Inside this issue:

- Vocations (Pages 2, 5)
- Cremations (The Bishop’s Desk, Page 3)
- Safety in Church situations (Page 6)
- Lenten celebration (Knickerbockers, Page 8)
- Film classifications (Page 11)
Odessa Catholic Charities Seeks New Executive Director

Catholic Charities of Odessa is seeking a new executive director. The executive director is the key management leader of Catholic Charities. The director is responsible for overseeing the administration, programs and strategic plan of the organization. Other key duties include fundraising, marketing and community outreach. The director reports directly to a board of directors. A fuller job description is available at ccodessaed@gmail.com or by calling 432-356-4657.

Friday fish fry during Lent at St. Margaret, San Angelo

St. Margaret of Scotland Parish in San Angelo, located at 2619 Era Ave., will be selling fried fish dinners every Friday during Lent (except Good Friday). Dates: Feb. 14 – Mar. 23, 2018

Time: 5:00 p.m. – 8:00 p.m.

Cost: Adults, $10; children, $5; active duty military, $8

Includes drink and dessert
Takeout available
For more information, please call 325-651-4633.

Chrism Mass

This year’s Chrism Mass will take place at the Cathedral of the Sacred Heart in San Angelo on Thursday, March 22, at 11:00 a.m.

Women’s Small Town ACTS Retreat

There will be a Women’s Small Town ACTS Retreat held on April 19-22 at Christ the King Retreat Center in San Angelo. The cost is $230.00 per person.

Transportation will be provided from St. Joseph Parish in Rowena, April 19, at 6:00 p.m. At the end of the retreat, participants will be transported to St. Boniface Parish in Olfen for the 11:00 a.m. Mass on April 22, followed by a meal.

It will be a weekend with the Lord and many fun-loving women. For more information, contact Director Brenda Workman at 325-400-5052, Joe’l Sefcik at 325-895-1204, or Candice Legg at 325-718-8090.

Rachel’s Vineyard Retreat

A Rachel’s Vineyard Retreat for women and men struggling with the psychological or spiritual pain of abortion is planned for April 27-29,2018, in the Lubbock area.

A donation for the Lubbock Retreat is $175 to help cover the costs of the room, meals and retreat materials, but full and partial scholarships are readily available.

Participation is strictly confidential and open to men and women of all faiths.

For more information or to register, call Kathy Kriile at 806-577-5912 or e-mail kathy.kriile@gmail.com.

For more information about the symptoms of post abortion trauma, visit the Rachel’s Vineyard website at www.rachelsvineyard.org.

Victims Assistance Information

If you or someone you know has been sexually abused by anyone who serves the Church, and you need a place to talk with someone about your feelings of betrayal or hurt by the Church due to abuse, exploitation, or harassment, we are here to help you. To report sexual misconduct call Lori Hines, Victim Assistance Coordinator, 325-374-7609, or write Diocese of San Angelo Victim Assistance Ministry, PO Box 1829, San Angelo, TX 76902. If the sexual abuse occurred outside this diocese, the Victim Assistance Coordinator will assist in bringing the concern to the appropriate authorities.
From The Bishop’s Desk

What is our teaching on cremation?

By Bishop Michael Sis
Diocese of San Angelo

In the ministry of the Church, we sometimes encounter questions about the cremation of the body of the deceased. Here I would like to offer some background and clarification of the teaching of the Church.

The practice of cremation is a growing trend. In 2015, the rate of cremations in this country surpassed the rate of burials for the first time ever. Fifty years ago, almost everyone who died in the United States was buried. Now over half of the dead are cremated. The rate of cremation in Texas today is about forty percent.

From prehistoric times, the universal human practice was to bury the body of the deceased in the ground. There were, however, some ancient cultures that practiced cremation, such as in India and among the Aztecs in central Mexico.

From the earliest apostolic times, Christians followed the Jewish practice of burial of the body. The Christian preference for burial over cremation is rooted in our belief in the resurrection of the dead, and it is strengthened by our belief in the sanctification of the body as God’s temple through the Sacrament of Baptism and nourishment by the Eucharist.

While cremation was a common practice in the ancient Roman Empire, Christians did not typically cremate their dead. In times of early persecutions, the bodies of martyrs were sometimes cremated by the Roman authorities and scattered to show contempt for the faith. The catacombs are evidence that the early Christians took great care to show respect to the bodies of the dead and give them an honorable burial.

Even though interment of the body was a nearly universal practice in our Church for centuries, there was no general Church law prohibiting cremation until 1886, when the Vatican’s Holy Office banned the burning of bodies for funeral rites. At that time in the late 19th century, there was a non-Catholic movement in Europe to promote cremation for reasons of public hygiene and conservation of land. The Church objected to this movement because some of those cremation proponents also flagrantly rejected the Christian belief in the immortality of the soul and the resurrection of the body.

The 1917 Code of Canon Law continued the ban on cremation, forbidding Christian burial to anyone who ordered that their body be cremated. However, in 1963 the Catholic Church began to permit cremation for various reasons, such as lack of burial space, natural disaster, or to avoid the spread of disease in epidemics. In the 1963 document Piam et Constantem, the Church clarified that the practice of cremation is not of its nature incompatible with Christianity.

The 1992 Catechism of the Catholic Church teaches in paragraph 2301: “The Church permits cremation, provided that it does not demonstrate a denial of faith in the resurrection of the body.”

In 2016, the Vatican Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith issued the instruction Ad resurgendum cum Christo (ARCC), for the purpose of explaining the reasons why the Church prefers the burial of the body and to set out norms pertaining to the disposition of the ashes in the case of cremation. It is a brief and very helpful document, and it can easily be found on the Internet.

The instruction Ad resurgendum cum Christo reminds us of the basic Catholic teaching that “by death the soul is separated from the body, but in the resurrection God will give incorruptible life to our body, transformed by reunion with our soul” (ARCC, 2). It goes on to say that the Church raises no doctrinal objections to the practice of cremation. “Since cremation of the deceased’s body does not affect his or her soul, nor does it prevent God, in his omnipotence, from raising up the deceased body to new life. Thus cremation, in and of itself, objectively negates neither the Christian doctrine of the soul’s immortality nor that of the resurrection of the body” (ARCC, 4). In short, it is not a sin to cremate a human body.

Nevertheless, the instruction reiterates the preference of the Church for the burial of the body. We believe that the body forms part of the identity of the human person. The burial of the body is intended to show esteem toward the deceased loved one and to affirm the great dignity of the human body (ARCC, 3). “Indeed, the human body is inextricably associated with the human person, which acts and is experienced by others through the body” (Order of Christian Funerals, Appendix 2, no. 411).

The Church offers norms for the proper disposition of the ashes of someone who has been cremated. They must be laid to rest in a sacred place that has been set aside for this purpose, such as in the ground in a cemetery, a mausoleum, or a niche in a church.

By Bishop Michael Sis
Diocese of San Angelo

Prayers for the Seasons of the Year

Editor’s Note: The two prayers below were written by Saint Bernard of Clairvaux (1090-1153), and are among a group of prayers he wrote for different seasons throughout the year.

Lent

Let me hold fast to you, Lord, whom the angels themselves yearn to look upon. Wherever you go, I will follow you. If you pass through fire, I will not flinch; I fear no evil when you are with me. You carry my griefs, because you grieve for my sake. You passed through the narrow doorway from death to life, to make it wide enough for all to follow. Nothing can ever now separate me from your love.

Holy Week

You taught us, Lord, that the greatest love a man can show is to lay down his life for his friends. But your love was greater still, because you laid down your life for the sake of your enemies. It was while we were still enemies that you not only took care of your own body, but also took care of the body of others. What other love has ever been, or could be, like yours? You suffered unjustly for the sake of the unjust. You died at the hands of sinners for the sake of the sinful. You became a slave to tyrants, to set the oppressed free.

¿Cuál es nuestra enseñanza sobre la cremación?

Por Obispo Michael Sis
Diócesis de San Ángeo

En el ministerio de la Iglesia, a veces nos encontramos con preguntas acerca de la cremación del cuerpo de los difuntos. Aquí me gustaría ofrecer algunos antecedentes y la aclaración de la enseñanza de la Iglesia.

La práctica de la cremación es una tendencia creciente. En 2015, la tasa de cremaciones en este país alcanzó a una tasa de enteramientos por primera vez en la historia. Hace cincuenta años, casi todos los que murieron en los Estados Unidos fueron enterados. Ahora más de la mitad de los muertos son incinerados. La práctica de la cremación es generalizada en nuestro país. Esta práctica estuvo prohibida por la censura previamente en Texas hoy es un cuarenta por ciento.

Desde tiempos prehistóricos, la práctica humana universal era enterrar el cuerpo del difunto en el suelo. Hubo, sin embargo, algunas culturas antiguas que practicaban la cremación, como en la India y entre los Aztecas en el centro de México.

Desde los primeros tiempos de los apóstoles, los Cristianos siguieron la práctica Judía que era el entierro del cuerpo. La preferencia Cristiana de sepultura sobre la cremación se basa en nuestra creencia en la resurrección de los muertos, y que es reforzada por la creencia en la santificación del cuerpo como el templo de Dios a través del Sacramento del Bautismo y la alimentación por la Eucaristía.

Mientras que la cremación era una práctica común en el antiguo Imperio Romano, los Cristianos no solían incinerar a sus muertos. Sin embargo, el entierro del cuerpo a menudo era prohibido por diversas razones, como la propagación de la enfermedad en epidemias. En los tiempos de las primeras persecuciones, los cuerpos de los mártires fueron incinerados en ollas por las autoridades Romanas y se dispersaban para mostrar desprecio por la fe. Las catacumbas son evidencia de que los primeros Cristianos tomaron gran cuidado para mostrar respeto a los cuerpos de los muertos y darles un entierro honorable.

A pesar de que el entierro del cuerpo era una práctica casi universal en nuestra época por siglos, no había ninguna ley general de la Iglesia prohibiendo la cremación hasta 1886, cuando el Santo Oficio del Vaticano prohibió la quemada de cuerpos para servicios funerarios. En 1963, el Concilio Vaticano II, 19, hubo un movimiento no-Católico en Europa para promover la cremación por razones de higiene pública y la conservación de la tierra. La Iglesia se opuso a ese movimiento porque algunos de esos defensores de la cremación también rechazaron de manera flagrante la creencia Cristiana en la inmortalidad del alma y el resurgimiento del cuerpo.

El Código de Derecho Canónico de 1917 continuó la prohibición de la cremación, prohibiendo una sepultura Cristiana a cualquier persona que hubiera ordenado que su cuerpo fuera cremado. Sin embargo, en 1963 la Iglesia Católica comenzó a permitir la cremación, por diversas razones, como la falta de espacio para entierros, costumbre nacional, o para evitar la propagación de la enfermedad en epidemias. En el documento Piam et Constantem de 1963, la Iglesia aclaró que la práctica de la cremación no es de su naturaleza incompatible con el Cristianismo.

Nuestro Código de Derecho Canónico actual de 1983 en el Canon 1176 dice: “La Iglesia aconseja vivamente que se conserve la piadosa costumbre de sepultar el cadáver de los difuntos; sin embargo, no prohibe la cremación, a no ser que haya sido elegida por razones contrarias a la doctrina Cristiana.” Del mismo modo, el Catecismo de la Iglesia Católica del 1992 enseña en el párrafo 2301: “La Iglesia permite la incineración cuando con ella no se cuestiona la fe en la resurrección del cuerpo.”

En 2016, la Congregación para la Doctrina de la Fe emitió la instrucción Ad resurgendum cum Christo (ARCC), con el propósito de explicar las razones por las que la Iglesia prefiere el entierro del cuerpo para establecer las normas relativas a la disposición de las cenizas en el caso de la cremación. Es un documento breve y muy servicial, y se puede encontrar fácilmente en el Internet.

La instrucción Ad resurgendum cum Christo nos recuerda la doctrina Católica de que “por la muerte, la resurrección y la gloria de Cristo es un lugar seguro para su cuerpo.” No se puede quemar el cuerpo de una persona en los últimos momentos de su vida. La cremación es una profanación, y se debe evitar.

(See please BISHOP/22)
LENTEN PENCE SERVICES

Wednesday, March 7
St. Theresa of the Child Jesus Parish, Junction, inquire for time.
St. Francis of Assisi Parish, Abilene, 7:00 p.m.
St. Lawrence Parish, St. Lawrence, 7:00 p.m.

Thursday, March 8
St. Vincent Pallotti Parish, Abilene, 6:00 p.m.
St. Stephen Parish, Midland, 7:00 p.m.

Monday, March 12
St. Mary, Star of the Sea Parish, Ballinger, inquire for time.
St. Mary Queen of Peace Parish, Brownwood, 7:00 p.m.

Wednesday, March 14
Sacred Heart Parish, Menard, inquire for time.
Cathedral of the Sacred Heart, San Angelo, inquire for time.
Our Lady of Perpetual Help Parish, Ozona, 6:30 p.m.
Sacred Heart Parish, Coleman, 7:00 p.m.
San Miguel Arcangel Parish, Midland, 7:00 p.m.

Thursday, March 15
St. Charles Parish, Eden, 6:00 p.m.
Holy Spirit Parish, Sweetwater, 7:00 p.m.

Monday, March 19
St. Mary Parish, San Angelo, 7:30 p.m.
St. Joseph Parish, Rowena, 6:30 p.m.

Tuesday, March 20
Our Lady of Lourdes Parish, Andrews, 7:00 p.m.
St. Margaret of Scotland Parish, San Angelo, 7:00 p.m.

Wednesday, March 21
Our Lady of Guadalupe Parish, Eldorado, 6:30 p.m.
St. Patrick Parish, Brady, 6:30 p.m.
St. Ann Parish, Colorado City, 7:00 p.m.
Holy Redeemer Parish, Odessa, 7:00 p.m.

Friday, March 23
Good Shepherd Parish, Crane, 6:30 p.m.
St. Ambrose Parish, Wall, 7:00 p.m.

Tuesday, March 27
St. Ann Parish, Midland, 7:00 p.m.

CHRIST THE KING RETREAT CENTER MARCH

3 — ODESSA, St. Mary’s Catholic School, Diocesan Schools Commission at 9:00 a.m.
3 — MIDLAND, St. Stephen, Religious Discernment Day
5 — MIDLAND, St. Stephen, Adult Confirmation Mass at 7:00 p.m.
7 — SAN ANGELO, Christ the King Retreat Center, Staff Lenten Day of Prayer at 9:00 a.m.
9-10 — CONCEPTION, MO, Conception Seminary College Board of Regents meeting
11-12 — WASHINGTON, DC, USCCB Doctrine Committee meeting
14 — SAN ANGELO, Diocesan Pastoral Center, Priestly Life and Formation meeting at 11:00 a.m.
14 — SAN ANGELO, Diocesan Pastoral Center, Diocesan Hermannamento Team meeting at 4:00 p.m.
18 — SWEETWATER, Holy Spirit, Mass and blessing at 11:00 a.m.
20 — SAN ANGELO, Diocesan Pastoral Center, Presbyteral Council meeting at 11:00 a.m.
22 — SAN ANGELO, Sacred Heart Cathedral, Christ the King Parish meeting at 10:00 a.m.
29 — SAN ANGELO, Diocesan Pastoral Center, Parish Personnel Board meeting at 10:15 a.m.
30 — SAN ANGELO, Sacred Heart Cathedral, Palm Sunday Mass at 10:00 a.m.
25 — SAN ANGELO, Holy Angels, Seder Meal at 5:30 p.m.
23 — SAN ANGELO, Sacred Heart Cathedral, Mass of the Lord’s Supper at 7:00 p.m.
30 — SAN ANGELO, St. Margaret, Soup lunch at 11:30 a.m.
30 — SAN ANGELO, St. Margaret, Good Friday Procession to Christ the King Retreat Center at 1:00 p.m.
30 — SAN ANGELO, Sacred Heart Cathedral, Service of the Lord’s Passion at 7:00 p.m.
31 — SAN ANGELO, Sacred Heart Cathedral, Easter Vigil at 8:30 p.m.

APRIL
3 — SAN ANGELO, Diocesan Pastoral Center, Finance Council meeting at 11:00 a.m.
5 — SAN ANGELO, Diocesan Pastoral Center, Liturgical Commission meeting at 10:00 a.m.
5 — SAN ANGELO, Christ the King Retreat Center, Staff Picnic at 6:00 p.m.
8 — SAN ANGELO, Holy Angels, Mass of Christian Initiation at 3:00 p.m.
8 — MILES, St. Thomas, Confirmation Mass at 8:00 a.m.
8 — ROWENA, St. Joseph, Confirmation Mass at 9:30 a.m.
8 — SAN ANGELO, Sacred Heart Cathedral Gym, Diocesan Awards Banquet at 4:30 p.m.
10 — SAN ANGELO, Diocesan Pastoral Center, Foundation Board Meeting at 10:00 a.m.
13-15 — SAN ANTONIO, Region X Encuentro Conference of Bishops Spring Meeting
17 — CHRISTOVAL, Our Lady of Grace Monastery, Mass at 5:00 p.m.
18 — STANTON, St. Joseph, Confirmation Mass at 6:30 p.m.
19 — ABILENE, Sacred Heart, Abilene Deacon Priests’ meeting at 10:30 a.m.
20 — SAN ANGELO, Diocesan Pastoral Center, Review Board meeting at 10:00 a.m.
21 — SAN ANGELO, St. Joseph, Confirmation Mass at 10:00 a.m.
21 — OZONA, Our Lady of Perpetual Help, Confirmation Mass at 6:00 p.m.
22 — ST. LAWRENCE, St. Lawrence, Confirmation Mass at 10:30 a.m.
24 — SAN ANGELO, Diocesan Pastoral Center, Presbyteral Council meeting at 11:00 a.m.
25 — BIG LAKE, San Angelo Deanery Priests’ meeting at 10:00 a.m.
26 — BIG LAKE, Confirmation Mass at 7:30 p.m.
26 — FT. STOCKTON, Our Lady of Guadalupe, Confirmation Mass at 5:30 p.m.
26 — ANDREWS, Our Lady of Lourdes, Confirmation Mass at 10:30 a.m.
26 — MIDLAND, St. Miguel, Confirmation Mass at 5:30 p.m.
May 1 — MIDLAND, The Way Retreat Center, Midland-Odessa Deanery Priests’ meeting at 12:00 noon

By Fr. Tom Barley
Chaplain, Ministry of the Third Cross

SAN ANGELO — On December 23, 2017, a few members of the Ministry of the Third Cross (MOTC) visited the dormitory of the Ron Jackson Texas Juvenile Justice Department Facility in Brownwood, taking Communion to the Catholic residents and spending a little time visiting with them.

On January 3, 2018, members of the MOTC had our monthly meeting with the girls at the Ron Jackson TJJD Facility in Brownwood and celebrated Christmas with them. Yes, Christmas falls on December 25, but since we usually visit the first Saturday of each month, this was our only opportunity for the MOTC team to celebrate with these girls who are all from over the State of Texas. We had snacks, gave them presents from an approved list of items, and played Catholic bingo with the residents.

Fr. Tom heard confessions and celebrated Mass.

On January 27, a team of MOTC visited the Concho Valley Female Corrections Center for our first MOTC retreats. The theme was “Preparing for Lent.” Half-day retreats were held for the residents in the CRTC and SATF programs. Eighteen residents attended these two retreats, where the Sacrament of Reconciliation was celebrated. Residents in these programs are not allowed to mix. Everyone was pleased with the retreats and the staffs were extremely helpful.

In addition to the retreats, members of MOTC transport residents from the facility to Mass in local parishes each Sunday. On Ash Wednesday, 13 residents were taken to Mass.

On February 3, Ministry of the Third Cross revisited Ron Jackson. The Sacraments of Initiation were conferred on five residents. The family of one of the residents came from El Paso for this joyful celebration.

We are preparing to go back to Ron Jackson on March 10 for our Spring Retreat. The theme will be “Hope and Joy.” On this retreat the residents each select an MOTC team member with whom they will discuss the presentations and their own spiritual journeys. Each year we have had the Spring Retreat, the response from the residents has been great. We ask for your prayers for the residents in Ron Jackson, CVFFC, and Tom Green County Jail (where we also minister), and for all who minister to the incarcerated, their families, the victims, and to all who are in need of God’s graces (Mt. 25:31-40).

The MOTC, in their own words, “is a retreat ministry for parishes in the criminal justice system. Through the weekend retreats, attendees experience the love of Jesus Christ within a Spirit filled, supportive, community environment. The retreats are times of reflection, repentance and renewal.”

More information on MOTC can be found on the ministry’s website: www.ministryofthethirdcross.org.
The priests of the Diocese of San Angelo gathered at Christ the King Retreat Center in February for their bi-annual priest convocation. The theme of this convocation was on the topic of vocational ministry in parishes, and it was given by Mrs. Rhonda Gruenewald. Rhonda is the native Texan, author, and founder of VocationMinistry.com, an online resource for parish-based outreach and vocational promotion.

Rhonda first reminded the priests about their responsibility to help others discern a most fundamental question: “What does God will for your life?” In this process of ongoing questioning and discernment, Mrs. Gruenewald outlined the advantages to having a parish-based team who would spearhead this initiative of vocational promotion. Drawing from her own personal experience of vocation and discernment, Mrs. Gruenewald outlined the vision more convincing.

I was particularly struck by a couple of statistics from her first presentation: of all parishes in this country, only 20 percent have an active team concerned with vocational ministry. And of those same 20 percent, 80 percent of recently ordained priests and consecrated religious came from these parishes who make vocational promotion a priority. It is an enticing idea to think that our small efforts on the ground could potentially set the vocational stage in the Diocese of San Angelo on fire.

Mrs. Gruenewald’s vision, however, is not just tied to pamphlets and numbers. Her vision of vocational ministry centered around four fundamental pillars of vocational promotion: prayer, awareness/education, youth, and affirmation. As a priest serving in full-time ministry, I was particularly appreciative of the last dimension: affirmation. The idea of affirmation is concerned with recognizing and acknowledging the good of those who have already said “yes” to God’s call. It is an attempt by parish teams to inspire priests, religious, and married couples to joyfully live the calling of Christ in their lives. We all need affirmation in our endeavors, and this essential dimension only helped to make Mrs. Gruenewald’s vision more convincing.

Walking away from this convocation, I feel particularly convinced that vocational promotion needs to be a pastoral priority for priests and parishes. We all have a responsibility to create a vocational consciousness in the hearts of our people, and I was personally renewed in my own enthusiasm for vocations. What does God will for your life? This is a most fundamental question.

For more information on vocation ministry in parishes, see VocationMinistry.com, or check out Mrs. Gruenewald’s book, Hundredfold: A Guide for Parish Vocation Ministry.

By Catholic News Service

AUSTIN — The Catholic bishops of Texas praised Gov. Greg Abbott for stopping the execution of death-row inmate Thomas Whitaker shortly before he was to be put to death Feb. 22.

“Whitaker will now serve life in prison without the possibility of parole,” the bishops said in a Feb. 22 statement. They called Abbott’s decision “an example of restorative justice.”

Whitaker, now 38, was found guilty and sentenced to death for plotting the murder of his mother, Kent and Tanya Whitaker. They returned from dinner, Brashear shot up Whitaker’s family members. He was convicted of murder and sentenced to life without parole. He was executive clemency for his son.

Whitaker took his family members out to dinner so his accomplice, Chris Brashear, could hide in their home. When they returned from dinner, Brashear shot up Whitaker’s family members. He was convicted of murder and sentenced to life without parole. He was given a full commute for someone like Mr. Whitaker who recruited others to commit murder. Additional factors make the decision more complex.

Among those factors, he said, was the fact Whitaker’s father “passionately opposes the execution of his son” and feels he “would be victimized again if the state put to death his last remaining immediate family member.”

The Texas Catholic bishops said they were grateful to Abbott, the Texas Board of Pardons and Paroles, and “to all those time actively being in each other’s lives. A wonderful lesson if you’re fortunate enough to be able to do something like that.

In the vein of the kid’s menus I mentioned earlier, the speaker opened with sharing something a mentor had told him once upon a time. The concept was about embracing “the power of 25%” to help as a guide to ensure that we’re allowing a proper balance in our own lives. The idea is that you should strive to split your time evenly among four different areas: Family, Faith, Community, and Profession — 25% of your time for each area of your life. If I’m remembering correctly, the story the speaker opened with was one of how his mentor would leave work in the middle of a project or schedule meetings specifically to allow for the fact that he had a standing weekly meal date with his daughter, just to visit and spend time actively being in each of his lives. A wonderful lesson if you’re fortunate enough to be able to do something like that.

From the Editor

Finding the right balance

By Brian Bodiford

Well, I’m a couple months into this job now. A couple months into sharing the good work going on in the diocese, a couple months into hearing helpful input and opinions about the Angelus, and a couple months into learning a bit more about myself as an editor. And one thing I’ve learned: I am — so far — very, very bad at guessing how much space an article is going to take up in these pages. It’s always far less than I think. I’ll have someone submit a full page in a word processor, for example, and I’ll think that’s a fantastically-sized article, sure to fill the space I imagine with everything a reader could want to know on the topic, only to plug it into the Angelus and find that it hogs cozily in the corner of a page, keeping to itself, a humble but impactful wallflower of a piece afloat in a sea of empty potential column-space.

This is fine, by the way. There’s certainly something to be said for conciseness and pith. But I’m not afraid to admit that a bit of healthy panic sets in from time to time. We can’t very well send out a newspaper with empty squares like you sometimes see taking up space on kid’s menus at restaurants (“Use this space to draw your favorite saint!”). So I set out to fill in that space in ways I hope brings a good variety to the content of the paper. You’ll find a bit of different content in each edition: local events, photos from our parishes, national coverage, columns dealing with current events. This month we even have some content on movies and the Olympics. It’s all about finding the right balance of topics to fill the space.

Reflecting on this reminded me of something I heard at a conference last year. At one session, the speaker opened by sharing something a mentor had told him once upon a time. The concept was about embracing “the power of 25%” to help as a guide to ensure that we’re allowing a proper balance in our own lives. The idea is that you should strive to split your time evenly among four different areas: Family, Faith, Community, and Profession — 25% of your time for each area of your life. If I’m remembering correctly, the story the speaker opened with was one of how his mentor would leave work in the middle of a project or schedule meetings specifically to allow for the fact that he had a standing weekly meal date with his daughter, just to visit and spend time actively being in each of his lives. A wonderful lesson if you’re fortunate enough to be able to do something like that.
Security in our Catholic churches and schools

By Bishop Michael Sis
Diocese of San Angelo

Concern for the safety of the American people in churches and schools has reached a critical point. Our law enforcement professionals have a tremendous challenge before them. The U.S. government has vital decisions to make regarding gun safety and background checks. Young people around the country are crying out for a safer society.

We cannot control every aspect of the world around us, but there are some concrete things that we can do to increase security in our churches, schools, and religious education facilities. For the past two years, our Presbyteral Council has been consulting professionals and working hard on a new diocesan policy regarding the security of people in our facilities. Because of the current deep level of concern in the hearts and minds of our people, we are publishing in this edition of the West Texas Angelus the new sections of our Diocesan Pastoral Manual relating to these matters.

Security in Churches, Schools, and other Parish Facilities

In the wake of many tragedies, mass shootings, and other violent acts across our country, our parishes are not immune to shootings and other violent attacks. As such, it is unlikely we will be able to absolutely prevent a shooting or other violent act at our churches. Nevertheless, it would be negligent to fail to take proactive actions to develop and implement plans to keep our parishioners and property safe.

Keeping in mind that seconds could save lives, the following strategies could have a major impact, prior to or during an incident, toward making attendance at church functions safer.

Situational Awareness

Perimeter security and facility monitoring can provide early detection and reduce the potential for harm to participants.

Outside entrances to churches, along with the narthex, should be monitored by ushers or designated individuals, during Mass or other parish activities.

Outside entrances to schools and religious education facilities should be controlled and monitored. It is everyone’s responsibility to be aware of suspicious individuals or activities and report it to parish leaders, and, if deemed appropriate, immediately contact law enforcement by calling 911.

Communication

The ability to communicate when suspicious individuals or activities are observed and during emergency situations is a vital part of any security protocol.

Timely communication among the ushers during Mass and among security monitors during school-type activities facilitates prevention and quick response in emergency situations. Communications can be enhanced through the use of short-range walkie-talkies. Walkie-talkies, when utilized in a worship setting, should be equipped with ear pieces to avoid disturbing worshipers.

Cell phones – Almost everyone carries a cell phone. Cell phones should be an essential part of the emergency response procedure. In particular, every usher should carry a cell phone and no one person should be assigned to call 911. It should be done by anyone that is available to do so. There are many 911 Apps available for cell phones. It is advisable that ushers have such an App on their phone. A 911 App can enable one-button dialing and can also send the cell phone’s GPS location to emergency responders, thus shortening emergency response time.

Easily Identifiable Ushers and Security Monitors

The ability to quickly identify ushers and security monitors is vital to the safety of parishioners when they observe suspicious situations, and especially during an emergency.

Ushers and other designated individuals providing security assistance should be clearly identifiable by some type of prominent name tag, vest, or jacket.

The ability of ushers and security monitors to be easily identified enables people to know who to look for to be directed out of the building, when necessary, as quickly and safely as possible.

Clearly Marked Exits

Anticipate the fact that many people in attendance in the church may never have visited your location before.

Look at and consider improved signage at all exit doors and/or hallways to quickly evacuate people when necessary. Consider larger exit signs, if necessary. Exit signs should conform to local fire codes.

Preventative measures should be taken such as ensuring that hallways and pathways to exit doors are not obstructed with tables, chairs, or other storage.

Hardware on doors should be inspected regularly to ensure panic bars are working properly and that doors open freely with minimal effort. Consider the fact that you may have to repair/replace some doors.

Emergency Training

Parishes are encouraged to provide Active Shooter Workshops to prepare their members to properly respond in the event of a shooting incident.

Training videos, available through some local law enforcement agencies or on the Internet, are a good source of information on this topic. Prior to viewing such videos, the pastor, along with other appropriate parish representatives, should review and select the videos to be presented to the members.

It is recommended that a local law

(Please see SECURITY/23)

Seguridad en nuestras Iglesias y Escuelas Católicas

Por Obispo Michael Sis
Diócesis de San Ángelo

La preocupación por la seguridad del pueblo estadounidense en iglesias y escuelas ha llegado a un punto crítico. Nuestros profesionales de seguridad pública tienen un tremendo desafío delante de ellos. El gobierno de los Estados Unidos tiene decisiones vitales que hacer con respecto a los controles de seguridad de armas y la verificación de antecedentes. Los jóvenes por todo el país están pidiendo a gritos por una sociedad más segura.

No podemos controlar todos los aspectos del mundo que nos rodea, pero hay algunas cosas concretas que podemos hacer en nuestras iglesias, escuelas y centros de educación religiosa, para aumentar la seguridad. Durante los últimos dos años, nuestro Consejo Presbiteral ha consultado a profesionales y trabajado duro en la formación de una nueva norma diocesana con respecto a la seguridad en nuestras instalaciones. Debido a la profundidad del nivel actual de preocupación en los corazones y las mentes de nuestra gente, estamos publicando en esta edición del West Texas Angelus las nuevas secciones de nuestro Manual Pastoral Diocesano, respecto a estos asuntos.

La Seguridad en Iglesias, Escuelas y otras Instalaciones Parroquiales

A raíz de muchas tragedias, tiroteos masivos, y otros actos violentos en todo nuestro país, nuestras parroquias son inmunes a los tiroteos y otros ataques violentos. Como tal, es improbable que seamos capaces de prevenir una preservación absoluta de un tiroteo u otro acto violento en nuestras iglesias. Sin embargo, sería imprudente dejar de tomar acciones proactivas para desarrollar e implementar planes para mantener seguros nuestros feligreses y propiedad.

Teniendo en cuenta que seguros podrían salvar vidas, las siguientes estrategias podrían tener un impacto importante, antes de o durante un incidente, haciendo la asistencia a las funciones de la iglesia más segura.

Conciencia situacional

La seguridad perimetral y vigilancia de instalaciones pueden proporcionar una detección temprana y reducir el potencial de daño a los participantes.

Las entradas exteriores a las iglesias, junto con el nártex, deben ser observadas por los ushers, monitores o personas designadas, durante la Misa u otras actividades de la parroquia.

Las entradas exteriores a las escuelas e instalaciones de educación religiosa deben ser controladas y supervisadas. Es la responsabilidad de todos de estar al tanto de las personas o actividades sospechosas e informar a los líderes parroquiales y, si se considera apropiado, contactar inmediatamente a la policía llamando al 911.

Comunicación

La habilidad de comunicarse cuando se observan personas o actividades sospechosas y durante situaciones de emergencia es una parte vital de cualquier protocolo de seguridad.

La comunicación oportuna entre los acomodadores durante la Misa y entre los monitores durante las actividades escolares facilita la prevención y respuesta rápida en situaciones de emergencia. Las comunicaciones pueden ser mejoradas mediante el uso de aparatos de comunicación de corto alcance (walkie-talkies). Walkie-talkies, cuando se utilizan en un escenario de la liturgia, deben estar equipados con piezas para los oídos para evitar perturbación de los fieles.

Los teléfonos celulares - Casi todo el mundo lleva consigo un teléfono celular. Los teléfonos celulares deben ser una parte esencial del procedimiento de respuesta de emergencia. En particular, cada acomodador debe llevar un teléfono celular y no solamente una persona debe ser asignada para llamar al 911. Debe hacerse por cualquier persona que esté disponible para hacerlo. Hay muchas aplicaciones (apps) disponibles para los teléfonos celulares para poder llamar al 911. Es aconsejable que los acomodadores tengan dicha aplicación en su teléfono. Una aplicación del 911 permite la marcación de un solo botón y también puede enviar la localización del GPS del teléfono celular para los servicios de emergencia, lo que acorta el tiempo de respuesta de emergencia.

Acomodadores y Monitores de Seguridad Fácilmente Identificables

La capacidad de identificar rápidamente los acomodadores y monitores de seguridad es de vital importancia para la seguridad de los feligreses cuando observan situaciones sospechosas, y especialmente durante una emergencia.

Los acomodadores y otros individuos designados a la asistencia de seguridad deben ser claramente identificables por algún tipo de etiqueta con su nombre prominente, chaleco o chaqueta.

El que los acomodadores y monitores de seguridad sean fácilmente identificados permitirá que las personas sepan a quién buscar para ser dirigido hacia fuera del edificio, cuando sea necesario, lo más rápido y seguro posible.

Las Salidas Claramente Marcadas

Anticípate el hecho de que muchas personas en asistencia a la iglesia nunca han visitado el edificio.

Mirar y considerar como mejorar la señalización en todas las puertas de salida y/o pasillos para evacuar rápidamente a la gente cuando sea necesario.

Considere las señales de salida de tamaño más grande, si es necesario. Las señales de salida deben cumplir con los códigos locales de incendios.

Las medidas preventivas se deben (Mira SEGURIDAD/23)
In Florida, pain, grief palpable; parishes console, help plan funerals

By Cynthia Thuma
Catholic News Service

PARKLAND, Fla. — The massacre at Marjory Stoneman Douglas High School in Parkland left all of America reeling, but at Mary Help of Christians Church and School, the pain and grief were especially palpable.

The church, school and preschool are less than a mile from the high school and on the afternoon of Feb. 14 -- Ash Wednesday and Valentine's Day combined -- sirens blared and emergency vehicles sped by the Catholic school throughout the afternoon. The school was locked down for nearly three hours, and the next morning, the parish family learned that one of its own had been among the victims.

The mood at the preschool was somber as veteran teachers reminisced about one of their former students, Gina Montalto. They recalled a youngster with a firm, mature disposition and a fervent personality. As a freshman at Douglas, she had excelled as a member of the marching band's winter guard, a precision flag and dance troupe.

Gina was being mourned as well in Parkland's neighboring city of Coral Springs, where she had been a member of St. Elizabeth Ann Seton's high school youth group. At an evening prayer service Feb. 18, parishioners said they would remember "her sweet smile and kind heart."

They also mourned 14-year-old freshman Cara Loughran, who served as a peer minister in St. Elizabeth's religious education program. Both Gina and Cara had received the sacrament of confirmation at the church last year.

Those who knew Gina said she always wore a bright smile and loved Irish dancing, weekends at the beach and time spent with her cousins. During that same Feb. 18 prayer service, parishioners recalled her as "a beautiful soul who will be dearly missed by all who knew her. She was truly an angel on earth."

As plans were made at Mary Help of Christians for Gina's Feb. 20 funeral, the parish also needed to address the pain felt by others in the community whose children and their friends had been terrorized and traumatized by the events, as well as their parents who had suddenly started feeling very vulnerable.

The parish moved swiftly: rosaries were being said every two hours Feb. 15, the day after the shooting. That same night, the parish held a bilingual prayer service, which was followed by an "evening of reflection and prayer. On a table at the amphitheater covered with candles, flowers and teddy bears is a note left by a former middle school classmate of Gina Montalto:"

"Gina: We were in Science Club together last year. You were one of the first to talk to me at Westglades (Middle School). You made me feel so worth it. And I never got to tell you. Thank you for being so sweet to me. You signed my yearbook. You told me to keep pursuing science and art. I promise that I will always be there for you. I'll never forget you, Gina. I'll miss you. We all will."

"Each of us has a connection to what happened" at Stoneman Douglas, music director Tadeo Castro told the attendees. "Even though we don't know what to say, we do know what to do. Prayer is the only thing we do fantastically. The only other thing that we have to do is be with each other -- as a volleyball coach at one school, an assistant soccer coach at another, he did what was needed for his students."

He was equally devoted as a husband and father, and had served honorably in the U.S. Navy and Navy Reserve. Accolades followed him throughout his career; his most recent honor was being named the 2017 Athletic Director of the Year for the Broward County Athletic Association.

In the days after the shooting, mourners have returned to Pine Trails Park where 17 lighted plastic angels stood as sentries at the Udine Amphitheater, an infectious smile and colorful religious Vigils held throughout Parkland that night.

"We parishediros of Mary Help of Christians Church in Parkland, Fla., pray during an outdoor Stations of the Cross service Feb. 16, dedicated to the victims and survivors of the deadly mass shooting at nearby Marjory Stoneman Douglas High School. At least 17 people were killed when 19-year-old former student Nikolas Cruz stormed the school with an AR-15 semi-automatic style weapon. At least one member of the parish was among those killed, according to the parish administrator. (CNS photo/Tom Tracy)"
Joy — in Lent?

By Fr. Knick and Sandie Knickerbocker

From the book of Judges in the Old Testament to the Third Letter of John in the New Testament, the word "joy" is used — 114 times in 19 books of the Old Testament and 58 times in 15 books of the New Testament (RSVCE)! What is the significance of this word that God inspired the Biblical writers to use?

The word joy in Hebrew is simchah, “to rejoice, be glad,” in Latin, gaudia, “joy” from gaudere, “rejoice;” and in Greek, chairo, “to rejoice, be glad, full of joy.” One writer suggests that a better translation would be “rejoicefulness” — as in appreciation, thanksgiving, and rejoicing.

The fourth Sunday of Lent, is called Laetare Sunday from the first words of the Entrance Antiphon at Mass, “Laetare Jerusalem” — “Rejoice Jerusalem” and its Liturgical color is rose. The “Rejoice” is a sign of hope to support its local efforts to end abortion.

Accepting the check for the Center were Sandra Franke, Patricia Stogner, and Courtney Tambunga. Members of the Council present were Mike Kozelsky, Grand Knight; Father Yesuratnam Mulakaleti, Council Chaplain and Parish Pastor; J.C Gore, Deputy Grand Knight; Deacon David Workman, Financial Secretary; and Father Hubert Wade.

On January 23, 2018, members of the St. Mary, Star of the Sea Knights of Columbus Council #10985, Ballinger, Texas, presented a check, in the amount of $2,500, to representatives from the Pregnancy Help Center of Concho Valley. The funds were raised by the Council through its annual Baby Bottle Campaign. This national campaign is sponsored by the Knights of Columbus as part of its Pro-Life efforts. The local Council chooses how to use the funds raised to support its local efforts to end abortion.

Speaking of Saints

Italian saint shed vanity, became inspiration to faithful

By Mary Lou Gibson

He was a vain young man who dressed impeccably and took great pride in his appearance — not so unusual for an educated man born into a prominent Italian family. But what was unusual and caused quite a stir in his hometown of Ravenna in the mid 11th century was what he did later with his fine garments.

Guy, also known as Guido, had gone to the feast of Apollinaris and was suddenly filled with compunction for the vanity he took in his appearance and his garments.

Editor Michael Walsh writes in Butler’s Lives of the Saints that Guy stripped off his fine clothes, gave them to some poor people and put on beggar’s rags. His parents were horrified and upset when this happened and even more so later when they learned that he went to Rome to seek a religious life.

He became a monk and placed himself under the guidance of a hermit, Martin, who lived on a little island in the river Po. Guy and Martin remained together for three years. Then Martin sent Guy to the Benedictine abbey of Pomposa near Ferrera to learn monastic life in a large community.

Walsh explains that the monastery of Pomposa and that of St. Severus at Ravenna were under the direction of Martin, who decided the appointment of superiors.

Guy grew in sanctity and wisdom, and he became much sought after as a spiritual advisor. He became abbot first of St. Severus and then of Pomposa upon the nomination by Martin and confirmation by vote of the monks.

Guy’s reputation drew so many to join the community, including his father and brother, that another monastery had to be built. But his reputation for sanctity did not sit well with everyone. Heribert, the archbishop of Ravenna, developed a hatred for the holy abbot and planned a secret inspection of the abbey with the intent to destroy the monasteries. But Guy was made aware of the archbishop’s impending arrival in a vision and made appropriate preparations for his visit. He fasted for three days, joined in this mortification by the entire community of monks. When the archbishop arrived with his soldiers, he was met by Guy with such humility and respect that he was overwhelmed and asked the abbot’s pardon.

Sean Kelly and Rosemary Rogers write in The Saint-a-Day Guide that Guy’s knowledge and foresight of this visit is why he is sometimes acknowledged as the patron of the intelligence community.

Guy continued to give most of his attention to prayer and spiritual direction of the monks, leaving the secular part of his office to others. At certain seasons of the year, Guy would withdraw to a cell a short distance from the abbey where he lived in extreme mortification, fasting and prayer, especially during Lent.

He invited St. Peter Damian to give lectures on the Sacred Scriptures at the abbey of Pomposa for a few years because he loved the study of sacred subjects.

Toward the end of his life Guy retired into solitude and to live once again as a hermit. He left his cell when he was summoned to Piacenza to consult with Emperor Henry III. John Delaney writes in The Dictionary of Saints that Guy became ill at Borgo San Donnino near Parma on route to Piacenza and died there on March 31, 1046.

According to Walsh, a contest took place for the custody of his body between Pomposa and Parma. The emperor settled the matter by having the relics taken to the church of St. John the Evangelist at Speyer, Germany.

Fr. Knick and Sandie Knickerbocker

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In our culture it is common to confuse joy with worldly happiness: an emotion or state of being resulting from pleasure or the fulfillment of our desires; contentment; delight — often in reference to ourselves and material things. By contrast, the Biblical understanding of joy — Biblical happiness — is centered in its source: the Lord our God. It is a movement of the soul produced by the Holy Spirit. "Rejoice in the Lord always; again I will say, Rejoice." (Phil 4:4).

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There is joy in celebration: In our culture it is common to confuse joy with worldly happiness: an emotion or state of being resulting from pleasure or the fulfillment of our desires; contentment; delight — often in reference to ourselves and material things. By contrast, the Biblical understanding of joy — Biblical happiness — is centered in its source: the Lord our God. It is a movement of the soul produced by the Holy Spirit. "Rejoice in the Lord always; again I will say, Rejoice." (Phil 4:4).

There is joy in God’s precepts: "I do not stray from thy precepts. Thy testimonies are my heritage for ever; yea, they are the joy of my heart" (Ps 119:110-111). As we read and reflect on Scripture during Lent, we internalize God’s precepts… to raise sounds of joy" (1 Chr 15:15-16). Every Mass is a celebration of what God has done for us in Christ Jesus.

There is joy in God’s presence: In his prayer to God, the Psalmist declares, "Thou dost show me the path of life; in thy presence there is fulness of joy" (Ps 16:11). And in Psalm 21:6 the Psalmist says the Lord makes the king glad with the joy of his presence. John the Baptist in his mother Elizabeth’s womb "leaped for joy" at the presence of Jesus in his mother Mary (Lk 1:44).

At Adoration of the Blessed Sacrament we rejoice in God’s presence in Jesus’ Precious Body. Psalmist says the Lord makes the king glad with "rejoicing with great joy" at the anointing of King Solomon. And "the Levites carried the ark of God" to the sound of “musical instruments … to raise sounds of joy” (1 Chr 15:15-16). Every Mass is a celebration of what God has done for us in Christ Jesus.

There is joy in God’s salvation: "Restore to me the joy of thy salvation, and uphold me with a willing spirit," the Psalmist implores the Lord (Ps 51:12). Isaiah assures us: "With joy you will draw water from the wells of salvation" (Is 12: 3). Jesus tells the Pharisees, "there will be more joy in heaven over one sinner who repents than over ninety-nine righteous persons who need no repentance" (Lk 15:7).

In an Angelus address, Pope Benedict said, "Sometimes men and women prefer the darkness to the light because they are attached to their sins. Nevertheless, it is only by opening oneself to the light and only by sincerely confessing one's sins to God that one finds true peace and true joy. It is therefore important to receive the Sacrament of Penance regularly, especially during Lent, in order to receive the Lord's forgiveness and to intensify our process of conversion" (3-18-12).

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(Please see KNICKERBOCKERS/21)
Sisters from Minnesota Catholic schools play on separate Olympic teams

By Matthew Davis
Catholic News Service

ST. PAUL, Minn. — Few schools can claim an Olympic athlete among their alumni base.

Even fewer schools have more than one, especially from the same family. But Hill-Murray High School in Maplewood and St. Odilia School in Shoreview -- both Catholic schools -- are proud to make this claim.

That's because Hannah and Marissa Brandt, graduates of both schools, play on women's Olympic ice hockey teams representing this year's Pyeongchang Winter Olympics.

Hannah Brandt, a recent standout with the University of Minnesota women's hockey team, is a forward for the U.S. Olympic team, which won the gold medal Feb. 22 in Pyeongchang. Team USA beat Canada, 3-2, in a shootout, capturing its first gold since 1998.

Marissa Brandt, who was adopted as a baby from South Korea, used her birth name, Park-Yoon Jung, for the Olympics and played defense for the combined Koreans, which lost 8-0 to Switzerland Feb. 10.

Hill-Murray and St. Odilia recognized the sisters' achievements in the weeks leading up to the games. The St. Odilia school office has a display of the Brandts' successes.

Brian Ragatz, St. Odilia principal, said students are encouraged knowing that these athletes sat in the same desks as they do. He said it "really inspires them a little bit more to go out and reach their goal, because it seems a little bit more attainable."

Students at Hill-Murray held a red and white dress-up day during National Catholic Schools Week. They wore the colors to raise funds for parents of Olympians to attend the games.

Hill-Murray had T-shirts and sweatshirts made to celebrate the Brandts. The school will also televise their games in the commons area.

Principal Erin Herman said the Brandts excelled on and off the ice in high school.

"Not only are they great athletes, both Hannah and Marissa are wonderful students and all-around wonderful young women," Herman said.

"They are both humble and kind; you would not have known they were Olympic athletes when you met them in the hall."

U.S. Olympic women's hockey team includes five Boston College players

By Carol Zimmermann
Catholic News Service

WASHINGTON — Boston College was paying close attention to women's ice hockey at the Olympic Games, which ended with the team's 3-2 shootout win against Canada to capture the gold medal Feb. 22.

That's because five players on the team's roster of 23 are from the Jesuit-run school -- two are recent graduates and three are current students taking a leave of absence for the Pyeongchang Games.

The team's gold medal is a first for them since 1998. It also happened on the 38th anniversary of the "Miracle on Ice," the U.S. men's ice hockey win at the 1980 Winter Olympics against the Soviet Union, the defending gold medalists.

"We're extremely proud of our Boston College players who made the Olympic team," said Katie Crowley, head coach of the Boston College women's hockey team.

It's an exciting time for them and their families. They've done a tremendous job working to get themselves prepared, and it's an outstanding achievement for them. We're just really excited for them."

The Olympics are not new to Crowley, who competed three times in the Winter Games with the U.S. team, starting in 1998 when women's ice hockey became an Olympic event. She also played on the team in 2002 and 2006. In the three games, Team USA won the gold, silver and bronze, consecutively.

Boston College also had two graduates and a student play on the 2014 Olympic women's hockey team.

The three Boston College students on Team USA are Cayla Barnes, Kali Flanagan and Megan Keller -- all defensemen. The Boston College alums on the team are Emily Pfalzer, defenseman, and Haley Skarupa, forward.

Captain of men's Olympic hockey team played for Catholic schools

By Carol Zimmermann
Catholic News Service

WASHINGTON — Brian Gionta, captain of the U.S. men's Olympic ice hockey team, competed in the 2006 Winter Games and played on three NHL teams, but his skating roots go back to his Catholic high school and college teams.

Before playing with travel teams in high school, Gionta was on the hockey team at Aquinas Institute, a Catholic middle school and high school in Rochester, New York. In college, he played for the Boston College Eagles and was the team captain in 2000-01, when the team won the national championship.

Now, as the Olympic team captain, he carries a torch of sorts as the 25th former Boston College player to have a spot on the U.S. men's Olympic team and the second player from the Jesuit-run school to be named the team's captain.

"We are thrilled for Brian to represent the maroon and gold in this year's Winter Olympics," said Jerry York, Boston College men's ice hockey coach.

"Brian has always been a leader I point to when I think of someone who embodies the Boston College hockey program. He will be a terrific captain for Team USA in their quest for gold."

Gionta's role will not just be on the ice but as a team leader with experience. At 39, the New York father of three is the oldest U.S. athlete at the 2018 Winter Games.

"I'm not that old," he joked with an NBC reporter at Pyeongchang.

Gionta has played for the New Jersey Devils and was on the team in 2003 when it won the Stanley Cup. He has also played, and was captain for, the Montreal Canadiens and Buffalo Sabres. Most recently, he described himself as semi-retired playing on the practice squad for an American Hockey League Club, the Rochester Americans. This enabled him to sign on with the Olympic team since the NHL, for the first time in 20 years, chose not to send players to the 2018 Winter Olympics amid disputes between the league and the International Olympic Committee.

That move to not send NHL players has plenty of fans hoping for a "Miracle on Ice" reboot when Team USA amateur hockey players won the gold against the favored Soviet Union's team in 1980.

Since that dramatic victory, the U.S. hockey team has won silver in 2002 and 2010.

In this year's games, Team USA's men's hockey team lost its first match Feb. 14 against Slovenia 3-2 in overtime.

The team had two preliminary matches before qualifying rounds. Team USA beat Slovakia 2-1 in Pyeongchang and will face Russian athletes Feb. 17.

In 2002, when Gionta was signing autographs at a parish festival, the Catholic Courier, diocesan newspaper of Rochester, caught up with the local rising star.

Gionta, who attended Our Mother of Sorrows Parish in Rochester when he was growing up, told the newspaper that he just enjoyed playing hockey.

"I don't do it for the recognition. I just do it because I love it, and to have fun. I work hard and never take it for granted. I don't throw it in anybody's face. There are a lot of people in the world who aren't as fortunate," he said.

Follow Zimmermann on Twitter: @carolmaczim.
**Change in Mass times shows cooperation for the benefit of the people**

By Fr. Bernardito Getigan  
St. Mary Parish, Odessa

Editor's Note: The latest Sunday Mass in the city of Odessa has been celebrated in recent years at Holy Redeemer Parish at 8:00 p.m. On Sunday, Feb. 18, the first Sunday of Lent, the late Sunday Mass was moved to St. Mary Parish at 7:30 p.m. The text below was provided by Fr. Bernardito Getigan, pastor of St. Mary, after consultation with Fr. Juan Fernando Bonilla-Sanchez, MSP, pastor of Holy Redeemer, in response to a request for comment from the *Angelus*.

ODESSA — The decision to move the Sunday Evening English Mass from Holy Redeemer to St. Mary’s was reached after six months of study and dialogue between Father Fernando and myself. Both of us concluded that moving the Holy Redeemer 8:00 p.m. Sunday Mass to St. Mary’s will be beneficial to both parishes. How? First, it will alleviate the Masses in Holy Redeemer because it had two evening Masses at 6:00 p.m. and 8:00 p.m. Second, it will help St. Mary’s in her effort of stabilizing herself financially. On January 2nd, through the encouragement of Bishop Sis, Father Fernando, pastor of Holy Redeemer; Father Bernardito, pastor of St. Mary’s; and Father Rodney White, Dean of the Midland-Odessa Deanery, met at Holy Redeemer to talk about transferring the Sunday 8:00 p.m. evening Mass to St. Mary’s. After deliberation, the decision was made.

St. Mary’s is at the heart of the city of Odessa and it is more accessible, especially for those who are working late at the hospital.

To implement the change, the pastors announced it to the people and explained to them why there is a need for it. The staff were informed about the changes so they can help in informing the parishioners. Holy Redeemer helped St. Mary’s in its preparation by allowing their choir to sing at St. Mary’s.

The First Sunday of Lent is a more important day than a Sunday in Ordinary Time. It has more meaning in the liturgical life of the people. Secondly, it gave us ample time to prepare the people.

The main challenge is preparing the people for this change. On the part of St. Mary’s, it is recruiting ministers to serve for this Mass since it is on Sunday evening. This is a blessing to us but it also means a sacrifice. I enjoyed my free Sunday evening, though I have to say that I started the 8:00 p.m. evening Mass in Holy Redeemer several years ago. On the part of Holy Redeemer, it was not easy for them since people are used to going over there. Father Fernando is still guiding the people who show up there on Sunday evening by standing outside the church. Father Fernando and myself have one thing in common as to why we do this: To glorify God through cooperation.

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If you are interested in arranging a showing of this film, please visit www.powerinmyhandsthemovie.com/other-showings/ and click on the “Contact me when Power In My Hands is available for requested local showings!” button.

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7620 Katy Freeway  
Houston, TX 77024

If you are interested in arranging a showing of this film, please visit www.powerinmyhandsthemovie.com/other-showings/ and click on the “Contact me when Power In My Hands is available for requested local showings!” button.
Editor's Note: Below is a sampling of Catholic News Service reviews of various movies nominated for the Academy Awards, which were held on March 4. A category in bold denotes a win. The CNS classifications are as follows:

A-I – General Patronage
A-II – Adults and Adolescents
A-III – Adults
L – Limited adult audience, films whose problematic content many adults would find troubling
O – Morally offensive

Coco
Nominated: Animated Feature Film, Original Song ("Remember Me")
MPAA Rating: PG
CNS Classification: A-I
Reviewed by Kurt Jensen

The Boss Baby
Nominated: Animated Feature Film
MPAA Rating: PG
CNS Classification: A-I

Star Wars: The Last Jedi
Nominated: Original Score, Sound Editing, Visual Effects
CNS Classification: A-II
Reviewed by Kurt Jensen

The Shape of Water
Nominated: Best Picture, Actor in a Leading Role (Richard Jenkins), Actress in a Leading Role (Sally Hawkins), Actress in a Supporting Role (Octavia Spencer), Cinematography, Costume Design, Directing, Editing, Original Score, Production Design, Sound Editing, Sound Mixing, Original Score
MPAA Rating: PG-13
CNS Classification: L
Reviewed by Kurt Jensen

Lady Bird
Nominated: Best Picture, Actress in a Leading Role (Saoirse Ronan), Actress in a Supporting Role (Laurie Metcalf), Directing, Original Screenplay
MPAA Rating: R
CNS Classification: L
Reviewed by Kurt Jensen

Writer-director Greta Gerwig's sensitive parochial school is pleasing in some respects but teeth-grating in a couple of others. In particular, a sexual encounter in which the title character (Saoirse Ronan) is a bit shy of her 18th birthday necessitates a restrictive classification. There is a redeeming wrap-up, but the problematic material that precedes it, including scenes dealing with homosexuality and the moral status of abortion, requires thoughtful discernment by grown viewers well-grounded in their faith. Underage non-marital sexual activity, mature themes, a same-sex kiss, a scene of marijuana use, frequent coarse language.

Dunkirk
Nominated: Best Picture, Cinematography, Directing, Editing, Film Making, Original Score, Production Design, Sound Editing, Sound Mixing
MPAA Rating: PG-13
CNS Classification: A-III
Reviewed by John Mulderig

Compelling historical drama, set in the spring of 1940, recounting the surprisingly successful evacuation of hundreds of thousands of British and French troops from the port of the title following their rapid defeat and encirclement by the forces of Nazi Germany. Taking an Everyman's view of the situation, writer-director Christopher Nolan follows the exploits of three ordinary soldiers (Fionn Whitehead, Aneurin Barnard and Harry Styles), the owner of a small yacht (Mark Rylance) who, like hundreds of others, allowed a ragtag crew to join in the rescue, and a duo of RAF Spitfire pilots (Jack Lowden and Tom Hardy). The perils of the desperate operation are fully exploited for dramatic tension, and the questionable measures resorted to by some characters in their efforts to survive are balanced by a general sense of heroic pluck and by incidents in which humane justice and generosity of spirit are upheld. While not for the faint-hearted of any age, the film's educational value makes it probably acceptable for older teens. Intense stylized combat violence, brief gore, a couple of uses of profanity, at least one instance each of crude, rude and crass language.

The Post
Nominated: Best Picture, Actress in a Leading Role (Meryl Streep), Directing, Original Screenplay
MPAA Rating: R
CNS Classification: O
Reviewed by Kurt Jensen

Nostalgic account of The Washington Post's publication of the Pentagon Papers in 1971 for civil libertarians Katharine Graham and Tom Hanks as editor Ben Bradlee fighting both the Nixon administration and their own notions of how journalists should behave around prominent public officials. Director Steven Spielberg, working from a script by Liz Hannah and Josh Singer, aims to make a rouser along the lines of 1952's "Deadline USA" and, according to that film's formula of a crusading newspaper in financial peril triumphing over government secrets and crooked politicians, he succeeds. Scenes of military combat, fleeting rough language.

Three Billboards Outside Ebbing, Missouri
Nominated: Best Picture, Actor in a Supporting Role (Woody Harrelson, Sam Rockwell), Actress in a Leading Role (Frances McDormand), Film Editing, Original Score, Original Screenplay
MPAA Rating: R
CNS Classification: L
Reviewed by John Mulderig

Enraged by the staked investigation into the gruesome rape and murder of her daughter, an embittered woman (a majestic Frances McDormand) plasters the structures of the title with signatures in yellow paint, calling police, specifically targeting their widely loved chief (Woody Harrelson). Her action sets off a small-scale civil war in the community that gradually draws in the chief's violence-prone second-in-command (Sam Rockwell), the mild-mannered head (Caleb Landry Jones) of the advertising company that owns the billboards, a dwarf who sells used cars (Peter Dinklage) as well as the protagonist's teen son (Lucas Hedges) and ex-husband (John Hawkes). The dramatic power of writer-director Martin McDonagh's dialogue is matched by the film's momentum throughout, making his raggled ride even for grown-ups. Some harsh and bloody violence, cohabitation, at least one use of profanity, pervasive rough and crude language.

Phantom Thread
Nominated: Best Picture, Actor in a Leading Role (Daniel Day-Lewis), Actress in a Supporting Role (Lesley Manville), Costume Design, Directing, Original Score
MPAA Rating: R
CNS Classification: L
Reviewed by Kurt Jensen

All silk, organza, lace and tulle in the first half and a bizarre portrayal of marriage in the second half. In this bumpy, bizarre trip through high fashion and passionate-aggressive sniping in 1950s London, a high-society dressmaker (Daniel Day-Lewis) inflicts emotional torture on his latest muse (Vicky Krieps) until she finds a disturbing way to make him dependent on her. Director-writer Paul Thomas Anderson may be trying to make a statement about necessary sacrifices to make the man-woman dynamic function properly, but despite the lush, appealing visuals, he's come up with an ugly denouement straight out of a cheap horror film. Aberrant view of marriage, frequent rough language.

The Post
Nominated: Best Picture, Actress in a Leading Role (Meryl Streep)
MPAA Rating: PG-13
CNS Classification: A-III
Reviewed by Kurt Jensen

Nostalgic account of The Washington Post's publication of the Pentagon Papers in 1971 for civil libertarians Katharine Graham and Tom Hanks as editor Ben Bradlee fighting both the Nixon administration and their own notions of how journalists should behave around prominent public officials. Director Steven Spielberg, working from a script by Liz Hannah and Josh Singer, aims to make a rouser along the lines of 1952's "Deadline USA" and, according to that film's formula of a crusading newspaper in financial peril triumphing over government secrets and crooked politicians, he succeeds. Scenes of military combat, fleeting rough language.
MIDLAND — Bishop Mike Sis was in Odessa and Midland celebrating the Ash Wednesday Masses for students and staff. At UTPB, almost 150 were in attendance, and at Midland College the Dollye Neal Chapel was standing room only. It was a true joy to have him on both campuses.

Bishop Mike spoke about using the three Lenten disciplines of prayer, fasting and almsgiving. He showed these as a way to practice self-control in a more deliberate way and to strengthen one’s will. As a high school saxophone player, he said the countless hours he spent learning how to play his instrument could be seen as wasted time, as he has not played in many years now. Reflecting on that process, however, he can see that it taught him how to discipline himself and to know what is required in order to master something. Similarly, the three disciplines of Lent teach us how to master ourselves as we work towards the goal of any Christian - to become more like Jesus.

Students celebrate Ash Wednesday

By Lisa Martinez
College Campus Ministry

Worshippers gather at the Angelo State University pavilion for an outdoor Ash Wednesday Mass offered by the ASU Newman Center (above and at right). Fr. Francis Onyekozuru, director of the Newman Center, held three Masses for the ASU community on Ash Wednesday. (photos courtesy ASU Newman Center)

Important Moments in the Journey of Faith

A group of students from St. Mary Central Catholic School in Odessa gather for a photo at their First Communion. (photo by Alan Terre/AFTPterre Photography)
Pope Francis told pastors in the Diocese of Rome that Blessed Paul VI would be canonized this year. The pope's announcement came at the end of a question-and-answer session with the priests Feb. 15; the Vatican released the text of the exchange three days later.

Archbishop Angelo De Donatis, papal vicar for Rome, had told the priests that they would be receiving a book of "meditations" about priestlyhood drawn from speeches from each pope, from Blessed Paul VI to Pope Francis.

That prompted Pope Francis to comment, "There are two (recent) bishops of Rome who already are saints," Sts. John XXIII and John Paul II. "Paul VI will be a saint this year."

The sainthood cause of Pope John Paul I is open, he noted, before adding, "Benedict (XVI) and I are on the waiting list; pray for us."

The cardinals and bishops who are members of the Congregation for Saints' Causes reported Feb. 6 to recognize as a miracle the healing of an unborn baby and helping her reach full term. The baby's mother, who was told she had a very high risk of miscarrying the baby, had prayed for Blessed Paul's intercession a few days after his beatification by Pope Francis in 2014.

The theological commission of the Congregation for Saints' Causes had voted in December to recognize the intercession of Blessed Paul in the healing.

Although Pope Francis announced the upcoming canonization, he still has not formally signed the decree recognizing the miracle nor held a consistory -- a meeting of cardinals -- to set the date for the ceremony.

La Voce del Popolo, the newspaper of Blessed Paul's home diocese, the Diocese of Brescia, Italy, had reported in December that it is likely Pope Francis will celebrate the canonization Mass in October, during the meeting of the world Synod of Bishops, an institution Pope Paul had revived.

Blessed Paul, who was born Giovanni Battista Montini, was pope from 1963 to 1978.

Papa Francisco: Pablo VI será declarado santo este año

CIUDAD DEL VATICANO (CNS) — El papa Francisco les dijo a sacerdotes en la Diócesis de Roma que el beato Pablo VI sería canonizado este año.

El anuncio del papa sucedió al final de una sesión de preguntas y respuestas con sacerdotes el 15 de febrero; el Vaticano publicó el texto de la reunión tres días después.

El arzobispo Angelo De Donatis, vicario papal para Roma, les había dicho a los sacerdotes que recibirían un libro de "meditaciones" sobre el sacerdocio, una de las destinadas a cada papa, desde el beato Pablo VI hasta el papa Francisco.

Eso llevó al papa Francisco a comentar: "Hay dos (recientes) obispos de Roma que ya son santos", santos Juan XXIII y Juan Pablo II. "Pablo VI será un santo este año".

La causa de la santidad del papa Juan Pablo I está abierta, señaló, antes de agregar, bromeando, "Benedicto (XVI) y yo estamos en la lista de espera, oren por nosotros".

Según los informes, los cardenales y obispos que son miembros de la Congregación para las Causas de los Santos votaron el 6 de febrero para reconocer como milagro la curación de una bebé en el vientre de su madre que alcanzó llegar al término completo. La madre del bebé, a quien se le dijo que corría un alto riesgo de abortar, había rezado por la intercesión del beato Pablo VI algunos días después de su beatificación por el papa Francisco en 2014.

La comisión teológica de la Congregación para las Causas de los Santos había votado en diciembre para reconocer la intercesión del beato Pablo en la sanación. Aunque el papa Francisco anunció la canonización, todavía no ha firmado formalmente el decreto que reconoce el milagro ni ha celebrado un consistorio, una reunión de cardenales, para fijar la fecha de la ceremonia.

La Voce del Popolo, el periódico de la diócesis de origen del beato Pablo, la Diócesis de Brescia, informó en diciembre que es probable que el papa Francisco celebre la misa de canonización en octubre, durante la reunión del Sínodo de Obispos del mundo, una institución que Pablo había revivido.

El beato Pablo, quien nació con el nombre Giovanni Battista Montini, fue papa de 1963 a 1978.

Pope names Spanish nun undersecretary of congregation for religious

By Carol Glatz
Catholic News Service

VATICAN CITY (CNS) — Pope Francis named a Spanish nun who had served as a missionary in South Korea to be the new undersecretary of the Congregation for Institutes of Consecrated Life and Societies of Apostolic Life.

The Vatican announced Feb. 23 the appointment of Sister Carmen Ros Nortes, a member of the Sisters of Our Lady of Consolation.

Born in southeast Spain, Dec. 20, 1953, she earned degrees in theology, catechetical pedagogy and humanities, and obtained her licentiate in theology, specializing in Mariology, in Rome in 1985.

She took her perpetual vows in 1986 and served her congregation in many ways, including as a missionary in South Korea, according to a Vatican statement.

In 1992, she was hired to be an official at the Vatican Congregation for Institutes of Consecrated Life and Societies of Apostolic Life. She also teaches at "Studium," the congregation's school of theology and law for consecrated life.

The Congregation for Institutes of Consecrated Life and Societies of Apostolic Life has had a woman religious as undersecretary since 2004. According to statistics released by the Vatican in April 2017, the Catholic Church has more than 670,000 consecrated women and 188,000 religious-order priests and brothers.
Rev. Graham dies; famous evangelist was admired by most Americans

By Catholic News Service

MONTREAL, N.C. — The Rev. Billy Graham, a fiery Baptist preacher who was easily the most famous evangelist of the 20th century and for decades one of the world figures most admired by Americans, died early Feb. 21 at his home in Montreat, according to the Billy Graham Evangelistic Association. He was 99.

He had suffered from Parkinson’s disease for many years, although he continued to lead crusades until 2005, when he held his last one in New York. In recent years, he also suffered from cancer, pneumonia and other ailments.

Rev. Graham will lie in honor in the U.S. Capitol Rotunda Feb. 28-March 1. Senate Majority Mitch McConnell, R-Kentucky, and House Speaker Paul Ryan, R-Wisconsin, will receive the casket with his body when it arrives at the Capitol and will take part in a bicameral service. Members of the public will be able to pay their respects. Rev. Graham will be the first person to lie in honor on Capitol Hill since civil rights heroine Rosa Parks in 2005.

His body will be returned to North Carolina for his funeral March 2 at the Billy Graham Library in Charlotte. The service will be private and by invitation only.

During his more than 60 years of ministry, Rev. Graham welcomed representatives of other denominations, including Catholics, to attend his crusades. In many places local Catholic authorities welcomed him and formed pastoral follow-up programs to welcome lapsed Catholics who were prompted by the preacher to return to the church.

In 1964, Cardinal Richard J. Cushing of Boston said that no Catholic who heard Graham preach “can do anything but become a better Catholic.”

At his final crusade, for example, Bishop Nicholas DiMarzio of Brooklyn, in whose diocese the crusade was held, said: “As a fellow Christian, I pray that the Lord will continue to bless him in his ministry to preach the Gospel to all who are willing to listen.”

He noted that Rev. Graham encouraged church members who make commitments during a crusade to return to their own churches, and his evangelization office scheduled listening sessions, revival missions and other forms of pastoral outreach in parishes.

Rev. Graham -- who preferred to be called Mr. Graham -- was sometimes regarded as a pastor to presidents because he was known as a spiritual adviser to 13 U.S. presidents, from Harry S. Truman to Donald Trump. He delivered the invocation at eight presidential inaugurations.

He was best known in the United States and worldwide, however, for his crusades -- revival meetings, often held in sports stadiums -- that took him to more than 185 countries to preach the message of Jesus Christ and invite people to accept Jesus as their Lord and Savior. In 1957, he filled New York’s Madison Square Garden for 16 consecutive weeks.

He preached the Gospel in person to more people than any other evangelist in history -- he reached at least 210 million through his personal appearances and through his radio and television ministries. In 1950, he launched his weekly “Hour of Decision” radio program that became a staple of Christian broadcasting for 60 years.

He reached many more through his films, more than two dozen books, an internationally syndicated newspaper column, “My Answer,” and a monthly magazine, Decision, which comes out in six languages and has more than 2 million subscribers.

His 1975 book, Angels: God’s Secret Agents, sold more than a million copies in three months. He wrote more than 30 books, starting in 1947 with Calling Youth to Christ and ending in 2015 with Where I Am: Heaven, Eternity and Our Life Beyond.

When he first met with St. John Paul II in 1981, it was a meeting that had been delayed three years. In 1978, Rev. Graham, on a crusade in Poland, preached at the Catholic cathedral in Krakow and was to have dined with Krakow’s Cardinal Karol Wojtyla. But the cardinal had been called out of town on short notice for important business in Rome -- attending the conclave at which he was elected pope.

In an interview with Catholic News Service after a meeting with St. John Paul II in 1990, Rev. Graham said being known as an evangelical is misunderstood in some parts of the world.

"Some think in terms of extreme fundamentalism," he said. "But an evangelical is a person who believes in the authority of the Bible, the atonement of Christ on the cross for our sins, of course the virgin birth of Christ, the Resurrection and the need to respond to the good news of the Gospel by repentance and faith."

He praised the pope for his Bible-based vision and message and said the pontiff’s homily at the inauguration of his ministry "was a straight evangelical address.”

"Of course Protestants cannot accept everything (the Catholic Church teaches), but they’re beginning to find out that we have a great deal in common, and perhaps far more in common than we have differences,” he said.

Rev. Graham made common cause with popes later in his life on matters of morality, but in August 1960, he played a role -- though behind the scenes -- in the efforts of a group of Protestant ministers, most of them Baptists, to oppose on religious grounds the election of the Catholic Democratic nominee, John F. Kennedy.

The ministers made the decision because, as one of them said: "I fear Catholicism more than I fear Communism."

Reports about how involved Rev. Graham was in this effort are mixed. An associate evangelist of his stated that the preacher had rejected a request from Kennedy that he sign a pledge not to make religion an issue in the campaign. Some accounts say that while he refused to issue such a pledge, he would not come out publicly against a Catholic candidate as some Protestants leaders urged him to do.

After the election, Rev. Graham and Kennedy were cordial to each other.

He was a friend of the Rev. Martin Luther King Jr., held integrated rallies beginning in 1953 and was considered a major influence in the civil rights movement. Rev. Graham appeared on the Gallup list of world’s most admired men 60 times in his life -- every single year the polling company asked the question.

He founded the Billy Graham Evangelistic Association in Minneapolis in 1950 after a photo in what is now The Atlanta-Journal Constitution daily newspaper showed an usher counting a $16,000 “love offering” from a crusade in Atlanta.

Ashamed at the insinuation that he was making a fortune through his ministry, he formed the association and made it the recipient of crusade offerings as well as all his speaker’s fees and book royalties. In 2003, the association was moved to North Carolina to be based in Charlotte, Rev. Graham’s hometown.

He received from the association the salary of a community pastor. Today the association, run by his son, William Franklin Graham III, has about $300 million in assets and a yearly budget of more than $100 million. The younger Graham has stirred controversy for the ministry with his criticism of Islam in recent years.

Rev. Graham’s grandson Will also preaches, and he saw Will preach via a television feed during an August 2012 hospital stay for bronchitis.

With his reputation for integrity and simplicity of life, the sex and money scandals that rocked the ministries of the Rev. Jim Bakker and the Rev. Jimmy Swaggart in the 1980s had no effect on Rev. Graham’s organization or ministries.

William Franklin Graham Jr. was born in Charlotte Nov. 7, 1918, and raised on a dairy farm in a strict Presbyterian family. At age 16 he attended a revival meeting led by the Rev. Mordecai Fowler Ham. It led him to commit himself to Christ. Another conversion experience in college led him to commit his life to preaching the Gospel.

He was ordained a Southern Baptist minister in 1939, graduated from Wheaton College in Illinois in 1943. After two years as a pastor in a Chicago suburb, he began working as a traveling tent evangelist.

From 1943 to 1948, he was first vice president of Youth for Christ International, and from 1947 to 1952, he was president of Northwestern College in Minneapolis, dividing his time between those duties and preaching at revivals.

He formed a lasting partnership with singer George Beverly Shea and song leader Cliff Barrows to lead the revival meetings, which he came to describe as crusades. They came to national attention in 1949, when a meeting in Los Angeles, expected to draw about 3,000 people, attracted 10,000.

Among the many awards Rev. Graham received over the years were numerous honorary doctorates and a wide range of religious, humanitarian and broadcasting honors. They included the prestigious Templeton Foundation Prize for Progress in Religion, the Presidential Medal of Freedom and the Congressional Gold Medal, one of the nation’s highest civilian honors.

The Billy Graham Library was dedicated in Charlotte May 30, 2007, just two weeks before the death of Ruth Graham, his wife of 64 years. Rev. Graham was to be buried alongside her on the library grounds.

He is survived by two sons and three daughters, 19 grandchildren and 41 great-grandchildren.
Catholic Voices

Confronting our most common sin: wrathful actions

By Fr. Ron Rolheiser, OMI

Classically Christianity has listed seven sins as "deadly sins," meaning that most everything else we do which is not virtuous somehow takes its root in one these congenital propensities. I have always taken this as emblematic of our selfishness and our blindness towards others and lust has often been given the ultimate notoriety, as if the Sixth Commandment were the only commandment.

Not to deny the importance of these, but I suspect that the sin which most commonly afflicts us and is not much mentioned in spiritual literature is wrath, that is, anger and hatred. I venture to say that most of us operate, however unconsciously, out of anger and this shows itself in our constant criticism of others, in our cynicism, in our jealousy of others, in our bitterness, and in our inability to praise others. And unlike most of our other sins, anger is easy to camouflage and rationalize as virtue.

At one level, anger often rationalizes itself as justified indignation over the foibles, stupidity, egotism, greed, and faults of others: How can I not be angry given what I see every day? Here anger shows itself in our constant irritation and in our quickness to correct, criticize, and make a cynical remark. Conversely we're very slow to praise and affirm. Perfection they're too often paraded itself as Godly virtue, as righteousness, as prophecy, as a healthy, divinely-inspired militancy for truth, for cause, for virtue, for God. And so we define ourselves as "holy warriors" and "vigilant defenders of truth," taking justification in the popular (though false) conception that prophets are angry people, on passionite fire for God.

However, there's a near infinite distance between true prophetic anger and the anger that today commonly parades itself as prophecy. Daniel Berrigan, in his criteria for prophecy, submits (and rightly) that a prophet is someone who takes a vow of love, not of alienation. Prophecy is characterized by love aching for reconnection, not anger pushing for separation.

And love isn't generally what characterizes most so-called prophetic anger in our world today, especially as it pertains to God, religion, and defense of truth. You see this in its worst form in Islamic extremism where, in the name of God, every kind of hatred, violence, and random murder purrs on God's cloak. Blaise Pascal captures this well in his Pensées where he writes: "Men love doing evil so completely and cheerfully as when they do it from religious conviction." He's wrong on one thing; mostly we aren't doing it cheerfully but angrily. One only has to read the letters to the editor in our newspapers, listen to most talk-radio stations, or listen to any debate on politics, religion, or morality to see this in its worst form.

There is such a thing as healthy prophetic anger, a fiery response when the poor of God, the word of God, or the truth of God are being slandered, abused, or neglected. There are important causes and boundaries to be defended. But prophetic anger is an anger that emanates out of love and empathy and always, regardless of the hatred it meets, still exhibits love and empathy, like a loving mother in the face of a belligerent child. Jesus on occasion exhibited this kind of anger, but his anger is antithetical to most of what masquerades as prophetic anger today, where love and empathy are so noticeably absent.

Some one once said that we spend the first half of life struggling with the Sixth Commandment, and then spend the second half of life struggling with the Fifth Commandment: Thou shalt not kill! We see this illustrated in the famous parable of the Prodigal Son, his Older Brother, and his Prodigal Father. The younger son is effectively out of his father's house from the very start of his life, and the older brother is effectively shut out of his father's house by the younger brother. The older brother is the father's firstborn, the son most like his father, the child with whom the father was closest. The Prodigal Son is the child who dissipated his father's resources. The Prodigal Father is the father who was not a father. And the Older Brother is the father who was a father, but never experienced the joy of fatherhood. The older brother is as effectively outside his father's house, not through sin, but through wrestling with anger.

As a young boy I was catechized to confess "bad thoughts" as sinful, but bad thoughts then were defined as sexual. As we age, I think we might continue to confess "bad thoughts," but now those "bad thoughts" have to do with anger.

A cynic, it's said, is someone who has given up, but not shut up! He's also someone who has confused one of the seven deadly sins, wrath, with virtue.

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.

‘America’ magazine’s survey of women in the Church

By Most Reverend Robert Barron

Auxiliary Bishop of Los Angeles

Last month, America magazine published a fascinating survey regarding the attitudes of women in the Church. They were kind enough to publish a few of my reactions to the study, but I would like to expand upon this in detail, to offer a fuller response to their findings.

One of the most disturbing conclusions from the survey is that women are increasingly disengaging from the life of the Church. The America editors themselves observed that this does not bode well for evangelization, for women have traditionally played a crucial role in the passing on of the faith. I couldn’t agree more. Hans Urs von Balthasar famously opined that Jesus’ own faith and sense of identity (at the level of his human nature) was awakened by the smile of his mother and by her relaying of the story of Israel. I have always taken this as emblematic of the indispensable contribution of mothers to the religious formation of their children.

That said, I am equally concerned about the massive attrition of men from the practice of the faith, for study after study have indicated that the fidelity of fathers and grandfathers has a disproportionately significant impact on the faith-development of children, both male and female.

A second finding of the study is that women feel the Church should do more to welcome unmarried parents, the divorced, the widowed, and singles. Once again, I strongly concur. I’m a great proponent of the Catholic Action model that was so prevalent in the period prior to Vatican II but which has largely fallen into desuetude in the last forty or fifty years. In line with Catholic Action instincts, we ought to gather people of similar backgrounds, experiences, and formation and teach them the method of “see, judge, and act.” So yes, parish activities could bring together single mothers, widows, etc., and invite them to look at their lives in light of the Gospel and to determine, on that basis, what ought to be done. It is indeed true that, too often, parish life revolves almost exclusively around the concerns and interests of married people and their families. This can and should be remedied.

A third conclusion of the study I will admit I find a bit puzzling. Only 18% of the women questioned feel that they are “very much involved in decision-making.” Now I fully understand that, given the hierarchical structure of the Church, the final call in most matters belongs to the pastor or the bishop; nevertheless, in my experience in two major Archdioceses, Chicago and Los Angeles, women are rather massively involved in the process of decision-making. Parish staffs and leadership teams are predominantly female, and increasingly, chancery offices and pastoral centers have ample female representation. And this is not simply my subjective impression. I distinctly recall a study by the theologian Catharine LaCugna, which appeared twenty-five years ago in the pages of America. She reported that 80% of religious education instructors and sponsors for the catechumenate are women; that 75% of Bible study leaders and participants are female; that 80% of those who join prayer groups are women; and that 70% of those who are active in parish renewal programs are female. I can’t help but speculate that those numbers have only increased in the last quarter century. And mind you, I enthusiastically applaud this development, which has only enriched the life of the Church.

An intriguing finding of the survey is that most Catholic women consider the commandment to love one’s neighbor and the Eucharist as the two most essential elements of Catholic life. Well, Pope Benedict XVI said that the Church has three essential tasks: it worships God, it evangelizes, and it cares for the poor. So my first response to this statistical finding is, “two out of three ain’t bad.” The Eucharist is indeed the central act of worship, the “source and summit of the Christian life,” and serving the poor is the moral commitment that flows most directly from rightly ordered worship. However, I must say that I do worry that the women surveyed didn’t seem to put evangelization on an equal footing, especially now when so many are drifting into the ranks of the “nones.” I also remark a certain cognitive dissonance. On the one hand, large numbers of women say that the Eucharist is central to one’s identity as a Catholic, and yet 75% of women stay away from the Mass on a regular basis.

The Fathers of Vatican II wanted “full, conscious, and active” participation in the liturgy. This survey confirms what a thousand other surveys over the past five decades have indicated, namely, that we are a long, long way from realizing that conciliar aspiration.

I must say that both surprised and heartened me the most was the discovery that fully 90% of the women surveyed say that they have not experienced sexism in the Catholic Church. Obviously, any type of sexism at any time is bad, but I wonder whether any other organization could put up numbers as good as these. Would 90% of women in the corporate world, in Hollywood, in government, or in education say that they never experienced sexism? I sincerely doubt it. I think that these numbers indicate that, though we still have a lot to do to address the problems of sexism and misogyny in the Church, we have indeed made a good deal of progress.
The Oblate Sisters of Providence: An American story

By Diane Batts Morrow
Catholic News Service

As we observe Black History Month in 2018, examining the early history of the Oblate Sisters of Providence can teach us several important lessons. The sisters proved exceptional in 19th-century America: They were black and free in a slave society that privileged only whiteness, female in a male dominated society, Catholic in a Protestant society, and pursuing religious vocations in a society doubting the virtue of all black women.

Organized in Baltimore in 1828, this pioneering black sisterhood dedicated themselves to educating black girls. The Oblate Sisters confronted many challenges in their early years. Most white people did not believe that black people could lead virtuous lives and rejected as impossible the idea of a black Catholic sisterhood.

But the Oblate Sisters did not allow the doubts and fears of others to interfere in their relationship with God. They firmly believed in the truth of God’s call to them to serve him in religious life and defined themselves as women of virtue in service to others.

As unusual as the Oblate experience proves, it also provides an iconic example of an American story. The sisterhood’s charter members had either emigrated from the Caribbean or claimed Caribbean ancestry, thus establishing immigrant roots like countless other 19th-century Americans.

Immigration can prove a disorienting experience that deprives newcomers of the comforts of the familiar, customary resources and previous social identity. Rather than descend into depression or helplessness, the founders utilized their religious convictions to affirm themselves as Catholics and to serve other people in the refugee community by opening a school for children in her home.

Shared traditions attracted Sulpicians and San Domingan exiles to each other, bound together by their French language and cultural heritage and their profession of the Catholic faith. Oblate co-founders Sulpician priest James Hector Joubert -- a French refugee -- and educator Elizabeth Clarisse Lange -- a Caribbean refugee -- met in Baltimore in 1828 and created a black religious community to educate black girls, a feat that challenged prevailing social and ecclesiastical attitudes about race and gender.

From 1789 through the 1830s, the church in the South remained the foundation of American Catholicism. In fully embracing the tenets of southern nationalism, the Catholic Church in the South accommodated racism and the institution of slavery. As did their Protestant counterparts, Catholic clergy and women religious not only tolerated the institution of slavery, but also actively participated in and profited from the ownership and sale of human chattel.

The persistent denial of the humanity of all black people stemming from the racial basis of slavery in the United States convinced most white people in America -- including the Catholic hierarchy -- of universal black inferiority. Throughout the 19th century, uncertainty about the Oblate Sisters as black women religious plagued the U.S. Catholic Church.

In responding to the call of their teaching mission, the Oblate Sisters nurtured the minds and souls of black folk, the very elements of black existence white society routinely denied.

The school’s established reputation and the competence and commitment of its dedicated staff of teachers, the Oblate Sisters of Providence, came to symbolize for many black people -- regardless of their religious affiliation -- both an affirmation of black humanity and the standard of excellence achievable in a hostile environment.

By insisting that the church grant the Oblate sisterhood “the respect which is due to the state we have embraced and the holy habit which we have the honor to wear,” Mother Lange challenged the U.S. Catholic Church to rise above the chains of socially systemic racism and to embrace Christ-like inclusion by institutionalizing a black sisterhood.

Mosaics provide an appropriate visual metaphor for our nation. Discrete, colored, richly textured fragments set in an adhesive background form a picture whose broken surface dramatically represents its composite nature. Our national motto, “E pluribus unum,” proclaims our immigrant origins.

The Oblate story replicates that of millions of refugees who came to this country and contributed their strength, vitality and service to the enrichment of the nation. Their presence has impelled the rest of us forward in our struggles to reject racism, xenophobia and religious intolerance.

During these dark days when our political leadership misrepresents immigrants of color particularly and people of color in general as criminal or lazy elements -- enemies to exclude and fear -- we would do well to recall the facts of our historical reality that inclusion and diversity benefit the nation as a whole.

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Diane Batts Morrow is associate professor of history and African-American studies at the University of Georgia. She researches and writes extensively on the Oblate Sisters of Providence. She is author of the award-winning book, Persons of Color and Religious at the Same Time: The Oblate Sisters of Providence, 1828-1860.

Racial healing and God's mercy

By Greg Erlandson
Catholic News Service

In 1961, there was a best-selling book called Black Like Me. It was the story of a journalist named John Howard Griffin, who changed his skin color from white to black and traveled through the South so he could learn, as the book’s subtitle said, “what it is like to live the life of a Negro by becoming one!”

It was a rare glimpse into white eyes of an “other America” of segregation and racial hostility, and the book contributed to the nation’s growing awareness of the poisonous fruits of racism.

At the same time, a young African-American boy named Larry Oney was growing up in a Louisiana sharecropper’s family. The family was so poor they ate mustard greens for Thanksgiving, and at 7 years of age, Larry went to work in the cotton fields. If he and his family did not experience slavery, then it was a suffocating racial and economic servitude that was meant to keep such workers in their place.

Against great odds, and thanks to an immensely courageous mother who dared to dream bigger dreams, Larry escaped from the fields to the city.

Racism was just as pervasive there, but eventually Larry went to college and became a successful businessman who today is a Catholic deacon in the Archdiocese of New Orleans.

Yet he would tell you the real miracle of his life was that he could forgive. What he and his family experienced in the 1960s and 1970s left him filled with anger and racial hatred that could have led him down a much darker path, if not for the grace of God.

The story of his conversion, his baptism and a deepening Catholic faith that eventually led him to become a deacon is told in a new book titled Amazed by God’s Grace: Overcoming Racial Divides by the Power of the Holy Spirit.

To meet Deacon Larry Oney today, one might never guess what he had endured as a boy. He seems to have a perpetual twinkle in his eye and gentleness of spirit. He is passionate about his faith and has a determined optimism about God’s ability to change lives.

Yet he is matter of fact about the racial divisions that still haunt our country. Unfortunately, for many of his fellow Americans, it still remains difficult to address these divisions honestly.

Perhaps we need a second John Howard Griffin, whose profound racial empathy led him to walk in another man’s shoes for even a little while.

In Washington, D.C., the new National Museum of African American History and Culture tells the stories -- good and bad -- about the black experience in this country. But the anecdotal impression is that there are many more African-Americans than whites who are visiting that museum.

To let God’s healing mercy in, we need to start listening to each other’s stories. For me, the moment came when I heard a middle-aged professional describe what it was like to drive every day past a garage door with a huge Confederate flag on it.

He told me what it is like to be stopped by the police in a largely white county. He told me about “the talk” that black fathers have to have with their sons. This is not about the birds and the bees, but about how to behave when, not if, they are pulled over.

Deacon Larry knows these stories too, but what drives him is an experience of God’s love and mercy that transcended race and stilled his anger. His hope is that our church can become a leader in word and deed of true racial reconciliation in this country.

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Erlandson, director and editor-in-chief of Catholic News Service, can be reached at gerlandson@catholicnews.com.
Making Sense of Bioethics

Sorting through 'solutions' to the HIV/AIDS pandemic

By Fr. Tad Pacholczyk

Each year human immunodeficiency virus (HIV) infects about 50,000 people in the United States, and more than two million worldwide. Reducing the number of infections with this virus, which causes AIDS, is a high priority for public health officials. Some strategies to reach this goal, however, raise significant moral concerns.

These concerns arise when experts seek to reduce infection rates by assuming that men and women lack the freedom to change their sexual behaviors or exercise self control, when they fail to acknowledge that self-restraint is possible and morally required, especially in the face of life-threatening diseases and pandemics.

One strategy for trying to control the pandemic includes “pre-exposure prophylaxis,” or PrEP, which involves an uninfected person taking a daily dose of the drug Truvada, an anti-retroviral medication. When someone takes the Truvada pill each day, and is later exposed to HIV through sex or injectable drug use, it can reduce the likelihood that the virus will establish a permanent infection by more than 92 percent.

While the benefits of PrEP have side effects, it is generally well-tolerated.

Many activists in the gay movement have argued that PrEP should be widely available and promoted, though other activists strongly disagree. AIDS Healthcare Foundation (AHF) founder Michael Weinstein has stressed, for example, that there are likely to be compliance issues. When someone is required to take a regimen of drugs every day in order to be protected, he argues, it is reasonable to expect that some will fail to do so. A 2014 article in The Advocate, a gay news outlet, notes that “When asked why so few people have started PrEP, experts give plenty of reasons — cost, worries about long-term effects, and lack of awareness about the regimen itself among doctors and patients are chief among them. But one top reason is the stigma of using PrEP, Weinstein’s name and the name of his organization, AHF, have become synonymous with the stigma surrounding PrEP use. In an April Associated Press article, it was reported that PrEP is a ‘party drug,’ giving license to gay and bisexual men to have casual, anonymous sex. He’s called it a ‘public health disaster in the making,’ as his oft-repeated argument is that the most at-risk people will not adhere to taking a pill each day.”

These compliance concerns have led some researchers and clinicians to look into the possibility of one-time “disco dosing,” where an individual would take the medication, in a high dose, prior to each anticipated “risky weekend.”

There are other problems with PrEP as well. Some researchers have noted that once people start on the drug, their risk compensation changes, meaning they engage in more sex with “non-primary partners.” Even if PrEP reduces rates of HIV infection, as studies have suggested, the incidence of other sexually transmitted diseases (STDs) may rise due to risk-compensation behaviors. PrEP can provide a false sense of security and encourage the lowering of inhibitions.

These kinds of approaches directed towards certain “at-risk populations” clearly raise concerns about sanctioning or supporting immoral behaviors. Medical professionals have raised objections of conscience when it comes to prescribing PrEP to HIV-negative men who indicate they are, or will be, sexually active with other men. They may raise similar objections to providing prescriptions for “disco dosing.” Writing such prescriptions means cooperating in, or facilitating, the evil actions of others.

Is pre-exposure prophylaxis always illicit? Not necessarily. For example, if a medical professional wishes to prescribe Truvada to the wife of a man who was infected through pre- or extramarital sexual activity, it would be for the purposes of protecting the wife from infection during marital relations, and would not involve the problem of promoting or facilitating unethical sexual behaviors.

STDs constitute a serious danger in an age where sexual behaviors are becoming ever more indiscriminate. STD outbreaks and pandemics often have their origins in unchaste behaviors and morally disordered forms of sexuality. The Centers for Disease Control notes that “men who have sex with men (MSM) remain the group most heavily affected by HIV in the United States. CDC estimates that MSM represent approximately 4 percent of the male population in the United States but male-to-male sex accounted for more than three-fourths (78 percent) of new HIV infections among men and nearly two-thirds (63 percent) of all new infections in 2010.” We should not be surprised by the high rate of male-to-male behavior involving multiple sexual partners. These sexual practices, in the final analysis, are not only immoral in themselves, but also reckless and clearly contributory to the spread of STDs.

The Angelus

The Latino effect of Pope Francis at year five of his pontificate

By Hosffman Ospino

Catholic News Service

Pope Francis was elected five years ago on March 13, 2013. Two firsts about him captured people's imaginations: the first Jesuit pope and the first Latin American pope elected pope.

What kind of leadership would a Latin American Jesuit pope exhibit? Would the fact that he is Jesuit and Latin American make any difference? Each pope brings a sense of newness and freshness to this ministry. In five years, Pope Francis has uniquely inspired Christians — and curiously, many non-Christians as well as people who claim not to have religious affiliation — to look at Catholicism with renewed eyes.

Writers and commentators soon started using the expression "the Francis effect." The expression has served as an instrument to measure the impact of Pope Francis' vision, style, policies, appointments, writings, travels, words and many other actions.

However, we must acknowledge that the idea of a "Francis effect" has some limitations.

One, this is still a young papacy. Two, the expression can be confused with many of our yearnings and frustrations as Catholics, placing unrealistic expectations upon someone steering an institution 2,000 years old. Three, though we see glimpses of interesting reforms, these still need more time to yield actual measurable effects.

We need to refrain ourselves from the immediacy characteristic of our culture. Five years seems like a long time, yet very short when placed in historical perspective.

After five years, I think that there is a "Francis effect," yet it seems too soon to rush into too much excitement or too much disillusionment. Patience is a good virtue that allows us to discern where the Spirit leads us as a church. At his request, I continue to pray for him.

In the meantime, there is another effect associated with Pope Francis' pontificate during these years that has received little attention: the Latino effect.

Pope Francis is a Latino pope. His election reminded us that about 40 percent of Catholics in the world live in Latin America and the Caribbean. It also reminds us that more than 40 percent of Catholics in the United States are Latino.

The pope's frequent use of Spanish has given major prominence to this language in the Catholic world. Well-known are the Latino catechetical resources and the Latino themes in the pope's speeches.

(See EFFECT/21)

El efecto latino del papa Francisco a los cinco años de su pontificado

Por Hosffman Ospino

Catholic News Service

El papa Francisco fue elegido hace cinco años el 13 de marzo del 2013. Dos características suyas llamaron la atención de muchos: Es el primer jesuita y el primer latinoamericano en la historia en ser elegido papa.

¿Qué clase de liderazgo ejercería un papa jesuita y latinoamericano? ¿Habrá alguna diferencia en su manera de obrar el hecho de ser jesuita y latinoamericano?

Cada papa trae algo de novedad y frescura a este ministerio. En cinco años, el papa Francisco ha inspirado de manera única a los católicos. At his request, I continue to pray for him.

Mientras tanto, durante estos años ha habido otro efecto asociado con el papa Francisco, el cual ha recibido poca atención: el efecto latino.

El papa Francisco es un papa latino. Su elección nos recordó que cerca del 40 por ciento de todos los católicos en el mundo viven en América Latina y el Caribe. También nos recuerda que más del 40 por ciento de los católicos en los Estados Unidos son latinos.

El uso frecuente del español por parte del papa Francisco, viceversa, ha tenido un gran impacto en el mundo católico. Son bien conocidos los términos latinos y latinoamericanos, incluyendo palabras y sentidos nuevos, que han hecho parte de las conversaciones sobre evangelización.

Pero el efecto latino es mucho más profundo y trascendental que el efecto español o de términos novedosos aquí y allá.

El papa Francisco ha inspirado una nueva ola de reflexión teológica latina y latinoamericana...
Sticking with the plan during Lent

By Effie Caldarola
Catholic News Service

When my son and his male cousins headed to college, my daughter’s gift to them was a colorful book called A Man, a Can, a Plan, by David Joachim and the editors of Men’s Health. Clever and presumably practical, it contained easy recipes for the man on his own. Realistically, however, a can opener was largely a foreign object to these guys, and if it couldn’t be accessed and consumed through a pop top, well, what good was it?

Nevertheless, that title stuck with me. I like plans. I may not always be much better at keeping them than a 19-year-old with a recipe book, but at least it helps me find a target and take a shot.

I think many of us feel this way about Lent. We see a target. We want to accomplish growth during Lent. I think that’s one reason that Ash Wednesday services are so crowded. We have good intentions. Sometimes, we don’t finish as strong as we start. And then we grow discouraged.

Let’s face it. Whether it’s life itself, or Lent, we need a plan. Of course, life teaches us that the “best laid plans of mice and men oft go awry.” (Thanks, Robert Burns.)

In this life, it seems we walk a delicate balancing act between consistently planning for our lives and then accepting that our plans may be turned upside down in a moment. And sometimes, it’s the turning upside down moments that yield the most value.

Perhaps walking in this tension is what we are called to do this Lent. Listening for the God of surprises might be our Lenten resolution.

But even listening requires some structure. Without a plan, the 40 days of Lent slip away. The best way to stay on course: Keep a daily Lenten journal. List your goals, and each day write a short reflection on how you’re doing. Don’t make it burdensome. Keep it short and sweet, your progress and your inevitable failures open to the God of surprises.

The church provides us with three “pillars” of Lent -- prayer, fasting and almsgiving. I like to think of these more like a circle, each pulling us more deeply toward the other.

Since the goal of Lent -- and of our entire Christian life -- is to build a relationship with Christ, it would seem that we would turn our attention first to prayer. Without quiet time to listen, our plans are futile. There are so many good online guides to prayer -- sacredspace.ie and ignatianspirituality.com, to name a couple of my favorites.

Parishes often offer materials as well.

Setting positively high bars is a recipe for failure, but anyone can commit to 10 minutes of prayerful listening a day.

Next, consider fasting. A temptation is to turn Lent’s sacrifices into a self-help program. Don’t make weight loss your motivation. Lent is not a prelude to swimsuit season. That doesn’t mean that a struggle with food or alcohol can’t be an issue to deal with during Lent. Only you know what fasting will be best for you.

Many people fast from screen time and use the extra minutes and hours for family time or prayer or serving a charity. Or they give up eating out or clothes shopping and donate the money. Then, both our fasting and our almsgiving become sacrificial. Rereading the corporal works of mercy prepares us for Lent’s call to sacrifice.

So, get that journal. Make those plans. Consider sharing them with someone. And be open and ready for the God of surprises to unpick your life in ways you least expect.
First auxiliary bishop ordained for the Diocese of Brownsville

By Rose Ybarra
The Valley Catholic

SAN JUAN, Texas — Bishop Daniel E. Flores ordained Mario Alberto Avilés as the first auxiliary bishop of the Diocese of Brownsville on Feb. 22, the feast of the Chair of St. Peter at Antioch, at the Basilica of Our Lady of San Juan del Valle-National Shrine in San Juan.

Bishop Emeritus Raymundo J. Peña and Bishop Eugenio Lira Rugarcía of the Diocese of Matamoros, a longtime friend of Bishop Avilés, served as the co-consecrators. Archbishop Christophe Pierre, the apostolic nuncio to the United States, read the apostolic letter from Pope Francis appointing Bishop Avilés as the auxiliary bishop for the Diocese of Brownsville. Also in attendance was Cardinal Daniel DiNardo of the Archdiocese of Galveston-Houston and 21 other bishops.

“Indeed, I know well this is a truly historic moment for this growing and dynamic local church,” Archbishop Pierre said, noting Bishop Avilés was the first auxiliary bishop appointed in the 52-year history of the diocese, that this was the first episcopal ordination to take place in the diocese and the Oratory priests are celebrating 50 years of service to the faithful in the diocese.

“So many things indeed,” Archbishop Pierre concluded.

Sitting in the front row of the basilica were the new bishop’s family members, including his parents, Rafael Avilés and Maria Guadalupe Campos of Mexico City who have been married for 62 years. Also in the congregation were 45 Oratory priests and brothers from around the world and most of the priests and deacons serving in the diocese.

In an interview on the morning of his episcopal ordination, Bishop Avilés, 48, said the growth of the Church in the Rio Grande Valley spurred his appointment as auxiliary bishop. He said there are clear signs the faith is growing rapidly in the diocese. He noted that just this past weekend, three Rite of Election ceremonies were held to accommodate the more than 1,000 catechumens who are preparing to join the Church at the Easter Vigil.

Bishop Avilés also pointed out new churches are opening and existing churches are expanding in the Diocese of Brownsville while other dioceses are shutting down and consolidating churches. He believes the Church in the United States is trying to be more attentive to the growing Hispanic community and is looking to respond to the needs identified through the V Encuentro, a four-year process in which the U.S. Church is discerning how to better serve Hispanic/Latino Catholics.

“I see all the things I have been experiencing as a sign of the Lord, not only for me but for the Church in the Valley and the United States — having a Hispanic bishop, a Mexican-born bishop, to be able to help meet the needs in our country, seeing the grace of the Lord, not only for me but for the Church in our country and our community,” Bishop Avilés said.

Bishop Avilés was in the fifth year of a six-year term as Procurator General of the Confederation of the Oratory of St. Philip Neri, leading 85 Oratories and more than 550 Oratory priests and brothers around the world when he was appointed auxiliary bishop.

He was in South Africa when he received word of his appointment from Archbishop Pierre.

In his homily at the episcopal ordination Mass, Bishop Flores shared details of the phone conversation he had with Bishop Avilés about the appointment.

“So what did you say? Yes or no?” Bishop Flores recalled.

“I said yes,” he said Bishop Avilés responded.

“Gracias a Dios! (Thanks to God),” Bishop Flores said to end his homily.

Bishop Flores said he petitioned the Holy Father for an auxiliary bishop two years ago to assist him in ministering to the more than a million Catholics in the diocese.

“We have been given the gift of a grace to extend the apostolic ministry and mission of the Church here in the Rio Grande Valley,” Bishop Flores said. “I welcome the help and I am grateful for it.”

Bishop Avilés has lived and served in the Diocese of Brownsville for almost 30 years. He became a member of the Pharr Oratory in 1988 upon graduating from high school. He was ordained to the priesthood on July 21, 1998 at the same basilica where he was ordained to the episcopacy, and assigned parochial vicar of St. Jude Thaddeus Parish in Pharr. He was pastor of Sacred Heart Parish in Hidalgo for 15 years until his ordination.

On the eve of his episcopal ordination, Bishop Avilés celebrated vespers with the priests, deacons and religious of the diocese on Feb. 21 at the Immaculate Conception Cathedral in Brownsville, the see of the diocese. Bishop-elect Avilés made his Profession of Faith and Oath of Fidelity and episcopal regalia — miter, ring and crosier — were blessed.

Bishop Avilés’ episcopal motto is “Caritas Dei diffusa est in cordibus nostris,” (The love of God has been poured out into our hearts) from Romans 5:5. He is the Titular Bishop of Cataquas, a suppressed see in Algeria.

Bishop Avilés is one of just four Oratorians in the world and the only one in the United States currently serving as a bishop. The other Oratorian bishops are the Most Rev. Robert Byrne, auxiliary bishop of Birmingham, England; the Most Rev. Edoardo Aldo Cerrato, Bishop of Ivrea, Italy and the Most Rev. Antonio Ortega Franco, an auxiliary bishop in Mexico City.

About the Diocese of Brownsville

The Diocese of Brownsville comprises 4,296 square miles in a four-county area, serving more than one million Catholics, or 85 percent of the total population. There are 72 parishes in the diocese and 43 mission churches, served by 109 priests.

Second Annual Catholic Moms’ Retreat: Love Begins At Home

All mothers are invited to join the San Angelo Catholic Moms for a one-day retreat, Saturday, April 14, from 8 a.m. to 5 p.m. at the St. Francis Hall in San Angelo, TX. Mothers will enjoy quiet reflection, spiritual enrichment, the opportunity to deepen your relationship with Christ and create new and lasting friendships. The cost of the retreat is $35 in advance and $40 at the door. Childcare is available for $20/child. For more details and to register for the retreat, please visit: http://bit.ly/CatholicMomsRetreat2018

Questions? Contact sacatholicmoms@gmail.com
KNICKERBOCKERS

(From 8)

cepts, so they can become the joy of our heart, “a lamp to [our] feet and a light to [our] path” (Ps 119:105).

There is joy in goodness, uprightness of heart, and serving others: “Light dawns for the righteous, and joy for the upright in heart. Rejoice in the Lord. O you righteous and give thanks to his holy name” (Ps 97:11-12). “Those who plan good have joy” (Prv 12:20). “Through love be servants of one another” (Gal 5:13b). In our Lenten disciplines of prayer, fasting, and almsgiving, we are growing in holiness – in goodness, generosity, and uprightness of heart. “We ... attract others by joy, in order to lead them to its source: the Heart of Christ,” St. Katharine Drexel.

There is joy in meekness: Not only shall the meek inherit the earth, (Mt 5:5), but they “shall obtain fresh joy in the Lord” (Is 29:19). Meekness: gentleness, humility, submission to God — the childlike trust in God.

“Love one another as I have loved you” (Jn 15:12). “You may have the joy of His resurrection fulfilled in yourselves” (Jn 17:13). Jesus prayed in His prayer to the Father, “But now I am coming to thee; and these things I speak in the world, that they may have my joy fulfilled in themselves” (Jn 17:13). Jesus invites us in Lent and Holy Week to enter into His suffering and death so may we have the joy of His resurrection fulfilled in us, eternal joy with the Holy Trinity.

As Pope Benedict XVI tells us, “Continue to walk in the faith and, faithful to the mandate that has been entrusted to you, go out with solicitude and joy toward all creatures and pass on to them the gifts of salvation.... Let yourselves be guided by the Holy Spirit to be the leaven of new life, salt of the earth and light of the world.”

THE JOY OF TRUTH

What is this joy, surpasses pleasure here, Immerses us in truth we’ve never seen, Was always there and now dispels our fear, And with it sin as though it’s never been?

How clearly now we can His wisdom see Wrapped up in beauty is seen all around, As each becomes the one he’s meant to be, And heaven’s angels sing their joyful sound.

We enter into joy of Trinity Who made us all and now redeems each one, As we before those Three on bended knee Await the consummation they’ve begun. Oh, joy, on earth here truth in love we know, With wisdom Church receives is heaven’s bow.

W. E. Knickerbocker

There is joy in fellowship with the Holy Trinity: “Our fellowship is with the Father and with his Son Jesus Christ. And we are writing this that our joy may be complete” (1 Jn 1:3-4). Jesus says, “These things I have spoken to you, that my joy may be in you, and that your joy may be full” (Jn 15:11). In His prayer to His Father, before His passion and death, Jesus prayed, “But now I am coming to thee; and these things I speak in the world, that they may have my joy fulfilled in themselves” (Jn 17:13). Jesus invites us in Lent and Holy Week to enter into His suffering and death so may we have the joy of His resurrection filled in us, eternal joy with the Holy Trinity.

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EDICTAL SUMMONS
February 13, 2018
CASE: HEDSTROM -- COOK
NO.: SO/18/12 Ed. Sum./RCIA

The Tribunal Office of the Catholic Diocese of San Angelo is seeking Tanya Marie Cook (Hedstrom).

You are hereby summoned to appear before the Tribunal of the Catholic Diocese of San Angelo, at 804 Ford Street, San Angelo, Texas 76905, on or before the 31st day of March 2018, to answer to the Petition of Kelly William Hedstrom, now introduced before the Diocesan Tribunal in an action styled, “Kelly Hedstrom and Tanya Hedstrom, Petition for Declaration of Invalidity of Marriage.” Said Petition is identified as Case: HEDSTROM -- COOK; Protocol No.: SO/18/12 Ed. Sum./RCIA, on the Tribunal Docket of the Diocese of San Angelo.

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

Given at the Tribunal of the Diocese of San Angelo on this 13th day of February 2018.

Reverend Tom Barley, MSW, MBA, M. Div., JCL Judicial Vicar

EFFECT
(From 18)

and Latin American terms and categories, including some neologisms -- new words or meanings -- that he has introduced in conversations about evangelization.

But the Latino effect is much deeper and substantial than the use of Spanish or the introduction of a few words here and there.

Pope Francis has inspired a new wave of Latin and Latin American theological reflection at the service of the entire church. At the forefront of this theology are thinkers with deep Latin/Latino American roots, writing in Spanish and other languages.

It is no secret that many of the pope's closest advisers, consultants and document drafters are Latino/Latino American. We are witnessing the development of a theology "in Spanish" setting the directions of theological scholarship as well as pastoral practice.

In the United States, initiatives like the Fifth National Encuentro of Hispanic/Latino ministry, involving hundreds of thousands of Catholics in missionary activity, draw directly from the wisdom of Pope Francis' vision for evangelization.

The Latino effect also becomes manifest in the questions, sources and priorities that the pope has put before the entire Catholic community and the world.

Drawing from the best of his Latin American experience, Pope Francis has been effective giving new life to conversations about urgent realities like poverty, migration, the defense of life, engagement of young people and care for the created order, among others.

This Latino effect is real and exciting, a gift for the entire church.

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Ospino is professor of theology and religious education at Boston College. He is a member of the leadership team for the Fifth National Encuentro of Hispanic/Latino Ministry.

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Reverend Tom Barley, MSW, MBA, M. Div., JCL Judicial Vicar
OBISPO  

(From 3)  

soul, a vault, or a columbarium. This allows the family and other members of the Church to come there and pray, remember, and reflect (ARCC, 5). Whenever possible, the place where the vessel of ashes are buried or entombed is identified with the name of the deceased on some kind of marker, plaque, or stone.

The instruction Ad resurreendum cum Christo makes it clear that the Church does not permit any of the following practices: keeping the ashes of the departed at home; dividing them among various family members; scattering them in the air, on land, or at sea; or preserving them in mementos, pieces of jewelry, artwork, or other objects (ARCC, 6-7).

When the dividing up of ashes is not permitted by the Catholic Church, it should be noted that the Church does not teach that dividing the ashes means that the person’s soul will never be at rest. The dividing up of the ashes is not permitted because it lacks proper reverence for the remains of the deceased.

It sometimes happens that a person has been cremated, and the ashes are kept in someone’s home. Whether for years, and eventually, the family is unsure what to do with them. In such a case, the family may contact a cemetery, their local pastor, or the diocesan chancellor, to discuss possibilities for the proper and final disposition of the cremated remains.

There are many legitimate reasons why families might choose cremation. The greatest factor is usually the cost. Cremations typically cost less than one-third the price of funerals with burial of the body. There are also reasons to choose cremation for simplicity or for ecological reasons. In some countries, such as Mexico, land for burial is very scarce. Sometimes cremation is the appropriate choice because of the presence of contagious disease or when the body is severely damaged.

Transportation of the remains of the deceased over great distances can also be a practical reason for cremation.

When cremation is chosen, the Church has specific funeral rites that provide for this situation. The ideal is for the cremation of the body to take place after the Funeral Mass. This allows for the use of our beautiful funeral rituals that show profound reverence to the body of the deceased: sprinkling it with holy water, the placing of the pall, the placing of Christian symbols on the coffin, and honoring it with incense.

If circumstances require cremation before the funeral, the liturgy may be celebrated in the presence of the cremated remains. The ashes are present in a sealed, worthy vessel, placed near the altar on a small table or stand. This vessel is either to be carried reverently in the entrance procession or placed on this table before the liturgy begins. The lit Paschal Candle is located nearby. The ashes are sprinkled with holy water. In all cases, the cremated remains of the body are to be treated with the same respect given to the human body from which they came.

The Church’s teachings and funeral rites remind us that the body is intended for resurrection and eternal life. Whether our body is buried or cremated at the end of our earthly life, we trust in the words of St. Paul: “Our commonwealth is in Heaven, and from it we await a Savior, the Lord Jesus Christ, who will change our lowly body to be like his glorious body, that we may be together in one eternal place” (Phil 3:20-21).

BODIFORD

(From 5)

I’d like to suggest, though, that there’s something missing from the equation (aside from the fact that a 40-hour workweek makes it a mathematical impossibility for anybody who occasionally sleeps). I’d honestly even remember the categories wrong until I looked back at my notes. If you look at the four categories – Family, Faith, Community, Profession – and do the suggested math (25% each), you’ll notice that you’re left with a whopping zero percent of your time for yourself. Sure, you’re present in all four of those areas, and they add up to make you who you are, of course. I’d like to think, though, that your own personal well-being, pursuing your hobbies, taking time to just be alone and do something that doesn’t involve other people or not following the country – the way you spend your personal time is worth at least a percent or two. I know I love the rare opportunity to just shut the lights off and watch a movie, to go for a walk alone, to spend time with a book that I just enjoy reading without questioning whether having read it is going to benefit any of those four areas of my life or feeling guilty if the answer is no. I think, too, that some occasional attention to yourself probably makes you a better person in the other areas. The idea of those percentages, though, is a good metric to try to abide by for some balance in your life.

Another way to look at it is to realize that you shouldn’t let any one problem take up more of your time than is appropriate. If you’re having what seems like a crisis in any one of those four areas, it’s probably a good idea to try not to let it consume more than 25% of your ability to stress about something. Whether or not that’s realistic is another question. If you’re here today reading this, though, it means that you’ve been through whatever problems your life has thrown at you, no matter how insurmountable they seemed at the time, and made it to the other side hopefully at least 75% intact. That’s a good thing to keep in mind for when the next one comes around.

Just like my guesses about the amount of space an article will take up in this paper, we have a tendency to think problems are bigger than they actually are. In the end, most questions we think are major, like: “I’ve found that my faith life has thrown at you, no matter how insurmountable they seemed at the time, and made it to the other side hopefully at least 75% intact. That’s a good thing to keep in mind for when the next one comes around.

So when you’re done flipping through these pages, get out there and spend some time with your family, find a way to strengthen your faith life, contribute to the community in some way, and do your best to be a benefit to your professional environment. But also do something small for yourself. Spend some time in introspection. Find a way to maintain the balance that makes you who you are. And if you’re feeling the urge, go ahead and sketch your favorite saint in crayon and email it to me. I may have some space for it next month.

I’ll see you all after Easter!
**SECURITY**

**From 6**

**Use of Armed Guards**

The practice of using armed volunteer guards as defined in Texas SB 2065 is not permitted in the Diocese of San Angelo. In circumstances where it is determined that a security presence is required to address a security concern, trained and licensed law enforcement personnel are the preferred resource. When law enforcement personnel are not available, trained and licensed professional security guards, operating under a written agreement approved in accordance with diocesan policy, are a secondary resource.

However, neither the diocese nor any diocesan entity is to rely on a parishioner or other layperson who is not a licensed and trained peace officer or security guard working under a written agreement to provide armed protection at any diocesan entity, facility, or event.

**Coordination with Law Enforcement and Fire Departments**

Law enforcement and fire departments should be invited to perform a safety/security inspection of parish facilities, especially those areas where groups gather. Parishes should coordinate with law enforcement and fire departments to develop security and evacuation plans.

**Security Cameras**

In the Diocese of San Angelo, parishes and schools are encouraged to use security cameras with recording capabilities. These systems can be monitored by the parish, by professional security services, or both. Experience has shown that posting signs that video cameras are in use reduces crime.

Many of these systems have the capability to be viewed on a cell phone.

**Policy on Firearms and Weapons**

It is the policy of the Roman Catholic Diocese of San Angelo that no firearms or weapons be openly carried into any building or onto any premises owned, controlled, or in use by the Roman Catholic Diocese of San Angelo; any parish, mission, Catholic school, retreat center, convent, pastoral center, shrine, cemetery, or any other facility or subdivision of the Roman Catholic Diocese of San Angelo.

Peace officers and military personnel commissioned by local, state, or federal agencies and authorized by law to carry such weapons are exempt from this policy. An exception to this policy is made for resident clergy who own firearms. They may retain their firearms in their rectory, provided they are properly secured.

Those found to be in violation of this policy are to be approached by the pastor or another representative of the parish and asked to remove the firearm from the premises or to store it securely in a vehicle. The diocese has cards available that can be handed out for use in this circumstance.

In enforcing this policy, the safety of people should be the primary concern. When a person is observed to be carrying a weapon at a facility or activity, one should be polite but firm when asking such a person to remove the weapon from the facility or activity. If a person in violation of this policy fails to comply with a polite but clear request, please call 911 so that law enforcement may intervene.

When someone appears to pose an imminent threat to themselves or the safety of others, law enforcement should be contacted immediately and the area around the person should be calmly and quickly cleared of other people to the extent possible.

The practice of using armed volunteer guards as defined in Texas SB 2065 is not permitted in the Diocese of San Angelo.

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**PEGUERÍA**

**Para 6**

tomar tales como asegurar que los pasillos y las vías para salir de las puertas no estén obstruidas con mesas, sillas, u otros medios de almacenamiento.

Herramienta en las puertas deben ser inspeccionada periódicamente para asegurarse de que barras anti-pánico estén funcionando correctamente y que las puertas se abran libremente con esfuerzo mínimo. Considere el hecho de que es posible que tenga que reparar/reemplazar algunas puertas.

**Entrenamiento para Emergencias**

Se anima a las parroquias a ofrecer talleres de Tirador Activo para preparar a sus miembros para responder adecuadamente en caso de un incidente de tiroteo.

Videos de entrenamiento, disponibles a través de algunas agencias de la ley locales o en el Internet, son una buena fuente de información sobre este tema. Antes de utilizar este tipo de videos, el párroco, junto con otros representantes apropiados de las parroquias, debe revisar y seleccionar los videos para ser presentados a los miembros.

Se recomienda que una agencia de policía local esté representada en este tipo de talleres.

**El uso de Guardias Armados**

La práctica de utilizar guardias voluntarios armados como se define en Texas SB 2065 no se permite en la Diócesis de San Ángel. En circunstancias en que se determine que se requiere una presencia de seguridad para hacer frente a un problema de seguridad, el personal capacitado y con licencia de aplicación de leyes es el recurso preferido. Cuando las fuerzas del orden no están disponibles, guardias de seguridad profesionales entrenados, que operan bajo un acuerdo escrito aprobado de acuerdo con la norma diocesana, son un recurso secundario.

Sin embargo, no la diócesis ni ninguna entidad diocesana debe de confiar en un feligrés u otro laico que no sea un agente del orden entrenado y con licencia o guardia de seguridad trabajando bajo un acuerdo escrito para proporcionar una protección armada en cualquier entidad diocesana, instalación o evento.

**Coordinación con los Departamentos de Policía y los Bomberos**

Los departamentos de policía y los bomberos deben ser invitados a realizar una inspección de seguridad de las instalaciones parroquiales, especialmente aquellas áreas donde grupos se reúnen. Los párrocos deben coordinar con los departamentos de policía y de bomberos para desarrollar planes de seguridad y evacuación.

**Cámaras de Seguridad**

En la Diócesis de San Ángel, se anima a las parroquias y escuelas a utilizar cámaras de seguridad con capacidad de grabación. Estos sistemas pueden ser controlados por la parroquia, los servicios de seguridad profesionales, o ambos.

La experiencia ha demostrado que el colocar letreros que las cámaras de video están en uso reduce el crimen.

Muchos de estos sistemas tienen la capacidad de ser visto en un teléfono celular.

**Normas sobre Armas de Fuego y Armas**

Es la norma de la Diócesis Católica Romana de San Ángel que ningún arma de fuego o cualquier arma sea portada abiertamente en cualquier edificio o en cualquier local que sea propiedad, controlado o en uso por la Diócesis Católica Romana de San Ángel; cualquier parroquia, misión, escuela Católica, centro de retiros, convento, centro pastoral, capilla, cementerio, o cualquier otra instalación o subdivisión de la Diócesis Católica Romana de San Ángel.

Los agentes de orden y el personal militar comisionado por agencias locales, del estado, o federales y agua instalaciones de la diócesis, o que estén exentos de esta norma. Una excepción a esta norma se hace para el clero residente que posee armas de fuego. Pueden conservar sus armas de fuego en su casa parroquial, con la condición de que estén apropiadamente seguras.

Aquéllos quienes se encuentren en violación de esta norma han de ser abordados por el párroco u otro representante de la parroquia y pedidos que remuevan el arma de fuego de las instalaciones o que la guarden de una forma segura en un vehículo. La diócesis tiene tarjetas disponibles que pueden ser entregadas para su uso en esta circunstancia.

Al aplicar esta norma, la seguridad de las personas debe ser la prioridad principal. Cuando se observa a una persona portando un arma en una instalación o actividad, uno debe ser respetuoso pero firme cuando se le pide a dicha persona de remover el arma de la instalación o actividad. Si una persona se encuentra en violación de esta norma y no cumple con una petición cortés, pero clara, por favor llame al 911 para que la policía pueda intervenir.

Cuando alguien supone una amenaza inminente para sí mismo o la seguridad de otros, la policía ha de ser contactada inmediatamente y el área alrededor de la persona debe ser calmada, pero rápidamente, despejada de personas a la medida más posible.

La práctica de utilizar guardias voluntarios armados como se define en Texas SB 2065 no está permitida en la Diócesis de San Ángel.
SAINT PIO
COMES TO THE
DIOCESE OF SAN ANGELO

SACRED HEART CATHEDRAL

20 E BEAUREGARD AVE
SAN ANGELO, TX 76903

SUNDAY, OCTOBER 7, 2018
(FROM 9:00 A.M. TO 5:30 P.M.)

For information about the public veneration, please call (325) 658-6567, or send an email to sanangelo.cathedral@sanangelodiocese.org.

Come and venerate the official relics of Saint Pio of Pietrelcina, on the occasion of the 50th commemoration anniversary of his passing.

A mass in honor of Saint Padre Pio will be celebrated at 6:00 P.M. by The Most Reverend Michael J. Sis, Bishop of San Angelo

SPONSORED BY THE SAINT PIO FOUNDATION