Pope reaches out after shootings in diocese

Cardinal Pietro Parolin, Vatican Secretary of State, recently relayed a message from the Holy Father to the people of the Diocese of San Angelo through Bishop Michael Sis:

“His Holiness Pope Francis was saddened to learn of the shooting near Midland and Odessa, and he asks you to assure all those affected by this tragedy of his spiritual closeness. He joins the entire community in praying for the eternal rest of those who died and the healing of those wounded. To all he sends his blessing as a pledge of consolation and strength in the Lord.”

A crowd gathered outside St. Elizabeth Ann Seton Church in Odessa on Oct. 2, 2019, for the blessing of a 25-foot steel cross, donated by HZ Services, to commemorate the response of the community to the recent mass shooting event in the city. The cross is accompanied by a sign that reads: “ODESSA STRONG To honor all Odessans who showed incredible grace under pressure on August 31, 2019, this cross is respectfully dedicated.”
San Angelo Area Foundation offers update on Sonora flood relief fund

The San Angelo Area Foundation sent a letter to donors Sept. 21 providing an update on funds collected through the Sonora Flood Relief Fund.

The date marked a year since the devastating flood, and the letter tells donors that “the overwhelming response of support and encouragement from neighbors like you lifted this community during their most vulnerable times.” Over 200 homes were damaged or destroyed by the flood waters, as were other buildings in town, including St. Ann Catholic Church. The parishes of the Diocese of San Angelo took up a special collection in September and October 2018 to assist in this relief effort.

The letter concludes: “Your heartfelt gift, combined with the generosity of other Foundations, corporations, individuals and numerous volunteers helped raise more than $783,000. Over the course of twelve months, the fund has distributed more than $627,000 directly to impacted individuals and families for immediate relief, long term recovery, and rebuilding. The San Angelo Area Foundation continues to work with the Sutton County Long Term Recovery group and the Sonora Flood Relief Fund will distribute the remaining funds as repairs and rebuilding continue for many still picking up the pieces.”

Diocese honors World Day of Migrants and Refugees

West Texas Angelus

Sept. 29 was World Day of Migrants and Refugees in the Catholic Church, as declared by Pope Francis. Bishop Sis gave two special Masses that day to commemorate the event, at St. Joseph Church and St. Anthony Church, both in Odessa.

Three days before, he was getting an early start on spreading a message of love for our migrant and displaced brothers and sisters. On Sept. 26, St. Joseph Church in San Angelo hosted an ecumenical service themed to coincide with World Day of Migrants and Refugees. The service, attended by Catholics and non-Catholics alike and organized by San Angeloan Gloria Johns, showed that compassion and humanity for migrants and refugees are not solely Catholic concerns.

Several speakers and the Holy Angels choir took part in the service.

In an opening by Father Juan Lopez Cortes, himself an immigrant to this country from Mexico, the pastor of St. Joseph Church envisioned a world where everyone can work together to “build a city where all residents have the opportunity to contribute to the maximum of their abilities.”

Next, Joe Muñoz, senior executive assistant to the president and general counsel at Angelo State University, shared statistics and demographic data pertaining to migrant populations in Tom Green, Real, and Ector counties, which contain the major population centers in the Diocese of San Angelo — San Angelo, Abilene, Midland, and Odessa, respectively. The data, he said, shows these communities are “full of migrants that sometimes go unnoticed.”

Other speakers followed, including Diocesan Hermanamiento Team member and president of the Texas Mission Council Clementine Urista, who shared her experiences to encourage people to treat migrants with humanity and dignity, recognizing their potential as human beings; Tim Davenport-Herbst, pastor of St. Paul Presbyterian Church in San Angelo, who shared personal stories of helping to resettle four waves of refugees from Laos, Poland, and Iraq; and reminded attendees “unless your family is currently living in the Rift Valley in Africa, you are an immigrant;”

Dudra Butler, a service worker for the San Angelo Independent School District who has also helped welcome new United States citizens at naturalization ceremonies; and Maria de los Santos Onofre-Madrid, an assistant professor of Spanish at Angelo State University, who shared her own story of immigrating to this country as an 8-year-old child, the subsequent prejudice she endured in school, and the success she and her siblings have seen since.

Bishop Sis was the keynote speaker for the evening. In his remarks, he echoed Pope Francis’ encouragement that people be open to interactions with people from different backgrounds and view migrants as fellow human beings in need of love and respect. He shared his own story about putting his talents to work. However, when they cannot find employment in their country of origin to support themselves, they have a right to seek work in another country, in order to survive.

And when people are suffering persecution or violence, they have a right to emigrate and seek a safe place to live. Migrants and refugees should be protected against exploitation, forced labor, and human trafficking. Migration should be an orderly process, which respects the laws of each country involved — the sending country, the countries of transit, and the receiving country. Migrants are obliged to obey the laws and respect with gratitude the material and spiritual heritage of the country that receives them.

“We believe that nations should work together to address the root causes that lead to migration. Those countries that are losing their citizens to emigration need to address the injustices and violence that cause their people to depart and leave. Illegal immigration should not be condoned or encouraged, because it is not good for society or the migrant, who then lives outside the law and in the shadows of society. The Catholic bishops of the U.S. have long supported comprehensive and humane immigration reform.”

Before closing by thanking Johns for organizing the event and Father Lopez and Father Ismael Velazco Ornelas — also a recent arrival from Mexico — of St. Joseph Church for hosting, Bishop Sis had one parting wish for the gathered crowd: he encouraged all present to think of someone they know who is an immigrant, and then to tell that person they are happy to know them and appreciative of their involvement in our lives.

Reporting Sexual Abuse

The Catholic Diocese of San Angelo is firmly committed to creating and maintaining the safest possible environment for our children and vulnerable adults. 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, we are here to help you. To report incidents, call Lori Hines, Victim Assistance Coordinator, 325-374-7609 (cell), or write Diocese of San Angelo, Victim Assistance Ministry, PO Box 1829, San Angelo, TX 76902. If the incident occurred outside this diocese, our Victim Assistance Coordinator will assist in bringing your concern to the attention of the appropriate diocese. Please keep in mind that our always has the right to report abuse to civil authorities, and civil law requires that any abuse of a minor must be reported.

Reportar Abuso Sexual

La Diócesis Católica de San Angelo está firmemente comprometida a crear y mantener el ambiente más seguro posible para nuestros niños y adultos vulnerables. Si usted o alguien que usted conoce ha sido víctima de abuso sexual por cualquier persona que sirve a la Iglesia, y necesita un lugar para hablar con alguien sobre sus sentimientos de traición o hecho por la Iglesia, estamos aquí para ayudarle. Para reportar incidentes, llame a Lori Hines, Coordinadora de Asistencia a Víctimas, 325-374-7609 (celular), o escriba a la Diócesis de San Ángelo, Ministerio de Asistencia a Víctimas, PO Box 1829, San Angelo, TX 76902. Un interlocutor de español está disponible. Si el incidente ocurrió fuera de esta diócesis, nuestra Coordinadora de Asistencia a Víctimas le ayudará a traer su preocupación a la atención de la diócesis correspondiente. Por favor, tenga en cuenta que uno siempre tiene el derecho de reportar el abuso a las autoridades civiles, y la ley civil requiere que cualquier abuso de un menor de edad debe ser reportado.
Diocesan Pastoral Plan:
A Future Full of Hope

As Catholics, our primary experience of the life of the Church is through the local parish, but we also belong to a diocese, united with one another through our universal Catholic faith. As St. Paul said in his Letter to the Romans, “we, though many, are one body in Christ and individually parts of one another” (Rom 12:5).

The Catholic Diocese of San Angelo is the largest in territory in the entire state of Texas. We cover 29 counties and 37,433 square miles. For the first time since 2003, we have created a new diocesan pastoral plan for the Diocese of San Angelo. This plan provides a vision and priorities for our ministries for the next three years, through 2022.

Over the past several months, we have consulted the members of our Catholic family around the diocese to determine the needs and the hopes of the people of God in West Texas. We distributed surveys, held public listening sessions at different locations around the diocese, and met with smaller focus groups that highlighted the diversity of our people throughout the vast territory of our diocese. The level of involvement and feedback we received in this process was impressive.

The title of our pastoral plan is “A Future Full of Hope.” This is rooted in a passage from the book of the prophet Jeremiah, where God tells his people, “I know well the plans I have for you...plans for your welfare...so as to give you a future full of hope” (Jer 29:11). Our Church faces great challenges, but we are a people of faith, and we move forward with deep sense of hope in what God can accomplish in us.

A pastoral plan is a way for us to work together to discern where God is calling us, and to set goals to move in that direction. In purely secular strategic planning, the decisions are based on rational analysis. However, in pastoral planning, the goals and direction of a church are based on analysis plus discernment and prayer. The process seeks to discern what is God’s will for us as disciples of Jesus Christ.

The first part of the plan is our new diocesan vision statement, which reads as follows: We envision the Diocese of San Angelo as a Church with vibrant, welcoming communities in which people encounter, support, and accompany one another on the path of missionary discipleship, learning and living the Catholic faith, supporting families, and building up the next generation of Catholics.

Next, through a summary of the input and feedback received from around the diocese, we have determined four areas as pastoral priorities for the next three years. We will work together to help our diocese, our churches, and our ministries to grow in these areas. The succinct wording of our four priorities is as follows:

- **Form Disciples**
- **Engage Young Adults**
- **Accompany Youth**
- **Nurture Families**

In the first priority, Form Disciples, the goal is to ensure that every Catholic has access to individuals, communities, and resources to support them in deepening their relationship with Jesus Christ.

**Espacio de Oración**

Oración para el Mes Misionero Extraordinario octubre 2019

Por Padre Francisco

Padre nuestro, tu Hijo Unigénito Jesucristo resucitado de entre los muertos encomendó a sus discípulos el mandato de «vayan y hagan discípulos de todas las naciones»: Tú nos recuerdas que a través de nuestro bautismo somos partícipes de la misión de la Iglesia.

Por los dones de tu Santo Espíritu, concédenos la gracia de ser testigos del Evangelio, valientes y tenaces, para que la misión encomendada a la Iglesia, que aún está lejos de ser completada, pueda encontrar manifestaciones nuevas y eficaces que traigan vida y luz al mundo.

Ayúdanos a hacer que todos los pueblos puedan experimentar el amor salvífico y la misericordia de Jesucristo, Él que es Dios y vive y reina contigo, en la unión del Espíritu Santo, por los siglos de los siglos. Amén.
Military Archdiocese holds retreat in San Angelo

SAN ANGELO — With a flock that spans the globe, the Archdiocese for the Military Services serves the Catholic faithful in the United States military, no matter where they may be stationed. Meeting the people where they are can mean a lot of miles for the archdiocesan leadership. When they decided to hold their third marriage enrichment retreat for servicemen and their spouses in Texas, the search brought Mark Moitoza and Archbishop Timothy Broglio to Christ the King Retreat Center in San Angelo.

Archbishop Broglio knows that the realities of service in the United States military can mean servicemembers find their relationships under strain. “One of the greatest casualties — if you want to use that word — of 18 years of war has been marriages,” he said ahead of the Sept. 27–29 retreat.

Aside from the stress and uncertainty that come with long separations due to deployments of one spouse to a war zone for six months or a year, there is also a readjustment that takes place upon the return home. Part of the archdiocese’s mission is to help with these readjustments. Sometimes servicemen will return home to find “people have stepped forward to fill roles that the spouse had filled” during deployment, said Broglio. Other factors like post-traumatic stress can make the readjustment even more difficult. “It does take its toll on the family,” the archbishop said.

These retreats can give servicemen and their spouses a “space away from their busy lives to talk to each other,” said Mark Moitoza, vice chancellor for evangelization for the archdiocese. The retreatants can “pray together as couples and with other couples in the military who are going through similar experiences,” he said.

Moitoza cited the bond among military families as a key to the success of retreats like this. “This opportunity is a good reminder,” he said, “that they are not alone when they sometimes might feel alone.”
Exploring Vocations

Sister Elsa Garcia, CDP: A vocation story

I was born in Corpus Christi, Texas, and grew up in a small town in South Texas called San Diego. The terrain is much like Midland, only there are fewer pumpjacks and more green grass. After high school I attended Baylor University in Waco. I was 18 years old.

It was during my university years that I experienced a call to religious life. In college one of my friends asked me if I had ever thought of becoming a sister. I originally laughed it off because … I was not the “holy type that prays all the time.” I liked to have fun and I liked being with and helping people. With time, and God’s persistence, the question opened me to realize that my interests, purpose, and growing relationship with God did point to a consecrated life. I visited many communities and found the one for me.

I was 23 when I entered the Sisters of Divine Providence in 1980. For nine years, I learned how to become a sister. I lived and worked with sisters and I professed final vows in 1989. I became a social worker and have served in different capacities, mostly in direct service to the poor and in counseling settings. I have done psychiatric social work as well as visiting poor pregnant women to help them access health care. I really loved my work in foster care with abused children, helping them experience safety and care. I likewise loved my work with newly-diagnosed HIV people living on the streets and those who found themselves in a hospice. I loved being where God’s love was needed.

I love the Gospel of John. Especially John 17—the chapter where Jesus shares his heart and shares the love of the Father and his love for all people … I just love it. I want to give my life to this very love.

This is why I am at St. Ann’s and the San Angelo Diocese. I am here to share God’s love and to help people know God’s love. It is the best ministry I have ever had. Next year I will celebrate 40 years in religious life. It’s a great way to live.

I invite you to come to the October 26 information gathering about religious life, 9:00 a.m. to noon in the St. Ann’s Church Parlor in Midland. I would love to share more information about this great heritage in the Catholic Church. Call St. Ann’s to register, 432-682-6303, or email srgsa@stannsparish.us.

Sister Elsa Garcia is Director of Religious for the Diocese of San Angelo and Social Ministry Coordinator for St. Ann Church in Midland.

What every Catholic needs to know about religious life...

What’s a Catholic Sister????

Have you ever wondered why women dedicate their lives to God?

What would it be like? Is it for real?

Sister Elsa invites you to learn about religious life...

Saturday, October 26, 2019

From 9:00 a.m. to noon

In the Parlor at St. Ann’s Church in Midland

Breakfast snacks will be provided

Bring a covered dish to share for lunch.

All are welcome. Moms, dads, grandparents, young and old...

Come learn about it…Every Catholic needs to know and promote this way to live out God’s love

Please contact Sister Elsa if you are coming: srgsa@stannsparish.us

Encounter with God’s Call Weekend

Conception Seminary College

Conception, Missouri

Come spend a few days to encounter God’s call in your life. Visit the seminary, meet other young men who wish to do God’s will, enjoy a free trip, and take time to pray in a beautiful atmosphere.

November 15-18

DEADLINE October 25, 2019

What to bring: Polo or collar type shirts and nice jeans or slacks, dress clothes for Sunday Mass, toiletries, a coat, money for gift store, an open heart to hear our Lord
Extraordinary Mission Month

What is Extraordinary Mission Month?

Pope Francis has declared October 2019 to be Extraordinary Mission Month within the universal Catholic Church.

The designation for October was chosen to celebrate the 100th anniversary of Maximum Illud, an apostolic letter promulgated by Pope Benedict XV.

Maximum Illud was pivotal in redefining the role of Catholic missionaries as ambassadors of Christ, and not as representatives of the nation they call home.

According to a Vatican website created for the month, Pope Francis has specified four areas in which people can “live more intensely the journey of preparation for the Extraordinary Mission Month.” These four areas are:

- A personal encounter with Jesus Christ alive in His Church through the Eucharist, the Word of God, personal and communal prayer;
- Testimony: missionary saints, martyrs and confessors of the faith, as an expression of the Church scattered throughout the world;
- Missionary formation: biblical, catechetical, spiritual and theological;
- Missionary charity.

In this month’s West Texas Angelus, we are sharing two stories of people from our diocesan church living out missionary discipleship in their lives.

Midland parishioners make mission a family affair

Sabrina and Isaac Sokolowski, pictured here with two of their three daughters, made a decision to become full-time foreign missionaries while raising their family.

West Texas Angelus

Isaac and Sabrina Sokolowski made a life for themselves in Midland, starting a family, growing closer and stronger in their faith. The path that took them there was not direct, though.

Sabrina was raised in the Catholic Church before finding her passion for Christ in a Protestant congregation during college and eventually returning to the faith of her parents after marrying Isaac.

Isaac, for his part, after serving his country as a member of the United States Army, prayed to God for a love like that which he saw in his sister’s relationship at her wedding: “Lord, if you have something like that for me, then prove it and I will go all in.” Three hours later, Sabrina showed up at the reception. Isaac knew his prayer had been answered. Sabrina, though, was not there yet.

Isaac’s path would then take him to Mount Carmel Hermitage in Christoval, where he spent time exploring the life of a religious hermit.

In the intervening three years, Sabrina’s love for Christ had blossomed and Isaac had discerned out of the hermitage. When they again encountered one another, they began to date and realized God was calling them to marriage.

Earlier in life, Sabrina used to joke with Isaac about his perfect woman: “you just need to marry yourself a super Catholic girl who is in love with the saints.” He’d retort in his sister’s relationship at her wedding: “Lord, if you have something like that for me, then prove it and I will go all in.” Three hours later, Sabrina showed up at the reception. Isaac knew his prayer had been answered. Sabrina, though, was not there yet.

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Extraordinary Mission Month

San Angelo native experiences missionary life in Ecuador, Peru

By Sarafina San Miguel

If someone had told me I would be living and serving in another country I wouldn’t have believed them. I always thought of myself as a typical person who would be satisfied living in my hometown of San Angelo. From attending Central High School to being active in my local parish at Sacred Heart Cathedral, it is the life I have always known. It’s where my family is, where my friends are, and of course where I felt the most comfortable. After graduating from Central, I went to St. Mary's University, a Catholic college in San Antonio, where I majored in English communications. During my junior year an extraordinary opportunity came my way where I was able to be a part of an immersion program with 12 other students that traveled to Ecuador for a week during spring break. It was my first time leaving the good old state of Texas, as well as my first time out of the country, or on a plane; I was a nervous wreck the entire way there. The second I stepped foot in the neighborhood we were visiting, Mount Sinai, I was in awe of what surrounded me. Colorful personalities, warmhearted smiles, genuine hospitality, but most of all, an unwavering faith. During those seven days I let myself be transformed, along with witnessing the harsh reality that poverty possesses. I was loved by people who hardly knew me, who even offered their homes in case I, or any of the other students, wanted to visit again some day in the future. The impact from that one week inspired me to apply to become a one-year volunteer doing service work in Mount Sinai, Ecuador, with a Catholic organization known as Rostro de Cristo.

Upon graduation day, not only was I excited for what my future held, but I had the pleasure of listening to Bishop Michael Sis, who spoke at the St. Mary’s University commencement ceremony. From then on, I was reaffirmed in my decision to dedicate a year of my time and presence to serve those living in a situation of extreme poverty. Two months after graduation I flew out to Ecuador where I lived with six other freshly graduated young adults, and together we lived a beautiful struggle and became witnesses to the strength of faith, abundant love, and meaningful relationships we will carry forever in our hearts no matter where life takes us. I learned so much from my fellow neighbors in Ecuador about how to love, pray, forgive, and play like a child once more. I never thought I would gain such a gift just by going out of my comfort zone for that one week which would ultimately kickstart my journey dedicated to service work.

I returned from Ecuador about a year ago, but I still couldn’t shake the desire of going back to Latin America and being a part of something bigger than myself. After substantial discernment and research, I decided on joining another Catholic organization, the Jesuit Volunteer Corps, where I have committed to live and work for two years in Andahuaylillas, Peru. Come December I will be living in community with three other volunteers and teaching religious education to students in a campus ministry position. I am eager to continue learning from others and be a witness to the injustices occurring in our world, but also to help change that reality. Being a Catholic young adult from a small town, I never thought I would be walking on the path of international service. I am grateful I took that first leap to leave what was familiar. Because of that leap of faith, I was able to recognize the importance of breaking out of my comfort zone to experience something greater in this lifetime that led me to serve others.

With the month of October being Extraordinary Missionary Month, as declared by Pope Francis, it is vital that people know how volunteer work creates a lasting impact among individuals young and old, and aids hundreds of organizations to continuously build awareness of the unjust realities many communities endure. I encourage anyone who feels a pull toward service work to open their hearts, listen, and follow that desire to discover where it takes you. The Catholic Volunteer Network has a great tool for starting your search for any Catholic volunteer organization, known as the RESPONSE directory, that has been sent out to all priests and deacons within the diocese. I have personally used this resource which led me to my former organization, Rostro de Cristo, and to the Jesuit Volunteer Corps as well. Please continue praying for missionaries around the world and here in the states, it is immensely appreciated and needed. If you would like to support me and the Jesuit Volunteer Corps, and in turn, hundreds of other volunteers, please use the following information to contact me via email or cellphone:

sarafinasm@yahoo.com
(512)-608-5981

Top photo: Sarafina San Miguel visited with a patient at Damien House, a foundation in Ecuador that houses and cares for individuals with Hansen’s Disease, also known as Leprosy.

Bottom photo: San Miguel with students at the San Felipe Neri school where she taught computers during her time in Ecuador.

COURTESY
October is Respect Life Month

In a meeting of the Pro-Life leaders in the Diocese of San Angelo, Bishop Sis was presented with a replica of the image of Our Lady of Guadalupe in memory of Paula Russell Matchen, who was a faithful defender of the right to life. Pictured are, from left to right: Gina Aaron, Midland Area Coordinator; Deacon Edward Gonzalez, Odessa Area Coordinator; Sharla Ynostroza, San Angelo Area Coordinator; Bishop Michael Sis; Jerry Peters, Diocesan Director of Pro-Life Ministry; and Dr. Jim Sullivan, Abilene Area Coordinator. If you would like to become involved in pro-life ministries, please reach out to one of the following: Jerry Peters, director, jmpoutdoorsmen@aol.com; Jim Sullivan, abilene coordinator, sulliman@camalott.com; Gina Aaron, Midland coordinator, sandlander@aol.com; Deacon Edward Gonzalez, Odessa coordinator, egonzalez@sanangelodioce.org; Sharla Ynostroza, San Angelo coordinator, sky-ja3@suddenlink.net.

Respect for life is the heart and soul of a nation. A nation that loses respect for the sanctity of life loses its soul.

In 1972, the year before the U.S. Supreme Court ruled on Roe v. Wade to legalize abortion, Pope St. John Paul II set aside the first Sunday of October as “Respect Life Sunday,” also called “Sanctity of Life Sunday.” The Catholic Church has dedicated the month of October, starting with the first Sunday, to promote respect for life and provide resources to advance the culture of life through prayer, activism, and education against the falsehoods promoted by the pro-abortion advocates.

What are some of the falsehoods? “This is my body; I can do what I want with it;” “No woman can call herself free who does not control her own body” (Margaret Sanger), “Pro-choice is advocacy for women’s health;” “The issue is women’s rights;” “Abortion is the compassionate choice for an unwanted pregnancy.”

Do our lives belong to us? Are we free — do we have the right — to choose life or death for ourselves or others? Is death of the unborn a compassionate choice? Does abortion promote women’s health? We find answers in the Natural Law, Scripture, church teaching, and current research.

Indicating the relationship of the Natural Law to the bases of American democracy, Mitchell Kalpakjian writes, “To say that the pro-life argument is an attempt to impose, force, or dictate ideas upon others is just as preposterous as referring to the evil of abortion as a private opinion. The pro-life position is an attempt to impose, force, or dictate ideas upon others in the culture of life, and to provide resources to advance the culture of life through prayer, activism, and education against the falsehoods promoted by the pro-abortion advocates.”

Mary Lou Gibson is the author of “Blessed Ferrini: A Layman of Faith in the Halls of Academia.”

Blessed Contardo Ferrini was described by one of his biographers as “that modern rarity, an internationally respected lay scholar who was also a man of profound holiness.” He was born in Milan, Italy, on April 4, 1859, the son of a professor. He had a passion for learning as a young man and was educated by three priests, one of whom taught him Hebrew, in addition to his Greek. Paul Burns writes in Butler’s Lives of the Saints that he gained a remarkable fluency in languages, knowing Latin, Syriac, and some Coptic and being at ease in German, English, Dutch, French and Spanish.

His formal education began in 1876 when he won a scholarship to study law at Borromeo College in Pavia. Father Robert McNamara writes that Contardo was already convinced that expertise in studies could fit in well with a life of prayer and good works (www.dor.org).

In 1880 Contardo went to study in Berlin where he found an active group of Catholics involved in social and charitable work. He joined the local branch of the Society of St. Vincent de Paul. Burns writes that it was toward the end of his time in Berlin when he made a vow of lifelong celibacy because he did not think he had a vocation to the priesthood.

He joined the Third Order of St. Francis and developed a spirituality based on devotion to the Blessed Sacrament, prayer and meditation. The simple Franciscan approach to God appealed to Contardo, Burns writes, because he could find God in the beauty of creation. Early in his academic life, Contardo developed a love of poetry and also became a keen mountaineer. Father McNamara writes that he loved to climb the peaks of the nearby Alps. About these experiences, Contardo wrote, “God also speaks to man in the clouds on the mountain tops ... and in the dazzling splendor of the unmelting snow.”

He spent two years teaching at the University of Berlin and the history of Roman law became his specialty. Contardo earned his doctorate in 1880. His thesis related Penal Law to Homeric poetry. He became a professor of Roman Law at Messina in 1887. Father Don Miller, OFM, writes that Contardo’s speeches and papers show his understanding of the relationship of faith and science (www.franciscanmedia.org/blessed-contardo-ferrini/).

In 1894 Contardo returned to the University of Pavia where he remained until the end of his life. John Delaney writes in the Dictionary of Saints that Contardo was one of the world’s leading experts on Roman Law. He was regarded by his students and colleagues as one who lived a life of holiness in the midst of academia. Father McNamara writes that many students attended his classes not just because of his reputation as a jurist, but because they marveled in listening to a “modern” professor who still believed in God.

Later, he became a canon lawyer in addition to being a civil lawyer. In 1895, he became a city councilor of Milan. Burns writes that Contardo was opposed to socialism and deplored the papal ban on Catholics taking part in Italian politics.

He caught typhoid fever while staying on Lake Maggiore and died on October 17, 1902. His body is venerated in the chapel of Milan’s Catholic University.

Pope Pius XII beatified Contardo in 1947 and held him up as a model of a Catholic lay person. He is the patron of universities.

Mary Lou Gibson writes about the saints for the West Texas Angelus from her home in Austin.
Women's Conference speaker encourages attendees to 'stop chasing happiness'

By Becca Sankey

SAN ANGELO — Cued by the band starting, women clad in blue T-shirts emblazoned with the words “Jesus Changed Everything” jumped to their feet enthusiastically. Waving their hands in the air and cheering, the women danced and clapped in a train formation that curved around the spacious meeting room at the heart of the McNease Convention Center.

It was a lively start to what would be a dynamic presentation from Kelly Nieto, one of three keynote speakers at the 4th annual San Angelo Catholic Women’s Conference held Sept. 22 – 28. Organized by the Heart of JMJ Foundation, this year’s theme was Outrageous Love: How Does God See You? and featured Nieto, Dr. Edward Sri and Judy Hehr.

Nieto, of Farmington Hills, Michigan, presented "God’s Secret" and "Stop Chasing Happiness," the latter of which was preceded by a gaggle of smiling, gleeful women who seemed to be demonstrating the sentiment that camaraderie, fellowship, and spirituality can foster.

"The whole world is crazy about happiness right now," Nieto said in her opening remarks. "It’s an epidemic. We in America have lost the source of happiness, and it’s time to take our world back."

God wired us for happiness, she said, yet Americans are believed to be one of the least happy nations in the world. "Americans spend more time, more money in the pursuit of happiness and look where it’s gotten us," Nieto said.

The U.S., she added, is ranked 25th in happiness, just two above Rwanda, a third-world country plagued by poverty, war and political strife. "It’s because we have walked away from Jesus," Nieto said emphatically. "If you want to be happy, stop chasing happiness. God is the source of our lives, the breath in our lungs. Happiness is a byproduct of leading a meaningful life, and it aligns perfectly with the Bible. We must want this. We must seek the kingdom first to find happiness."

Nieto discussed four keys to happiness, or the ABCs, "a method by which we can measure progress in our lives," she said. ‘A’ stands for awareness of a transcendent, which can be accomplished through prayer and making prayer public.

‘B’ represents belonging. “Don’t forget about other people,” Nieto explained. "God created us to be in union with him and all of humanity."

‘C’ represents one’s calling, Nieto said, adding, "A true calling God gives us is not about you. If you want to bust the happiness myth, go out in the world and serve."

"S," she said, stands for story. "If every woman in this room took the time to look back on their lives, (you would see) that God has been with you the entire time, whether you believed in him or not. You have to start varying your story; the words you speak have power."

Following Nieto’s impassioned presentation, Leny Davis, a member of St. Joseph’s in San Angelo, said, "I feel like too often we look at happiness in the material instead of God, who is truly the source of our happiness."

Nieto’s speech, she said, was a reminder that she needs to focus more on service. "When you give of yourself, it comes back to you 100-fold — not expecting anything in return, just doing it from the heart," Davis said.

For Barbara Quillin of Abilene, the San Angelo convention, her first to attend, was eye-opening. "I really got some solid messages," she said, adding that she took comfort in "having like-minded people come together so everybody knows everyone’s going through the same thing. Everybody has their struggles."

That is one reason why Joann Turner, chairman of both the JMJ Foundation and the committee that organizes the conference, helped start the event in San Angelo in 2016. "We need to be fed, especially women," she said. "We’re so busy being caregivers and taking care of family that sometimes we just forget to stop. We go to Mass and pray, but we forget to just sit and listen, and that’s what this does."

"It’s becoming a community, like a big party. It’s a lot of fellowship, and I think that’s sometimes missing in women’s lives. They get so bound up they don’t take time to go out for a girls’ night."

For Turner, a parishioner at Holy Angels, camaraderie and being a part of the body of Christ are her main takeaways from each year’s conference. "You mingle, you meet new people, you see people you haven’t seen in a year," she said. "We’re a big community, and it’s all women, so it’s nice to let your hair down. Being around other Catholic women all believing the same way you do is amazing."

Ministry of the Third Cross celebrates 10 years in diocese

By Father Tom Barley

On Sunday, Sept. 22, 2019, the Ministry of the Third Cross celebrated ten years of ministry to the incarcerated in a variety of facilities in the Diocese of San Angelo with a Mass celebrated at Christ the King Retreat Center by Bishop Michael Sis and concelebrated by Father Tom Barley, spiritual director of MOTC.

In 2009, the ministry began with an annual fall retreat at Ron Jackson, a TYC/TJJD female facility in Brownwood. Residents at the facility are from all over Texas. The ministry at Ron Jackson has grown in the number of team members who have participated in MOTC and has included an annual spring retreat, monthly MOTC reunions with Mass and visitation, and religious lesson time with the girls, weekly sacramental preparation classes, and mentoring. Many girls have received their sacraments and others have been brought into the church.

In addition, MOTC has ministered at the Eden Detention Center, celebrating Mass and conducting religious education and sacramental preparation classes in Spanish. Mass attendance increased from around 75 to around 100 with Eucharist reception going from 15 to 65 on a weekly basis. Blessings were always given to those inmates who had completed their sentences and were leaving to return to their country of origin.

MOTC has also been a part of ministry at the Tom Green County Jail for several years with Mass on the third Saturday of each month at 9:00 a.m. Other team members make regular visitations to inmates’ areas to share Scripture and pray with inmates.

The latest additions to MOTC’s list of ministries have been the Concho Valley Female Corrections Facility and Roy K. Robb Men’s Correction Facility. Annually, two retreats are presented to the two programs at the female facility and the sacrament of reconciliation is offered on request. The St. Frances of Rome Ministry provides rides for residents to Sunday Mass. At the men’s facility, Deacon Andy Gonzalez has provided Scripture classes to the residents.

MOTC has assisted with the conferral of the Sacraments at the State Work Camp in San Angelo.

While the activities of MOTC are important to the people we minister to, members of MOTC are fully aware of our call to tend to our sisters and brothers in prison as Jesus Christ instructed in Matthew 25:36. We are also aware how our ministry to those who are incarcerated has blessed and changed us as team and as individuals. We often comment that we realize we have received more blessings in this ministry from those on the inside than what we have given by our ministry. The icon of the Christ of Maryknoll shows Christ on the other side of a barb wire fence and begs the question: Is Christ on the inside or are we? All I know is that when we visit the incarcerated, Christ visits us.
**Fall Festivals**

**SATURDAY, OCTOBER 12**
Our Lady of Lourdes Parish
Andrews
Our Lady Of Lourdes Catholic Church in Andrews, Texas, invites you to our Parish Jamaica Festival taking place on Saturday, October 12, 2019. Come and join us celebrate our unity, oneness, and fellowship with God and one another.

**SATURDAY, OCTOBER 12 AND SUNDAY, OCTOBER 13**
Sacred Heart Parish
Abilene
For more information, please call the parish office at 325-677-7951.

**SUNDAY, OCTOBER 13**
St. Boniface Parish
Olfen
Homemade German sausage, turkey and dressing meal served 11:00 a.m. — 1:00 p.m.
Dine-in, take-out and drive through to-go plates available.
Adult plates and all plates-to-go: $10
Children under 10 years of age: $5
Raw homemade German sausage: $5 per pound
Pre-orders on sausage — mail payment by October 8 to St. Boniface Church, 1118 County Road 234, Rowena, TX, 76875
Dine-in guests enter Olfen from the north on FM 1874; drive through to-go plate guests enter from the west on County Road 234.
Handicap parking and shuttle bus available.
12:00 noon — Games & concessions
1:00 p.m. — Live auction

**SATURDAY, OCTOBER 19**
St. Ann Parish
Colorado City
St. Ann Parish in Colorado City will hold their festival from 10:00 a.m. to 10:00 p.m. at the Mitchell County Railhead Building in downtown Colorado City.

**SATURDAY, OCTOBER 19**
St. Stephen Parish
Midland
See flyer on Page 11 for more information.

**SATURDAY, OCTOBER 27**
Angelo Catholic School
San Angelo
See flyer on this page for more information.

**SATURDAY, NOVEMBER 2**
Our Lady of Perpetual Help Parish
Ozona
Vendors welcome; food booths, games & raffle.
Dance at 7:30 p.m.

**SUNDAY, NOVEMBER 10**
St. Joseph Parish
Rowena
Parishioners of St. Joseph’s Church in Rowena will be hosting the 97th annual fall festival in celebration and thanksgiving for the “FAITH OF OUR FATHERS”
10:30 a.m. — Flag raising at the Veterans Monument in front of St. Joseph School Building along with a balloon release to honor all veterans.
11:00 a.m. — 1:30 p.m. — Turkey and German sausage dinner with all the trimmings. Adult plates: $10.00; Children (10 years and under): $5.00; Plates-to-go: $10.00. Drive-thru or walk-up windows available.
Uncooked sausage for sale @ $5.00/lb while supply lasts.
11:30 a.m. — 3:00 p.m. — Children and adult games, Bingo, cake walk, bouncy houses, and other children’s games.
1:00 p.m. — Live auction with cotton auction beginning at 2:00 p.m.
Country Store opened throughout the day with one of a kind items — needle work, canned items, baked goods, plants.
4:30 p.m. — Sausage sandwich supper: $5.00 includes tea
Handicapped parking and seating available.
All activities will take place in the parish hall and on church grounds.
Members of St. Joseph’s and the community of Rowena extend a warm welcome to everyone to come and share the day with us.
YOU'RE INVITED TO THE
St. Stephen’s Women’s Organization’s
Fall Festival
SATURDAY OCTOBER 19, 2019
6:00 P.M. - 9:00 P.M.
IN THE PARISH HALL

*We will be having a Costume Contest for the kids, the Prize Wheel and the Cake Walk (for a small fee) and lots of free fun activities, to include Face Painting, Children’s Games, and DJ Robert Dominguez for entertainment. There will be lots of goodies and one-of-a-kind items to buy from our Bake Sale and our Silent Auction. Of course, there will be Food & Drinks sold by our Knights of Columbus, so come hungry.

*The Silent Auction will continue in the Church Foyer until 6:30 p.m. the following day (Sunday).

*Entry into this event is a simple bag of candy per family but you’re welcome to bring more! This is the organization's biggest fundraiser, so please join us for a wonderful time.

ALL AGES ARE WELCOME!
Father Juan Fernando Bonilla-Sanchez, MSP, leads holy hour at Holy Redeemer Church in Odessa on Sept. 19, 2019.

Jenenna Torre | APTORRE PHOTOGRAPHY

Bishop Sis spoke at the West Texas Catholic Men's Conference Sept. 15 at The Way Retreat Center in Midland.

Jenenna Torre | APTORRE PHOTOGRAPHY

Bryan Valenzuela watched as Bishop Sis played one of the games at the joint festival for St. Joseph and St. Anthony Churches in Odessa on Sept. 29.

Jenenna Torre | APTORRE PHOTOGRAPHY

Parishioners prayed during a Mass at St. Joseph Church in Odessa Sept. 29. The Mass was one of two held in Odessa that day to commemorate World Day of Migrants and Refugees.

Jenenna Torre | APTORRE PHOTOGRAPHY

Jeduthun, a group of singing Boholano priests from the Philippines, performed a pair of shows at St. Elizabeth Ann Seton Church (pictured) and St. Mary's Central Catholic School in Odessa on Sept. 8 and 9. The group is on a United States tour to raise money for projects in their home country, including building homes for people affected by recent natural disasters.

Jenenna Torre | APTORRE PHOTOGRAPHY

Parishioners prayed during a Mass at St. Joseph Church in Odessa Sept. 29. The Mass was one of two held in Odessa that day to commemorate World Day of Migrants and Refugees.

Jenenna Torre | APTORRE PHOTOGRAPHY

Pre-harvest prayer breakfast in St. Lawrence

September 9, 2019

COURTESY PHOTOS
BORDER

Continued from Page 2

I was invited because San Angelo is a mission diocese (Home Missions paid for my expenses) and because of my past work with World Youth Day (Panama) with USCCB and the National Federation for Catholic Youth Ministry. Father Robert Starks, Regional Coordinator of the Vatic-...
Eritrean bishops protest government seizure of Catholic schools

By Francis Njoguna
Catholic News Service

NAIROBI, Kenya (CNS) — Eritrean bishops protested the government's seizure of Catholic schools and asked that the church be enabled to continue its educational and health services.

"If this is not hatred against the faith and against religion, what else can it be?" Archbishop Menghestaeb Tesfiamariam of Asmara, Bishop Thomas Osman of Barentu, Bishop Kidane Yebio of Keren and Bishop Kifremariam Hagos Tsalimg of Seghenity said in a letter to Eritrea's minister of public education.

"Our voice of protest" is raised again at the government's "arbitrary and unilateral measures," the bishops said, noting that the closure of its schools follows the seizure of its clinics and other medical facilities in June.

"Considering that the actions that are being taken against our educational and health institutions are contrary to the rights and to the legitimate freedom of the church and to the liberty of the conscience of the followers of the postulates of faith, mission and social services, we ask that the recent resolutions are reviewed and the consequent course of action promptly stopped," the bishops said.

The Most Holy Redeemer Secondary School of Asmara's seminary was closed two years ago, with three other secondary schools closed in September; one of the secondary schools includes a primary school.

The bishops said in June that all health facilities run by the Catholic Church in Eritrea — more than 20, with many on the property of monasteries — had been seized by the government.

In their letter to the minister, Semere Reesom, the bishops asked that the church be allowed to continue its "precious and highly appreciated services to the people." If the government seeks changes to the way these institutions are run, there should be "open and constructive dialogue," they said, noting that the church has always sought dialogue "on everything concerning the situation of the church and our nation."

The Catholic Church makes up about 5% of Eritrea's population of 6 million people.

In April, the bishops angered the government by releasing a pastoral letter calling for a national reconciliation process to go along with respect for human rights and religious freedom.

Ruled by President Isaias Afwerki since 1993, Eritrea has been strongly criticized by human rights groups, especially over reports of detention without trial, open-ended military conscription and bans on some faiths. Regulations introduced in 1995 limit any developmental activities of religious institutions, including schools, hospitals, agricultural projects and sponsoring education for vulnerable children.

Hundreds of thousands of people have fled the country in recent years, with many making perilous journeys through deserts and across the Mediterranean Sea to Europe.

China-Vatican accord promotes church's pastoral work, speakers say

By Cindy Wooden
Catholic News Service

ROME (CNS) — The provisional agreement signed in 2018 by the Holy See and the Chinese government has "opened the way to the two most important things: pastoral activity and dialogue," said Archbishop Claudio Maria Celli.

The agreement also meant that, for the first time in 70 years, all of the Catholic bishops in China are in communion with the pope and with their brother bishops throughout the world, the archbishop said Sept. 26 at the presentation in Rome of a book on the agreement, its historical roots and the future of Catholicism in China.

Archbishop Celli, who retired in 2016 as president of the Pontifical Council for Social Communications, was a key partner in the negotiations that led to the signing of the agreement. He had spent 35 years as part of a team of Vatican officials reaching out to the Chinese government on behalf of popes John Paul II, Benedict XVI and Francis.

"A door has been opened," he said. "It's a door that would be difficult to close again."

The provisional agreement, signed Sept. 22, 2018, set out procedures for the nomination of bishops acceptable to both the Vatican and the Chinese government, ending decades of Chinese insistence that allowing the Vatican to name bishops would amount to foreign interference in China's internal affairs.

Vatican officials consistently had said that giving up full control over the nomination of bishops would not be what it hoped for, but that it could be an acceptable first step toward ensuring greater freedom and security for the Catholic community there.

The agreement was controversial given that bishops, priests, religious and lay Catholics had been jailed and persecuted for their loyalty to Rome and their refusal to join the Chinese government's associations for Catholics.

At the book presentation, Archbishop Celli paid tribute to those witnesses for the faith.

"When the time comes that the archives are opened, people will be in awe over the great witness of Chinese bishops and what they endured in order to be fully Chinese and authentically Catholic, faithful to Jesus Christ," he said.

But the unity of the church in China is essential for its existence and growth, he said.

"It is a challenge to find ways to reach out to priests and people still part of what we called the 'clandestine' church," he said.

The book and speakers at the book presentation, including Andrea Riccardi, a historian and founder of the Community of San T'egidio, noted how surveys show a growing interest in religion among the Chinese, but a steep decline in the number of Catholics baptized each year, both in communities registered with the government and in those that are not.

Romano Prodi, an economist, former Italian prime minister and former president of the European Commission, also spoke at the book launch and noted how China's economic boom has been accompanied by a huge population shift from rural areas to cities, where Catholic churches are few and far between.

Bringing all the country's bishops into union with each other and with the pope and having them all recognized by the Chinese government were necessary for the Catholic Church to minister to its current members, to evangelize others and to build a future in China, Riccardi said.

Writing the preface to the book, Cardinal Pietro Parolin, Vatican secretary of state, said the agreement was a necessary step in showing the Chinese government and Chinese Catholics that a person could be simultaneously fully Chinese and fully Catholic.

"Especially since the Second Vatican Council, he said, the Catholic Church has made it clear that one could "live universality without uniformity and communion without homogenization."

The provisional agreement, Cardinal Parolin wrote, leads to hope for a true inculturation of the Catholic faith in China, a process that "presupposes the growth of local communities fully rooted in a specific historical, social and cultural context, but also authentically inserted into the communion of the universal church."

Australian states to have priests report abuse disclosed in confession

By Michael Sainsbury
Catholic News Service

SYDNEY (CNS) — The Australian states of Victoria and Tasmania have become the latest in the country to pass legislation criminalizing priests who fail to report the abuse of children disclosed during confession. The country's six states and two territories are all expected have such laws in place in coming months.

But some clerics, including Melbourne Archbishop Peter Comensoli, one of Australia's most senior and vocal bishops, have vowed to ignore the laws in an effort to uphold the seal of the confessional.

Archbishop Comensoli told Australian public radio that he would urge anyone who confessed to child sexual abuse to tell police. But he added that he, personally, would not break the seal, preferring to go to jail.

The laws broadly make it a crime if members of the clergy do not report abuse or suspected abuse to police. Penalties for breaching the new laws range from fines to decades in prison, and the laws underscore the rollback of special concessions for the church in Australia following the country's landmark Royal Commission into Institutional Responses to Child Sexual Abuse.

The laws have flowed from recommendations made by the Royal Commission, which ran from 2013 to 2017, when its findings were handed down along with 79 recommendations, many of which are being implemented by the church.

Victoria and Tasmania join Queensland and Western Australia as having passed or introduced such laws to parliament. New South Wales, the Australian Capital Territory, South Australia, Queensland and the Northern Territory governments have signaled they will introduce legislation.

The new laws in Australia stand in contradiction to the Code of Canon Law, which states: "The sacramental seal is inviolable; therefore it is absolutely forbidden for a confessor to betray in any way a penitent in words or in any manner and for any reason."

At present, a priest who breaks the seal of confession would be subject to automatic excommunication, unless otherwise decided by the pope.

Along with Archbishop Comensoli, other bishops also have vowed to ignore the new laws. These include Bishop Greg O'Kelly, apostolic administrator of Adelaide, and Sydney Archbishop Anthony Fisher. As well, all three bishops and other senior clerics have effectively described the new confessional laws as a distraction that would do nothing to halt child sexual abuse.

Bishop O'Kelly told the Australian Broadcasting Corp. that, in 28 years as a priest, he had never had anyone confess to child sexual abuse, either anonymously or in person.

"If you've ever had anything to do with a pedophile, they think they're innocent and so won't line up at a confession," Fisher said.

"We have vowed to ignore the new laws in an effort to uphold the seal of the confessional," Comensoli said.

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Some counsels on faith and religion for our present generation

It’s no secret that today we’re witnessing a massive decline in church attendance and, seemingly, a parallel loss of interest in religion. The former mindset, within which we worried, sometimes obsessively, about sin, church-going, and heaven and hell no longer holds sway for millions of people. As one parent, worried about the religious state of his children, shared with me recently, “our old religious concerns never ever darken their minds.” What’s to be said in the face of this?

Admittedly, I may not be the person best-suited to offer that advice. I’m over 70 years old, a spiritual writer whose main focus of research and teaching right now is on the spirituality of aging, and I’m a Roman Catholic priest, a religious insider, who can be perceived as something of a salesman for religion and the churches.

But, despite that, here are some counsels on faith and religion for today’s generation.

First: Search honestly. God’s first concern is not whether you’re going to church or not, but whether you are staying honest in your search for truth and meaning. When the Apostle Thomas doubted the reality of the resurrection, Jesus didn’t scold him, but simply asks him to stretch out his hand and continuing searching, trusting that if he searches honestly he will eventually find the truth. The same is true for us. All we have to do is be honest, not to lie, to acknowledge truth as it meets us. In John’s Gospel, Jesus sets out only one condition to come to God: Be honest and never refuse to acknowledge what’s true, no matter how inconvenient. But the key is to be honest! If we’re honestly we will eventually find meaning and that will lead us where we need to go — perhaps even to a church door somewhere. But even if it doesn’t, God will find us. The mystery of Christ is bigger than we imagine.

Second: Listen to what’s deepest inside you. Soul is a precious commodity. Make sure you honor yours. Honor the voice inside your soul. Deeper than the many enticing voices you hear in the world inviting you in every direction is a voice inside you which, like an insatiable thirst, reminds you always of the truth of this prayer from Saint Augustine: You have made us for yourself, Lord, and our hearts are restless until they rest in you. Stay in touch with that voice. You will hear it in your restlessness and it will, in the words of Karl Rahner, teach you something that’s initially is hard to bear but eventually sets you free: In the torrent of the insufficiency of everything attainable, we eventually learn that here in this life there is no finished symphony.

Third: Beware the crowd! In the Gospels the word “crowd” is almost always pejorative. For good reason: Crowds don’t have a mind and the energy of a crowd is often dangerous. So beware of what Milan Kundera calls “the great truth about human stupidity” to be led by ideology, group-think, the latest trend, the popular person or thing, the false feeling of being right because the majority of people feel that way, and the social pressures coming from both the right and the left. Be true to yourself. Be the lonely prophet who’s not afraid to be alone on the outside. Dream. Be idealistic. Protect your soul. Don’t give it away cheaply.

Fourth: Don’t confuse faith with the churches — but don’t write off the churches too quickly. When they ask those without religious affiliation today why they aren’t religious invariably their answer is: “I just don’t believe it anymore.” But what’s the “it” which they no longer believe? What don’t they believe anymore isn’t in fact the truth about God, faith, and religion, but rather what they’ve heard about God, faith, and religion. Sort that out and you will find that you do have faith. Moreover, don’t write off the churches too quickly. They have real faults; you’re not wrong about that, but they’re still the best GPS available to help you find your way to meaning. They’re a roadmap drawn up by millions of explorers who have walked the road before you. You can ignore them, but then be alert to God’s gentle voice often saying: “Recalculating.” God will get you home, but the churches can help.

Fifth: Don’t forget about the poor. When you touch the poor, you’re touching God. As Jesus says, as you serve the poor, the judgment day we will be judged the poor. Give yourself away in some form of altruism, knowing, as Jesus puts it, that it’s not those who say “Lord, Lord,” who go to heaven but those who serve others. In your search, you need to get a letter of reference from the people who serve others.

Sixth: Look among your contemporaries for a patron to inspire you. Jean Vanier, Henri Nouwen, Thomas Merton, Dorothy Day, Oscar Romero, Dietrich Bonhoeffer, Simone Weil, Etty Hillesum, and Dag Hammarskjold, among others — they’ve all navigated your issues.

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.

Cardinal Etchegaray, Henri de Lubac, and Vatican II

Last week, Cardinal Roger Etchegaray passed away. Perhaps his was not a household name, but this very decent man made a substantive contribution to the life of the Church, serving in a number of different capacities over the years and collaborating closely with St. Pope John Paul II. I had the privilege of meeting him in the mid-1990s when he visited Mundelein Seminary, where I was serving as president of theology. The Cardinal wanted to address the community, but his English was a bit rusty, so I translated for him. But I recall that his smile and evident joy in the Lord needed no translation whatsoever.

The first time I ever laid eyes on Roger Etchegaray was some years before then, on an extraordinary day in Notre Dame Cathedral in Paris: the funeral of the legendary theologian Henri de Lubac. A third-year doctoral student at the time, I had made my way to Notre Dame, hoping that I might be able to participate in the funeral Mass. As I approached the door, I was stopped by a security agent who asked, “Are you from la famille? (Are you a member of the family?)” “Non,” I responded. Then he inquired, “Est-ce que vous êtes théologien? (Are you a theologian?)” With some trepidation, I said, “Oui,” and he promptly directed me to a position near the front of the Cathedral. To the tolling of the deepest bells in the Cathedral, the simple wooden coffin of de Lubac was wheeled down the middle aisle. I noticed, as it passed by my position, that it was topped by de Lubac’s red cardinal’s biretta.

To the tolling of the deep low bells in the Cathedral, to the tolling of the deepest bells in the Cathedral, de Lubac was wheeled down the middle aisle. I noticed, as it passed by my position, that it was topped by de Lubac’s red cardinal’s biretta.

At the close of the Mass, Cardinal Etchegaray rose to speak on behalf of the Pope. He read a beautiful tribute from John Paul II, and then he shared the following anecdote. Soon after his election to the papacy, John Paul came to Paris for a pastoral visit. He made a special stop at the Institut Catholique de Paris to meet with theologians and other Catholic academics. After his formal remarks, Etchegaray continued, John Paul II looked up and said, “Oui est le Pere de Lubac? (Where is Fr. de Lubac?)?” The young Karol Wojtyla had worked closely with de Lubac during Vatican II, specifically in the composition of the great conciliar document Gaudium et Spes. De Lubac stepped forward and, Etchegaray told us, Pope John Paul bowed his head to the distinguished theologian. Then, turning to the coffin, Etchegaray said, “Encore une fois, au nom du pape, j’incline la tête devant le Pere de Lubac (Once more, in the name of the Pope, I bow my head before Father de Lubac).”

This is much more than a charming story, for upon John Paul’s reverence for Henri de Lubac hangs a very interesting tale of continuing relevance to our time. De Lubac was the most prominent proponent of what came to be called la nouvelle theologie (the new theology). Departing from the strict and rather rationalist Thomism that dominated Catholic intellectual life in the first half of the twentieth century, de Lubac and his colleagues turned with enthusiasm to the Scriptures and to the Church Fathers. This return to the “sources” of the faith produced a theology that was spiritually informed, ecumenically generous, and intellectually rich — and it got de Lubac in considerable hot water with the academic and ecclesial establishment of that time. At the very height of these polemics, in the 1950s, he was silenced, prohibited from teaching, speaking, or publishing. Rehabilitated by Pope John XXIII, de Lubac played a pivotal role at Vatican II, decisively influencing many of its major documents. It is altogether correct to say that this champion of the reforming Second Vatican Council was one of the chief architects of pre-conciliar Catholic conservatism.

However, in the years immediately following the Council, Henri de Lubac became impatient with the Catholic liberalization, led by such figures as Hans Küng, Karl Rahner, and Edward Schillebeeckx, which was pushing past the texts of Vatican II, accommodating itself far too readily with the environing culture, and losing its mooring in classical Christianity. And so, along with his colleagues Hans Urs von Balthasar and Joseph Ratzinger, he founded the theological journal Communio, which was meant as a counterweight to the journal Concilium, which published the works of the leading liberals. It was this Communio, this middle path between both a conservative and liberal rejection of Vatican II, that John Paul II enthusiastically embraced. If you seek clear evidence that the Polish Pope favored this middle path, look no further than the Catholic journal Cathéchisme of 1992, which is filled with the spirit of the nouvelle theologie, and to the fact that John Paul especially honored the three founders of Communio, making Joseph Ratzinger head of the Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith, and naming both de Lubac and Balthasar Cardinals.

If you’re looking for right and left-wing rejections of Vatican II on display today? Just go on the Catholic new media space and you’ll find the question readily answered. What is still very much the needful thing is the de Lubac attitude: deep commitment to the texts of Vatican II, openness to ecumenical conversation, a willingness to address the great march, namely, the propensity to losing its mooring in classical Christianity. Perhaps I might invite you to muse on that gesture and those words of Cardinal Etchegaray that I took in many years ago: “Once more, in the name of the Pope, I bow my head before Father de Lubac.”

Bishop Robert Barron is an auxiliary bishop of the Archdiocese of Los Angeles and the founder of Word on Fire Catholic Ministries.
Journeying into motherhood as a young Latina

My husband and I will be celebrating our one-year anniversary in just three months. It’ll be a grand celebration for us as, God willing, we’ll be celebrating it with a new tiny addition, our first child.

As a young woman, you have all of these ideas and imaginations of what it’s going to be like journeying into motherhood. You think of all the positive moments, the exciting emotions and, yes, even the growing belly. Very rarely does one think of all the possible complications. I know I sure didn’t.

I was diagnosed with a high-risk pregnancy about halfway through the journey. Instead of meeting our baby at the end of November, we’ll be meeting him at the end of October. I’m still coping with all the emotions of fear, anxiety, excitement, humility and gratitude.

God willing, our baby will arrive as healthy as can be, but I want to share a little bit of what I’ve learned about maternal care in the U.S.

I did some research on the maternal care in the U.S. What I found was unexpected, a true injustice to all mothers in this country.

The U.S. has one of the worst maternal health care practices among developed countries in the world. American women are dying from pregnancy-related deaths compared to white mothers. Here in Illinois, black mothers are six to eight times more likely than white mothers. Here in Illinois, black mothers are six to eight times more likely than white mothers.

I’ve spent extensive time looking into the possible consequences of my journey into motherhood as a person of color in the U.S. It saddens my heart to know that I have to work, yet again, extra harder to protect my child and myself.

We plan to deliver at a birth center with a midwife. We also hired a doula to help us advocate for ourselves and keep us on track with our priorities.

Maternal health care is the perfect example of what racism looks like when its built into the systems that impact our daily life. Of course, this issue goes beyond racial injustice; it’s also an offense to the poor and vulnerable who likely cannot afford the extra assistance needed to ensure the best possible outcome.

Yet, hope is always present. There are some legislative proposals at the federal level that aim to tackle these problems. I’m not endorsing a particular proposal, I’m grateful that some are discussing the importance of protecting our mothers and unborn from oppressive systems in this light.

When we fight for life from the beginning of conception, we must remember there is a journey that follows that moment and it’s just as important.

May our mother Mary always protect all mothers and their children.

Edith Avila Olea
Catholic News Service
In Pursuit of Justice

El jardín católico de Pascasie

"Mi jardín era el orgullo de mis vecinos y quienes me visitaban. La gente lo llamaba el jardín católico", me contó Pascasie Masabyemungu, quien trabaja para Catholic Relief Services en Ruanda. Ella cuidaba el jardín de su casa como si fuese una ofrenda a Dios.

Conoci a Pascasie en julio del 2019 durante una visita a Ruanda cuyo objetivo fue conocer más cómo los católicos en los Estados Unidos apoyamos programas de solidaridad global. Pascasie dedicaba un sinnúmero de horas atendiendo su "jardín católico". Su dedicación quasi-religiosa le hacía eco a su devoción por su familia y el servicio a los demás.

Flores hermosas y coloridas florecían, de manera casi que milagrosa, bajo el sol ardiente africano. Pascasie cortaba la maleza que crece rápido en una tierra en donde la lluvia y la aridez alternan de manera rítmica durante el año. En 200 días católicos cambiaron su vida al igual que la de las poblaciones Tutsi, Hutu y Twa en aquel momento. Casí 1 millón de personas murieron en un genocidio vertiginoso, feroz e inexplicable. La mayoría de las víctimas fueron Tutsi; también algunos Hutu moderados.

Después de 25 años, Pascasie recuerda esos días como si fueran ayer. "¿Cómo pudiera alguien olvidarlo?", dijo. Durante 100 días, el agua y el sol que daban vida al jardín de Pascasie se mezclaron con sangre, llanto y muerte.

Algo murió al interior de Pascasie. Ya no era la misma. Tampoco los ruandeses. Su jardín desapareció. No plantaría más flores por muchos años.

Antes del genocidio, cerca del 70% de los ruandeses se identificaban como católicos. Un 20% eran protestantes. El genocidio fue un verdadero teatro de horror en el cual muchos cristianos, la mayoría católicos, cegaron la vida de otros cristianos. "Nadie podía entenderlo", dijo Pascasie.

Más doloroso para ella y otros ruandeses fue observar la falta de valor de muchos líderes y fieles católicos para denunciar la violencia. Algunos incluso promovieron aquellas acciones.

En el año 2016, los obispos de Ruanda pidieron perdón por el papel que muchos católicos jugaron durante el genocidio. El papa Francisco hizo lo mismo en el año 2017, pidiendo "el perdón de Dios por los pecados y errores de la iglesia y sus miembros" en Ruanda. El silencio fue un error abismal.

Durante los últimos 25 años, los católicos...
Palliative sedation while approaching death

Because suffering almost always imposes itself on us during life, and especially at the end of life, it can be helpful to reflect on the need to accept some personal suffering as we die, even as we recognize the importance of palliative steps and other comfort measures.

In the last week of life, more than 90 percent of patients require medical management of symptoms such as pain, nausea, delirium, spasmodic contractions of muscles, vomiting, hallucinations, or generalized agitation.

Many of these symptoms can be addressed with medication, and serious pain can often be managed with powerful opioid drugs or ketamine. These remarkable drugs, however, call for discernment in their use because at higher dosages, they can limit mental clarity and induce an extended semi-dreamland state as death approaches.

The U.S. Catholic bishops offer an important observation about participating in our own dying process in their Ethical and Religious Directives. “Since a person has the right to prepare for his or her death while fully conscious,” it says, “he or she should not be deprived of consciousness without a compelling reason.”

In some cases, however, the harsh symptoms associated with dying may prove refractory to treatments, prompting physician to consider, during a patient’s final stretch of days, the possibility of a globalized form of sedation known as “palliative sedation.”

This approach, which relies on the monitored use of sedatives, barbiturates, neuroleptics, benzodiazepines or other anesthetic medications, entirely deprives the patient of consciousness as he or she enters into a deep comatose state until death.

One concern is that the reception of the sacraments, whether confession, the anointing of the sick or the Eucharist/viaticum becomes problematic for an unconscious person.

This purposeful and complete shutting down of consciousness also raises broader ethical and spiritual concerns about categorically precluding participation in one’s death, as well as the last days of life.

While for some dying patients, severe pain can almost entirely preclude their ability to think, once the intensity of their pain has been moderated, the possibility of reflection is limited as the mind no longer focuses on mere survival. Medications can thus be helpful to dying patients by keeping the harmful effects of pain within manageable levels.

The inward movement of our being in our final days and hours can involve a kind of transformation or conversion, sometimes quite dramatic, as in the case of the good thief. It can involve a contemplative internalization of the mysteries of human existence, a stripping away of everything, and a period of “reducing naked” the soul.

That’s why it is so important for us not to be entirely deprived of our consciousness except for the most extreme reasons. That’s why it is so important for us to be prepared to learn how to endure some pain so that we can more fully cooperate with the redemptive meaning of suffering.

Our concluding time on earth may thus serve an important role in our own eschatological fulfillment. Our last days and hours can also powerfully affect the course of that fulfillment in others around us, as occurred in the lives of various bystanders on that historic day on Calvary. When we find ourselves nailed to our hospital bed, it can become an important personal moment for us to engage the possibility of a spiritual transformation opening before us, as we pass through the pains of childbirth to the joy of new life (Jn 16:21).

Father Tad Pacholczyk

Making Sense of Bioethics

Don’t miss the best thing

My daughter has this T-shirt. I found it on the clearance rack at Target marked down 75%. Without hesitation, I tossed it in the cart, and ironically, that steal of a deal has become her favorite shirt, worn at least once a week.

Across the shirt is a line from Dr. Seuss: “I Can Read with My Eyes Shut. "You'll miss the best things if you keep your eyes shut!" the shirt reads.

Rose wears it with pride. I think she loves the shirt because it’s soft. Simple pleasures keep her pretty content. But I love it because it reminds me to keep my eyes open rather than turned down at a screen.

It tells me to pay attention and to look for the wonder, especially in the quiet, mundane, ordinary moments that could pass by entirely unnoticed. It reminds me to take notice of what’s around, and what could be, rather than wallow in what I perceive to be frustrating or annoying.

In some ways, this tiny T-shirt and its colorful wording has become a mission statement for my motherhood, my marriage, my job: to keep my eyes open, take it all in and never forget the goodness of the very best things happening right in front of me, big or small.

She only wears the shirt once a week, but every day, my 2-year-old greets the morning with an excited “Mama!” and proceeds to babble away, describing her dreams in toddler gibberish that I so wish I could understand.

She runs through the house and yard with endless energy. She bounds into her classroom each morning with a joy that is bottled and sold would make us millions. She watches TV, reads books, eats meals, dances and plays games with a committed joy, the likes of which I’ve never seen.

Her eyes are wide open, and her desire to soak in life is unmatched. She has, in a very tangible way, an unalterable, unassailable, visible, obvious and enzymatic spirit of hope because her eyes are open. She isn’t missing the best things, but soaking them all in.

And that — eyes open to goodness all around us — is a reason for hope.

I’ve always struggled with the idea of hope. What is it, exactly? And why does it matter so much? I know about faith: It’s the belief in things unseen. And I’m fairly confident I can pinpoint love: It’s the gift of

See McGrady, Page 23

Biblical wisdom for expectant, ‘older’ mothers

There is a special kind of humiliation (and humor, if you’re a good sport), reserved for pregnant women who skew a little bit above the average age of moms in this country. I can tell you exactly how I know: I read the fine print on the report from my baby’s first ultrasound.


When I asked a nurse about that last line, she said, “Yeah, it’s an unfortunate term. When a woman delivers a baby at 35 years old, we call it a ‘geriatric pregnancy.’”

Between morning sickness (which, if we really want to be technical with our terminology, should be called “all-day-and-night sickness”) and chronic (but only the last thing needed to hear was that I was old. Everyone knows that motherhood demands supernatural levels of energy and attention.

Sensing my discomfort, she shared that many of her patients were finding themselves pregnant well into their 30s and early 40s. Medical terms would likely catch up, she reassured. “Plus,” she said, “think of all that life experience and wisdom you’ll bring to the table.”

Riding that wave of cheerleading, I decided to spend the next two trimesters getting to know some of my geriatric foremothers to absorb some of their wisdom. I traded contemporary books, blogs and social media accounts dedicated to the subject of motherhood in your 30s for a classic — the Bible.

I started with Sarah, Abraham’s wife. Sarah shared her husband’s frustration as the promise of parenthood seemed to be perpetually delayed. While most people remember how Abraham fumbled the situation, at several points Sarah also tried to take matters into her own hands. Her way turned out well for no one.

I think Sarah’s great lesson for mothers comes at the point of Isaac’s sacrifice: Abraham names the place where God spared their son “l’hoveh-yireh,” meaning, “The Lord will provide.” Later, that same place was renamed “Terah-salem,” or “the Lord will see to the peace.”

Sarah’s story suggests that with faith and a relinquishing of the reins, we can experience how God’s plan and timing is aimed at our peace. God delivers on promised

See URENECK, Page 23

Elise Italiano Ureneck
Catholic News Service
Finding God in All Things
Thoughts on humility

I grew up near a small town that had a big Labor Day weekend celebration. For a farm kid, it rivaled Christmas for excitement. There were carnival rides, barker hawking games, a big parade, an alumni dance at the local ballroom, contests of all kinds. The streets were closed to traffic, and people spilled out of the pubs that overflowed with revelers. No Knight of Columbus missed his chance to flip a pancake.

Eventually, I moved far away but every Labor Day would bring memories.

So, since I live in Nebraska now, I decided to head out to the Labor Day parade in the old hometown.

You know that Thomas Wolfe novel, You Can't Go Home Again? There's a reason that title has worked its way into the American lexicon. Labor Day sure wasn't what it was when I was 12.

However, I did experience one of those little God moments that St. Ignatius speaks of — the idea of finding God in all things, sometimes unexpectedly. That Sunday's readings had focused on humility, a hard virtue to define.

Jesus said not to hide your lamp under a basket, and we know a lack of self-esteem is not true humility. Yet, we live in an uncomfortably self-promotional age.

Publish something? Receive an award? Broadcast it on Twitter? Broadcast it on Twitter?
fortably self-promotional age.

In 2015, the bishops of Rwanda asked for forgiveness for the role that many Catholics played in the genocide. Pope Francis did likewise in 2017 asking “God's forgiveness for the sins and failings of the church and its members” in Rwanda. Silence was an abysmal failing.

For 25 years, Rwandan Catholics have been discerning the consequences of the genocide and their responses to it, institutionally, communally and personally.

Disappointment and resentment are surely part of that process. It is not accidental that barely half of Rwandans today self-identify as Catholic. Nonetheless, a spirit of resurrection has prevailed during the last quarter of a century.

"Rwanda is rising from the ashes of 1994. ... We will do anything to prevent this from happening again," said Pascasie.

As I visited various communities throughout the country, I confirmed her observation. A communal consciousness of being a new people defines almost every aspect of the Rwandan society.

The spirit of communal resurrection has also engendered fresher ways of being church. Pope Francis has summoned Catholics to be "a church that is poor and for the poor." I witnessed that in Rwanda.

The church there, led by its pastors, is visibly committed to solidarity with the poor, social reconstruction and reconciliation among Rwandans living together amidst differences.

Fifteen years after the genocide, Pascasie finally managed to return to her garden. Beautiful flowers continue to blossom today with bright colors in what her neighbors called her "Catholic garden."

Pascasie's garden is the perfect metaphor for the Rwandan society and the church in this country. Listening to her story, I feel that I am part of it along with countless Catholics in the U.S. who support her work through CRS.

Every time U.S. Catholics contribute to the work of solidarity in Rwanda and in the more than 100 other countries where CRS and similar Catholic organizations are present, like Pascasie we make possible that a thousand flowers bloom in God's global community garden.

Ospino is professor of theology and religious education at Boston College.
OBISPO

Continúa de Página 3

profundización de su relación con Cristo, el modelo de la fe católica, y poder vivirlo plenamente. En los próximos años, exploraremos formas para poder hacer recursos para formación en la fe más accesibles a la gente de nuestras parroquias y misiones. Vamos a encontrar maneras para aumentar las oportunidades para retiros y para proporcionar un mayor acceso a la formación de liderazgo, y exploraremos formas para hacer las responsabilidades administrativas de los sacerdotes más manejables, de manera que puedan centrarse más plenamente en el ministerio.

BISCHOF

Continuación auf Seite 3

deren Zusammenhang mit Christus, lernen die Katholische Lehre, und leben sie. Über die nächsten Jahre werden wir Möglichkeiten finden, um die Bildungsmöglichkeiten zur Katholischen Lehre zu verbessern und sie zugänglicher für die Gemeinden zu machen. Wir werden forschen, um die Möglichkeiten für Ausflüge und für ein stärkeren Zugang zu Führungsförderung zu erweitern, und wir werden Möglichkeiten finden, um die Verantwortung der Priester zu verhandeln, so dass sie sich mehr vollständig auf das Ministerium konzentrieren können.

El día 19 de octubre, ofreceré una Misa especial en San Ángel que servirá como el lanzamiento oficial de nuestro plan pastoral. Esta Misa se llevará a cabo en el Campo de Fútbol de la Confederación Diocesana en el Centro de Convenciones McNease. También vamos a ofrecer una reunión en inglés y español a principios de 2020 para los feligreses que quieran aprender más sobre la forma en que los laicos pueden ayudar a hacer que este plan sea una realidad.

El Comité de Dirección del Plan Pastoral Diocesano jugó un papel decisivo en el proceso de consulta que llevó al desarrollo de este plan. Los miembros de este comité fueron Brian Bodiford, Adán Castillo, Monsenhor Lary Droll, Carol Ann Hunt, Perla García, Isabel y Victor Garza, Carol Ann Hunt, Jerry Jiménez, Vincent Mangano, Sister Hilda Marotta, Deacon Luís Mata, Deacon Freddy Medina, Kevin Pantoja, Tereza Rico, y Vonda Wilde.

El ten-page Pastoral Plan document is on our diocesan website at www.sanangeldiocese.org.
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FMU contact the Parish office at (325)392-3353 or
email: ozona@sangangodiocese.org

Jesse is a full-time bilingual Catholic Lay Evangelist, who is nationally acclaimed for his dynamic, upbeat Christ-centered preaching. His preaching apostolate is “On Fire Evangelization.”
Jesse has been on Catholic radio for over 15 years now hosting teaching and speaking in English & Spanish. Currently on virginmediaoperradio.org hosting “The Terry and Jesse Show.” & “Jesse 36.” Jesse is also a host on a spanish network show Infancia Radio” in Phoenix, Arizona. He speaks on all things Catholic such as:
- Catholic Evangelization
- Apologetics
- Marriage & Family
- Male Spirituality
- Spiritual Warfare
- Culture Wars
- Teen | GST

Jesse has been preaching since 1993. He has also defended Holy Mother Church in several official debates with different Protestant Pastors, and on Spanish television against secular humanists.
Jesse’s motto is: Love God. Save Souls. & Stay Energetic!

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*Glory to the Lord with me. Let us together extol His name.*
Psalm 14:1
Catholic Charities to award $1 million for innovative anti-poverty efforts

By Dennis Sadowski

WASHINGTON (CNS) — Catholic Charities USA has unveiled a $1 million award program that officials hope will lead to innovative efforts to address poverty.

Called the Innovation Challenge, the program will see three member agencies receiving identical $333,333 awards for the "reduction, elimination and prevention of poverty."

"Innovation is the key word," explained Steve Bogus, who is Catholic Charities USA’s vice president of social enterprise and workforce development.

Dominican Sister Donna Markham, president and CEO, announced a yearlong competition Sept. 26 during the agency’s annual gathering in Albuquerque, New Mexico. She invited diocesan member agencies to submit proposals for new programs to meet peoples’ needs.

The winners will be announced during the organization’s annual gathering Oct. 28-30, 2020, in Cleveland.

Awards will be given to three diocesan agencies based on the size of their operation. That way, Bogus told Catholic News Service, a small agency will not be competing with an agency in a much larger budget and staff.

The competition is meant to inspire Catholic charities to staff their programs based on the size of their operation. That way, Bogus told Catholic News Service, a small agency will not be competing with an agency in a much larger budget and staff.

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Continued from Page 18

self for the other because of their value and worth.

But hope: It’s the desiring of heaven and eternal life, and that just seems so far off, something I have to worry about tomorrow. I have to believe today. I have to love people and God right now. But I don’t need to hope for heaven yet ... that’ll come in the future.

But that’s where I’m wrong. It’s where a lot of us go wrong as we ponder the idea of hope.

Because hope isn’t just longing for heaven someday, it’s the belief that we’re made for heaven, meant for heaven, designed for heaven and life with God now. And we are promised something by God (eternity with him) and he will deliver.

That’s something we have to keep our eyes open to ... or we’ll miss that very best thing.

It’s so easy to close our eyes to it these days. The church hasn’t been a source of much hope lately, at least not on the surface. Disaffiliation numbers are up — people are leaving and not coming back. The misunderstanding about the Eucharist is prevalent — people are either ignorant or disagree. The scandals seem to increase by the day, and it hurts every single time, a gut punch as we see corruption and dishonesty.

But I then got to imagining Elizabeth raising John day in and day out. If the hairshirts and diet he embraced as an adult tell us anything about his childhood, it’s that she likely had her hands full.

She might not have had the youthful energy required for the job, but what we do to help them on their path to heaven. God can do a lot with our generosity at any age.

It’s a lesson I hope other mothers in my midst remind me of from time to time, as my child’s personality and preferences unfold.

And thanks to a medical report, I’m glad to know that group of women includes the company of a few matrarchs and saints of “advanced maternal age.”

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Elise Italiano Ureneck, associate director of the Center for the Church in the 21st Century at Boston College, writes the "Finding God in All Things" column for Catholic News Service.
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OSPINO

Contínua de Página 17

en Ruanda han estado discerniendo las consecuencias del genocidio y cómo respondieron a lo sucedido tanto institucional, comunitaria y personalmente.

No se puede negar que hay elementos de decepción y resentimiento en el proceso. No es un accidente que sólo cerca de la mitad de los ruandeses hoy en día se identifiquen como católicos. Aun así, durante el último cuarto de siglo ha predominado un espíritu de resurrección.

“Ruanda se levanta de entre las cenizas de 1994. … Haremos todo lo posible para evitar que esto ocurra otra vez”, dijo Pascasie.

Al consultar varias comunidades en el país, no hay inconvenientes en su observación. Existe una conciencia compartida de ser un pueblo nuevo, la cual define gran parte de la vida diaria en la sociedad ruandesa.

Ese espíritu de resurrección comunitaria también ha dado vida a maneras nuevas de ser iglesia. El papa Francisco ha invitado a los católicos a ser “una iglesia que es pobre para los pobres”. Puede ver esto en Ruanda.

La iglesia allí, guiada por sus pastores, está comprometida visiblemente a vivir en solidaridad con los pobres, a reconstruir la sociedad y a promover la reconciliación entre los ruandeses en medio de las diferencias que les definen.

Quince años después de lo ocurrido, Pascasie finalmente logró regresar a su jardín. Hoy en día, flores hermosas florecen con colores radiantes en lo que sus vecinos llamaban el “jardín católico”.

El jardín de Pascasie es la metáfora perfecta para describir a la sociedad ruandesa y a la iglesia en este país. Al escuchar a Pascasie, quien hoy ya es parte de su historia junto con los muchos católicos en los Estados Unidos que apoyamos su trabajo por medio de CRS.

Cada vez que los católicos en los Estados Unidos apoyamos proyectos de solidaridad en Ruanda y en los más de 100 países en los que CRS y otras organizaciones católicas similares se encuentran, al igual que Pascasie hacemos posible que muchas flores broten en el jardín global de Dios.

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Ospino es profesor de teología y educación religiosa en Boston College.
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Bishop Michael J. Sis
Publisher

Brian Bodiford
Editor
Director of Communications
A new pastor and a renovated hall for parishioners of St. Patrick in Brady

Bishop Sis installed Father Terry Brenon as pastor of St. Patrick Church in Brady, Sept. 22, 2019.

While in Brady for the installation of St. Patrick Church's new pastor, Bishop Sis blessed the renovated Parish Hall, Sept. 22, 2019.

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A FUTURE FULL OF HOPE
UN FUTURO LLENO DE ESPERANZA

DATE/FECHA
OCTOBER 19, 2019 | 9:00 AM - 4:00 PM

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MCNEASE CONVENTION CENTER, SAN ANGELO, TEXAS

TIME/HORA

SITIO

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$25.00

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(per participant, includes mail; must be postmarked on or before September 25, 2019)

$30.00 after Sept 25
$35.00 at the Door

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