable us to fulfill God's purpose for our life: wisdom, understanding, counsel, fortitude, knowledge, piety, and fear of the Lord. When we are "Baptized in the Spirit," the Holy Spirit "fans the flames" of our Baptism and Confirmation.

The Ministry Gifts or Ephesian Gifts (4:11-12) are the gifts of function or position in the body. "And his gifts were that some should be apostles, some prophets, some evangelists, some pastors and teachers, to equip the saints for the work of ministry, for building up the body of Christ..." (RSVCE). The persons to whom God gives any of the five ministry gifts are the leaders God has appointed to teach and inspire us in our Christian mission. The Ministry Gifts are people in specific roles.

The Charismatic Gifts are also referred to as the Manifestation Gifts. "To each is given the manifestation of the Spirit for the common good," (1 Cor. 12:7) i.e. to build up the Body of Christ. These gifts are supernatural abilities. God chooses how He will manifest His attributes through us for the common good. Most often these gifts are manifested in a praying community and are given to minister to a particular need or situation in that community: Gifts of Insight/Revelation, Communication/Utterance, Power/Dynamism.

Gifts Of Insight Or Revelation

Expression of Knowledge (Word of Knowledge) is a supernatural revelation of facts past, present, or future which we did not learn through the efforts of the natural mind. This is a supernaturally imparted Word. True supernatural knowledge starts with knowing God personally, through Jesus Christ. Jesus and the disciples received many Words of Knowledge from the Holy Spirit. See Matthew 17:27, Mark 5:36-40, John 4:17-27, Acts 3:1-20, Acts 5:1-9.

Expression of Wisdom (Word of Wisdom) is a supernatural insight given to the members of the Body of Christ, which reveals God's timing and method of ministry in a given situation. It explains or illuminates a given revelation such as a Word of Knowledge, Discernment of Spirits, or the communication of revealed Prophecy.

Discernment of Spirits is a supernatural ability to recognize whether a person or situation is being 

(Please See KNICKERBOCKER/23)

Speaking of Saints

St. Thérèse Couderc key in retreat movement before demotion, obscurity

By Mary Lou Gibson

Marie Victoire Couderc was 20 years old when she attended a mission preached by a young priest, the Rev. J. P. E. Terme. It was the year 1824 and Fr. Terme and a few other priests had been sent to La Louvesc, in the Vivarais, a rural section in southeastern France to look after the pilgrim shrine of St. John Francis Regis.

The priests opened a hostel for women pilgrims and Fr. Terme asked a community of sisters he had established to run the hostel. The sisters were teachers in Fr. Terme's former parish of Aps. After he met Marie Victoire, he invited her to join this new congregation dedicated to education. She took the religious name Thérèse and when she was only 23, Fr. Terme made her superior general at La Louvesc. The congregation was known as the Daughters of St. Regis.

Soon after, things changed rapidly for Thérèse and her sisters. Editor Michael Walsh writes in Butler’s Lives of the Saints that in 1828 Fr. Terme attended a retreat at the Jesuit house near Le Puy. When he returned, he announced that the Daughters of St. Regis should include the giving of retreats for women to their duties. His decision that nuns, not priests, should conduct retreats for the women who came to visit the pilgrimage site was astonishing for its day. Tom Cowan writes in The Way of the Saints that nowhere did nuns give retreats.

But, according to Cowan, the concept caught on and grew and flourished under Mother Thérèse’s supervision. It was an immediate success, especially among countrywomen. Thus, the Society of the Cenacle became a separate congregation from the teaching ministry of the Sisters of St. Regis. Dom Basil Watkins, OSB writes in The Book of Saints that it was Thérèse’s intention to attract pilgrims to the tomb of St. John Francis Regis and to help them spend time in reflection. The small community of 12 sisters were installed at La Louvesc with Mother Thérèse at their head. They began giving retreats according to the method of St. Ignatius. Plans were made for a new house and church for the convent.

But the community’s financial resources could not meet the increased expenses, and the community amassed very large debts. Before Fr. Terme’s death in 1834, the shrine of St. John Francis Regis and the parish of Le Louvesc were taken over by the Jesuits. Walsh writes that Mother Thérèse blamed herself for the financial problems and mismanagement that followed. She resigned in 1838. Sarah Gallick writes in The Big Book of Women Saints, the Jesuits demoted Thérèse and replaced her with a series of wealthy, well-connected women. While she continued to play a role in the retreat program, Thérèse more and more withdrew into obscurity.

Years of internal dissension followed in the community and Cowan writes that there was disagreement and conflict over who was the true founder of the Society of the Cenacle. Thérèse lived most of the rest of her life as a simple nun and endured false allegations about her health and abilities from many in the religious community.

But these years were also a time of grace for her. Gallick notes that during the last 20 years of her life, Mother Thérèse received many mystical graces and discovered a revelation on the meaning of complete self surrender to God. This became the keynote to her spirituality, and she wrote: “The surrendered soul has found Paradise on earth.”

Finally, toward the end of her life, by decree of a local bishop, Mother Thérèse was officially recognized as the cofounder of the Cenacle retreat movement along with Fr. John Terme. She died on September 26, 1838. She was beatified in 1951 by Pope Pius XII and canonized in 1970 by Pope Paul VI. Cowan writes that she is known as “a pioneer in the women’s retreat movement.”

Today the Sisters of the Cenacle continue to lead retreats all over the world. They have houses in Chicago, Houston, Atlanta, and Ronkonkoma, New York.

Mary Lou Gibson writes about saints for the Angelus from Austin.
Pastor Installations

Fr. Rodney White, with Bishop Michael Sis during Fr. Rodney’s installation as pastor of St Stephen’s in Midland (at left and above), August 19, 2017.

Below right, Fr. Albert Ezanyo during the Oath of Fidelity at his installation at St. Charles in Eden; at bottom right, front row, left to right, Fr. Hilary Ihedioha, left; Fr. Desmond Obi; Fr. Joseph Choutapalli; Rev. Darrell K. Howanit, of Trinity Lutheran Church; San Angelo Bishop Michael Sis; Eden Mayor Eddy Markham, and Fr. Albert. The wives of Rev. Howanit and Mayor Markham, are standing above each of them. The installation Mass for Fr. Albert was celebrated August 14, 2017.

The installation Mass for Fr. Isidore Ochiabuto, August 13, 2017, at St Francis, Abilene.

Below, Bishop Michael Sis, left, celebrates the Installation Mass for Fr. Chinna Pagidela, second from left, at St. Lawrence Church, in St. Lawrence, August 15, 2017.

Photos of Fr. Rodney White installation by Jimmy Patterson, West Texas Angelus. All other photos courtesy photos.
Hope for Honduras

Mission trip about accompanying, encountering Christ

By Msgr. Larry J. Droll

“Our parish is having a mission trip to Santisima Trinidad parish in Honduras; would you like to join us?”

“What will we do on the mission trip?”

That’s always the first question!

Our mission trip is not to accomplish a project, like build a house, dig a water well or paint an orphanage. It is to “accompany” the parishioners of our partner parish in the missionary life of their parish for a week. To spend a block of time with people, joining them in whatever work they are doing—maybe visiting the sick, feeding the hungry, celebrating Mass, having parish meetings, etc. In walking with our fellow Catholics, we encounter the living Christ; this leads to conversion in our hearts, a feeling of communion with them and solidarity to engage in work alongside them.

The recent St. Ann’s-Midland’s mission trip (July 27-August 3, 2017) is a part of the Hermanamiento (partnership) among the dioceses of San Pedro Sula, La Ceiba, Tyler and San Angelo, initiated in September 2001. We have enjoyed our parish-to-parish relationship for seven years, although prior to that we worked with another Catholic group in the same neighborhood, a very poor community in San Pedro Sula called Chamelecon. During these years, we have participated in a variety of mission experiences and reciprocal visits.

This year our group was composed of five young adults, one retired teacher, the parish youth coordinator, a seminary deacon and myself. In any given year, the participants vary. We had several formation sessions in Midland to prepare for the trip.

With this group, we experienced the pastoral life of the parish in five dimensions, which come from the general organization of the parish and diocesan plan.

The pastor, Padre Luis Estevez, gave us an orientation soon after we arrived, so we could interpret our experience according to the Pastoral Plan.

The first dimension is discipleship. To become disciples, we have to encounter Christ in his Word and community and learn his way of life. Our group spent a morning with the catechists of the Santa Ana community. We met the bishop of San Pedro Sula for an hour and had several sessions of reflection with the pastor.

The second dimension is communitarian. The parish is a community of communities; there are thirteen chapels. We
Racism in America

Charlottesville: the antidote is in the venom

By Carole Norris Greene
Catholic News Service

The Ku Klux Klan once came out primarily at night, carrying torches with their faces covered by hoods with ghostly openings for eyes.

Not anymore.

They were out in droves in Charlottesville, Virginia, in mid-August. Their faces were unmasked and held high, unapologetic. They joined hundreds of other white supremacists protesting the February vote by the City Council to remove a statue from Lee Park that has memorialized Confederate General Robert E. Lee since 1924. In June, the city renamed Lee Park Emancipation Park. Remove the statue and you try to erase history, the Unite the Right rally argued vehemently.

That statue, said hundreds of counter-protesters with equal passion, is a monument to white supremacy and must go.

Anyone looking for God in all of this may take comfort in considering that, just as the antidote for a poisonous snake bite is found within the venom, the antidote to evil is likewise built within itself.

Making an antidote to coral snake poison, for example, takes time, as many as three years and 69,000 milkings to obtain one pint of the snake's venom.

After the snake is milked with its head grasped so that it will not bite, the venom is cooled considerably and freeze-dried for storage and transport for immunization. The venom is then injected into animals, horses mainly because of their large body mass, for the creation of antibodies.

But before the chemist injects an animal, the venom is mixed with distilled water or another buffer solution. Then an adjuvant, a substance that enhances the body's immune response to a foreign substance, is added. Thus the horse remains healthy as its immune system reacts, producing antibodies that attach to and neutralize the venom.

So, while countless people are horrified by Unite the Right's poisonous display in Charlottesville, God is already using that same venom to make the antidote!

The white supremacists did not save the Lee monument; they only numbered its days and ignited efforts across the United States to bring down other Confederate symbols. Some counter-protesters now want the statue of Lee astride his horse to be replaced by a memorial of Heather Heyer.

Fighting may have occurred in Emancipation Park, but now people are going there to reflect, pray and sing songs of hope.

Photos of the violence are now frozen in time, chilling reminders that unleashed hatred can be deadly.

Culprits are being rounded up and transported to jail.

While many throughout the nation were shocked that their president did not immediately and unequivocally name names as he condemned the blatant displays of domestic terrorism in Charlottesville, President Donald Trump's delayed response has caused a widening of the spotlight to encompass his inner circle. Now there are resounding calls for the removal of suspected white supremacists serving incognito in the White House.

Those suffering from the injection of evil into their midst are standing up to it with righteous indignation. They armor themselves with the cleansing waters of tough love and forgiveness. Christ is their adjuvant for staying healthy and offering revival to those poisoned by hatred.

Greene was an associate editor for CNS for nearly 22 years.
By Deacon Freddy Medina  
Director of Diaconal Ministry  
Diocese of San Angelo

GARDEN CITY — On August 19, 2017 at the parish of St. Lawrence in St. Lawrence, Bishop Michael Sis, received 14 men into the Ministry of Acolyte for the Diocese of San Angelo. The men joined their classmate, Edward Gonzalez, who is already an instituted acolyte. The ministry of acolyte is their final ministry prior to ordination as a permanent deacon.

Nearly filled to capacity, it was a lovely Mass and so appropriate to take place in a Church dedicated to a patron saint of deacons.

Bishop Sis in his homily charged the acolytes to keep service to others in mind always and not to assume an authoritarian or superior role when working in the vineyard of the Lord.

The function of an acolyte may include but is not limited to:

- Carry the cross in the procession.
- Present the missal to the priest and/or deacon for the entire celebration.
- In the absence of the deacon, the acolyte arranges items on the altar.
- Assist the priest in receiving the gifts from the people.
- Bring the bread/wine to the altar and hand them to the priest.
- Handle the thurible if incense is used (assist the priest to incense the cross, altar, and offerings).
Understanding the Vision and Journey of the RCIA

Presented by:
Leota Roesch

September 16, 2017
St. Ann Parish, Midland
9:30 a.m.—3:30 p.m.

September 30, 2017
Christ the King Retreat Center, San Angelo
9:30 a.m.—3:30 p.m.

A Day to Explore:

⇒ Understanding the RCIA and the liturgical rites that mark each stage
⇒ Sorting out who belongs in the RCIA process
⇒ Assisting candidates who have canonical/Sacramental issues
⇒ Working with families who have unbaptized children older than 7 years of age
⇒ Engaging the parish community in the RCIA
⇒ Forming a ministry team to facilitate RCIA
⇒ Evaluating resources the RCIA uses for adults, children and families

This day will also include breakout sessions to address various topics.

Bring the Study Edition of the RCIA (white book). This book will also be available for purchase.

Fee: 25.00
(includes lunch)

ABOUT THE PRESENTER: Leota Roesch
Leota has worked indirectly and directly with the RCIA on diocesan and parish levels over the course of her life in Ministry. For the last ten years, she has directed parish RCIA ministry in suburban parishes in the Diocese of Phoenix and has served as a consultant for parishes implementing or desiring assistance with their RCIA ministry.

For more information, contact the Office of Evangelization and Catechesis at 325-651-7500 or evangelizationcatechesis@sanangelodiocese.org.
BISHOP

(From 3)

Student Bible for Catholics (it has a great index in the back)

• Catechism: This could be the Catechism of the Catholic Church (quite technical, also available online), the United States Catholic Catechism for Adults (less technical, easier to understand), or perhaps the Catholic Faith Handbook for Youth (for teens) from St. Mary’s Press

• Catholic Bible Commentary (such as the Collegeville Bible Commentary)

• Book of the Saints

• The Catholic Household Blessings and Prayers (USCCB) and the Manual of Prayers (North American College)

• Catholic Encyclopedia: some is a single volume, and some have multiple volumes

• Basic question-and-answer book, such as Catholic Q & A: All You Want to Know About Catholicism, by John J. Dietzen

When I was a child, my parents had some of these books around the house.

Every once in a while, when they were not looking, I would look up things in those books, to answer my curiosities about God and the Catholic faith.

I found them to be extremely informative.

Think about all the things you have around your house. Ask yourself, “How is our home equipped for the practice of the Catholic faith?” Some helpful tools would be movies with a religious theme, Christian music, religious art on the walls, crosses, crucifixes, icons, rosaries, and an advent wreath. Some families have discovered an amazing new online resource called Formed.org from the Augustine Institute in Colorado. This is a digital platform that offers a wealth of informative and entertaining Catholic audio talks, eBooks, feature films, documentaries, and various study programs.

Some parishes provide Formed.org free to their parishioners; check your bulletin or call your parish for the access code.

I have also known many adult Catholics who have experienced profound growth in their religious understanding through watching a video series such as Bishop Robert Barron’s Catholicism or Jeff Cavins’ Bible Timeline. It is especially effective to gather a group of adults or young adults to watch these videos and discuss them together.

The school year is just beginning. If you have children at home, and they are not in the religious education program of your local Catholic parish, I recommend that you contact the parish office and ask how your children can get started now. Religious education is a form of immediate preparation before receiving a sacrament. Ongoing formation and education in the faith is a lifelong process.

If the only religious education we ever received was as a young child, that is not enough to help us manage the complicated life situations we face in adulthood. We should never stop studying and learning the faith.

If we don’t keep the plant watered, it will not grow, and eventually it will shrivel up and die.

Any relationship will suffer if we approach it with a minimalistic attitude. The same is true of our relationship with God. Minimalism debilitates our faith life.

For example, if we pray only when we want something from God, or if we go to religious education classes just enough to receive a sacrament, or if we are satisfied with an elementary level of faith education, we are being minimalists. God has much more waiting for us if we will just open ourselves to receive it.

If you are preparing a barbecue, and you marinate the meat in a certain sauce, it will absorb the flavor of that sauce. If you marinate your mind with certain values, you will eventually absorb those values. What is the marinade in which you dwell? Does it provide only the secular, materialistic values of the world around us, or is it a lifetime learning process based in the truth of Jesus Christ?

All of us have occasional experiences of doubts. Whenever we have a doubt, we may conclude that we go with our doubts. Rather than isolating ourselves, we should go to where the Church is, and remain open to the guidance of the Holy Spirit. After all, Jesus promised that he would send his Spirit to guide the Church to all truth until the end of time.

Through catechesis, youth ministry, adult faith formation, and reliable Catholic books and websites, we can ask questions and work through our doubts. This is the path to a deeper, more adult level of faith.

OBISPO

(Para 3)

Nelson), y El Libro de Mis Oraciones (por Jacobo).

• Enciclopedia Católica: algunos son un solo volumen, y algunos tienen varios volúmenes

• Libro básico de preguntas y respuestas, tales como Conozca Primero Su Fe Católica (por Pedro de Jesús).

Cuando yo era un niño, mis padres tenían algunos de estos libros en la casa. De vez en cuando, cuando no estaban mirando, me gustaba escudriñar cosas en esos libros, para hallar respuestas a mis curiosidades acerca de Dios y la fe católica. Me parecieron ser muy informativos.

Piense en todas las cosas que tiene alrededor en su casa.

Pregúntese: “¿Cómo está equipado nuestro hogar para la práctica de la fe católica?” Algunas herramientas útiles serían las películas con un tema religioso, música cristiana, el arte religioso en las paredes, cruces, crucifixos, íconos, rosarios, y una corona de Adviento. Algunas familias han descubierto un sorprendente nuevo recurso en línea llamado Formed.org del Instituto Agustín de Colorado. Algunas parroquias proveen Formed.org gratuitamente para sus feligreses; miren el boletín o llamen a su parroquia para el código de acceso. Se trata de una plataforma digital que ofrece una gran cantidad de pláticas Católicas informativas y de entrenamiento de audio, libros electrónicos, películas, documentales y programas de estudio en vídeo.

También he conocido a muchos Católicos adultos que han experimentado un crecimiento profundo en su comprensión religiosa a través de ver una serie de videos, como El Catecismo del Obispo Robert Barron o Cronología de la Biblia de Jeff Cavins.

Es especialmente eficaz el reunir un grupo de adultos jóvenes o adultos a ver estos videos y discutirlos juntos.

El año escolar acaba de comenzar. Si usted tiene niños en casa, y no están en el programa de educación religiosa en su parroquia Católica local, recomiendo que se ponga en contacto con la oficina parroquial y pregunte cómo sus hijos pueden empezar ahora.

La educación religiosa no es solamente para la preparación inmediata antes de recibir un sacramento. La formación continua y la educación en la fe es un proceso de toda la vida. Si la única educación religiosa que jamás hemos recibido fue cuando éramos niños pequeños, eso no es suficiente para ayudarnos a manejar las situaciones complicadas de la vida que nos enfrentamos como adultos. Nunca debemos dejar de estudiar y aprender a la fe.

Si no mantenemos la planta regada, no va a crecer, y con el tiempo se marchitará y se muere.

Cualquier relación se verá afectada si nos acercamos a ella con una actitud minimalista. Es lo mismo con nuestra relación con Dios. El minimalismo debilita nuestra vida de fe. Por ejemplo, si sólo oramos cuando queremos algo de Dios, o si vamos a clases de educación religiosa sólo lo suficiente para recibir un sacramento, o si estamos satisfechos con un nivel elemental de educación en la fe, estamos siendo minimalistas.

Dios tiene mucho que nos espera si solamente nos abrimos a recibirlo. Si nos gusta a preparar una barbacoa, y marina la carne en una cierta salsa, la carne absorberá todo el sabor de la salsa. Si pone a marinar su mente con ciertos valores, es muy probable que absorba esos valores. ¿Cuál es el adobo en que morará? ¿Le proporciona únicamente los valores seculares y materialistas del mundo que nos rodea, o se trata de un proceso de aprendizaje de por vida basada en la verdad de Jesucristo?

Todos nosotros tenemos experiencias ocasionales de dudas. Cada vez que tenemos dudas, se hace una diferencia a donde vamos con nuestras dudas. En lugar de aislarnos, debemos ir a donde está la Iglesia, y permanecer abiertos a la guía del Espíritu Santo. Después de todo, Jesús prometió que el Espíritu Santo para guiar a la Iglesia a toda la verdad hasta el fin del tiempo.

A través de la catequesis, pastoral juvenil, formación de la fe de adultos, y los libros y sitios web Católicos fiables, podemos hacer preguntas y aprender a través de nuestras dudas. Este es el camino a un más profundo nivel de la fe de adultos.

KOLBE

(From 5)

Archdioce of San Antonio teamed up to put on a 3-day prison ACTS retreat in August 2009 at Connolly Unit in Kenedy.

From this initial prison retreat, the effort has now been extended to over 40 state prisons in 14 dioceses of Texas. In 2015, these retreats took on a new name, after St. Maximilian Kolbe. Kolbe retreats are igniting a fire in many men to return to the Catholic Church and in others who want to learn about the truths of our faith so RCIA is a follow-up program being offered to inmates after attending a Kolbe retreat. This overall effort is called Kolbe Prison Ministries (KPM).

Kolbe is now an approved retreat program having the endorsement of the Texas Department of Criminal Justice (TDCJ) in Huntsville. Even so, each prison has local authority with its warden and chaplain so their approval is needed to hold a Kolbe retreat, just like it is in getting a pastor’s support to bring ACTS to a new parish.

In the Diocese of San Angelo, the first Kolbe retreat was held at the Havins State Jail in Brownewood in July 9-11, 2015, led by volunteers from the Dioceses of Austin and San Antonio. Kolbe 2 was held in March 10-12, 2016 and Kolbe 3 at Havins occurred July 6-8, 2017. KPM is still in its infancy here so volunteers from neighboring dioceses under the direction of Kolbe Missions continue to lead the retreats at Havins until a local team can be established. Also, Kolbe Missions is committed to help bring a retreat to the Robertson Unit in Abilene later this year in October.

Lay and clergy participants from the ACTS community in the Diocese of San Angelo are desperately needed. The retreat team is predominantly lay so volunteers are needed to man the team and then a local community is a must following the retreat if RCIA is to be offered to prepare those that want to receive the sacraments and enter the Church. Also, retreats are required at the retreat for confessions and Masses offered. Also, deacons have roles to serve, to expose and repose the Blessed Sacrament for daily adoration, to give the Theology and Sacraments talks and to assist at Mass, just to name a few.

Kolbe is calling priests, deacons, deacon candidates, and laity of the Diocese of San Angelo. Please pass the word in your parishes, work place, and to everyone who will listen. Contact Deacon Mike Medina, Director of Kolbe Prison Ministries. Kolbe Missions is located at the Diocese of San Antonio at (432) 222-2256 and inform him of your interest. If you want more information about Kolbe Prison Ministries, you can contact Deacon Bob Leibrecht from the Archdiocese of San Antonio at 210-734-1980 or his cell, 432-889-3858. In addition, you can visit the website: http://www.kolbeprisonministries.com/ to learn more. It is time to say YES!
**Catholic Voices**

**God, who loves all people equally, needs better press**

By Fr. Ron Rolheiser

The word “Protestant” is generally misunderstood. Martin Luther’s protest that led to the Protestant reformation was not, in fact, a protest against the Roman Catholic Church; properly understood, it was a protest for God. God, in Luther’s view, was being manipulated to serve human and self-interest. His protest was a plea to respect God’s transcendence.

We need a new protest today, a new plea, a strong one, to not connect God and our churches to intolerance, injustice, bigotry, violence, sexism, racism, stupidity. And we wonder why so many of our actions we are connecting God and church to narrowness, intolerance, rigidness, racism, sexism, favoritism, legalism, dogmatism, and stupidity. And we wonder why so many of our own children no longer go to church and struggle with religion.

The mystery church on the edge of the world

By Most Rev. Robert Barron

Auxiliary Bishop of Los Angeles

Even though I lived in France for three years while doing my doctoral studies, I never managed a visit to Mont Saint-Michel, the mysterious, mystical, and hauntingly photogenic abbey situated on a promontory just off the Normandy coast between Caen and St. Malo. But last week, in connection with the filming for my Pivotal Players series, my team and I made the pilgrimage. I first spied the mount from the backseat of the van, when we were still many miles away. It looked like a great ship, moored on the line of the horizon. As we got closer, the place became increasingly impressive, sometimes looming like a fortress, other times seeming to float on the sea. When we entered the gates this morning to commence our work, we stepped out of our world and into the Middle Ages. Our climb to the top—arduous and steep—mimicked that of thousands of pilgrims and monks and spiritual seekers over the centuries.

To grasp the religious significance of the Mount, we have to remember that it was built on the edge. Like the Irish monks who constructed their simple dwellings off the harsh western coast of their homeland, the religious who gave rise to Mont Saint-Michel felt that they were doing their work, quite literally, at the ends of the earth. Jesus told his disciples to proclaim the Gospel everywhere and not to stop until they had gone all the way. Cardinal Francis George loved to relate the story of his brothers in the Oblates of Mary Immaculate, who, taking Jesus at his word, declared the resurrection to every village and hamlet in the Yukon, until they came finally to the people who said, “There’s no one beyond us.” Mont Saint-Michel was intended to be a monument to the thoroughness of the Christian missionary effort. Hence it was, to me, a vivid example of tying God to evil in the violence and terrorism of ISIS and other such terrorist groups who are killing, randomly and brutally, in the name of God. You can be sure that the last words uttered, just as a suicide bomber randomly kills innocent people, is: God is great! What horrible thing to say as one is committing an act of murder! Doing the ungodly in the name of God.

And yet we so often do the same thing in subtler forms, namely, we justify the ungodly (violence, injustice, inequality, poverty, intolerance, bigotry, racism, sexism, the abuse of power, and rich privilege) by appealing to our religion.

Silently, unconsciously, blind to ourselves, grounded in a sense of right and wrong that’s colored by self-interest, we give ourselves divine permission to live and act in ways that are antithetical to most everything Jesus taught.

We can protest, saying that we’re sincere, but that sincerity is not a moral or religious criterion. Sincerity can, and often does, tie God to the ungodly and justifies what’s evil in the name of God: The people conducting the Inquisition were sincere; the slave traders were sincere; those who protected pedophile priests were sincere, racists are sincere, sexists are sincere. If we are sincere, the rich defending their privilege are sincere; church offices making hurtful, gospel-defying pastoral decisions that deprive people of ecclesial access are very sincere and gospel-motivated; and all of us, as we make the kind of judgments of others that we would not tolerate if we were the one of gain not to make, are sincere. But we think that we’re doing this all for the good, for God. However in so many of our actions we are connecting God and church to narrowness, intolerance, rigidness, racism, sexism, favoritism, legalism, dogmatism, and stupidity. And we wonder why so many of our own children no longer go to church and struggle with religion.

The mountain itself, and then the architecture, are a border country more existential than peripheral, the antithesis of much of religion, sad but true. The God whom Jesus reveals is the prodigal God, a God who isn’t stingy; a God who wills the salvation of everyone, who loves all races and all peoples equally; a God with a preferential love for the poor; a God who creates both genders equally; a God who strongly opposes worldly power and privilege. The God of Jesus Christ is a God of compassion, empathy, and forgiveness, a God who demands that spiritual transcendence over law, love over dogma, and forgiveness over juridical justice. And very importantly, the God whom Jesus incarnates isn’t stupid, but is a God whose intelligence isn’t threatened by science, and a God who doesn’t condemn and send people to hell according to our limited human judgments.

Sadly too often that’s not the God of religion, of our churches, of our spirituality, or of our private conscience.

God isn’t narrow, stupid, legalistic, bigoted, racist, violent, or vengeful, and it’s time we stopped connecting God to those things.

Fr. Ron Rolheiser, theologian, teacher, and author, is President of the Oblate School of Theology in San Antonio. He can be contacted through his website www.ronrolheiser.com. Now on Facebook www.facebook.com/ronrolheiser.

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By Fr. Rolheiser

The Angelus

SEPTEMBER 2017

The mysterious church on the edge of the world

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Fr. Ron Rolheiser, theologian, teacher, and author, is President of the Oblate School of Theology in San Antonio. He can be contacted through his website www.ronrolheiser.com. Now on Facebook www.facebook.com/ronrolheiser.
Perseverance an essential part of prayer life

By Greg Erlandsen
Catholic News Service

The daughter of a good friend of mine died this week of a drug overdose. I had been praying for her for at least two years. I keep a list of people I pray for. I always hated the idea of saying, "You are in my prayers" and then that not being so. I started keeping track, and if the person passes away, I keep praying for them.

Praying for the dead, for the souls in purgatory, is a spiritual work of mercy. We don't pray expecting a certain result, for it is all beyond our vision. We simply pray that God's mercy will envelop our beloved dead and that, as the prayer says, his perpetual will light shine upon them.

But for my friend's daughter, I wasn't praying for the dead but for the living. I knew she was in a serious fight. I barely knew her personally, but I wanted her to come out victorious in this cage match with addiction. I wanted it for her father and her mother, for her siblings.

As a father myself, I could imagine -- if but a little -- my friend's pain. No parent is more vulnerable than the parent of a drug overdose.

I had been praying for her for at least two years. I keep a list of people I pray for. I started keeping track, and if the circumstances permit, to join the cause of the prayer.

And there was a small, angry part of me that said, "God, I was praying for her. Others were praying for her. She was loved despite all. Couldn't you have stopped this?"

Jerome Lejeune, the great French Catholic geneticist, once said, "God always forgives, man sometimes forgives, nature never forgives."

That is one reason we believe desperately in miracles: That even in nature's remorseless grip -- the deep cavity of addiction, the rot of disease, the frightening mercilessness of drought and floods -- God's mercy and healing can triumph.

St. Paul in the stunning 12th chapter of his Letter to the Romans, exhorts us: "Rejoice in hope, endure in affliction, persevere in prayer." When it is another who is afflicted, our hope resides in prayer, hoping that the Almighty can work miracles.

Jesus healed the leper. Jesus brought Lazarus back to life. Couldn't he have done the same for this young woman?

The entire fourth pillar or section of the Catechism of the Catholic Church is an extended reflection on prayer. In language we don't often hear, it describes "the battle of prayer," part of which is against "erroneous notions of prayer."

One of these notions is when we are disappointed that we have not been heard according to what our will is. In Matthew Kelly's wonderful line, too often our attitude is "Listen Lord, your servant is speaking." We want God to do our will, to implement our wishes.

Instead, St. Augustine says it is God's will "that our desire should be exercised in prayer, that we may be able to receive what he is prepared to give." And what he is prepared to give is not always what we are asking for.

And so, in a few days we will gather at a funeral liturgy. We will find ourselves praying once again.

We will pray for God's mercy on this broken daughter of the Lord. We will pray for her grieving family. We will endure this new affliction. We will persevere in prayer.

And our hope will remain in the Lord, knowing even now that he will not abandon us.

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Narrow gate? / Refuse to baptize? / Married priests

By Fr. Kenneth Doyle
Catholic News Service

Q. At dinner recently with two Catholic priests, they happened to observe that it will be more difficult for them to reach heaven than for most people. I dismissed that opinion rather quickly until I read a passage from section 14 in "Lumen Gentium."

Speaking of Catholics, it said: "He is not saved, however, who, though part of the body of the church, does not persevere in charity. He remains indeed in the bosom of the church, but, as it were, only in a 'bodily' manner and not 'in his heart.'..."

"All the church's children should remember that their exalted status is to be attributed not to their own merits but to the special grace of Christ. If they fail moreover to respond to that grace in thought, word and deed, not only shall they not be saved but they will be more severely judged."

Is the "gate of heaven," therefore, narrower for Catholics because more is given and expected? (Vacherie, Louisiana)

A. Let me say first that I have always believed that the vast majority of the people God created will wind up in heaven. Why would God have made all of us in the first place, if that experiment were destined largely to fail?

And I do not think that the gate is more narrow for Catholics; in fact, I think the opposite -- namely, that Catholics have a head start on eternal salvation. We Catholics have access to abundant graces through the seven sacraments that help us to live as God wants; and we have, from Christ, the guarantee of fundamental truth and of continual guidance in theological teaching.

What the Second Vatican Council was cautioning against (in your quote from "Lumen Gentium") was the same kind of formalism Jesus had detected in the religious leaders of his day -- the conviction that merely by officially "belonging" to the church, righteousness and eternal salvation were certainties.

The council noted that salvation is worked out "on the ground," by sharing God's love with those we meet. (Didn't Jesus say the same thing in Matthew 25, when he suggested that the ultimate thing we'll judged on is whether we helped people when they needed it?)

It is true that, as Luke's Gospel says (12:48), "much will be required of the person entrusted with much, and still more will be demanded of the person entrusted with more." But that heavier responsibility can be balanced by the opportunities that life offers. (Priests, for example, have the daily Eucharist, the Divine Office and the frequent chance to minister directly with the compassion of Jesus.)

Q. Can a priest refuse to christen a child born out of wedlock? (Mason Neck, Virginia)

A. The answer -- which may not be the one you were expecting or wanted -- is, "It depends." Simply that the child's parents are unmarried would not justify refusing a baptism, and I would call Pope Francis as my witness on this.

In 2014, on the feast of the Baptism of the Lord, Pope Francis was reported by the Italian press as having baptized the child of an unmarried couple in a ceremony in the Sistine Chapel. That would have squared with what Pope Francis, in 2009 while still a cardinal in Argentina, was quoted as telling the Italian magazine 30 Giorni: "The child has absolutely no responsibility for the state of the parents' marriage. And often a baptism can be a new start for the parents as well."

There may, however, be other circumstances that would warrant delaying a baptism. The church's Code of Canon Law requires that, for an infant to be baptized, "there must be a founded hope that the infant will be brought up in the Catholic religion" (No. 868.1.2.).

Priests vary somewhat as to just what evidence is needed for that assurance, but pastoral sensitivity is always critical; I am personally inclined to give the benefit of the doubt to the parents.

Nearly all parishes require parents to attend a class or two of baptismal preparation, which can help to bring them back to regular church attendance and sometimes, if the circumstances permit, to have a marriage blessed in the church. (And even if there is virtually no likelihood that the parents will bring the child to Mass regularly, sometimes a grandparent is willing to step into that role.)

Q. I have been a Catholic since birth (over 50 years), but I am still learning things about my religion. Recently we were at a wedding in another city, and the priest who performed the ceremony told us that he has been a priest for 10 years but has been married for 30 years. Did I miss something here?

I have never heard of married Catholic priests. He said that there are a few of them around. Can you enlighten me? (City of origin withheld)

A. Most likely, the man you mentioned had once been an Anglican (Episcopal) priest who later converted to Roman Catholicism.

In 1980, Pope John Paul II effected a policy change that allowed married Anglican priests to continue their ministry after their conversion, and there are now several dozen such men serving as Catholic priests throughout the U.S. I am aware of Lutheran pastors who have made a similar transition.

Another possibility is that he belongs to one of the Eastern Catholic Churches (there are more than 20 that are in union with Rome (Maronites, Ukrainians, etc.), which for centuries have allowed the ordination of married men.

From 1929 until 2014, such priests were generally not permitted to minister outside their rite's country of origin, but in 2014 Pope Francis quietly lifted that ban, opening the door for them to serve in the U.S.

Questions may be sent to Father Kenneth Doyle at askfatherdoyle@gmail.com and 30 Columbia Circle Dr., Albany, New York.
The tragedy of the ‘expendable children’

By Fr. Tad Pacholczyk

Couples who struggle to get pregnant are turning with greater frequency to the in vitro fertilization (IVF) industry for assistance. In some cases, they can end up feeling that they are “too pregnant” when twins, triplets or quads arise. This occurs from the practice of implanting more than one embryo at a time to improve pregnancy success rates. A multiplet pregnancy can involve significant risk, both for the children in utero, and for the mother. Because of these risks, the pregnant mother will sometimes be advised to opt for a “selective reduction,” where potassium chloride is injected into one or two of the growing babies, to cause their hearts to seize, followed by death and the gradual re-absorption of their bodies during the remainder of the pregnancy. This can allow the one or more remaining brothers or sisters to grow more safely and avoid further complications during the pregnancy. Given the incredible effort expended by the couple to become pregnant in the first place, these lethal practices often draw gasps of disbelief from others.

A New York Times Magazine article from 2011 chronicled the saga of a woman who selectively reduced her pregnancy from twins to a single. Even though she tried to not think too much about the two ultrasound shadows within her, she was forthright about her justification for doing it: “If I had conceived these twins naturally, I wouldn’t have reduced this pregnancy, because you feel like if there’s a natural order, then you don’t want to disrupt it. But we created this child in such an artificial manner — in a test tube, choosing an egg donor, having the embryo placed in me — and somehow, making a decision about how many to carry seemed to be just another choice. The pregnancy was all so consumerish to begin with, and this became yet another thing we could control.”

Her devastatingly honest appraisal of IVF and the way it devalues the lives of children offers an important opportunity to reflect. When we take it upon ourselves to manufacture new human life in test tubes, it indeed becomes another “thing we can control,” an object for our own willful manipulation, another means to realize our own goals. This “command and control mentality” over conception sets up a glide path for us to begin treating our own offspring like raw material, even tempting us to exercise an absolute, death-dealing dominion over them. As they are produced in the laboratory and transferred to the womb, our children can become an abstraction, mere pawns to be played in the end game of seeking what we want.

This attitude of seeing our offspring as expendable is becoming more widely accepted not only among IVF customers, but also among biomedical researchers themselves. In August, a highly troubling report was published describing the first successful editing of DNA in human embryos. The experiments were carried out in the laboratory of Shoukhrat Mitalipov at the Oregon Health and Science University (OHSU) and involved the generation of many dozens of embryos by IVF. The experiments utilized a new and highly precise DNA-editing technology called CRISPR-Cas9 to fix a defective, disease-causing gene that some of the embryos carried. While research into understanding and eliminating serious diseases is certainly good and praiseworthy as a goal, the techniques we employ as we pursue good research goals need to be good as well. Doing evil that good may accrue, is, after all, still doing evil.

These research experiments performed on human embryos at OHSU were morally objectionable on a number of counts. If such genetically modified embryos had been allowed to grow up, there may well have been unintended effects from modifying their genes, unanticipated defects that they and future generations would bear. The problems and risks associated with this kind of “germ-line therapy” raise such serious concerns as to make it doubtful it should ever be attempted in humans. Even more distressing from the moral point of view is the fact that very young humans were treated not as ends, but as mere means to achieve particular investigatory goals. They were created in laboratory glassware, experimented upon, their genes were tinkered with and they were killed and dispatched as research fodder into biohazard waste containers. The purported darkness of medieval times was never as dark as the remarkable ethical blackness that is descending upon contemporary “enlightened” man as he exploits and destroys his own offspring.

Vigilance and care are required when dealing with vulnerable research subjects, and human embryos are among the most vulnerable of God’s creatures, entrusted to us as our children, calling for stringent measures to ensure their protection and safeguard their human dignity.

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

Bishop Nelson J. Perez and a new moment for Midwest Catholicism

By Hosffman Ospino

The appointment of Hispanic bishops as ordinaries of dioceses in California, Texas or Florida is rather common. This is not surprising since most Catholics in the South and the West are Hispanic. However, the recent appointment of Bishop Nelson J. Perez as the next bishop of Cleveland is not business as usual. It is a historical milestone for U.S. Catholics.

Many reports have noted that Bishop Perez is the first Hispanic bishop of Cleveland. More interesting is that he is the first Hispanic bishop to head a diocese in the entire Midwest. The Midwest and the Northeast remain as the standard hubs of Euro-American Catholicism. These are the regions where most Catholics from Europe settled during the 19th and early 20th centuries.

In recent decades, Catholicism in the Midwest has experienced significant demographic, racial/ethnic and cultural transformations. These transformations have brought renewed attention to the rich diversity that has long existed among Midwestern Catholics. Some of those changes are small. Others are more significant but they are often treated as marginal compared against predominant cultural expressions of Catholic life. In any case, change is happening steadily and it will continue to transform Catholic life in the region.

Bishop Perez assumes leadership of a Catholic body that is largely white, Euro-American, with about 10.7 percent Hispanic, 2.3 percent black, and 1.6 percent American, with about 10.7 percent Hispanic, 2.3 percent black, and 1.6 percent Hispanic, 2.3 percent black, and 1.6 percent African-American.

Monseñor Nelson J. Pérez y un nuevo momento para el catolicismo en el Medio Oeste

By Hosffman Ospino

El nombramiento de obispos hispanos como ordinarios de las diócesis de California o Texas o Florida es bastante común. Esto no sorprende a nadie, pues la mayoría de los católicos en el Sur y el Oeste son hispanos.

Sin embargo, el reciente nombramiento de monseñor Nelson J. Pérez como el próximo obispo de Cleveland tiene bastante novedad. Es un evento de grandes incidencias históricas para el catolicismo estadounidense.

Muchos reportes han observado que monseñor Pérez es el primer obispo hispano de Cleveland. Más interesante aún es el hecho de que él es el primer obispo hispano en guiar una diócesis en el todo el Medio Oeste del país.

El Medio Oeste junto con el Noreste tienen las concentraciones más altas de católicos euroamericanos. Estas son las regiones en las cuales se estableció la mayoría de católicos que llegaron de Europa durante el siglo 19 y comienzos del siglo 20.

En las últimas décadas, el catolicismo en el Medio Oeste ha experimentado transformaciones demográficas, raciales, étnicas y culturales profundas. Estas transformaciones han renovado la atención sobre la gran diversidad que ha existido por mucho tiempo entre los católicos que viven en esta región.

Algunos de estos cambios son pequeños. Otros son mucho más significativos, aunque con frecuencia son considerados como marginales al compararlos con...
Catholic Voices

**Bishop Caggiano reached the young with heart**

**By Elise Italiano**
Catholic News Service

Of all the headliners billed for last month's World Youth Day Unite in Washington, D.C., I was guessing that the two musicians — Audrey Assad and Tony Melendez — were the biggest draw for the young pilgrims who traveled to the St. John Paul II National Shrine.

Assad is a nationally known singer and songwriter who shares personal witnesses about her conversion. Melendez, a Nicaraguan-American born without arms who plays the guitar exclusively with his feet, has performed for international audiences at World Youth Days convened by the past three popes.

Little did I know that the biggest star of the event would be Bishop Frank J. Caggiano of Bridgeport, Connecticut, a shepherd who though small in stature, is big in heart.

Those who have their pulse on the American Catholic hierarchy tend to follow the prelates responsible for the church's response to the biggest social and cultural issues of the day: immigration, religious liberty, the protection of life, marriage and health care. They’re the topics that dominate religion news headlines. They’re also the issues that people think are so polarizing that they are keeping young people out of the pews.

As we've been exploring in this column, the church has another priority that is less contentious but no less important: direct, attentive engagement with the next generation of believers. After hearing his World Youth Day Unite catechesis, it's clear that Bishop Caggiano needs to play a big part of the American contribution to the world synod on youth.

Though from the world's perspective a 58-year-old cleric might be as far removed as one could be from millennials and young adults, he understands the challenges they face when discerning and saying "yes" to God's plan for their lives. No doubt that's why the past two popes booked him at World Youth Days and why he has served as the episcopal advisor for The National Federation of Catholic Youth Ministry for three years.

At various points during his 30-minute catechesis, I looked to my left and right and saw teens and 20-somethings leaning forward in pews or on the floor with bated breath, hanging on his every word — that is, when they weren't catching their breath between side-stitching fits of laughter.

Like the pope who shares his name, his approach is personal and passionate. He masterfully combined exegesis with personal accounts of his vocation story and invited the participants to share their own takeaways. He looked them directly in the eyes.

Anyone in youth ministry knows that building up young people involves both instruction and invitation. That's the basis for trust, intimacy and response.

Bishop Caggiano seems to think when it comes to youth, it's best -- as he says -- to "get down to brass tacks." They crave the good news more than anything else: God is love, he loves them in spite of their sins and in their brokenness, and he's closer to them than they can imagine.

For a generation plagued by anxiety, depression, fear and loneliness, a generation who has endless virtual encounters at the expense of real friendship, the bishop simply delivered the fundamental messages of the Gospel. Though the controversial issues of our day saturate news and social media, it's the basic kerygma -- God loves me -- that makes skeptics into saints.

From that starting point alone young people can ask themselves, "What does God want for my life? How will I respond tomorrow now that I know what I do today?"

Maybe it was his Brooklyn accent that wrapped his talk in warmth or his eyes that sparked with a little bit of mischief. Whatever it was, Bishop Caggiano convinced me and those crammed into a chapel in Washington, that even though "life will give us a thousand reasons to doubt God's love," there is still yet good news.

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**It’s time to say goodbye**

**By Bill Dodds**
Catholic News Service

When I began writing for CNS my youngest was 11. Now I have a grandchild who's 12. "Tempus fugit." Latin for "Holy moly, where did those decades go?"

Some longtime readers may recall that it's only recently that I became a solo act. Only since my wife, Monica, died of uterine cancer in early 2013.

Before that, years and years before that, David Gibson -- an editor at CNS at the time -- approached me and asked me if I'd be interested in writing a monthly column. He had a few topics in mind, but the only one I remember focused on family caregiving.

I knew just about nothing on that topic, but I knew someone who knew a lot: Monica, a social worker for the Seattle archdiocese's Catholic Community Services. Monica, my wife. We could work on it together. So we began "Your Aging Parent," which became a book and, when that went out of print, a website and a second book.

In the early 2000s, the column's focus broadened and became family life in general. To sound like an old man here (which is not a stretch, since I'm not a young or middle-aged man and stretching isn't as easy as it used to be) ...

By cracky when Monica and I began this column, we wrote it on a Radio Shack TRS-80 computer, ran it off on a dot matrix printer and sent it in a stamped envelope to CNS. Later, going high tech, we faxed it in.

Because of CNS, because of you dear diocesan editors and readers, in 2005, our website about family caregiving led to our beginning the Friends of St. John the Caregiver (www.FSJC.org). It's an international Catholic organization that promotes care for family caregivers.

To Monica and me, it seemed that what we had been moving toward all our adults lives. A ministry we were led to and, thanks be God, were able to do. One that, in 2013, became a core part of her legacy.

That year I wrote a lot columns about widowhood because, although I thought I was prepared for Monica's death, I -- like most new widowers -- was clueless. It was a blessing to me to be able to share a part of that journey. To receive emails from fellow "club members" telling me their stories and thanking me. To have so many people remembering Monica, me and our family in their prayers.

I'm nearing the 600-word limit. Feel free to visit me at BillDodds.com. (Info on my books there.) Or contact me at BillDodds@BillDodds.com.

(Wow, do columnists have big egos or what?)

Bill Dodds and his late wife, Monica, were the founders of the Friends of St. John the Caregiver (www.FSJC.org).
**Review By Brenda Lehr**

West Texas Angelus

The book “Beautiful Mercy” deals with the giving and receiving of mercy. No matter where a person is in life, the seven spiritual and seven corporal works of mercy are possible for us all. These authors witness the power of God’s mercy, provide simple, practical tips on how to be an instrument of that mercy, and bring hope to anyone searching for deeper meaning in life.

First, let us look at the definitions of “Mercy,” “Counsel,” and “Doubtful,” as explained by priests to Jackie Francois-Angel.

The Latin word for mercy, is misericordia, derived from the two words misere ("pity" or "misery") and cor ("heart"). When we ask for God’s mercy, we are essentially asking him to relieve us of a heart in misery. Our hearts can be in a state of misery not just from sin, but from the deep hurt caused by a broken relationship with a family member, from the suffering of infertility, from the pain of a physical or mental illness, from losing a job, from being betrayed or abandoned, from spiritual or physical poverty, and so on.

The English word “counsel” comes from the Latin consilium (con (with) + silium (a decision). So, to counsel means to assist someone in the act of deciding, not just to give vague or generic advice.

The word “doubt” comes from the Latin word dubius meaning “uncertain.” This gives us a more precise description of the spiritual work of mercy we call “Giving counsel to the doubtful.” It is the work which helps the undecided (or those of two minds on something) to come to a good and upright decision rooted in the call to holiness and the goal of attaining Heaven by God’s grace.

Every time we go to Mass and say, “Lord, have mercy. Christ, have mercy. Lord, have mercy,” we know that the God who is relieving us of a heart in misery is also empowering us by His Holy Spirit to go and do the same for others.

John wrote to his people: “You must see what great love the Father has lavished on us by letting us be called God’s children – what great love the Father has lavished on us by letting us be called God’s children – so that we may call to holiness and the goal of attaining Heaven by God’s grace.

For the sake of the seven corporal works of mercy, it gave her a pause when she came across “instruct the ignorant.” Her definition of ignorant was from the Latin meaning “not knowing.” It can also mean “unlearned,” “unknown,” or even “unaware.” She found while spread- ing the “good news” to those who were “ignorant,” was a mix of exhilaration, frustration, excitement, and terror all rolled up, in one. She also discovered that “wisdom” and “faith” are the anchors of human life, giving us meaning and purpose.

Borrowing the line from Peter as he was walking to the temple and saw a beggar who has been crippled since birth, “I have no silver or gold, but I give you what I have; in the name of Jesus Christ of Nazareth, rise and walk” (Acts 3:6-6).

We may not always have the perfect answer or argument, but we have the same truth, knowledge, wisdom, faith, and conviction that was given to the apostles; the examples.

She soon found herself in front of about eighty men in the San Quentin chapel. Given the pain and violence they’d experienced or perpetrated in their own lives, she was unsure if they wanted to hear of the violence and pain in the stories she was going to bring to them.

She began to tell them stories of the men and women she had met in Rwanda. They listened, asked questions, and were very thoughtful and kind. They shared from their own lives as well, and were eager to talk about forgiveness.

She discovered while sitting there, she was among a community of men cut off from the rest of the world, sharing stories from men and women she had met halfway around the world, and everyone was struggling, suffering, and seeking forgiveness. She found that there is power in community, and that we must accompany one another in life’s struggles, as Christ accompanies us.

**SHARING MERCY**

Sarah Swofford

Sarah was raised a Kansas farm girl. Whenever she read through the corporal and spiritual works of mercy, it gave her pause when she came across “instruct the ignorant.” Her definition of ignorant was being dumb or rude, and therefore not at the heart of the work of mercy.

She later learned the word ignorant is from the Latin meaning “not knowing.” It can also mean “unlearned,” “unknown,” or even “unaware.” She found while spreading the “good news” to those who were “ignorant,” was a mix of exhilaration, frustration, excitement, and terror all rolled up, in one. She also discovered that “wisdom” and “faith” are the anchors of human life, giving us meaning and purpose.

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**FREEING MERCY**

Kerry Weber

The chaplain from San Quentin State Prison, Fr. George, sat down in Kerry Weber’s office. Kerry was eager to tell him about her recent trip to Rwanda. She had traveled there with Catholic Relief Services to report on the country’s 1994 genocide and the healing and reconciliation that had taken place.

If you are not familiar, it was at the beginning of April 1994, that over the course of 100 days, approximately 1 million people were killed in Rwanda. A minority tribe, the Tutsi, were being killed by members of a majority tribe, the Hutu. Many of these people were being killed by their neighbors who they spent time with in their daily lives.

Catholic Relief Services worked with the people of the Rugango parish and the diocese to create the Community Healing and Reconciliation Program, which fostered discussion and forgiveness among the people of that community – a community where survivors and perpetrators of the genocide lived side by side.

Little by little forgiveness began to happen. Boniface, a man who was in prison for ten years, came home to discover the women he had harmed was living in peace and harmony with his wife. She even helped his wife feed him while he was in prison. Another member in the community forgave him for killing his relatives.

All this took place gradually as more and more participated in discussions and took part in “solidarity activities” during the annual month of mourning each April.

The parish was also able to build a youth center, which helped educate young people in ways of peace.

One survivor said, “We forgive because we know God also forgives.”

After finishing her story, Fr George told Kerry, she should come to San Quentin Prison. He told her they had a restorative justice program that many men participate in. He thought the men would appreciate her stories. Kerry said, “no” she was not an expert, but Fr George asked her to simply be a conduit for these grace-filled
**HARVEY**

(From 6)

It’s been hard to communicate with other areas, said Bishop Flores in an Aug. 26 interview with Catholic News Service, so it’s hard to gauge the extent of the damage. But he said his diocese wanted to get a head start to quickly divert help where it is needed and as fast as possible.

If the Rio Grande Valley, where Bishop Flores’ diocese is located, was spared the major impact of Hurricane Harvey, then the diocese had a duty to help their neighbors to the north, in the coastal areas of Corpus Christi and Galveston-Houston, which seemed to be hit hardest, he said. Hurricane Harvey seemed to enter near Corpus Christi and affected seven coastal counties in Texas and one Louisiana parish.

“We continue to pray for every for everyone affected by the hurricane and those who are at risk, as the storms continue,” said Bishop Flores in a statement.

Though the brunt of the hurricane’s winds has passed and Harvey was downgraded to a tropical storm hours after landfall, heavy rains and “catastrophic flooding” are expected for days, said the National Hurricane Center.

“We have to remember ... the families affected by flood damage in the next few days in other parts of the state will be in need of relief,” said Bishop Flores. “We will assess better how we can help as we get further information about the needs from the (Texas Catholic Conference of Bishops) and Catholic Charities.”

In an Aug. 26 statement published by the Galveston-Houston archdiocese, Cardinal DiNardo said powerful winds and heavy rainfall have already impacted many lives and homes throughout the region, and many in the southern counties of his archdiocese have already suffered substantial property damage and losses.

In Houston, the country’s fourth largest city with 6.6 million residents, many struggled seeking safety in flooded residential streets, which are expected to get up to 50 inches of rainfall by the time the rain stops sometime at the end of August.

“Numerous homes in these communities are currently without power. Several forecasts anticipate additional storm damage and flooding in the coming days, along with high winds and tornado activity,” Cardinal DiNardo said.

Up to 250,000 have been reported without power in Texas, a number that’s expected to rise.

San Antonio Archbishop Gustavo Garcia-Siller said in a statement that the archdiocese pledged its support to recovery efforts that will start after the rain and wind subside.

“My thoughts and prayers are with the people of the dioceses of Corpus Christi and Victoria, as well as the Archdiocese of Galveston-Houston, as they cope with the damaging effects of Hurricane Harvey,” he said. “The people of San Antonio have opened their arms to welcome evacuees of this historic hurricane, and Catholic Charities of the archdiocese has been assisting and will continue to assist in a variety of ways those impacted by this natural disaster.”

**Diocesan Conference Day**

**MISSIONARY DISCIPLESHIP**

**Called to Be a People of Justice**

**Keynote speaker**

Jennifer Carr Allmon

Executive Director

Texas Catholic Conference

**PLACE**

McNease Convention Center

(San Angelo Convention Center, San Angelo)

**DATE**

October 21, 2017

**TIME**

9:00 A.M.—4:00 P.M.

**REGISTRATION FEES**

$30.00

Entire Conference (lunch included)

$25.00

Early Registration—postmarked before September 22 (lunch included)

$35.00

At the Door (lunch included)

**MERCY**

(From 20)

same Holy Spirit descends upon us and asks us to go out to all the nations and tell the Good News (see Matthew 28:19-20; Acts 2:1-6). Sarah says, this is our role, our part to play in the story – and remember, no one can argue with your story, your testimony.

**BEING MERCY**

Sr. Helena Burns, FSP

Sr. Helena Burns, likes to “counsel the doubtful.” The people who – just don’t get it. This is her favorite spiritual work of mercy, knowing that we live in a doubtful, skeptical age. As the non-Christian culture becomes stronger and stronger, faith gets weaker and weaker. In the United States, according to the Pew Research Center, one in three millennials now declare “no affiliation” as their religion, even if they were baptized. If it were a religion, the second-largest religious group in the United States would be “lapsed Catholic,” with twenty-two million members. These “lapsed Catholics” are precisely the audience for the New Evangelization proclaimed by John Paul II. “There is an intermediate situation, particularly in countries with ancient Christian roots, and occasionally in the younger Churches as well, where entire groups of the baptized have lost a living sense of the faith, or even no longer consider themselves members of the Church, and live a life far removed from Christ and his Gospel. In this case what is needed is a ‘new evangelization’ or a ‘re-evangelization’.” The book covers in detail the categories these doubt-filled souls fall into.

We need to thank God for our strong faith. We obviously have a treasure that others do not have, but one they do want. People who are constantly wavering, can be a real cross to bear. St. Paul the Apostle took great care with those he called the “weak in faith,” to bring as many as possible to salvation.

**BEYOND GRUMBLING**

Dr. Scott Hahn

Dr. Scott Hahn is a popular speaker, teacher and author. He expresses that Our Heavenly Father longs to convince us of his passionate love for each one of us, that

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relicent Asian and Pacific Islander, among other groups from different cultural families. Everything seems to indicate that such diversity will continue to expand.

The closer one gets to larger cities in the region like Detroit, Indianapolis or Chicago, the more culturally diverse the region, as in the case of Detroit, Indiana and Chicago, more diverse is the population católica a nivel cultural. Sin duda alguna la presencia de monseñor Pérez hará que se ponga más atención a la población hispana en la región, la cual crece rápidamente. El obispo cubanoamericano, nacido en Miami, es perfectamente bilingüe y bicultural.

Monseñor también está posicionado de manera única para relacionarse con muchos otros católicos gracias a su experiencia personal y pastoral. Siendo hijo de inmigrantes cubanos, su historia converge con la de muchos inmigrantes, exiliados y refugiados. Sus raíces afroamericanas le permiten relacionarse más de cerca con el itinerario de los católicos de raza negra.

Como católico estadounidense, monseñor Pérez camina cultural y religiosamente con sus hermanos y hermanas católicos en un momento en el que seguimos discerniendo la diversidad cultural comunitaria. Como pastor, él tiene la responsabilidad de acompañar a todos los católicos que se le han encomendado.

Un líder pastoral ciertamente no tiene que ser irlandés para servir a los católicos irlandeses, o hispano para servir a los católicos hispanos, o vietnamita para servir a los católicos vietnamitas. La clave es familiarizarse al máximo con las realidades espirituales, eclesiales y culturales de las comunidades que uno sirve.

Monseñor Pérez y un sinnúmero de líderes pastorales hispanos están cada vez más preparados y listos para servir a toda la comunidad católica en nuestro país. No se pudiera esperar menos. Necesitamos dedicar más recursos para cultivar a esta clase de líderes.

El saber esto desafía la presunción poco razonable de que los líderes pastorales hispanos han de servir primordialmente a los católicos hispanos. No creo haber conocido una sola persona que piense que un obispo que no es hispano deba servir primordialmente a católicos que no son hispanos. Tal negligencia intencionada sería pecaminosa.

Monseñor Pérez es el primer obispo hispano a cargo de una diócesis en el Medio Oeste. Seguramente el primero de muchos. Esto es una buena noticia para la iglesia en los Estados Unidos. Cuando Boston esperaba el nombramiento de un nuevo arzobispo en el año 2003, le comenté a un amigo sacerdote, el cual es irlandés-americano, que me encantaría ver a un obispo hispano guiar el rumbo de esta arquidiócesis. Él me dijo, "El catolicismo en Boston es muy irlandés; no creo que en mi vida veré a un latino guiar a esta diócesis." A lo cual respondí, "¿Por qué no?"

As an American Catholic, Bishop Perez journeys culturally and religiously with his Catholic sisters and brothers at a moment when we continue to discern cultural diversity as a blessing. As a pastor, he has the responsibility to accompany all Catholics under his care.

A pastoral leader indeed does not need to be Irish to serve Irish Catholics or Hispanic to serve Hispanic Catholics or Vietnamese to serve Vietnamese. The key is to become familiar as much as possible with the spiritual, ecclesial and cultural realities of the communities one serves.

Bishop Perez and countless other Hispanic pastoral leaders are increasingly prepared and ready to serve the entire Catholic community in our country. One could not expect less. We need to cultivate more of these leaders.

Knowing this challenges the unrealistic assumption that Hispanic pastoral leaders are to serve primarily Hispanic Catholics. I do not think that I ever met anyone who would expect that a bishop with a non-Hispanic surname should choose to serve primarily non-Hispanics. Such willful neglect would be sinful.

Bishop Perez is the first Hispanic bishop heading a diocese in the Midwest. The first of many, for sure. This is good news for our church.

When Boston awaited the appointment of a new archbishop in 2003, I told an Irish-American priest friend that I would love to see a Hispanic leading the archdiocese. He said, "Boston Catholicism is very Irish, I don't think I will see a Hispanic leading this diocese in my lifetime." To that, I responded, "Why not!"

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motivated by the Holy Spirit, their human spirit, an evil spirit, or a combination of these spirits. The Discernment of Spirits is a gift of revelation given for a specific situation. This revelation can come through a vision, a sense, or a specific word, similar to a Word of Knowledge.

Gifs of Communication or Utterance

Tongues is a spontaneous, inspired utterance by the Holy Spirit in which we use our voice according to the Spirit’s prompting to minister to the praying or listening heart. Tongues is a gift given in a particular situation. Speaking in tongues is a transient gift used only when there is an anointing. It may be an earthly or heavenly language; a language current on the earth or one long dead, or it could be any one of countless dialects. These inspired utterances can bring deliverance, inspiration, or edification (both spiritually and physically), revival, wisdom, and is a means to victory in spiritual warfare.

Interpretation of Tongues is a prophetic message given in response to speaking in tongues in a community. If someone speaks out in tongues there should be an interpretation for the benefit of the community. This can be given by the person who has spoken in tongues, or it can be given by someone else in the group.

Prayer in tongues, on the other hand, is a permanent gift in which the individual is edified. The Spirit prays within the speaking tongue. Likewise the Spirit helps us in our weakness; for we do not know how to pray as we ought, but the Spirit himself intercedes for us with signs too deep for words.” In a prayer language, the person yields to the Holy Spirit to pray through him/her according to the will of the Spirit, through sounds and syllables, not knowing what the Spirit is praying.

Relinquishing oneself to the Holy Spirit in this way is loving, trusting, and praising God. Prayer in tongues may be used in a charismatic or communal prayer.

Prophecy is a supernatural communication from God to an individual or a group of believers. It is an anointing given as the Spirit wills to anyone open to bringing forth a gift in love to their brothers and sisters in Christ to promote the spiritual growth and development of the body of believers. Prophecy builds up, encourages (this could include warnings), exhorts, consoles, draws us closer to God in worship, and stirs up a response in God’s people. It always brings glory to Jesus Christ. Prophecy is forth-telling of the mind and heart of God to His people. Prophecy can be manifested through a vision, words, and thoughts, or be prompted by a form of physical sensation to alert us to listen. Prophecy should always be discerned and tested by those present. It is a specific message given at a particular time for a specific purpose. On the other hand, a prophet is one who has been anointed by the Holy Spirit to express prophetic words consistently over time—a Ministry Gift.

Gifts of Power/Dynamism

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Gifts of Power/Dynamism

Faith is a supernatural outpouring or anointing of the Holy Spirit which enables us to believe without a doubt that what is spoken or undertaken in Jesus’ name will be accomplished. Faith involves entrusting oneself wholly to God and to believing absolutely and completely what He reveals. The Gift of Faith is a supernatural faith that will heal and bring about miracles. The person who has this gift centers his/her mind on God to receive Words of Knowledge and Words of Wisdom to know what God wants to do at that particular moment. This Gift of Faith is to be distinguished from faith as belief in God, saving or justifying faith, and faith as faithfulness—a fruit of the Spirit.

Miracles is a supernatural outpouring of God’s power, which results in the healing of sickness and disease without the use of medical means. This can involve sickness of the body, soul and/or spirit. God is interested in healing our total person. Healing may be physical, psychological, emotional, spiritual, or relational. Jesus is the healer. Even a few of those present to us through the intercession of our Blessed Mother Mary and the saints are through their intercession with Jesus the Healer. When we pray for healing, some type of healing comes, though it may not be what we asked for. Healing is often accompanied with the gift of tears—a wonderful gift described by one of the saints as the "washing of the soul." Also, joy may accompany healing and can be expressed through "holy laughter" or tears.

Working of Miracles are interventions into the course of events that seem to contradict the laws of nature.

Though working of miracles the Holy Spirit manifests the power of God to produce works that override natural laws, such as turning water into wine, multiplication of the loaves and fishes; healing beyond the ordinary, such as healing the withered hand (Luke 6:6-10), the replacement of an organ that is not there, disappearance of diseases, making the blind see without surgery. The Lord bestows miracles to encourage, strengthen, and support the faith of His people, or to correct a given situation which cannot be accomplished by any natural means, or to show His power at work in response to a ministry of prayer.

The An angel of the Lord will bring glory through the intercession of Jesus Christ, to whom belong glory and dominion forever and ever. Amen.

How do you receive a Manifestation Gift? Pray the Holy Spirit to give you according to His will; ask the grace, prayers, and assistance of our Blessed Mother Mary; and ask the intercession of a prayer team in a Charismatic Renewal community. If you are interested in participating in an English or Spanish language Charismatic prayer group, contact Sandy Seidel, 325-656-5550 to find out the location and time of one closest to you. The Diocesan Renewal website is sanangeloheraldmercy.com.

"Come, Holy Spirit, fill our hearts, enkindle in us the fire of your love. Send forth your Spirit and we shall be created, and you shall renew the face of the earth."
Fun Stockton!

Our Lady of Guadalupe Parish in Fort Stockton hosted a Family Sunday Funday End of Summer Bash on August 13, at the Michael Quiroz Memorial Heroes Spray Park. Through a combined effort of contributions of all ministries and groups, a fun-filled afternoon was enjoyed by all parishioners in an event to end the summer. Hamburgers with all the trimmings, hot dogs, chips and watermelon were enjoyed by all. More importantly, it helped strengthen the unity of the Catholic family at Our Lady of Guadalupe Parish.

HONDURAS

(From 10)

visited most of these. The chapel-communities are organized, each with its own lay leadership, which in turn are represented on the Parish Pastoral Council (with whom we enjoyed a meeting and festive activities). About half the chapel-communities have Youth Groups; we spent a lively afternoon with one, learning to “see, judge, and act.”

The third dimension is called the “paschal” dimension, referring to celebrating our faith in the Mass, other sacraments and prayer services. We took part in Sunday Masses, weekday Masses and one Mass on the patronal feast day of one of the chapel-communities, Santa Marta, with the meal after it. Small groups of three or four of us accompanied women of the Legion of Mary, taking Holy Communion to shut-ins in their homes; these encounters were especially emotional for our group members, as they saw what it is like to be sick or elderly in the midst of poverty and heat of the neighborhood. Christ is present to the sick in the missionary disciples who come to see them and in the Bread of Life, Holy Communion.

The fourth dimension of the Church is mission. Pope Francis calls on us to go out to the marginalized and the poor. The entire parish of Santisima Trinidad is in one of the most distressed barrios of San Pedro Sula; we were immersed in this environment every day. One afternoon we sorted bags of food and then went with the people involved in social ministries to take the food to the homes of the most needy, a truly moving time for our parishioners.

The fifth dimension is called the “Samaritan” area; it is the fruit of being missionary disciples of Jesus. This is demonstrated especially in areas of service, which can bring about change in the society. We spent an afternoon with the parish IHER program, teaching English in this effort which helps students achieve a high school equivalency diploma (like a GED). We spent a morning with another IHER program, a non-profit called “Caminando por la Paz” which is supported by a number of people from our parish back home. We spent yet another morning with the “Jardines de Niños,” a head start type program for four and five-year-olds, in which Moms (trained by the Church) work with at-risk children to prepare them to enter Kindergarten.

Every moment during the week-long trip was a time of encounter, travel, sharing meals, meeting the people of Honduras. We were accompanying people in their parish life, working alongside them. The activities listed above are simply what happened during this week; another week would have been different, perhaps with a retreat or a vocation promotion or a procession through the streets, but just as impactful. The main idea is to spend a good block of time with the people in each activity; in this time, we share our faith, witness to one another, encourage one another.

Finally, life includes times of rest and enjoyment, too. So one day was spent traveling to the Caribbean coast at Omoa. We toured a fortress from the 1700s and swam at the beach. Another afternoon we toured the cathedral and the city plaza, finishing the visit with shopping for souvenirs at the artisan market called “Guamilito.”

In his apostolic exhortation “The Church in America (1999)” Saint Pope John Paul II wrote that accompanying our fellow Catholics results in an encounter with the living Christ; from this encounter proceed conversion, communion and solidarity.

This is what we “do” on a mission trip.