Faithful venerate relics of St. Pio of Pietrelcina — the crusts of his wounds, a handkerchief soaked in his sweat, and a glove worn by the saint — at the Cathedral of the Sacred Heart in San Angelo, Oct. 7, 2018. (Angelus photo)

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The Inside Front

Diocesan Safe Environment program explained

By Mike Wyse
Chancellor, Diocese of San Angelo

SAN ANGELO — In 2003 the Diocese of San Angelo established a new Safe Environment Program in light of the requirements of the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops’ Charter for the Protection of Children and Young People, which was issued in 2002. As far back as August 1994, the diocese already had a Policy on Sexual Misconduct in place which explained the diocese’s expectations of chaste and moral behavior for all clergy and lay personnel working in ministry.

The directives of the Bishops’ Charter for the Protection of Children and Young People set out specific actions which must be accomplished in every diocese of the country to help ensure a safe environment for all to whom we minister, especially children, youth, and vulnerable adults. Among these actions are conducting background criminal records checks and safe environment training for all clergy, religious, employees, and volunteers in our many church programs and ministries.

An additional requirement of the Charter is that the safe environment program of each diocese is subject to an annual audit by an independent auditing firm contracted by the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops. Since 2003, the Diocese of San Angelo has been audited 15 times and has never been found non-compliant in any area of the Bishops’ Charter. Recently, the diocese completed its 16th audit for 2018 and we expect that, once again, no compliance issues will be discovered. Such a phenomenal audit record is only possible due to the hard work and diligence of hundreds of people across the diocese — priests, deacons, sisters, lay employees, and volunteers. In support of the annual audit, we also conduct an annual safe environment audit for each parish and mission in the diocese to ensure that each parish and mission is compliant with the requirements of the Bishops’ Charter.

We are often asked about our background check process and the safe environment training program. We would like to take this opportunity to share a little bit of information about how this is accomplished in the diocese.

Background checks are conducted before anyone is permitted to work around children, youth, or vulnerable adults. To date, the diocese has conducted 14,233 background checks. Of those applications that have been approved, 74 applications have had limitations placed on them, such as: a) may not work around children; b) may not handle parish funds; or c) may not drive for parish functions or activities. Additionally, 191 applications have been rejected for various offenses such as: a) violent offenses — murder, sex crimes, assault, robbery, use of deadly force, kidnapping, domestic violence; b) registered sex offenders; c) any form of child abuse; or d) drug manufacturing or distribution. Those in active ministry have their background check automatically updated every five years.

All who work in ministry around children, youth, or vulnerable adults must also participate in the diocesan Safe Environment Program. This entails a two and a half hour workshop which covers the topics of child sexual abuse and the diocesan Policies on Ethics and Integrity in Ministry. More than 10,500 people have attended these workshops. A workshop covering sexual abuse of children is provided to parents at least once a year in each parish. Lastly, age-appropriate training is provided to the children in our Catholic schools and religious education programs in an effort to minimize the possibility of one of them becoming a victim of sexual abuse. All three of these training programs are mandated by the Bishops’ Charter.

All are invited to become familiar with our diocesan Policies on Ethics and Integrity in Ministry. This policy is available on the Diocese of San Angelo website: www.sanangelodiocese.org/safe-environment.

Much has been accomplished in our diocese over the years to provide the safest environment we can for our children and youth. We extend our gratitude to all those dedicated persons who work tirelessly to create a safe environment in our Church activities.

Pastoral planning process underway in diocese

West Texas Angelus

SAN ANGELO — The Diocese of San Angelo has launched its pastoral planning process, “A Future Full of Hope,” and is currently gathering input from local Catholics to help guide the direction of diocese in the near future.

The official launch of the process was coordinated with an introductory video featuring Bishop Michael J. Sis explaining the purpose of pastoral planning and how the parishioners of the diocese can participate. Bishop Sis asked that this video be shown in all parishes in mid-September. The video, in English and Spanish, can also be found on a page on the diocesan website created specifically for the pastoral planning process. These videos and other information related to the diocese’s pastoral plan can be found at www.sanangelodiocese.org/pastoral-plan.

A major component of the pastoral planning process is the gathering of information from as many local faithful as possible with the goal of developing a plan that considers the needs of the people served by the diocese. The diocese has contracted with outside consultants specializing in pastoral planning to develop and facilitate several steps in the information-gathering campaign. These steps will include convening several small focus groups reflective of larger populations essential to the church’s service, a short survey that all are encouraged to complete, and a series of larger open listening sessions at various churches throughout the diocese.

The survey, provided in both English and Spanish, is available on the diocese’s pastoral plan webpage. It is available both as an online survey and as a PDF that may be printed out, completed, and returned to the diocesan pastoral center or any parish office. For those without internet access, parish offices can make physical copies of the survey available. All responses to the survey will be anonymous. The deadline for completing this survey is Nov. 5.

The listening sessions, which are facilitated in both English and Spanish, are open to all who wish to attend to provide their input into the future direction of the diocese. These sessions began on Oct. 1 with a session at the Cathedral of the Sacred Heart in San Angelo, followed by dates in Abilene and Big Spring. Deacon Freddy Medina, who facilitated the Spanish listening session in San Angelo, said that 91 people came to the Cathedral to have their voices heard.

He said that the general consensus is that “people are happy, but they asked for more formation” of the laity. The San Angelo group have noticed a trend that children are not staying in the Church, and they would like that to be addressed.

People in Deacon Medina’s group were quite pleased with the opportunity to sit down and express what they wanted from the Church, and were particularly happy when Bishop Michael Sis joined the group, allowing for the participants to ask him questions directly. “It provided them an avenue to talk with the leadership,” Medina said, noting that one participant referred to the bishop as a mero-mero, informal Spanish for “top dog,” and welcomed the opportunity to dialogue with the leader of the diocese in a comfortable environment. While the bishop’s presence was appreciated, the focus of the group was largely on local parish concerns and a desire for more parish retreats.

“It’s a very good idea,” Medina said of the listening sessions where people can come together to have questions answered about their parish and the diocese. “It needs to be a continual thing.”

Future listening sessions are scheduled as follows:

- Oct. 15, St. Elizabeth Church in Odessa
- Oct. 16, St. Stephen Church in Midland
- Oct. 25, St. Mary Church in Brownwood
- Oct. 29, Our Lady of Guadalupe Church, North Campus, in Fort Stockton
- Oct. 30, St. Ann Church in Sonora

All listening sessions begin with a light meal at 6:00 p.m., with the session itself following at 6:30 p.m.
From The Bishop’s Desk

Help for Sonora

By Bishop Michael Sis
Diocese of San Angelo

The people of the Diocese of San Angelo have always been amazingly generous when disasters have hit many different countries. Hundreds of thousands of dollars have flowed from our West Texas families to victims of tsunamis, earthquakes, and monsoons around the world. Now is a special moment to help some of our own neighbors in their hour of need.

On Friday, September 21, 2018, a storm sat over Sonora, Texas, dumping large amounts of water over the city and the surrounding area. The flood control system was overwhelmed by the amount of rain that fell in a small area in a short period of time. More than 250 homes were flooded in the low-lying neighborhoods near the draws. Now those residents are trying to find a way to clean up the mess, dispose of their ruined belongings, dry out things, prevent mold, and put their homes back together again. Many of their homes will not be inhabitable, so these people will need to search for a place to live.

The Catholic parish in Sonora is called St. Ann’s. Since it is situated next to the draw, it also suffered serious flooding on that unforgettable day. The church and the parish hall were surrounded by so much water that it looked like they were sitting in a lake. Now these buildings cannot be used until the flood damage is repaired. Clean-up crews started their work right away, but the actual repair of the church facilities will take plenty of time. The parish will need plenty of assistance and prayer support.

In the meantime, a generous local Christian community, Lighthouse Christian Church, has agreed to allow St. Ann’s to celebrate weekend Masses in their church hall until they can move back into their own buildings. We should all pray for God’s blessings upon the people of Lighthouse Community Church for their loving spirit of hospitality.

Thankfully, St. Ann’s Parish has flood insurance, which should be helpful in the recovery process. Unfortunately, however, about 90% of the flooded homes in town did not have insurance. Their prognosis is much more worrisome. Since the threshold for the federal government to release FEMA money is a total damage level of 36 million dollars, it is not known whether federal assistance will be forthcoming for the people of Sonora. Governor Greg Abbott has declared Sutton County a state disaster area, thereby facilitating the allocation of some state-level assistance.

Many of our Catholic people around the diocese have asked what they can do to help. I asked the community leaders in Sonora, and they gave me some information that I would like to pass on to our readers:

- First of all, please do not send any unmanaged informal donations, such as clothing, shoes, or television sets. They do not have the logistical ability to handle any more such items.
- They told me that they can use plastic totes, cleaning supplies, personal hygiene supplies, and demolition equipment such as saws, pry bars, and utility knives. When I was in Sonora, these items were being used rapidly.

See BISHOP, Page 21

Ayuda para Sonora

Por Obispo Michael Sis
Diócesis de San Ángelo

La gente de la Diócesis de San Ángelo siempre ha sido increíblemente generosa cuando los desastres han afectado a muchos diferentes países. Cientos de miles de dólares han fluido de nuestras familias del Oeste de Texas a las víctimas de los tsunami, terremotos, y monzones del mundo. Ahora es un momento especial para ayudar a algunos de nuestros propios vecinos en su hora de necesidad.

El viernes, 21 de septiembre de 2018, una tormenta se sentó sobre Sonora, Texas, arrojando grandes cantidades de agua a la ciudad y sus alrededores. El sistema de control de inundaciones se vio abrumado por la cantidad de lluvia que cayó en un área pequeña en un corto período de tiempo. Mas de 250 casas fueron inundadas en los barrios de baja altitud cerca del arroyo. Ahora los residentes están tratando de encontrar una manera de limpiar el desorden, disponer de sus pertenencias en ruinas, secar sus cosas, evitar el moho, y reponer sus casas de nuevo. Muchos de sus hogares no serán habitables, por lo que estas personas tendrán que buscar un lugar para vivir.

La parroquia Católica en Sonora se llama St. Ann. Ya que se encuentra al lado del arroyo, que también sufrió graves inundaciones en ese día inolvidable. La iglesia y el salón parroquial estaban rodeados de tanta agua que parecía que estaban sentados en una laguna. Ahora estos edificios no se pueden utilizar hasta que se repare el daño de la inundación. Equipos de limpieza comenzaron su trabajo de inmediato, pero la reparación real de las instalaciones de la iglesia se tomará mucho tiempo. La parroquia necesitará mucha ayuda y apoyo en oración.

Mientras tanto, una generosa comunidad Cristiana local, Lighthouse Christian Church, ha decidi do permitir la Parroquia de St. Ann el celebrar sus Misas en su salón de la iglesia hasta que puedan regresar a sus propios edificios. Todos debemos orar por las bendiciones de Dios sobre los miembros de Lighthouse Community Church por su amoroso espíritu de hospitalidad.

Afortunadamente, la Parroquia de St. Ann tiene un seguro contra inundaciones, la cual debe ser útil en el proceso de recuperación. Sin embargo, desafortunadamente, alrededor del 90% de las casas inundadas en la ciudad no tienen seguro. Su pronóstico es mucho más preocupante. Dado que el umbral para que el gobierno federal autorice dinero de FEMA es un nivel de daño total de 36 millones de dólares, no se sabe si la asistencia federal sea disponible al pueblo de Sonora. El Gobernador Greg Abbott ha declarado el Condado Sutton un área de desastre estatal, de este modo facilitando la asignación de asistencia al nivel estatal.

Muchos de nuestros Católicos alrededor de la diócesis han preguntado qué pueden hacer para ayudar. Prometí a los líderes de la comunidad en Sonora, y me dieron alguna información que me gustaría pasársela a nuestros lectores.

- Primeramente, por favor, no envíe donaciones informales no administradas, tales como ropas, zapatos, o televisores. Ellos no tienen la capacidad logística para encargarse de más de tales artículos.
- Me dijeron que ellos pueden usar cajas de plástico, artículos de limpieza, artículos de higiene personal y equipo de demolición, tales como serruchos, palancas, y cuchillos para uso general. Cuando estaba en Sonora, estos artículos se estaban recibiendo y distribuyendo en el Centro Cívico del Condado de Sutton. El centro no tiene personal pagado, por lo que el trabajo se está haciendo en su totalidad por voluntarios.
- Me dijeron que también hay una necesidad grave para el asesoramiento y guía espiritual. Algunos de los residentes locales están tan traumizados que necesitan desesperadamente alguien con quien hablar y orar. Se les pide que cualquier consejero profesional, clérigo, o director espiritual capacitado que está disponible para ayudar se ponga en contacto con la coordinadora de voluntarios en Sonora, Tammy Fisher, al 202-468-5262.
- Hay una página de Facebook llamada Sonora Flood Relief, y esa página ha sido un foro útil para que las personas expresen sus necesidades y respondan a ellas rápidamente.

See BISHOP, Page 21

The Prayer Square

Prayer for the family

Dear Lord and Savior Jesus Christ, with Mary and Joseph, you have lived within a family. Teach us always to appreciate the precious gift of being part of a family.

Show us new ways to protect and comfort those closest to us.

Let us, each day, do something that will say, “I love you” even without speaking the words. But, remind us, also, to frequently say those words.

Let us never part from any member of our family in anger.

Prompt us always to forgive, and to seek forgiveness, without delay.

Open our eyes to see your image within each person in our own family, and in our greater human family.

Knowing that in your Kingdom, we will truly be one family, united by your sacrifice on the Cross. Amen.
**Bishop’s Calendar**

**October 2018**

1. AUSTIN, Texas Catholic Conference of Bishops, Fall General Assembly
2. SAN ANGELO, Sacred Heart Cathedral, Pastoral Planning Listening Session at 6:30 p.m.
3. SAN ANGELO, Diocesan Pastoral Center, Finance Council meeting at 12:00 p.m.
4. MIDLAND, The Way Retreat Center, Board meeting at 12:00 p.m.
5. ODESSA, Sacred Heart, 25th Anniversary of Adoration Chapel Mass at 6:30 p.m.
6. ODESSA, Sacred Heart, Confirmation Retreat
7. SAN ANGELO, Sacred Heart, Respect Life Mass at 11:15 a.m.
8. SAN ANGELO, Sacred Heart, Pastoral Planning Listening Session at 6:30 p.m.
9. SAN ANGELO, Christ the King Retreat Center, Priests’ Fall Convocation
10. SAN ANGELO, Diocesan Pastoral Center, Deans’ meeting at 1:00 p.m.
11. SAN ANGELO, McNease Convention Center, Diocesan Conference Day
12. ODESSA, Sacred Heart, Confirmation Retreat
13. SAN ANGELO, Sacred Heart, Confirmation Retreat
14. SAN ANGELO, Sacred Heart, Confirmation Retreat
15. SAN ANGELO, Sacred Heart, Pastoral Planning Listening Session at 6:30 p.m.
16. ODESSA, Sacred Heart, Confirmation Retreat
17. SAN ANGELO, Sacred Heart, Pastoral Planning Listening Session at 6:30 p.m.
18. SAN ANGELO, Diocesan Pastoral Center, Presbyteral Council meeting at 11:00 a.m.
19. ODESSA, Sacred Heart, Annual Convocation of Deacons
20. SAN ANGELO, Sacred Heart, Confirmation Retreat
21. SAN ANGELO, Sacred Heart, Confirmation Retreat
22. SAN ANGELO, Sacred Heart, Confirmation Retreat
23. SAN ANGELO, Sacred Heart, Confirmation Retreat
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27. SAN ANGELO, Sacred Heart, Confirmation Retreat
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29. SAN ANGELO, Sacred Heart, Confirmation Retreat
30. SAN ANGELO, Sacred Heart, Confirmation Retreat
31. SAN ANGELO, Sacred Heart, Confirmation Retreat

**November 2018**

1. ODESSA, UTPB, Mass at 12:00 p.m.
2. SAN ANGELO, Calvary Cemetery, All Souls’ Day Mass and blessing of the graves at 9:00 a.m.
3. MIDLAND, St. Stephen, Mass for young adult conference at 6:00 p.m.
4. SAN ANGELO, Christ the King Retreat Center, Mass for deacon’s retreat at 11:00 a.m.
5. SAN ANGELO, Sacred Heart, Confirmation Retreat
6. SAN ANGELO, Sacred Heart, Confirmation Retreat
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30. SAN ANGELO, Sacred Heart, Confirmation Retreat
31. SAN ANGELO, Sacred Heart, Confirmation Retreat

**Christ the King Retreat Center**

**October 2018**

1. Heart of Mercy Prayer Group
2. Confirmation Retreat
3. Heart of Mercy Prayer Group
4. 9-10 DOA Fall Priests’ Convocation
5. 12-14 Deacon Formation
6. Heart of Mercy Prayer Group
7. Heart of Mercy Prayer Group
8. Women’s Walk to Emmaus
9. Heart of Mercy Prayer Group
10. Deacon Quarterly
11. Staff Mass & Lunch

**November 2018**

1. CKRC Offices Closed in Observance of All Saints Day
2. 2-4 DOA Deacon’s Annual Retreat #2
3. Heart of Mercy Prayer Group
4. Shannon Volunteers
5. Deacon Formation
6. Heart of Mercy Prayer Group
7. Heart of Mercy Prayer Group
8. 22-23 CKRC Offices Closed in Observance of Thanksgiving
9. Heart of Mercy Prayer Group
10. Staff Mass & Lunch
11. Annual Advent Party for Clergy

**Necrology of Priests and Deacons**

**October**

8. Deacon Peter Ballard (2013)

**November**

15. Deacon Leroy Beach (2016)
By Sister Adelina Garcia, OSF

Over 3,000 participants gathered at the Gaylord Hotel in Grapevine, Texas, September 20–23, 2018, for the V Encuentro. This was an opportunity to hear about the gifts and challenges of Hispanic/Latino members in our Church. The focus of the Encuentro was on Pope Francis’ Evangelii Gaudium: Missionary Disciples: Witnesses of God’s Love. Over 130 bishops attended along with the papal nuncio of the United States, Archbishop Christophe Pierre. Thirteen participants represented the Diocese of San Angelo: Deacon Hector Mendez, Rose Mendez, Linda Navarro, Juaniita Silva, Father Freddy Perez, Laura Hernandez, Jo Anne Herrera, Antonio Herrera, Tereza Rico, Virgilio Miguel, Sr. Adelina Garcia, OSF, Bishop Michael Sis, and Bishop Emeritus Michael Pfeifer.

Two images that struck me came from Bishop Oscar Cantu from San Jose, California, and Bishop Arturo Cepeda from Detroit. Bishop Cantu spoke of coming from the Gulf Coast to Gallup, New Mexico. He would note that some bushes have very shallow roots that eventually dry up and get blown by the wind until they become tumbleweeds. “We must learn to develop deep roots of faith so we don’t get uprooted when encounter challenges, persecution, ridicule in our lives,” he said. Bishop Cepeda spoke about sowing seeds of faith as we go about our lives: “We are called to nurture the seeds so they will bear fruit.”

Breakout sessions were held on different topics concerning ministry and leadership. Panels reported to the large gatherings. Bishop Ed Burns of Dallas held a dinner for young adults on Friday night. This event gave young adults an opportunity to ask questions and express concerns to the church leaders. Each table had a facilitator and a bishop who listened. Sister Adelina Garcia served as a facilitator and Bishop Sis sat at one of the tables. Both Laura Hernandez and Virgilio Miguel attended the dinner.

The three main issues that were identified were: 1) the importance of leadership formation across the board at all levels; 2) mentorship and alcoholic suicide; and 3) mission and leadership. These issues we encountered in our parishes and dioceses in September 23, 2018, we heard from the many voices included young adults, undocumented Hispanics, families, those that have left the Catholic Church, and others. All of these are crying out to the Church, “We need your help and guidance!” We also heard from numerous cardinals, bishops, and laity leaders thanking us for the efforts.

By Virgilio Miguel

Al haber atendido al V Encuentro hispano, quedo admirado por la belleza y la capacidad de nuestra Iglesia “en salida” ya que como joven adulto quedé impregnado de las enormes posibilidades y compromisos que podemos y debemos realizar los católicos.

Al llegar y ver el lugar de primera mano entendió que era un magnífico evento, la multitud se hacía presente; pero a la misma vez el cálido y atento recibimiento te hacía sentir en casa y emocionado. Al dar comienzo nos recibieron con una bella cena, dando paso a la presentación e introducción de los temas y puntos a tratar, inyectándonos con felicidad desde el principio, debido a que vimos un mensaje del Papa, recalculando que somos una Iglesia y estábamos ahí para no solo ser una simple Iglesia, sino una Iglesia en salida que se preocupa por los diversos temas problemáticos que aquejan a la sociedad hispana, y así también saber que no estamos solos, y que se puede hacer mucho.

Al retirarnos para descansar, nos fuimos con una mentalidad completamente de atención y motivación para escuchar, para platicar de las inquietudes que íbamos representando. El día viernes muy temprano las actividades comenzaron, separándonos por grupos, para desempeñar pequeños núcleos de escucha y para buscar soluciones en cuanto a lo que nos aqueja en la comunidad. Conociendo a hermanos de otras diócesis entendí que quizás al igual que yo nos falta una estructura de renovación para trabajar en conjunto, haciéndonos parte y especialistas en las diferentes áreas para fortalecer e invitar a toda nuestra comunidad, a la Iglesia Católica.

Conforme pasó el tiempo el discernimiento que le pedía a Dios me abrió mis sentidos para comprender que el pueblo hispano en muchas regiones padece de las mismas dificultades, pero así también me puso alerta para entender como aprender de los que tienen una mejor estructura y experiencia en este emprendimiento, para con mis dones ponerlos al servicio de la Iglesia Católica, fortaleciendo y creando grupos de jóvenes adultos, ya que es uno de los grupos más vulnerables por el entorno social; es por eso

By Tereza Rico

“The Holy Spirit has come to set the world on fire! Do not be afraid to encounter others. The Church needs us today! We are the future of the Church.” These are words spoken by Archbishop Gustavo Garcia-Siller from San Antonio, Texas, as he led the opening prayer to begin The Fifth National Encuentro of Hispanic/Latino Ministry Leaders, or V Encuentro.

The V Encuentro is an initiative of the bishops of the United States calling all Catholic leaders to listen with profound attention to the needs, challenges, and aspirations that the growing Hispanic/Latino population faces in daily life. It especially prepares us as a Church to better recognize, embrace, and promote the many gifts and talents that the Hispanic community shares in the life and mission of the Church, and in society.

After years of preparing for the V Encuentro, over 3,000 delegates from every diocese in the United States met in Grapevine, Texas, at the Gaylord Hotel to pray, worship, and brainstorm together. Under the theme “Missionary Disciples: Witnesses to God’s Love,” we shared many stories of how in our dioceses and parishes, we encountered numerous people hungry for God's Love and, as a result of that encounter, we were once again filled with missionary zeal.

Pope Francis has said numerous times that he has a dream of an evangelizing Church that reaches out to others, especially those less fortunate. The 14 delegates from our diocese that attended the V Encuentro can say that we are a small part of that dream.

From Thursday, September 20 to Sunday, September 23, 2018, we heard from the many voices we encountered in our parishes and dioceses in the beginning phases of the V Encuentro. These voices included young adults, undocumented Hispanics, families, those that have left the Catholic Church, and others. All of these are crying out to the Church, “We need your help and guidance!” We also heard from numerous cardinals, bishops, and lay leaders thanking us for the efforts.
The U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops' Committee on Divine Worship is in the early stages of preparing a new English edition of the RCIA, to be titled the *Order of Christian Initiation of Adults*. Although the Latin version of the book has not changed, the International Commission on English in the Liturgy has completed a new English translation of the Latin text. The publication of a new book will provide an opportunity to review and evaluate the various distinctive features of the current English edition.

The Secretariat of Divine Worship would like to hear from people around the country about their experiences with the RCIA, both the process in general and, in particular, the ritual book and the National Statutes. They are seeking input on the following questions:

• What have you found helpful and effective with the RCIA?
• What difficulties have you encountered?
• What changes would you recommend?
• Do you have other feedback concerning the RCIA (the book and/or the process)?

In your reply, please tell us a little bit about yourself:

• How have you been involved in RCIA ministry? In what capacity and for how long?
• Have you gone through the RCIA process yourself? What was your experience like?

Through Dec. 31, 2018, responses can be e-mailed to RCIA@usccb.org or sent by regular mail to: USCCB – Divine Worship, 3211 Fourth Street, NE, Washington, DC 20017, ATTN: RCIA Consultation.

By Sister Adelina Garcia, OSF
Associate Director, Office of Evangelization and Catechesis

San Angelo will be hosting the dioceses of Little Rock, Amarillo, Lubbock, Corpus Christi, and Oklahoma City this November. The Area Catholic High School Conference will be held at the McNease Convention Center. The theme: *Listen! ¡Oye!* is focused on God’s call to each of us. As a result of the Synod Gathering of Young Adults last spring in Rome, diocesan directors thought it would be good to listen to the concerns of the young people and address some of their issues.

The keynote speakers are Joe Melendez, a national rapper/speaker, and Damon West, a national speaker on addictions. He shares his story of popularity, drugs, success, and prison. Odd Walk will provide music and serve as emcees. A dance will be held on Saturday night. Breakout workshops include: Healthy Relationships, Coping with Change, Finding Meaning and Hope in My Life, What to do? What to be? Discernment, and Accompanying Our Children (adults). Bishop Sis will celebrate liturgy on Sunday morning; Bishop Coerver from Lubbock will be a breakout presenter.

Registration is $75.00, which includes a T-Shirt, lunch and supper on Saturday. Pearl on the Concho is providing rooms for $74.00 a night. I recommend four youth to a room. It would be for two nights, Friday and Saturday. Identify that you are attending the Catholic Youth Conference when calling to reserve rooms in order to get the discount.

Deadline for registration is Nov. 2, 2018.

For more information call Sister Adelina at 325-651-7500.
Diocesan Conference Day: Bridging the Generations

**BRIDGING THE GENERATIONS**
**UNIENDO LAS GENERACIONES**
**October 20, 2018**

9:00 Welcome
9:30 Prayer
9:30 Crossing the Generational Divide: Strengths and Challenges
Joseph White, PhD (sponsored by Our Sunday Visitor)

What do we need to understand about the differences between Baby Boomers, Generation Xers and Millennials? This session will discuss what research tells us about the strengths and challenges of each generation and how we can use this knowledge in our ministry with families today.

10:15 Break

10:30 Breakout Sessions (Round A)
1) iBelieve: Faith in the Generation
   - Bishop D. Brian P. Jones, USC (Diocese of Austin, Texas)
2) Bridging the Generations: What Children and Youth Teach Us About Life, Love, and God
   - Msgr. Robert W. Eiseley, S.J. (Diocese of San Angelo)
3) Young Adult Success Stories
   - Bishop Michael J. Sis (Diocese of San Angelo)
4) Recursos para la familia en la justicia social
   - Sr. Agnes Garcia OSF (Associate Director, Office of Evangelization and Catechesis, Diocese of San Angelo)
5) Pastoral Planning Focus Group

11:30 Eucharist
   Bishop Michael J. Sis

12:30 Lunch

1:15 Engaging the Family
Joseph White, PhD (sponsored by Our Sunday Visitor)

Our Church teaches us that parents are the first and most important teachers of the faith for their children, but many catechists and leaders find it challenging to engage parents in their children’s faith formation. This session will discuss practical strategies for involving parents and engaging families.

2:00 Break

2:15 Breakout Sessions (Round B)
1) iBelieve: Faith in the Generation
   - Bishop D. Brian P. Jones, USC (Diocese of Austin, Texas)
2) Bridging the Generations: What Children and Youth Teach Us About Life, Love, and God
   - Msgr. Robert W. Eiseley, S.J. (Diocese of San Angelo)
3) Young Adult Success Stories
   - Bishop Michael J. Sis (Diocese of San Angelo)
4) Recursos para la familia en la justicia social
   - Sr. Agnes Garcia OSF (Associate Director, Office of Evangelization and Catechesis, Diocese of San Angelo)
5) Pastoral Planning Focus Group

3:15 Moving Forward
   Prayer

4:00 Departure

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**BRIDGING THE GENERATIONS**
**UNIENDO LAS GENERACIONES**

Diocesan Conference Day Registration—October 20, 2018

Complete ONE form for EACH registrant; this form may be reproduced. Mail completed registration form and payment to:
Office of Evangelization & Catechesis, 804 Ford St., St., San Angelo, TX 76905

For more information, contact the Office of Evangelization and Catechesis at 325-651-7600 or evang@anglican.org

**BREAKOUT SESSIONS**

**Round A** (Choose One: 1–5)

**Round B** (Choose One: 1–5)

**REGISTRATION FEES**

- **$30.00** (Lunch included)
- **$25.00** (Lunch included)
- **$25.00** (Lunch included)
- **$25.00** (Lunch included)
- **$25.00** (Lunch included)

**TOTAL**

- **$150.00**

**MAILING ADDRESS:**

**Contact Person:**

**Parish/School/Office:**

**Email:**

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**Thank you from the West Texas Angelus**

The West Texas Angelus would like to thank The Catholic Charitable Foundation for the Roman Catholic Diocese of San Angelo for their generous grant of $1000 toward the purchase of a new camera and associated equipment. This grant was made possible by generous donors who have given gifts to the Foundation’s Unrestricted Endowment Funds. Endowment donations are invested. A portion of the annual income from the investment is used to address immediate charitable, educational, and pastoral needs within the diocese. The remaining funds are reinvested to ensure indefinite support. A tax-deductible gift to the Foundation has both immediate and long-term benefits.

Please visit the Foundation’s website at www.catholicfoundationsanangelo.org or call Steve McKay at 325-651-3771 to learn more about how you can provide lasting support to the diocese, a parish, school, or other Catholic organization now or in the future.
The massive scandal in the Catholic Church is challenging our faith in the integrity and credibility of our priests and bishops and, indeed, of the pope. Even our faith in the Church is being rocked by continuing allegations against our shepherds. In response to this abuse of pastoral authority by clergy, our thoughts and feelings range from shock and disbelief to outrage, disgust, and betrayal. Are we to abandon the Catholic Church and our parish and look for another place to worship?

Recently, we heard the statement that if being hurt by the Church causes us to lose faith or leave the Church, then our faith is in people—not in Jesus Christ.

But in 1958 when Pope Pius XII died, Cardinal Roncalli went to Rome to participate in the conclave to elect a new pope. Rosemary Guiley writes in The Encyclopedia of Saints that Cardinal Roncalli’s name was put forward as a compromise candidate for the papacy. After eleven ballots, he was elected pope on October 28, 1958, just before his 77th birthday. He took the name John XXIII, the first pope to take the pontifical name of John in more than 500 years. The new pope showed himself to be an energetic man with a vision. One of his first acts was to enlarge the membership of the College of Cardinals from 70 to 87.

He also became very visible in Rome, visiting local parishes, hospitals, prisons and convalescent homes. These actions earned him the nickname of “Good Pope John.”

A Crisis of Infidelity,” “At the heart of the recent Catholic scandals is infidelity — literally the lack of faith” — unfaithfulness, including unfaithfulness to Scriptural and Church teachings about sex and marriage and the duty never to exploit or abuse.” He says the answer to infidelity is fidelity. “If a man does not believe what the Church teaches about God, about the dignity of the human person, about sex and marriage, or about justice, he should not function as a priest or serve as a bishop. Priests must believe and preach what the Church holds to be true about God and man — and must practice what they preach” (8-20-18).

In this difficult time, our focus must be on Jesus. The Church is the eternal Body of Christ; it is not a human institution. It was established by him and has been empowered by the Holy Spirit for 2000 years, and in Jesus’ words in Matthew 16:18, “the powers of death shall not prevail against it.” Over the millennia it has withstood opposition, persecution, sinful shepherds, and the onslaught of Satan in many forms. Jesus Christ will never abandon his flock. He asks us not to abandon him and his Church. In this crisis we are called to remember the reality of the Resurrection, the new springtime, and the triumph of Mary’s Immaculate Heart.

As members of the Body of Christ, we are reminded of our own sin and sinfulness, of how
El segundo Congreso de Mujeres de Fe y Esperanza

Ante un mundo donde hemos sacado a Dios de nuestras vidas, los valores no son prioritarios, la esencia y presencia de mujer ha sido devaluada, tomándola como un objeto, la misma mujer lo ha permitido por aprendizaje y lo ha fomentado.

Consideramos que esta actividad responde a la realidad de nuestra sociedad donde la crisis de valores humanos y cristianos afecta los diferentes ámbitos sociales.

La formación e información que les ofrecemos a las mujeres en este congreso y posteriormente en el seguimiento contribuirá para que sea fermento en la obra de salvación humana, dignificando a la mujer y su entorno.

Objetivo General:
Favorecer en la mujer, un espacio de reflexión sobre la esencia de su ser, reconociéndose como la verdadera manifestación del amor del Padre, para que desde su propio ámbito y con su presencia activa y creativa, se levante y trascienda en los roles donde se desarrolla.

Fecha: 13 de octubre 2018
Lugar: Parroquia San Esteban, Midland TX,
Hora: iniciamos a las 8:30 de la Mañana y concluimos a las 4 de la Tarde
Cuota de recuperación: 25 dólares
Predicador: Padre Octavio Ventura
Conferencista: Adriana Macías
Ministerio de alabanza: Miguel Aquino

Stay Connected with the Diocese of San Angelo

DOSA Mail
The official Flocknote of the Diocese of San Angelo. Receive texts or emails with important news, updates, and messages from the diocese.

Two ways to join:
1) Text DOSA to 84567
OR
2) Visit https://app.flocknote.com/dosamail

Social Media
Diocese of San Angelo on Facebook: https://www.facebook.com/DioceseofSanAngelo
Bishop Michael Sis on Twitter: @SABishopMike

On the Web
www.sanangelodioceze.org
Our Lady of Lourdes Parish, Andrews  
Saturday, Oct. 13

Sacred Heart Parish, Abilene  
Saturday, Oct. 13
Sunday, Oct. 14

Holy Redeemer Parish, Odessa  
Sunday, Oct. 14

St. Boniface Parish, Olfen  
Sunday, Oct. 14

A lunch meal of homemade sausage, turkey, and dressing will be served from 11:00 a.m. until 1:00 p.m. Dine-in, take-out and drive through plates-to-go will be available. Adults plates are $10 and children’s plates (under 10 years) are $5. All plates-to-go are $10. Dine-In guests enter Olfen from the North on FM 1874 and Drive Through Plates-To-Go guests enter Olfen from the West on County Road 234. Handicap parking and shuttle bus available. Homemade raw sausage will be for sale at $5 per pound. Pre-paid sausage orders are being accepted through October 9th and payment should be mailed to St. Boniface Church, 1118 County Road 234, Rowena, TX. 76875. Other activities for the day include: 12 p.m.- games and concessions, 1 p.m. - live auction, 3 p.m. - helicopter candy drop, quilt raffle, and homemade items for sale at the “fancy stand/country store.” Sausage sandwiches will be sold during the auction. For more information call 325-365-6875 or 325-442-2893.

Holy Spirit Parish, Sweetwater  
Sunday, Oct. 14

Holy Spirit Catholic Parish Annual Jamaica will be held Sunday, October 14th, 12:00 p.m. - 7:00 p.m. There will be live entertainment, bingo, games for the kids, and LOTS of different foods.

- Raffle tickets are $5.00 and prizes include:
  - 2 65” Vizio Smart TV
  - 2 400.00 Pre Paid Visa
  - 2 300.00 Pre Paid Visa
  - 2 200.00 Pre Paid Visa
  - 2 100.00 Pre Paid Visa

Please make plans to join us!

St. Ann Parish, Colorado City  
Saturday, Oct. 20

Mitchell County Railhead Building
10 a.m.–10 p.m.
Live Music
Bingo
Food Booths
Game Booths
Silent Auction
Raffle [Top Prize $1,000 Visa Gift Card]

St. Stephen Parish, Midland  
Saturday, Oct. 20

St. Stephen’s in Midland, TX will be hosting their Annual Fall Festival and Silent Auction in the Church Hall, 4601 Neely Ave., Saturday, Oct. 20, 2018, from 6:00 to 9:00 p.m. Your ticket into the festival is a bag of candy per family. There will be a Cake Walk, Baked Goods Store, Face Painting, children’s Games, Balloons, Music, Silent Auction and lots of fun. Don’t forget to wear your costume as there will be a Costume Contest, so let your imagination run wild and be creative! For more information, please call 432-770-3314 or 956-286-6432.

St. Ann Parish, Sonora  
TBA

St. Ann’s festival has been postponed. Please consider donating to the special collection for flood recovery (see column on Page 2 for details).

St. Ambrose Parish, Wall  
Sunday, Oct. 21

79th St. Ambrose Fall Festival
Turkey, dressing, and sausage dinner served 11:00 a.m. – 2:00 p.m.
Adults - $10; Children - $5; Plates to go - $10
Sausage - $5/lb
Entertainment: 12:15 p.m. – 12:45 p.m.
Children's games: 10:30 a.m. – 4:00 p.m.
Bingo: 12:00 p.m. – 4:00 p.m.
Live Auction: 1:15 p.m.
A shuttle bus will be available from the Wall School parking lot from 8:00 a.m. – 3:00 p.m.

St. Joseph Parish, Rowena  
Sunday, Nov. 11

Theme: “Texas Born – Catholic Raised”
The day’s activities begin at 10:30 a.m. with a Flag Raising and balloon release ceremony honoring all veterans.
A mid day meal consisting of turkey and dressing with all the trimmings, will also include Rowena style German sausage. A live auction begins immediately following the meal.
Games for all ages, including bingo, will be held. A Country Store featuring handmade items, canned goods and plants will be open throughout the day. A Sausage Sandwich Supper will be held.
Uncooked sausage will be sold by the pound as long as the supply lasts. Handicapped parking will be available as well as a shuttle bus. Assistance will be provided to those who need help in being seated for the meal.
For more information call the church office at 325-442-3521 or 325-365-6447.
**Recommendation: Have a family meeting**

By Felix Briones Jr.

Family meetings are important when it comes to weddings, birthdays, and other holidays. They tend to include the family's favorite foods, music, visiting, catching up on the progress of members we have not been able to keep in close contact with, sharing our accomplishments, and sometimes crying over lost members or some tragedy that may have struck us. I want to address a different kind of family meeting — an end of life meeting. I share this information with the hope that it may be helpful to other families.

You might ask, “How do you have an end of life meeting if it is not a funeral?” Our family held a meeting in Farmington, New Mexico, and the three of our five children who live away from us, two sons from Albuquerque and a daughter from Midland, Texas, were glad to come and join us. I want to address a different kind of family meeting — an end of life meeting. I share this information with the hope that it may be helpful to other families.

I had items of importance to all of us.

To other families.

- Editor

**Agenda:**

1. Prayer for the family (obtained from our parish deacon) [See the Prayer Square, Page 2 – Editor]
2. Discussion and announcements by parents:
   a. We have paid for a place to rest our ashes in the columbarium at our parish.
   b. We want Masses said at our parish for each of us when we die.
   c. We will try to make a list of the readings we request be used at our Masses.
   d. We want to remain home as long as possible.
   e. Our children are concerned about our continuing to live in our tri-level home that is not suited to handicapped living and we promised to either consider remodel of our home or purchase a home that is suited for handicapped living.
   f. We announced what assets we owned in great detail.
   g. We announced that none of our kids owes us any money.
   h. We announced who among them we have selected to be the Personal Representative of our estate and successor Trustee of our Revocable Living Trust as well as agents under Powers of Attorney.
   i. We announced what our income is without the income that we earn working, as it will be important to know what it is when we cannot work any longer.
   j. They also learned about the nature and extent of our debts.
3. We arranged for a photographer to be at our meeting at a specified time; we took time out for a photo shoot of us jointly and individually. It is precious to have those photos.
4. We had general discussion and then adjourned.
5. We ended the afternoon with a closing prayer.

As you can see, the meeting was mostly announcements by us parents because it was a meeting to inform our children about our thinking and preferences about matters that we know have been on their minds without too much comment, but still enough comments to send the message that they wanted to know these things. So, it wasn’t a meeting for decisions by the kids, at least not at this one.

I believe that it was a beneficial meeting for our kids; it certainly made us parents feel good that we informed our family about these matters. I have found that if children know what Dad and Mom want, they are less likely to argue about the decisions. I hope you enjoy your family meeting.

Briones is an estate attorney in Farmington, NM, and member of St. Mary’s Church in the Diocese of Gallup. His daughter is a parishioner in the Diocese of San Angelo.

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**DIOCESAN BRIEFS**

**Retreats for Women/Girls Interested in Becoming a Sister**

If you are a woman who wants to understand more about this call from God, you are invited to these retreats. Or if you know a woman who has interest in religious life, please share this information with her. Pearl of Great Price Vocation Information.

- October 14, 2018 in San Angelo
- February 23, 2019 in Abilene

Contact The Vocation office at 325-651-7500 or Sr. Elsa at 432-682-6303 for more information.

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**Bishop Sis to celebrate All Souls Day Mass at cemetery**

Bishop Michael Sis will celebrate All Souls Day Mass at 9:00 a.m. on Friday, Nov. 2 at Calvary Catholic Cemetery in San Angelo. The cemetery is located at 1501 W Avenue N in San Angelo. Graves will be blessed after the Mass.

Contemplating the diaconate?

The Diocese of San Angelo ordained a group of fifteen new permanent deacons in June 2018. The next deacon class has already begun the formation process. In a few years, we plan to begin the discernment of new members of a subsequent class. Completion of the Basic and Advanced Formation classes offered by the San Angelo Diocesan Office of Evangelization and Catechesis (or their equivalent) will be required of all men prior to the start of deacon formation in future classes. The classes are an excellent means for all who want to learn more about the faith, and the perfect foundation from which the deacon formation program would start. Please take advantage of current ongoing classes. More information on Basic and Advanced Formation is available by contacting the Office of Evangelization and Catechesis at 325-651-7500 or evangelizationcatechesis@sangelodiocese.org.
Bishop Michael Sis and students at St. Mary Central Catholic School, Sept. 7. (photo by Alan Torre/APTorre Photography)

Deacon Mike LaMonica speaks at the Guadalupe Radio Network Vino Veritas event, Aug. 23, held at The Way Retreat Center in Midland. (photo by Alan Torre/APTorre Photography)

Deacon Mike LaMonica speaks at the Guadalupe Radio Network Vino Veritas event, Aug. 23, held at The Way Retreat Center in Midland. (photo by Alan Torre/APTorre Photography)

Relics of St. Pio of Pietrelcina on display during Mass at St. Joseph Parish in Odessa, Oct. 6. (photo by Alan Torre/APTorre Photography)

Speaker Julie Alexander gives a presentation titled "Wife, Woman, Mother" at the "Outrageous Love:Mercy at the Well" Catholic Women's Conference, sponsored by the Heart of JMJ Foundation, Sept. 27 in San Angelo. (Angelus photo)

Speaker Julie Alexander gives a presentation titled "Wife, Woman, Mother" at the "Outrageous Love:Mercy at the Well" Catholic Women's Conference, sponsored by the Heart of JMJ Foundation, Sept. 27 in San Angelo. (Angelus photo)
The Confirmation class from Good Shepherd Parish in Crane, Sept. 5. (courtesy photo)

The Confirmation class from Our Lady of Lourdes Mission in Imperial, Sept. 5. (courtesy photo)

The Confirmation class from Sacred Heart Parish in McCamey, Sept. 5. (courtesy photo)

**GRN RADIO PROGRAM SCHEDULE**

The Guadalupe Radio Network (GRN) operates 3 English & 1 Spanish language Catholic radio stations in the Diocese of San Angelo:

- Abilene - 91.7 FM, KQOS
- Midland/Odessa - 1180 AM - English
- Midland/Odessa - 90.9 FM (Español)
- San Angelo - 91.5 FM, KPDE

The GRN (Radio for Your Soul) is an EWTN Affiliate. The weekday programs (most are ‘live’ call-ins) are:

6 AM - Morning Glory
7 AM - Daily Mass (EWTN Chapel)
8 AM - Catholic Connection Mon-Thur
9 AM - More to Life with Greg & Lisa
10 AM - Women of Grace with Johnnette Benkovic
11 AM - Take 2 with Jerry and Debbie
12 PM - The Doctor Is In with Dr. Ray
1 PM - Called to Communion
2 PM - EWTN Open Line
3 PM - Divine Mercy Chaplet
3:15-5 pm - Kresta in the Afternoon
5-7 PM - Catholic Answers Live
8 PM - Patriotic Rosary

**Schedule Exceptions**
The GRN produces 2 other shows:
- Fri., 8 AM - GRN Alive
- Sat., 11 AM - We Sing our Faith

For our other stations and to get the FREE App or to listen online:

www.grnonline.com
432-638-1150
By Catholic News Service

LAS VEGAS — This last year "has been a time of unthinkable pain and raw emotion for the Las Vegas community and for families devastated" by the mass shooting of Oct. 1, 2017, Bishop George L. Thomas said at an interfaith prayer service at Guardian Angel Cathedral.

"But it has also been a time when Las Vegas has revealed the best the human family has to offer — the resilience of the human spirit in the face of incalculable odds," said the bishop, who heads the Diocese of Las Vegas.

He delivered the remarks during the evening service Sept. 30, where he was joined by a dozen leaders of other faiths. Described by many as an emotional gathering, it came on the eve of the first anniversary of the worst shooting in U.S. history, which left 58 people dead and 527 others injured.

From his room on a top floor of a high-rise hotel, the shooter, later identified as 64-year-old Stephen Paddock, rained bullets down on a crowd gathered below for an outdoor country music festival on the Las Vegas Strip.

As a refrain through his remarks, Bishop Thomas used lyrics from a song written in 1971 by Barry and Robin Gibb: "How can you mend a broken heart?" The words, he said, helped "to capture the struggles and challenges we are facing as a Las Vegas community."

"The questions they asked were plaintive and penetrating. The answers to those questions are resistant to facile responses and pious platitudes," the bishop said. "'How can you mend a broken heart?' they asked. 'How can you stop the rain from falling down?'

"Their questions were followed by a call for help that gives voice to our own present-day cry and struggle: 'Please help me mend my broken heart and let me live again,'" he said.

The question "How can you mend a broken heart?" brings "into focus the images of first responders who risked life and limb to spare human life in the face of danger and unthinkable peril," Bishop Thomas said. "They were there for us. They embodied uncommon courage and grace under fire. They displayed valor in the face of evil, and demonstrated expertise and training that stands in the ready whenever our community is in need."

He praised the health care community. With "expertise and acumen," health care personnel "came together that night with surgical precision," he said.

Their "human touch, wise counsel and medical competence saved lives," and they "eased human suffering and soothed grieving hearts just when we needed them the most," he added.

Next, he told the congregation, "turn your sights to the community at large, a community that lavished love and compassion upon anonymous brothers and sisters, and selflessly gave their time, their tears and their very blood to complete strangers."

"And in the doing," the community "redefined the meaning and the power of the Las Vegas community as a human family of care and compassion," Bishop Thomas said.

Las Vegas spiritual leaders, many of whom attended the prayer service, "were on the pavement, blessing the people with prayer and presence, with consolation and counsel, keeping long hours keeping vigil with the families of the dead and grieving," Bishop Thomas recalled.

"They embodied servant leadership at its best, and gave depth and meaning to the Scripture passage that 'there is no greater love than this — to lay down one's life for a friend,'" he said.

His final words were for the families who lost loved ones and those whose bodies and spirits "were wounded on that fateful night."

"You have been our teachers in the ways of goodness and grace," Bishop Thomas said. "You have given new meaning to words like intrepid, resilient and courageous by making room for us in your lives at a time when you were
**Catholic Voices**

**Called to be Abraham: What’s in a name?**

**By Father Ron Rolheiser**

We’re called to a name change. We’re all familiar with the incident in the bible where God changes the name of Abram to Abraham. The change seems so small that often times it isn’t even picked up by those reading that text. What’s the difference between Abram and Abraham? The name Abram, means “father,” “father” is the name given the great patriarch to whom God made the promise that one day he would be the father of all the descendants of the nation of Judaism. But later when God promises this same thing to a man that he is to be the father as well of all nations everywhere, God changes his name to Abraham: “You will no longer be called Abram; your name will be Abraham, for I have made you a father of many nations.” (Genesis 17, 5).

What is implied in this change? The name, Abraham, in its very etymology, connotes a stretching to become something larger; he’s now to be the father of all nations. Abram, the father of one nation, now becomes Abraham (in Hebrew, Ab hamon goyim) the father of all the other nations, the “goyim.”

That change doesn’t just stretch a word; it stretches Abraham, a Jew, and redefines his understanding of himself and his mission. He’s no longer to understand himself as the patriarch of just one nation, his own, his ethnic and religious family, but he’s to see himself and the faith he is entrusted with as something for all nations. He’s no longer to think of himself as the patriarch of one particular tribe, since God is not a tribal God. As well, he’s no longer to think of just his own tribe as his family, but to understand we share our ethnicity or faith, as also his children.

What does that mean for us? T.S. Eliot might answer that by saying: Home is where we start from. Our particular ethnic, religious, cultural, and civic roots are precious and important, but they’re not the fully mature tree into which we’re meant to grow. Our roots are where we start from.

I grew up a very sheltered child, in a very close family, in a very enclosed rural environment. We were all of one kind, our neighbors, my classmates, everyone I knew, all of us, we shared a common history, ethnicity, religion, cultural background, set of values, and lived in a young country, Canada, that for the most part looked exactly like we did. I value those roots. They’re a great gift. Those roots have given me a stability that has freed me up for the rest of my life. But they’re only my roots, precious, but merely the place where I start from.

And it’s the same for all of us. We take root inside a particular family, an ethnicity, a neighborhood, a country, and a faith, with a particular slant on the world and, with that, some people constitute our tribe and others don’t. That’s where we start from. We grow, change, move, meet new people, and live and work with others who don’t share our background, nationality, ethnicity, skin color, religion, or particular slant on life. And yet we do share our countries, cities, neighborhoods, and churches with the “goyim,” the people of other tribes, and that makes for the long struggle, hopefully successful, to eventually see that those others who are different from us, share the same God, are our brothers and sisters, and have lives that are just as real, important, and precious as those of our own biological, national, and religious families. Like Abraham we need a name change so that we don’t make idolatry out of our youthful patriotism which has us believe that our own tribe is special and that our own country, skin color, background, and religion give us a unique and privileged claim to God.

Our world is globalizing at a dizzying pace and countries, neighborhoods, and churches are becoming ever-more plural and diverse ethnically, linguistically, culturally, and religiously. Our countries, neighborhoods, workplaces, and churches are literally taking on a different face. The old sheltered communities that gave us our roots are disappearing and for many of us this is scary and the temptation is retrench, to go hard to the right, to militantly defend the old boundaries, and to claim God and truth more exclusively again for ourselves. That’s understandable, but not where we’re called to be by what’s best inside our humanity and our faith. Like Abraham, we’re called to a name change.

We’re called to cherish our heritage, country, mother tongue, culture, faith, and church because only by being firmly rooted within primary community are we stable and altruisitc enough to offer family to those outside of our own. But home is where we start from. From those wonderful families that gave us roots, we’re called to stretch our hearts religiously, ethically, culturally so that everyone eventually is embraced as family. We’re called to move from being Abram to becoming Abraham.

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

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**Tintoretto and the reform of the Church**

**By Bishop Robert Barron**

Auxiliary Bishop of Los Angeles

I am in Washington, DC this week for meetings of the USCCB. Since formal proceedings didn’t begin until the evening, I found myself yesterday morning with a little free time. So I made my way to one of my favorite places in the city, the National Gallery of Art, which I frequented when I was a student at Catholic University many years ago.

At the close of a long session of walking and musing, I was drawn by an empty and comfortable-looking couch situated at the end of one of the galleries. Plopping down to rest, I looked at the picture right in front of me. At first glance, given the color scheme and the peculiar modeling of the figures, I thought it was an El Greco, but closer examination revealed that it in fact was Tintoretto’s depiction of Christ at the Sea of Galilee. The drama at the center of the composition is the Apostles’ boat, buffeted by choppy waves, and St. Peter taking a gingerly, tentative step onto the bounding main at the invitation of the Lord who beckons to him. My seated posture conducted toward contemplation, and I spent a good deal of time with this painting, first admiring the obvious technical skill of the master, especially in the rendering of the water, but eventually moving to a deeper perception of its spiritual theme, of particular resonance today.

Whenever the Gospels present the disciples of Jesus in a boat, they are, of course, symbolically representing the Church. So Tintoretto is showing the Church in its practically permanent condition across the ages: at sea, rocking by waves, in danger of going under. Indeed, with a handful of remarkable exceptions, every age has been, in some way, a perilous one for the Mystical Body of Christ. The boat is filled with the specially-chosen Apostles of the Lord, those who spent years with the Master, learning his mind, watching his moves, witnessing his miracles and even living in his spirit. One would think that even if everyone else failed to follow the Lord, these men would hold steady. And yet we see them cowering, timorous, obviously at a loss as the storm rages around them. And the Gospels, in a manner that sets them in some way, as a perilous one for the Mystical Body of Christ. The boat is filled with the specially-chosen Apostles of the Lord, those who spent years with the Master, learning his mind, watching his moves, witnessing his miracles and even living in his spirit. One would think that even if everyone else failed to follow the Lord, these men would hold steady. And yet we see them cowering, timorous, obviously at a loss as the storm rages around them. And the Gospels, in a manner that sets them in some way, as a perilous one for the Mystical Body of Christ. The boat is filled with the specially-chosen Apostles of the Lord, those who spent years with the Master, learning his mind, watching his moves, witnessing his miracles and even living in his spirit. One would think that even if everyone else failed to follow the Lord, these men would hold steady. And yet we see them cowering, timorous, obviously at a loss as the storm rages around them. And the Gospels, in a manner that sets them in some way, as a perilous one for the Mystical Body of Christ. The boat is filled with the specially-chosen Apostles of the Lord, those who spent years with the Master, learning his mind, watching his moves, witnessing his miracles and even living in his spirit. One would think that even if everyone else failed to follow the Lord, these men would hold steady. And yet we see them cowering, timorous, obviously at a loss as the storm rages around them. And the Gospels, in a manner that sets them in some way, as a perilous one for the Mystical Body of Christ. The boat is filled with the specially-chosen Apostles of the Lord, those who spent years with the Master, learning his mind, watching his moves, witnessing his miracles and even living in his spirit. One would think that even if everyone else failed to follow the Lord, these men would hold steady. And yet we see them cowering, timorous, obviously at a loss as the storm rages around them. And the Gospels, in a manner that sets them in some way, as a perilous one for the Mystical Body of Christ. The boat is filled with the specially-chosen Apostles of the Lord, those who spent years with the Master, learning his mind, watching his moves, witnessing his miracles and even living in his spirit. One would think that even if everyone else failed to follow the Lord, these men would hold steady. And yet we see them cowering, timorous, obviously at a loss as the storm rages around them. And the Gospels, in a manner that sets them in some way, as a perilous one for the Mystical Body of Christ. The boat is filled with the specially-chosen Apostles of the Lord, those who spent years with the Master, learning his mind, watching his moves, witnessing his miracles and even living in his spirit. One would think that even if everyone else failed to follow the Lord, these men would hold steady. And yet we see them cowering, timorous, obviously at a loss as the storm rages around them. And the Gospels, in a manner that sets them in some way, as a perilous one for the Mystical Body of Christ.

Peter denied the Lord at the moment of truth; James and John succumbed to petty ambition; Thomas refused to believe the report of the Resurrection; Judas betrayed his master; all of them, with the exception of John, abandoned him on the cross, protecting their own hides. And yet Tintoretto shows Peter tentatively placing his foot upon the sea,commencing to walk toward Jesus. The great spiritual lesson — shopworn perhaps to the point of being a cliché, but still worth repeating — is that as long as the Church keeps its eyes fixed on Christ, it can survive even the worst of storms. It can walk on the water.

The Catholic Church is once more enduring a moment of extreme trial in regard to sexual abuse. This time, the focus of attention is on the failure of some bishops to protect the vulnerable, and in at least one terrible case, the active abuse perpetrated by a cardinal, who is rightly outraged by these sins, and the Church appropriately feels ashamed. Many wonder, understandably, how those specially devoted to Christ could fall into such depravity. But then we recall that every bishop today is a successor of the Apostles — which is to say, of that band that both sat in easy familiarity with Jesus and denied, betrayed, and ran from their Master. In stormy times, the first Apostles cowered, and their successors, we have to admit, often do the same.

But there are grounds for hope. The tide has turned, not in institutional reform (as important as that is), not in psychological analysis (as indispensable as that might be), not in new programs and protocols (as helpful as they might prove), but rather in a return to Jesus Christ. Eyes fixed on him, hearts attuned to him, minds beguiled by him, action determined by him, the leaders of the Church can, even now, walk on the water.

Tintoretto sheds considerable light on this issue of Apostolic weakness and strength in the very manner in which he has arranged the figures in his composition. The painting is foreshortened in such a way that the disciples appear very small, almost doll-like, whereas Jesus, looming in the extreme foreground, looks gigantic. As John the Baptist put the principle: “He must increase and I must decrease.” When our anxieties and egos are placed in the foreground, Christ necessarily recedes. Crucial to the reformation of the Church is the reversal of that perspective.

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

By Gina Christian
Catholic News Service

I scanned the rows of baby food jars on the shelf, grabbed several in a clattering handful, and tossed them into my cart. The store assistant smiled as she rang me up.

"How old is your little one?" she asked.

I blushed. "It's for a friend's child," I murmured quickly, fishing through my purse for money.

Back in the car, I burst into tears. The baby food I'd bought wasn't for an infant. It was for me.

I wasn't on a diet, nor did I have any quirky cravings for mashed pears. I was eating like an infant because I couldn't swallow regular food.

And I couldn't swallow regular food because all day long — and even through the night — my throat kept closing from panic attacks.

A few weeks earlier, I had confronted my family about the years of childhood sexual abuse I had endured at the hands of a loved one. The revelation stunned and outraged them; the perpetrator himself denounced me as a "lying beast."

Despite the relief of having broken my long and crippling silence, I felt as if I were single-handedly destroying my family. Anxiety washed over me — at work, on the highway, in the store, even in my little apartment.

Only one relative was still speaking to me. After my disclosure, she and I would meet at a diner, where — between visits from the waitress — we both tried to come to terms with the abuse. As I carefully nibbled on toast often stopping to rub my aching throat so I could swallow — I felt that I was choking on more than bread.

"You don't understand," my relative would say, her phrases tumbling out in a torrent. "He loves you; he would never have done this to you. You've been reading those self-help books, haven't you? They can create false memories. You didn't tell a therapist about this, did you? It's a family matter; we're private people and the world doesn't need to know what we do. I guess you think I'm a bad person, too. Why are you bringing this up after all these years? You just want to blame everyone else for your problems.

How can you call yourself a Catholic? Jesus tells us to forgive and forget. I can't believe you're being selfish and inconsiderate." I would explain that I was only trying to face the abuse so that I could heal from it — so that our family could heal from it.

But she never listened. When I would share with her my memories and my pain, she only repeated her words of disbelief and defense.

After a few months, I stopped meeting her at the diner. I didn't have anything more to say about the abuse — nothing that she was willing to hear.

The road from that diner to where I now stand has been an excruciating one, and only by God's grace and mercy have I walked it. As we face yet another round of clerical abuse scandals, one psalm has become even more relevant to me as a sexual abuse survivor — and, I believe, to our church — because it speaks to one of the greatest dangers we face in addressing this evil: the "re-silencing" of its victims.

With its relentless expression of agony and anger, Psalm 88 has been called "the black sheep of the Psalter." Unlike its lighter parts, this psalm doesn't end on a hopeful note. In line after line, the psalmist laments his agony, which has utterly isolated him. In the final verse, the psalmist places the blame for his misery on God: "Because of you friend and neighbor shun me; my only friend is darkness" (Ps 88:19). And what does God do? Nothing — and everything.

He listens.

The Lord doesn't try to comfort the psalmist, as he does in his four-chapter rebuke to Job (Jb 38-41). He doesn't tell him to take heart and flip forward in the Scriptures to read the happy ending.

He doesn't plead with him to stay strong in his faith and keep going to church, because the flawed leaders aren't the Lord we actually worship. He doesn't produce a list of protocols vetted by legal counsel to prevent future disasters.

He doesn't use the psalmist's anguish as a starting point for debates about culture wars, political power, doctrinal differences or church hierarchy.

Instead, he listens with compassion, knowing that the psalmist has a divinely given right to fully express his misery. God will indeed provide healing and justice, but not without first allowing the pain and suffering to be expressed.

At the heart of this latest sexual abuse crisis are deeply wounded men and women who each deserve the same. Even if statutes of limitations will not permit formal trials, we must allow their voices to resound, without muting them through our reactions, our rhetoric, even our well-meaning reassurances.

The Lord God, who catches every tear in his flask (Ps 56:9), listens to these victims. And if we do likewise, we will hear not only their voices, but the cry of Christ himself.

Christian is the senior content producer for CatholicPhilly.com, the digital newspaper of the Archdiocese of Philadelphia. Follow her on Twitter at @GinaJesseReina.

Praying with children

By John Garvey
Catholic News Service

Next month, Pope Francis will host a synod of bishops on the theme of "Young people, faith and vocational discernment."

This may seem uncomfortable, even incongruous, given the crisis the church faces today. Some have asked the Holy Father to put off this synod and concentrate instead on the meeting he has convened for next February to discuss the crisis.

For my part, I think there's a strong argument for going ahead with the synod on youth right now. The faith of the world's young people is precisely what the present crisis is destroying. It will not be enough, though it is certainly necessary, for the church to root out the evil in her midst and bring about some semblance of justice. She also needs to tend to the generation whose faith in God has been impaired by the depraved shepherds.

Here at the university, we are giving a lot of attention to the role of the laity in the church and what they can do to right the ark in these rough seas. Theologians are looking at Lumen Gentium, the Second Vatican Council's Dogmatic Constitution on the Church. It is not an accident that that document speaks first about the people of God, before going on to discuss the roles of the hierarchy and the laity; "Each of them in its own special way is a participation in the one priesthood of Christ." Out of this crisis may come a new understanding of that prophetic observation.

This is an important inquiry. But let us not overlook the fact that the most important work ahead of us is the work of prayer: the work of prayer to which the psalmist calls us in chapter 88. The Lord doesn't try to comfort us, doesn't speak to us in a way that calms our fear. He doesn't propose a protocol, a strategy for how we can go about doing this even better. He just asks us to pray — and to pray in silence. He asks us to wait. He asks us to be with him, and to wait for him. And to pray for his people — his church — and for his creation.

He asks us to pray and to pray and to pray.

Our hope remains in the Lord

By Greg Erlandsen
Catholic News Service

People ask how I can do my job as a Catholic editor and journalist these days without being depressed.

Actually, it is depressing. How could it not be? The church I was baptized into when I was two weeks old, the church that I have attended, wrestled with, studied and loved is hurting. Again.

So are the people who love it. Priests I have once again been attacked on the street by vigilantes angry at the stories of child abuse. Pastors break down and cry as they apologize to their flock.

Colleagues are asked how they can in good conscience work for such an evil organization. Family members roll their eyes and suggest this is why they left years ago. The news media is in full throttle, and social media is volcanic in its fury.

But what is most impossible to ignore is the hurt of the victims as their stories see the light of day. It is very difficult for anyone who has not felt this kind of betrayal to understand how shattering it is. When a parent or a stepparent, a neighbor or a family friend abuses, it crushes one's trust and breaks one's confidence.

The world is no longer a safe place. It will never be a safe place.

To deal with this unimaginable betrayal and pain, often memories are buried, feelings denied, self-hatred papered over. Until one day it can no longer be hidden and the dragon crawls out from its lair, laying to waste all around it.

For others, the betrayal is never suppressed or forgotten, making it difficult to get beyond the wanton destruction of one's equilibrium, often leading to an increasingly frantic effort to run from the pain.

Now imagine if the person who did all of this to you was someone who works for the church, who has a role of some authority, who might be esteemed for his holiness, who is associated with God. Imagine what that does, and one can only be in awe of those who survive abuse, find some measure of forgiveness, recover some measure of normalcy.

All of this is depressing. It is also disheartening to see priests and bishops one knows, perhaps even admires, and discover what was done, and what was not done. To imagine that those in authority failed to protect the innocent and the vulnerable for reasons that are not always clear but always seem unworthy — this is difficult too.

The waves of accusations are bad enough, but the crisis also is amplified by divisions in the church that some are trying to exploit. People are making ideological points off of the pain of our family, the church, targeting those they already disliked, pitting people against one another. It only adds to our humiliation and shame.

So yes, it is depressing. And it will be for some time.

Some Christians think of the faith as a warm electric blanket, Flannery O'Connor once wrote. Instead it is the cross. This is our cross. We have to accept that. We are called to pray for our church, to pray for our good bishops and our sinning bishops, to pray for our many, many good priests and our sinning priests, to pray for our hurting communities. We are called to pray for each other.

In these dark days, we are reminded by the psalmist that our hope is in the Lord.

"Answer me, Lord, in your generous time and answer me in the light of day, for my cry comes before you. My embrace is too weak to lift up my head, yes, my cry is too weak to reach you. Answer me, Lord, in your generous time and answer me in the light of day, for my cry comes before you. I have been silent, I will not hide your face from your servant; hasten to answer me, for I am in distress" (Ps 69:17-18).

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Opioids, pain management, and addiction: Balancing ethical duties

By Father Tad Pacholczyk

Almost two million Americans are now addicted to opioids. The National Institute on Drug Abuse notes that more than 100 people die each day in the U.S. from opioid overdoses. This unprecedented level of abuse—which involves not only heroin, but also prescription pain relievers such as Oxycotin, Percocet, morphine, codeine, and fentanyl—has become a national crisis. Reportedly, about 80 percent of heroin addicts first misused prescription opioids. Yet for many patients, no-pain-relieving options more effective than opioids exist. Figuring out how to use these powerful pharmaco- logical agents in an appropriate and ethical manner is urgent and imperative.

At a minimum, a three-pronged approach is required. One prong involves working with medical professionals to limit the use and availability of these drugs by modifying prescribing practices. A second involves making patients more aware of the risks of addiction and increasing their involvement in monitoring their medications and managing decisions about their care. A third involves making effective addiction treatment and outreach programs accessible to those caught in the throes of chemical dependency.

With regard to reducing opioid availability, in recent years medical professionals have been seeking to establish guidelines for prescribing opiates that take into account the number of pills typically needed to get through a surgery or treatment. For example, recovery from more complex stomach surgeries might require 60 opioid pills, while an appendectomy or hernia might only require 15-20. Although prescribing guidelines can be helpful, they clearly can’t be fixed in stone, as individual patients will have varying pain management needs. Some nurses recall well the days when concerns about addiction could result in undermedicated patients watching the clock and writhing in pain until the time of the next dose. Unmanaged pain is a spiritual assault on the dignity of a person, and plays right into the hands of assisted suicide advocates.

Careful titration of pain medications is necessary to ensure adequate pain control, but also helps to avoid overmedicating patients and rendering them lethargic or semi-comatose; in terminal situations, patients still have the right to prepare for their death while fully conscious, and they should not generally be deprived of consciousness or alertness except to mitigate excruciating or otherwise uncontrollable pain.

In certain cases, of course, it may not matter if a person becomes addicted to pain medications. If a patient has only a few weeks of life remaining, and he or she is experiencing intractable pain in such that high doses of opioids are the most effective approach, addiction during his or her final days and hours would not generally raise ethical concerns.

There are alternatives to the use of opioids that may be suitable for some patients. These include the use of less-addictive or non-addictive drugs such as acetaminophen, ibuprofen, naproxen, or anesthetics and blockers at the pain site. Cognitive behavioral therapy, stress management and relaxation techniques can help patients learn how to modify triggers that increase pain. Specialists sometimes remind us that bringing pain down to a tolerable level should be the goal, rather than trying to eliminate it entirely, which in many cases may not even be possible. Some patients may require assistance to come to accept even a limited amount of pain.

A San Diego-based pilot program to reduce the over-prescription of opioids included the novel step of notifying physicians when one of their patients had died from an overdose. The San Diego medical examiner would send health care professionals a letter in this format: “This is a courtesy communication to inform you that your patient [Name, Date of Birth] died on [Date]. Prescription drug overdose was either the primary cause or contributed to the death. In following this protocol, physicians who received these letters were found to prescribe at significantly decreased levels, and they were also less likely to start new patients on opioids at all. Researchers speculated that, like everyone else, physicians tend to assess health and safety risks differently when bad outcomes spring readily to mind. At the same time, taking steps to restrict opioid availability can backfire, with devastating consequences for chronic pain patients who may now end up being refused opioid prescriptions they need and have relied on for years.

The proper use of pain medications, in the final analysis, requires a balanced approach, attending to objective indications from the patient, so clinicians can offer sufficient comfort and remediation of their pain. Patients must also take responsibility for their own pain management decisions, becoming informed about, and aware of, the challenges and risks. When the goal is to provide the lowest dose of opioids for the shortest amount of time, in direct response to the level and type of the pain, patients are likely to have better treatment outcomes with diminished risks of addiction.

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Por María-Pía Negro Chin

Catholic News Service

Hace unos años, cuando entrevisté a Kathy DiFiore, una mujer ejemplar que fundó una red de albergues en Nueva Jersey para madres adolescentes sin hogar y mujeres maltratadas, mencionó cómo la inspiración para su ministerio llegó mientras rezaba el “Señor, hazme un instrumento de tu paz”. Esta oración, generalmente atribuida a san Francisco de Asís, pero no escrita por él, muestra humildad al reconocer que somos de Dios y que, para ser pacificadores, primero debemos pensar en las necesidades de los demás. Dado el clima de hoy y la tremenda necesidad de curación, justicia y paz, reflexionar sobre este patrón nos da una pauta.

Ya que el 4 de octubre es la fiesta de san Francisco, quise reflexionar más sobre cómo el santo patrono de la ecología también es conocido como un edificador de paz que se preocupa por los pobres e inspira a miles de personas a seguir a Jesús. San Francisco comenzó su vida como hijo de un rico comerciante en Asís, pero después de experimentar la guerra y el cautiverio, comenzó un proceso de conversión. En 1205, oró en la capilla de san Damión y tuvo una experiencia mística donde escuchó que Dios le dijo: “Francisco, repara mi iglesia.”

El santo tomó este pedido literalmente y comenzó a reconstruir la estructura dilapidada de la capilla, pero luego se dio cuenta de que estaba destinado a ayudar a reparar la iglesia del siglo 13, que se vio afectada por la corrupción.

Al orar ante el crucifijo, san Francisco le pidió a Dios por un corazón limpio de lujurias y por “fe verdadera, cierta esperanza y perfecta caridad” para hacer la voluntad de Dios. Como muchos santos y personajes santos, san Francisco oró constantemente, vivió una auténtica vida de cara al evangelio y consideró a la Virgen María como un modelo de cómo podía seguir a Dios.

Ahora, más de 800 años después, las personas inspiradas por este santo continúan respondiendo al llamado de Dios al establecimiento de la paz, al cuidado del medio ambiente y la ayuda a los pobres. A principios de la década del 2000, el profesor de teología Jay Hammond escribió que san Francisco de Asís “proporciona un ejemplo concreto de vivir la misión de paz, justicia y paz en un mundo desgarrado por el sufrimiento, el odio y la violencia”.

Y como dijo el padre franciscano Richard Rohr: “La marca de un verdadero corazón franciscano es la devoción al Evangelio”. Al igual que otros pacificadores, san Francisco sabía que “el poder no anuncia la paz” y que, para ser pacificadores, primero debemos pensar en las necesidades de los demás. Dado el clima de hoy y la tremenda necesidad de curación, justicia y paz, reflexionar sobre este patrón nos da una pauta.

Hace un tiempo, el teólogo brasileño Leonardo Boff publicó un libro con una versión ampliada de la "Oración de San Francisco”. Al igual que la oración original.

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Peace in adversity

By María-Pía Negro Chin

Catholic News Service

Years ago, when I interviewed Kathy DiFiore, an exemplary woman who founded a network of shelters in New Jersey for homeless teenage mothers and abused women, she mentioned how the inspiration for her ministry came while she was praying. "Lord, make me a channel of your peace." This prayer, normally attributed to St. Francis of Assisi but not written by him, shows humility in recognizing that we are God’s and that to be peace-bearers we need to think of others' needs first. Given today’s climate and the tremendous need for healing, justice and peace, reflecting on this prayer helps me a little.

Since Oct. 4 is the feast day of St. Francis, I wanted to reflect more on how the patron saint of ecology is also known as a peacemaker who cared for the poor and inspired thousands to follow Jesus. St. Francis began his life as the son of a wealthy merchant in Assisi, but after experiencing war and captivity, he started a conversion process. In 1205, he prayed in the chapel of San Damiano and had a mystical experience where he heard God say, “Francis, repair my church, which you see is falling into ruins.”

He took this charge literally, and began to rebuild the church’s dilapidated structure, but later realized that he was meant to help repair the 13th-century church, which was affected by corruption.

When praying before the crucifix, St. Francis asked God for a heart that is clean from darkness and for “true faith, certain hope and perfect charity” to do God’s will. Like many saints and holy people, St. Francis constantly prayed, lived an authentic Gospel life and considered the Virgin Mary a model for how he could try to follow Jesus.

Now, over 800 years later, people inspired by this saint continue to respond to God’s call to peace-making, care of the environment and outreach to the poor. Back in the early 2000s, theology professor Jay Hammond wrote that St. Francis of Assisi "provides a concrete example of living the mission of peace, justice and forgiveness in a world torn apart by suffering, hatred and violence.”

And as Franciscan Father Richard Rohr said, "The mark of a true Franciscan heart is devotion to the Gospel.”

Like other peacemakers, St. Francis knew that “power does not announce peace; justice and solidarity announce peace.” Hammond said. That might be why he is also a symbol of peace for people of many
The way forward in an age of attention deficit

By Brett Robinson
Catholic News Service

It has been said that St. John Paul II was our first "media" pope. His international visits attracted scores of media attention. Television footage of millions attending a papal Mass were awe-inspiring. In 1987, the Holy Father delivered a prayer for world peace to over a billion people thanks to satellite TV. Media technology was helping to spread the Gospel message farther and wider than ever before.

Pope Francis has continued St. John Paul II's legacy by becoming the first truly "social media" pope. His daily tweets are meant to inspire the millions of Catholics (and non-Catholics) around the world. He famously allows pilgrims to take "selfies" with him to post on Facebook and Instagram.

Each new media technology has given the church new channels for sharing the joy of the Gospel, but the story has not always gotten through.

Effective storytelling via media has long been the province of savvy advertisers. While some might sneer at ads as consumerist propaganda, it's worth remembering that the church was first in establishing a Congregation for the Propagation of the Faith, or "Congregatio de Propaganda Fide." A well-told story stirs the human spirit in ways that a "pope selfie" might not.

We live in an "attention economy," meaning our most valuable and scarce commodity is attention. We have only so much of it to go around. This makes it especially tricky for institutions like the church to share messages that they think their audience needs to hear. Advertisers harness that attention by telling stories that connect with everyday hopes, fears and desires.

Simone Weil said, "Attention, taken to its highest degree, is the same thing as prayer. It presupposes faith and love."

One current trend that has been garnering attention is the use of "content marketing" to tell stories. Rather than 30-second spots about a product, advertisers are producing elaborate minidocies about real people doing inspiring things with the company's brand always somewhere in the background.

A good example is a 2-minute video produced by The North Face, a clothing and outdoor equipment company. The online video features climbers and skiers enduring extreme conditions and climbing to insane heights. We see the bruises, hear the screams and feel the rush.

The ad asks, "What is madness?" The answers that flash by on the screen describe the adventurers as both "obsessed and devoted," feeling "pain" while gaining "perspective."

Not once do we hear about a North Face product. We see the adventurers enduring hardship and pain with faith.

Consider those same bits of ad copy, "obsessed, devoted, pain, perspective," and you also have a story of conversion. The irony here is that the church is the one with the deepest concern for our hopes, fears and desires. There is no North Face tent or fleece that is paying attention to what matters in an era that is obsessed with distraction.

While all three popes have something valuable to teach us, there may be something in Pope Benedict XVI's approach that transcends even what the advertisers are capable of. Cardinal Robert Sarah puts it best in his book, The Power of Silence, by quoting Romano Guardini: "The greatest things are accomplished in silence — not in the clamor and display of superficial eventfulness, but in the deep clarity of inner vision; in the almost imperceptible start of decision, in quiet over, coming and hidden sacrifice."

Robinson is director of communications and Catholic media studies at the University of Notre Dame McGrath Institute for Church Life.

Mollie Tibbetts and our church

By Effie Caldarola
Catholic News Service

Can you take any more bad news about the Catholic Church right now?

I didn't think so. The Pennsylvania grand jury report on clergy sexual abuse and the cover-up by church officials, the silence of the former Cardinal McCarrick, the con-fusing letter by a disgruntled former papal nuncio to the U.S. in which he urged Pope Francis to resign — in my lifetime, I've never seen so much terrible news about my church.

Around the time of this latest summer disaster, a young woman out here in my neck of the woods (as they say in the Midwest) was discovered dead in a cornfield after a monthlong search. This, too, was very sad news indeed.

But the life of Mollie Tibbetts, and her late August funeral Mass held in a small-town Iowa gymnasium, gave us a moment to thank God for all that remains good and whole—some in the faith we love and the people who espouse that faith.

I was initially stunned by the national attention paid to Tibbetts' disappearance and death. I live in eastern Nebraska, a stone's throw from our Iowa neighbors. So it wasn't surprising that when the University of Iowa student was reported missing after going for a run in the little town of Brooklyn, Iowa, where she lived, and where she was housesitting for her boyfriend, it was big news in Omaha.

"Driving through Iowa, I saw "missing" posters for Tibbetts at every rest stop. When a sign on the interstate indicated Brooklyn was somewhere nearby, off beyond the rolling green cornfields, something in my heart sank."

And when she was found dead, and her suspected murderer was discovered to be an undocumented Mexican worker, it was a double jolt. Added to this tragedy would be hatred unleashed against a group of people for the criminality of one.

It took barely hours for some politicians to use her death as an example of immigration problems and to tar yet again Mexican people.

But then something wonderful emerged. First, members of the Tibbetts family went on social media and decried any attempt to use her death to impugn immigration.

Then, the bishop of Davenport, Iowa, presided over her funeral Mass, a ritual full of the spirit of hope and resurrection.

According to Catholic News Service, her parish's director of religious education talked about Tibbetts growing stronger in her faith and her desire to be a child psychologist.

"She always had something good to say about somebody," the director said.

Her small-town pastor gave the homily and compared Tibbetts, according to CNS, as not just a mustard seed, "but as a full-grown bush" full of seeds.

He compared her to St. Therese of Lisieux, who also died young but left a "legacy of faith and inspiration."

The pastor emphasized not the horror of a young life cut short, but instead, "Who can say what good will come of what Mollie has already given to the world?... Look at the good God is working among us here today."

To me, his words evoked the classic Catholic embrace of the grain of wheat dying, then yielding a rich harvest. That mysterious Christian concept is one we might pray over during these days of sorrow in our church.

Finally, I laughed warmly at the words the Des Moines Register quoted from Tibbetts' father. These words help explain where Mollie Tibbetts received her good-natured grounding in grace and faith:

"The Hispanic community are Iowans," said Mr. Tibbetts. "They have the same values as Iowans. As far as I'm concerned, they're Iowans with better food."
MIGUEL
Continúa de Página 5
que debemos de aprovecharlo de manera positiva.

Entiendo que la Iglesia no es solo el templo sino es tu y yo. La Iglesia somos todos y todos tenemos que pedir discernimiento y usar nuestros dones para unirla y entenderla en el tiempo actual con su respeto, pero también sus muchísimas actividades, ayudas y preocupaciones que se tratan en este V Encuentro con la unión de líderes, no la división de grupos, con la humildad que Jesús nos enseñó, y así mismo con la seguridad que él nos apoyará.

El V Encuentro tuvo muchísimos temas de tratar y es poco el espacio que tengo para englobarlo todo. Lo que sí puedo decir es que la recaudación, unión, y discusión de los temas se ha dado. Ahora estructuremos y pregúntemos a los grupos con experiencia, aportemos, luchemos y no olvidemos pedirle al Todopoderoso buen juicio, porque el Espíritu Santo se manifestó, pero no debemos dejarlo ir ni enfriarnos. El V Encuentro, como lo dijo el Papa, nos debe hacer una Iglesia en salida. Y yo sumaría una Iglesia en salida estructurada y actualizada con las facilidades de invitación y promulgación de la ayuda con base en medios sociales pero con raíces de amor, unión, y experiencia de todos los ministerios.

GARCIA
Continuada from Page 5
accompanyment, especially for young adults; and 3) budgets to be able to meet the needs.

A suggestion brought up at one session was that the pro-life movement be understood in a broader context to include the immigrant population and those in the margins. They want to see people marching and protesting at detention centers, not just abortion clinics.

Several of the speakers stressed the need to integrate parishes because many times the majority and minority populations never interact. They share the same complex but remain separate. Both groups need to be challenged to become one in Christ. We are One, Holy, Catholic, and Apostolic Church.

Present were non-Hispanic leaders of different organizations and dioceses. They were very impressed by the spirit and joyful participation of the participants. There was real spirit of community, joy, and outreach. Oregon Catholic Press musicians provided the wonderful music throughout the weekend.

RICO
Continued from Page 5
we have already made and encouraging us to continue going forth as missionary disciples.

Bishop Oscar Cantu from the Diocese of San Jose, California, gave a very profound talk on Saturday. He asked us, “How many of you have seen a tumbleweed?” Of course, those of us from the San Angelo Diocese have all seen many tumbleweeds. Then he went on to ask, “Are we becoming spiritual tumbleweeds in today’s world, that tumble and tumble when the wind blows? If we do not have sufficient roots, then in the rainy season, our roots will uproot with the water and when the wind blows, we will be tossed about. We must find the living water to deepen our roots. Jesus is that Living Water. And we must not only find him but then share him with others.” As I heard this talk, I, like the disciples many, many years ago, on their way to Emmaus, felt my heart burning. I want to help others find the Living Water; I want to share Jesus with all those I encounter. I know the fruits of the V Encuentro may not be seen for many more years to come, but like the disciples, I want to share the love of Christ with the world.

In the closing prayer, Bishop Gustavo Garcia-Siller ended the V Encuentro with these powerful words, “The Lord sends us out now, to be faithful to the mission of the Church, with the help of the Holy Spirit! Ven Espíritu, Ven! Come, Holy Spirit, Come!” May God’s Grace lead us all to become Missionary Disciples!
received and distributed at the Sutton County Civic Center. The center has no paid staff, so the work is being done entirely by volunteers.

- I was told that there is also a severe need for counseling and spiritual guidance. Some of the local residents are so traumatized that they desperately need someone to talk and pray with. Any professional counselors, clergy, or trained spiritual directors who are able to assist are asked to contact the coordinator of volunteers in Sonora, Tammy Fisher, at 202-468-5262.
- There is a Facebook page called Sonora Flood Relief, and that page has been a useful forum for people to express needs and respond to those needs quickly.
- The designated emergency manager in Sonora is the County Judge, Steve Smith, who can be reached at 325-387-2711.
- Of course, the greatest need is money. The San Angelo Area Foundation has set up an account for collecting donations for the flood victims in Sonora. Those funds will be distributed by the Foundation according to the guidance given by the Sonora Ministerial Alliance, which is made up of the pastors of the various churches in Sonora, including Father Terry Brenon, pastor of St. Ann’s Catholic Parish, and Father Casey Berkhouse, pastor of St. John’s Episcopal Church. Anyone wishing to donate to the flood victims can send the funds electronically through the Foundation website at www.saafound.org or mail a check to this address: San Angelo Area Foundation, 221 S. Irving Street, San Angelo, TX 76903. Their telephone is 325-947-7071.

As an expression of solidarity with our brothers and sisters who are struggling in Sonora, I have asked all of our parishes and missions in the Diocese of San Angelo to take up a special collection on either the weekend of September 29-30 or the weekend of October 13-14. These funds will be used to assist those residents of Sonora who have been affected by the flood, as well as the parish of St. Ann in Sonora, in their efforts of recovery from this natural disaster. I believe the people of our diocese will respond with exemplary generosity.

Please pray for the flood victims in Sonora, as well as all those who have suffered natural disasters in other places, such as the recent flooding in the Carolinas and southern India, and the catastrophic earthquake and tsunami in Indonesia.

OBISPO

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- El director de emergencias designado en Sonora es el Juez del Condado, Steve Smith, que se puede contactar al 325-387-2711.
- Por supuesto, la mayor necesidad es el dinero. El San Angelo Area Foundation ha establecido una cuenta para recaudar donaciones para las víctimas de las inundaciones en Sonora. Esos fondos serán distribuidos por la Fundación de acuerdo con los consejos del Sonora Ministerial Alliance, que se compone de los pastores de las diversas iglesias en Sonora, incluyendo al Padre Terry Brenon, párroco de St. Ann, y el Padre Casey Berkhouse, pastor de la Iglesia Episcopal St. John. Cualquier persona que desee donar a las víctimas de las inundaciones puede enviar los fondos electrónicamente a través de la página web de la Fundación en www.saafound.org o enviar por correo un cheque a esta dirección: San Angelo Area Foundation, 221 S. Irving, San Angelo, TX 76903. Su teléfono es 325-947-7071.

Como una expresión de solidaridad con nuestros hermanos y hermanas que están luchando en Sonora, he pedido a todas nuestras parroquias y misiones de la Diócesis de San Angelo a hacer una colecta especial ya sea en el fin de semana del 29-30 de septiembre o el fin de semana del 13-14 de octubre. Estos fondos serán utilizados para ayudar a los residentes de Sonora que han sido afectados por la inundación, así como la parroquia de St. Ann en Sonora, en sus esfuerzos de recuperación de este desastre natural. Creo que el pueblo de nuestra diócesis responderá con generosidad ejemplar.

Oremos por las víctimas de las inundaciones en Sonora, así como por todos aquellos que han sufrido desastres naturales en otros lugares, como las recientes inundaciones en las Carolinas y el sur de la India, y el catastrófico terremoto y el tsunami en Indonesia.
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thing the laity can do to rebuild the church is to raise their children in the prayer for mercy. We are called to pray and "offer reparation for our sins and the sins of others, and to repent, to do reparation for our sins against God and his will for us, how we have woefully fallen short of the glory of God and our ongoing pursuit of fidelity and truth."

As Boff wrote: "Lord, where there is darkness, may I bring light. You are the true light that enlightens every person who comes into this world. Enable me through inspired words, consoling gestures and a warm heart to dissipate human darkness so that your light may show us the way."

I hope that St. Francis and modern-day peacemakers intercede for the church and world, so we become instruments of God's peace with hearts open to embrace the needs of others. - - -

Maria-Pia Negro Chin is bilingual associate editor at Maryknoll Magazine.

Before she begins to speak, they teach her how to pray. They bring her to Mass when she is more interested in Cheerios than in the sacrament. Elizabeth Anscombe, the great analytic philosopher and mother of seven, has a wonderful essay about teaching children the doctrine of transsubstantiation. It's best done at Mass, she says, when a child is just learning to speak. At the moment of consecration, the child can connect the thought and the action: This is Jesus now before us. And implicit in the lesson is our belief in the divinity and the resurrection of the Lord.

No one but a parent can do this. The priest can't interrupt his own celebration of the Mass to offer the explanation. The teacher in a classroom has missed the moment; the lesson becomes abstract.

And none of them has the massive reserve of trust a parent draws upon in teaching lessons of faith. I'm a grandfather, and I still find myself invoking my mother's axioms about putting silver knives in the dishwasher and handling colicky babies. This may be the most important advantage parents have in handing on the faith at the present moment. Catholics are experiencing a crisis of confidence in the hierarchy. The loss of trust does not go all the way down. If we earn our children's faith in us, we can still be heralds of the faith. My sense is that this extends to our parishes as well, the communities where Christian families live their liturgical life.

Let's make sure we are worthy of the trust reposed in us. There's a lot riding on it right now. - - -

Garvey is president of The Catholic University of America in Washington. Catholic University's website is www.cua.edu.

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we have woefully fallen short of the glory of God and his will for us, how we have been unfaithful. We should call ourselves to accountability, to require truthfulness in all our parts, to repent, to do reparation for our sins against God and our brothers and sisters, to offer reparation for our sins and the sins of others, and to pray for mercy. We are called to pray and "offer up" for the victims of abuse and their families and to aid in their healing through efforts of reconciliation.

By virtue of our baptism into Christ, we are prophets, priests, and kings. We must act, speak, and write boldly to require of our shepherds accountability, truthfulness, repentance, reparation for sins, and, when necessary, resignation from office. Now is the time for faithful lay persons and clergy to demand to know the truth and to persevere untringly to that end.

St. John relates in his Gospel, "many of His disciples drew back and no longer went about with him. Jesus said to the twelve, 'Will you also go away?' Simon Peter answered him, 'Lord, to whom shall we go? You have the words of eternal life; and we have believed and have come to know, that you are the Holy One of God' " (Jn 6:66-69 RSVCE). John tells us in the Book of Revelation not to "fear what you are about to suffer": prison, testing, tribulation. "Be faithful until death, and I will give you the crown of life" (Rv 2:10).

THE LIGHT OF TRUTH
Your Truth in us a beacon bright
That lights our pilgrim way;
In us will pierce the darkest night
And drive our sin away.

For Devil cannot stand the light
Shines from your Cross on hill:
For all the world a saving sight
That our sin always kills.

Your beacon shines through empty grave
With grave clothes there unfurled;
For you from death have all us saved —
Your Truth for our whole world.

Father Knick Knickerbocker is a retired priest of the Diocese of San Angelo. He and his wife, Sandie, write a monthly column for the West Texas Angelus.

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most vulnerable."

"By your witness," he said, "you have been clear and definitive. In the Las Vegas community evil and darkness will always be overcome by goodness and light, and unfettered violence will never have the final say."

So "how can you mend a broken heart?" he asked.

By "standing stronger and standing together, this is how you mend a broken heart," Bishop Thomas said. "Standing strong and standing together, this is how we can stop the rain from falling down. Standing strong together with faith in God, we can live and love again."

On the evening of Oct. 1, hundreds gathered at the Las Vegas Community Healing Garden for the dedication of a new "Remembrance Wall," which honors the 58 killed in the shooting.

The new wall, which includes memorial plaques for those who died, replaces a makeshift wall made of wood pallets and put up quickly after the tragedy.

"Standing strong and standing together, this is how we can stop the rain from falling down. Standing strong together with faith in God, we can live and love again."

In August, police officials confirmed the department was shutting down its official investigation into the atrocity.
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cada línea tiene mucho para reflexionar, pero últimamente estoy orando por la parte pidiendo que "brille la verdad a través de nuestros corazones sinceros, nuestros gestos humanizadores, nuestras intenciones puras y nuestra búsqueda continua de fidelidad y verdad". Como Boff escribió: "Señor, donde hay oscuridad, que yo lleve tu luz. Tú eres la luz verdadera que ilumina a cada persona que viene a este mundo. Permíteme a través de palabras inspiradoras, gestos consoladores y un corazón cálido para disipar la oscuridad humana para que tu luz nos muestre el camino".

Espero que san Francisco y los edificadores de paz de nuestros tiempos intercedan por la iglesia y el mundo, para que nos convirtamos en instrumentos de la paz de Dios con corazones abiertos para responder a las necesidades de los demás.

PAZ

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Bishop Michael J. Sis
Publisher

Brian Bodiford
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Director of Communications

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Flooding in Sonora impacts St. Ann Church

SONORA — The city of Sonora, Texas, saw significant rainfall on Friday, Sept. 21, 2018, which caused flooding throughout town. It is estimated that over 250 homes were affected by this flooding.

St. Ann Catholic Church was also impacted by the flooding. Pastor Father Terry Brenon was able to find a secondary location for Mass on the weekend of the flooding.

Both the church and the parish hall were damaged by flood waters. Recovery efforts were already underway by the following Monday.

For more information on how you can help those affected by this flood, please see Bishop Sis’ article on Page 2.

Below: During a visit to the parish on Monday, Sept. 24, Bishop Michael Sis stands with Father Terry Brenon in front of the church altar piled with materials to protect them from damage. The church’s carpet has been removed and fans have been placed to dry out the building. (courtesy photo)

Flood waters reached to the door of St. Ann Catholic Church in Sonora in this photo taken on Friday, Sept. 21. (courtesy photo)

Disaster recovery trucks line up outside the church on Monday, Sept. 24. In the foreground a fence littered with debris shows how high the flood waters reached in this part of Sonora. (courtesy photo)