The young adult group from St. Elizabeth Ann Seton Parish in Odessa on a bowling outing Feb. 24. (photo by Alan Torre/APTorre Photography)

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- National Catholic Sisters Week (Page 24)
Join the Diocese of San Angelo at Texas Catholic Advocacy Day

By Deacon Freddy Medina

Texas Catholic Advocacy Day is right around the corner on March 26 in Austin. This is a chance to join the Texas bishops and thousands of Catholics for a day at our State Capitol, visiting legislators and promoting faithful citizenship. This biennial rally is hosted by the Texas bishops to promote the Church’s values of life, justice, charity, and religious freedom to members of the Texas Legislature.

Why advocate?
Well, for a couple of reasons:
• Our baptismal call is to follow and bear witness to Christ in all we do.
• Participation in the political process is a moral obligation.
Therefore, on Advocacy Day participants are invited to visit the State Capitol and meet with legislative staff to discuss the Texas bishops’ legislative concerns regarding issues that affect the lives and dignity of the people of Texas.

How do you get there?
• You can drive yourself or gather a group of folks from your parish and carpool to the State Capitol.
• There is a bus leaving Holy Redeemer in Odessa, stopping in Midland, Big Spring (if needed) and San Angelo before continuing on to Austin. There is no cost to ride the bus, but you must reserve a seat by calling the Office of Diocesan Ministry at 325-651-7500 before March 15.

Legislative agenda of the Texas Catholic Conference of Bishops

The Texas Catholic Conference of Bishops is the public policy arm of the Catholic bishops of the state of Texas. Among other responsibilities, the TCCB lobbies for the public policy priorities of the bishops during the biennial session of the Texas legislature.

By participating in Catholic Advocacy Day, Catholics from around the state can meet personally with legislators to help argue the need for laws that support Catholic teaching.

Below are the areas of interest to the TCCB as well as some specific policy goals of the bishops of Texas:

Life and Family Life
Human life is intrinsically valuable and should be protected by law from fertilization to natural death. Moreover, the family is the sanctuary of life in which parents teach children about their feelings of betrayal or hurt by the Church, we are here to help you. To report incidents, call Lori Hines, Victim Assistance Coordinator, at 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.

Supports increased funding to abortion alternatives for expectant mothers; supports the elimination of wrongful birth lawsuits; supports proposals that recognize the sacredness, fidelity, and permanency of marriage; supports an improved foster care system which respects subsidiarity through a community-based model; and supports increased recruitment, formation, and support of foster, adoptive, and biological parents.

Immigration
Life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness in America are preserved by a government that is of, by, and for the people. This is the exceptional American heritage, and it has been charitably offered to the world’s oppressed and persecuted for over two centuries. The TCCB encourages its continuation, welcomes migrants embracing the American dream, and respects the enforcement of laws which preserve the common good. Specifically, the TCCB:
• opposes efforts to reduce access by immigrants to IDs, birth certificates, drivers’ licenses, education, and healthcare;
• supports care for unaccompanied minors and alternatives to family detention;

See AGENDA, Page 21

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, at 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.

Make your Voice heard!

JOIN the Texas Catholic Network. Visit https://texascatholic.org and click GET STARTED to get regular updates on the 86th Texas Legislature and the work of the Texas Catholic Conference of Bishops

Reportar Abuso Sexual

La Diócesis Católica de San Ángelo 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 trascención o herido 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 Angelo, Ministerio de Asistencia a Víctimas, PO Box 1829, San Angelo, TX 76902. 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.
From the Bishop’s Desk

God and money

Bishop Michael J. Sis
Diocese of San Angelo

“If I am suffering with illness or poverty, then it must mean I have very little faith.” The truth is, however, that Jesus never promised us that faith in him would bring economic prosperity in this world.

God does not owe us material wealth or complete bodily health as those kind of reward for our faith in him. Being faithful to Jesus Christ does not necessarily bring upward mobility. In fact, there sometimes come moments of truth in our lives when being true to our values and being faithful to Jesus entails making choices which mean less money and less comfort for ourselves.

It is in such moments that we show our true loyalty to Jesus Christ.

Sometimes people talk about a person’s “net worth.” In that context, we are tempted to evaluate ourselves according to financial resources and material things; however, it is not the size of our house or our bank account that makes us worthwhile persons. Our true worth as human beings is based on the fact that we are created in the image and likeness of God. So, when we’re calculating our true net worth, we need to keep in mind that there are some things that money can’t buy. These include our faith, our eternal salvation, our character, our moral integrity, our human dignity, our family, and our true friends.

THE PROSPERITY GOSPEL

You may have heard of the “prosperity gospel.” This is a mistaken view of some contemporary Christians who claim that material prosperity flows from the depth and quality of one’s faith in God. Their “gospel of prosperity” leads some people to think in the following way:

Where do you find your security? Do you place your trust in your own power, and in passing material things, or do you place your trust in God, who is eternal?

Dios y el dinero

Obispo Michael J. Sis
Diócesis de San Angelo

EL EVANGELIO DE LA PROSPERIDAD

Es posible que usted haya oído hablar del “evangelio de la prosperidad.” Esta es una visión errónea de algunos Cristianos contemporáneos que afirman que la prosperidad material fluye desde la profunidad y la calidad de nuestra fe en Dios. Su “evangelio de la prosperidad” lleva a algunas personas a pensar de la siguiente manera: “Si estoy sufriendo de una enfermedad o la pobreza, entonces significa que tengo muy poca fe.” Al contrario, la verdad es que Jesús nunca nos prometió que la fe en Él traería la prosperidad económica en este mundo.

Dios no nos debe la riqueza material o la salud corporal completa como un tipo de recompensa por nuestra fe en Él. Ser fiel a Jesucristo no lleva necesariamente a la movilidad ascendente. De hecho, a veces hay momentos de verdad en nuestras vidas cuando ser fieles a nuestros valores y ser fieles a Jesús implica tomar decisiones que significan menos dinero y menos comodidad para nosotros mismos. Es en estos momentos que mostramos nuestra verdadera lealtad a Jesucristo.

A veces la gente habla del “valor neto” de una persona. En ese contexto, nos vemos tentados a evaluar nosotros mismos de acuerdo a los recursos financieros y las cosas materiales; sin embargo, no es el tamaño de nuestra casa o nuestra cuenta bancaria que nos convierte en personas que valen la pena. Nuestro verdadero valor como seres humanos se basa en el hecho de que hemos sido creados a la imagen y semejanza de Dios. Por lo tanto, cuando estamos calculando nuestro verdadero valor neto, tenemos que tomar en cuenta que hay algunas cosas que el dinero no puede comprar. Estos incluyen nuestra fe, nuestra salvación eterna, nuestro carácter, nuestra integridad moral, nuestra dignidad humana, nuestra familia, y nuestros verdaderos amigos.

An Ash Wednesday Prayer

Lord, take the days when I feel like dust,
Like dirt that is scattered by the wind,
Swept away and inconsequential.

Break open my heart this Lent.
Help me trust in Your power
To transform dusty-lives
Into sacred, living signs
That embody flaming
Love and goodness.
Amen.

Sr. Joyce Detzel, CDP
Associate Director
Diocese of San Angelo
Office of Evangelization and Catechesis
By Catholic News Service

WASHINGTON (CNS) — The U.S. Supreme Court Feb. 19 rejected hearing an appeal from Whole Woman's Health, a Texas-based abortion facility chain, which aimed to get the Texas Catholic bishops' internal communications about abortion.

In December 2016, Whole Woman's Health sued over a Texas law that requires abortion facilities to bury or cremate aborted human remains. The Texas Catholic bishops offered to provide burials to all unborn children who were aborted, which led to the abortion chain subpoenaing decades of internal religious deliberations among the bishops regarding abortion, even though they were not part of the lawsuit.

"Thank goodness the Supreme Court saw this appeal for what it was: a nasty attempt to intimidate the bishops and force them to withdraw their offer to bury every child aborted in Texas," said Eric Rassbach, vice president and senior counsel at Becket, a nonprofit, public-interest law firm, which represents the Texas Catholic Conference, which represents the bishops on public policy matters.

"Abortion groups may think the bishops 'troublesome,' but it is wrong to weaponize the law to stop the bishops from standing up for their beliefs," said Rassbach in a statement.

Last June, when a trial judge ordered the bishops to hand over their private religious deliberations, Becket filed an emergency appeal to the 5th U.S. Circuit Court of Appeals, based in New Orleans. The 5th Circuit granted the bishops temporary protection, then made the protection permanent in July 2018.

On Aug. 16, 2018, the full 5th Circuit rejected Whole Woman's Health's petition for a rehearing of the case. The abortion provider then appealed to the U.S. Supreme Court.

Supreme Court to hear oral arguments on 2020 citizenship census question

By Carol Zimmermann

WASHINGTON (CNS) — The U.S. Supreme Court agreed to hear oral arguments in April about the Trump administration's push to add a citizenship question to the 2020 census and its decision to cut funding for census outreach, since the Census Bureau needs to begin printing forms for the every-10-years questionnaire this summer.

The court agreed Feb. 15 to take on this case — Department of Commerce v. New York — without following the normal procedure and waiting for action from the federal appeals court.

In January, a federal trial judge blocked the Commerce Department from adding the citizenship question to the census saying the process that led to adding it was deeply flawed.

U.S. Commerce Secretary Wilbur Ross has maintained the citizenship question is in response to a request from the Justice Department, which said the information would help it enforce the Voting Rights Act.

U.S. District Court Judge Jesse Furman in New York did not buy this reasoning and criticized Ross for ignoring reports of both government statisticians and demographers who have warned that asking this type of question was a mistake.

Solicitor General Noel J. Francisco urged the Supreme Court to review Furman's decision, saying the judge had exceeded his authority. He also said citizenship questions have been asked of sample groups to the population in previous census forms and that they are also used by other countries.

The lawsuit initially challenging the citizenship question was filed by New York and other states and localities and advocacy groups that called See CENSUS, Page 22

See CENSUS, Page 22

CALENDARS

Bishop's Calendar

March 2019

5 SAN ANGELO, Diocesan Pastoral Center, Diocesan Liturgical Commission meeting at 10:00 a.m.
6 ABILENE, Hardin-Simmons University, Ash Wednesday service in the Logsdon Chapel at 1:30 p.m.
6 ABILENE, McMurry University, Ash Wednesday Mass in the Carleton Chapel in the Radford building at 5:00 p.m.
6 ABILENE, Abilene Christian University, Ash Wednesday service in the Chapel at 7:30 p.m.
7 SAN ANGELO, Diocesan Pastoral Center, Personnel Board meeting at 1:00 p.m.
9 ROWENA, St. Joseph, ACTS Mass and social at 5:00 p.m.
10 SAN ANGELO, Christ the King Retreat Center, Mass for deaconate formation class at 11:00 a.m.
10 SAN ANGELO, Cathedral of the Sacred Heart, Rite of Election at 3:00 p.m.
11–13 WASHINGTON, D.C., USCCB Administrative Committee meeting
13–16 CONCEPTION, MO, Seminary Board of Regents meeting
17 MIDLAND, St. Stephen, Rite of Election at 2:30 p.m.
19 SAN ANGELO, Diocesan Pastoral Center, Presidential Council meeting at 11:00 a.m.
20 SAN ANGELO, Christ the King Retreat Center, Staff Lenten Day of Prayer at 9:00 a.m.
20 SAN ANGELO, Diocesan Pastoral Center, Priestly Life and Formation meeting at 1:00 p.m.
22–23 SAN ANGELO, Christ the King Retreat Center, Diocesan Leadership Summit
24 SAN ANGELO, Cathedral of the Sacred Heart, Marriage Jubilee Mass at 3:00 p.m.
25 AUSTIN, Texas Catholic Conference Spring Bishops' meeting
26 AUSTIN, State Capitol, Texas Catholic Advocate Day
27 SAN ANGELO, Diocesan Pastoral Center, Vocation Team meeting at 10:00 a.m.
28 WINTERS, Our Lady of Mt. Carmel, Confirmation Mass at 6:00 p.m.
28 SAN ANGELO, Diocesan Pastoral Center, San Angelo Diocese Priests' Annual Retreat
30 SAN ANGELO, Sacred Heart Cathedral, Chrism Mass at 11:00 a.m.
30 SAN ANGELO, Sacred Heart Cathedral, Passion Sunday Mass at 12:00 noon
30 SAN ANGELO, Holy Angels, Seder Meal at 5:30 p.m.
14 MIDLAND, Sacred Heart Cathedral, Holy Thursday Mass of the Lord's Supper at 7:00 p.m.
19 SAN ANGELO, St. Margaret, Good Friday Procession and Stations of the Cross at 1:00 p.m.; light lunch at 11:30 a.m.
20 SAN ANGELO, Sacred Heart Cathedral, Easter Vigil at 8:30 p.m.
23 SAN ANGELO, Christ the King Retreat Center, Staff picnic at 6:00 p.m.
24–26 ST. LOUIS, MO, Kennicott-Glennon Seminary visit
28 OZONA, Our Lady of Perpetual Help, Confirmation Mass at 11:00 a.m.
28 MIDLAND, San Miguel Arcángel, Confirmation Mass at 4:00 p.m.
29 SAN ANGELO, Diocesan Pastoral Center, Catholic Charitable Foundation meeting at 10:00 a.m.
30 SAN ANGELO, Diocesan Pastoral Center, Presbyteral Council meeting at 11:00 a.m.
30 STANTON, St. Joseph, Confirmation Mass at 6:30 p.m.

April 2019

2 SAN ANGELO, Diocesan Pastoral Center, Finance Council meeting at 11:00 a.m.
2 MIDLAND, San Miguel Arcángel, Adult Confirmation Mass at 7:00 p.m.
4 WALL, St. Ambrose, Mass and blessing of columbarium at 8:00 p.m.
6 GARDEN CITY, St. Lawrence, Theology on Tap at 7:00 p.m.
7 GARDEN CITY, St. Lawrence, Confirmation Mass at 10:30 a.m.
7 SAN ANGELO, Murphey Performance Hall, Premier of film, The Needle and the Thread, at 3:00 p.m.
8–12 SAN ANGELO, Christ the King Retreat Center, San Angelo Diocese Priests' Annual Retreat
12 SAN ANGELO, Sacred Heart Cathedral, Chrism Mass at 11:00 a.m.
14 SAN ANGELO, Sacred Heart Cathedral, Passion Sunday Mass at 12:00 noon
14 SAN ANGELO, Holy Angels, Seder Meal at 5:30 p.m.
18 SAN ANGELO, Sacred Heart Cathedral, Holy Thursday Mass of the Lord's Supper at 7:00 p.m.
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20 SAN ANGELO, Sacred Heart Cathedral, Easter Vigil at 8:30 p.m.
23 SAFAN ANGELO, Christ the King Retreat Center, Staff picnic at 6:00 p.m.
28 ST. LOUIS, MO, Kennicott-Glennon Seminary visit
28 OZONA, Our Lady of Perpetual Help, Confirmation Mass at 11:00 a.m.
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30 STANTON, St. Joseph, Confirmation Mass at 6:30 p.m.

Christ the King Retreat Center

March 2019

1–2 First Central Presbyterian
3 Confirmation Retreat
8 Heart of Mercy Prayer Group
8 Staff Mass & Lunch
8–9 Nun Run
8–10 Deacon Formation
10–12 San Angelo Realtors Association
11 Heart of Mercy Prayer Group
14–17 St. John the Baptist
18 Heart of Mercy Prayer Group
20 Staff Lenten Day of Prayer
22–23 Leadership Summit
25 Heart of Mercy Prayer Group
25–31 Engaged Encounter
31 Natural Family Planning

April 2019

1 Heart of Mercy Prayer Group
4 Confirmation Retreat
5–7 Deacon Formation
8–12 Deacon Annual Retreat
14 Confirmation Retreat
15 Heart of Mercy Prayer Group
19 Ascension of Our Lord, Mass in Celebration of Good Friday
20 Stations of the Cross w/Bishop Sis
22 Heart of Mercy Prayer Group
23 Staff Easter Party
25–28 Women's Small Town ACTS Retreat
29 Heart of Mercy Prayer Group
30 Deacon Quarterly

Necrology of Priests and Deacons

Please pray for our departed clergy

March

10 Deacon Bonifacio Rodriguez (2017)
11 Deacon Albert Libortone (1977)
14 Rev. George Fey, CPPS (2013)
15 Deacon Cosme Ureña (2011)
21 Deacon Frank Trudo (1992)
26 Rev. Serran Braun (1999)
26 Deacon Audon Saldivar (2000)

April

2 Deacon Lazaro Sevier (2009)
3 Deacon Edward Martinez (1985)
3 Deacon Alan Neff (2016)
4 Deacon Andres Hernandez (2013)
7 Deacon Jerry Treviño (2017)
16 Deacon Eliseo Carrillo (1989)
21 Rev. Thomas Leahy, SAC (1969)
22 Deacon Jesués (Jesse) Vasquez (2018)
23 Rev. Louis Droit (2006)
25 Deacon Juan Muñoz (2007)
29 Deacon Robert Daigle (1986)
Speakers, vigil with 700k pilgrims and Pope Francis highlights of ‘whirlwind’ World Youth Day experience in Panama

By Lisa Martinez

ODESSA — Nine pilgrims from our diocese recently attended World Youth Day from Jan. 21–27 in Panama City, Panama. The temperature there at this time of year was sweltering, so it was a very hot but blessed experience!

We were involved in a whirlwind of activities. We attended the Fiat Festival for English-speaking pilgrims and were able to hear some great speakers like Curtis Martin, Sister Bethany Madonna and Bishop Robert Barron.

We were also able to meet up with the Diocese of San Angelo’s Bishop Emeritus Michael Pfeifer. He has a tradition of getting together with pilgrims from our diocese at every World Youth Day. This was his eighth one to attend. He saw us off with a really lovely blessing!

We were thrilled to see Pope Francis at the welcome ceremony and the Stations of the Cross, along the coastline of Panama City called the Cinta Costera. It was a beautiful setting lined with palm trees overlooking the Pacific Ocean.

The last two main events involved an overnight vigil with the pope in several large fields called the Metro Park. We spent the night outdoors along with about 700,000 of our closest friends! The following morning the pope presided over the farewell Mass and announced the next WYD would be held in Lisbon, Portugal.

Lisa Martinez is the director of campus ministry in Midland and Odessa for the Diocese of San Angelo.

Pilgrimage as a family affair: DeHoyos clan shares experiences of travel to three World Youth Days

By Loretta Fulton

SAN ANGELO — What could be better for someone living in the Diocese of San Angelo than attending a World Youth Day in some far-flung part of the globe?

How about if all the members of a family got to experience several? That’s exactly what has happened with the Mario and Connie DeHoyos Family of San Angelo. The first to attend was Natalee, now 22, who attended the 2016 event in Lisbon, Portugal.

In 2019, Matthew returned to World Youth Day, this time in Panama, and so did mom and dad. And so, what could possibly be better than that family experience? How about if the whole family goes together to the next World Youth Day, scheduled for Portugal in 2022? If Mom has her way, that is exactly what will happen three years in the future.

“That is our plan,” Connie DeHoyos said, “God willing.”

So far, God has been willing to smile graciously on the DeHoyos Family and their desire for each family member to attend a World Youth Day. Mario and Connie Turner look forward to their chance to experience a World Youth Day, which first was held in 1986. Their Catholic faith is important to them and they emphasized to their children that Catholicism is universal. All Catholics follow the same liturgy, reading the same scriptures at Mass, no matter where they live in the world.

That point came alive to Natalee when she attended World Youth Day in Sydney. She worshipped alongside other young adults from all over the world, people who spoke different languages and observed different cultural traditions. But the one thing they had in common was their Catholic faith.

“It’s beautiful to experience the universal church,” not just hear about the universality, Natalee said. “It was beautiful when we all were one in that moment at the consecration.”

Ever since Natalee’s experience, her parents wanted to make sure her brothers got to be a part of World Youth Day, too. Since the first one, held in Rome in 1986, World Youth Day has been held all over the world. A forerunner to today’s World Youth Day was held in 1984 when over 300,000 young people from around the world responded to an invitation from Pope John Paul II for an international Jubilee of Youth on Palm Sunday in St. Peter’s Square.

The Holy Father invited youths to Rome again the following Palm Sunday, in 1985, to coincide with the United Nations’ International Year of the Youth. On Dec. 20, 1985, Pope John Paul II announced the first official World Youth Day to be held in 1986.

World Youth Day in Poland in 2016 was a special one for the DeHoyos Family. That was the year that both Matthew and Jacob got to go. That also was the year that mom had an idea. They had sent all three children to World Youth Day, sharing in the pre-trip excitement.

“We would get so excited,” Connie said. “It was almost like we were living it alongside them.”

But “almost” isn’t the same as actually being there. So, when the opportunity came for Connie and Mario to serve as chaperones for the 2019 World Youth Day, held Jan. 22-27 in Panama City, they jumped at it. Sharing a room, and the experience, with son Matthew made the trip even more special.

“It was more personal for us,” Connie said.

While in Panama, visitors toured the historic district of Panama City, saw the Panama Canal, and visited religious sites. Hundreds of thousands of youths and chaperones gathered on the beach to celebrate Mass, listening in native languages through headphones. Jumbo screens were set up so that everyone could see Pope Francis and the other celebtrants. Connie and Mario got to see the Holy Father in Philadelphia and New York City in 2015, but they didn’t get as close to him then as they did in Panama.

“It was such an amazing experience,” Connie said.

Natalee had the same impression when she attended World Youth Day in Sydney, Australia, in 2008 and encountered Pope Benedict XVI. She recalled something in particular Pope Benedict said to the throng of young people gathered.

“Our Catholic faith is real,” he said. “It’s alive.”

Now, the entire DeHoyos Family has experienced that reality. The 2019 trip, packed each day with worship, concerts, touring religious and historic sites, was tiring but energizing at the same time. The five young adults and four chaperones from the Diocese of San Angelo got a special treat at World Youth Day when retired Bishop Michael Pfeifer showed up. The current Bishop, Michael Sis, presided over World Youth Day USA, which was held Jan. 26 in San Angelo. Natalee is a veteran of the local one-day event, too. If she can’t make it to the global event, she at least tries to participate in the local gathering.

“It makes it so that you at least get a small glimpse of what the pilgrims are experiencing,” she said.

Natalee is looking forward to experiencing the real, live event in Portugal in 2022 — with her entire family. As mom of the family, Connie DeHoyos is excited about the prospect of her entire clan experiencing together the sense of a bright future that she got from attending this year’s World Youth Day.

“It gave me a lot of hope and joy for our church,” Connie said. “I left with a lot of joy and hope in my heart.”
Catholic Foundation now accepting grant applications

SAN ANGELO — The Catholic Foundation for the Roman Catholic Diocese of San Angelo held its annual meeting on Feb. 14, 2019. The trustees, after reviewing the positive returns on investments, adopted a five-percent payout rate for Foundation endowments as of Dec. 31, 2018. Therefore, $37,731 will be available from unrestricted endowment funds to be distributed as grants this year for projects and programs of parishes, schools, and Catholic organizations throughout the diocese.

Interested parties can apply for a grant by reviewing the grant policy and completing the grant application found on the Foundation’s website: www.catholicfoundationsanangelo.org.

All grant applications must include the pastor’s signature and are due by Friday, April 5, 2019. The board of trustees will review all grant applications and approve those addressing critical needs in our diocese at a meeting in April. All grants made will be paid before June 30, 2019.

Grants of $37,109 were also paid in February to the beneficiaries as designated by the donors of the designated endowment funds. In addition, $192,927 was distributed to the agencies who have investment management agreements with the Foundation for the management of their endowment funds.

The total value of our portfolio on Dec. 31, 2018, was $6,030,955.

The Catholic Foundation was established in 2010 for the benefit of our diocese. The Foundation is a non-profit corporation that is legally separate from the Diocese of San Angelo. The trustees of the Foundation are: Bishop Michael J. Sis, Chairman; Mrs. Lois Folger, President; Mr. Steve McKay, Secretary/Treasurer; Mr. Joe Ed Canon; Father Timothy Hayter; Mr. Len Mertz; Ms. Michelle Allen; Mr. Oran “Trey” Berry III; Mr. David Boutin; and Mr. Douglas Burns. The trustees are extremely grateful for the confidence of the donors to the Foundation. Donor generosity has made it possible for the Foundation to make investments and achieve the growth that has allowed continued grant making from endowment funds on an annual basis.

Donations given to the Foundation are tax-deductible to the full extent allowed by law. A gift to an endowment fund is a gift that will serve the Catholic family in the Diocese of San Angelo in perpetuity. The value of the principal of the original gift will be preserved while the growth and earnings on the investment may be distributed out in grants on an annual basis. Additional information on how to set up an endowment fund is available on the Foundation website at www.catholicfoundationsanangelo.org.

International donations, compliance with civil law

By Steve McKay
Diocesan Finance Officer

The people of the Diocese of San Angelo are very generous. In Bishop Sis’ Financial Report to the Faithful published in the February Angelus, it was noted that parishes of the diocese had contributed $1,208,909 to national and diocesan special collections. One of the diocesan collections taken up at each parish is the Mission Cooperative Collection. This collection supports missionary dioceses, religious congregations and lay mission groups by assigning them to parishes so they may make an appeal at weekend Masses in the name of their organization. Within our diocese many of the appeals are made from groups outside the United States. Often the foreign organizations may not be a 501(c)(3) exempt organization in the United States.

The foreign organization status of groups and individuals requires the Diocese of San Angelo and its parishes to follow certain protocols in order to ensure the donations made by parishioners are tax deductible and federal and state laws are not being violated. Some of the priests and parishes would like to send funds to charitable causes in other countries. The protocols described in this article will apply to most of these cases.

Once a parish receives donations for a foreign organization it sends the donations to the diocese for transmittal to the foreign organization. Parishies are not permitted to send money internationally. The diocese, upon receipt of parish collections, will require the foreign organization to specify that the money to be sent will be used for the furtherance of the diocese’s exempt purposes: “To proclaim the good news of Jesus Christ, inviting all people into a loving relationship with the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, united as sisters and brothers in service to the world.”

Additionally, the diocese asks that none of the funds shall be marked and that the foreign organization report back to the diocese on how the funds were used. These requirements are found in the grant agreement required of each foreign organization. Finally, the grant agreement notifies the foreign organization that the diocese may deny, withhold, or attempt to recover any funds not used for the intended purposes.

The rules for sending money to international groups were brought about by concerns over funding terrorism and money laundering. After 9/11, Congress passed the USA PATRIOT Act. The USA PATRIOT Act contains strong measures to prevent, detect, and prosecute terrorism and international money laundering. The strong measures filter down to our diocese and its transfers of appeal collections to foreign groups. In addition to the USA PATRIOT Act there are other anti-terrorism financing laws that place restrictions on the transfer of money outside the United States.

Our diocese will continue giving local parishioners an opportunity to deepen their connection with Catholic communities worldwide and to strengthen their participation in missionary activity. As these opportunities arise, if you have any questions regarding the diocese’s protocols for getting your donation to the organization making the appeal, please contact Steve McKay, Diocesan Finance Officer, at 325-651-3711 or Mike Wyse, Chancellor, at 325-651-3732.
Spring priests’ conference puts focus on preaching

On Tuesday, Feb. 19 and Wednesday, Feb. 20, many of the priests of the diocese gathered together at the Way Retreat Center in Midland to learn about a topic of great importance. This topic affects every person that attends church and is often a subject of compliments and complaints. This mysterious topic is nothing other than preaching.

Father Roger Keeler, a priest from the Oblate School of Theology in San Antonio, began his presentation with some moving words from our Holy Father Pope Francis. In his first apostolic exhortation, Evangelii Gaudium, the pope invited all Christians to a renewed personal encounter with Jesus Christ. In the homily, we, as ministers bring Christ to the people, and the people open their hearts to receive the Word of God in a transformative way. It was particularly moving to hear that the homily is connected to the liturgy that day. The homily can truly be called a part of the offering made to the Father, mediating the grace which Christ pours out upon us.

As Father Roger continued with the presentation, he presented a list of key points that each preacher must keep in mind throughout the entire process of preparation and all the way to the delivery of the homily. An authentic homily flows from the relationship that the pastor has for his community. He speaks the truth to every person that attends church and is often a subject of compliments and complaints. This topic is nothing other than preaching.

I was particularly impressed by the depth of preparation that Father Roger called each of us to in terms of homily preparation. At one point he even suggested reading the Gospel passage as many as 30 times in one sitting! This all points to a priest who has entered into a posture of receptive prayer, and so is open to allowing the Lord to speak to him, and through him. Any priest who preaches must first allow the Word of God to take flesh in their daily lives. In that way the priest can truly say with St. Paul, “It is no longer I who live, but Christ who lives in me.” We preach the Gospel because we have been challenged and moved by the Word of God, and we are not content to remain silent!

Many of us have encountered homilies which do not lift up the spirit or bring us new life. Father Roger took this opportunity to encourage us again to work at preaching positive homilies which offer hope, point to the future, and won’t leave the faithful trapped in negativity. This type of homily naturally flows from study and prayer. He then encouraged us to pray and ask the Lord before we approach that ambo that we can be God’s instrument — that God’s word spoken through us will not return empty but will do what God intends. A homily is not just about a thought, but a thought that makes a difference. When the faithful hear the Word with an open heart, it is the preacher’s hope and prayer that they will encounter the Lord and be better equipped to live in the reign of God here on earth.

Dangerous apps for kids

Smartphones and tablets have allowed predators access to children in their own homes. Additionally, children can be exposed to cyber-bullying and sexually inappropriate content. New apps are constantly being created, so it’s important to monitor what your child downloads. It’s important to know what each app does, whether it has any benefit, and whether it can expose your child to danger.

Apps Specifically Known to Be Dangerous for Kids

**Whisper.** Whisper allows you to post secrets anonymously and allows you to chat with other users in your geographic area.

Why is it dangerous? Many children are drawn to communicating with strangers, feeling that their secrets are safer with a stranger than with their friends. The app is a perfect tool for ill-intentioned strangers looking to connect with young people because it allows them to exchange messages with people nearest them.

**Yik Yak.** Yik Yak users are anonymous, they don’t create a profile or an account, but they can post comments that are accessible to the nearest 500 people (within a 1-5 mile radius). In fact, a psychiatrist called Yik Yak the most dangerous app he’d ever seen because “it can turn a school into a chat room where everyone can post his or her comments anonymously. Untruthful, mean, character assassinating short messages are immediately seen by all users in a specific geographic area.”

Why is it dangerous? This app is causing problems in schools across the United States, with students maliciously slandering teachers, staff, and other students.

**Kik.** Kik is a free app-based alternative texting service that allows texts/pictures to be sent without being logged in the phone history. Similar apps are Viber, WhatsApp, and TextNow.

Why is it dangerous? Kik makes it easier for your child to talk to strangers without your knowledge since it bypasses the wireless providers short message services (SMS). In addition, strangers can send your child a “friend request.”

**Snapchat.** Snapchat allows users to capture an image or a video and make it available to friends who can then share with possible unintended users. Pictures and videos automatically disappear forever unless the user saves it to their memories. Additionally, Snapchat has a map screen where others can see the users exact location in real time.

Why is it dangerous? Kids can receive or send inappropriate photos. This app can also makes kids feel like they can send inappropriate pictures without the consequences because the image will self-destruct automatically or so they think. The truth is that the image is sent over the internet and could ultimately affect future careers. The location feature could allow predators to know exactly where your child is located.

**Vine.** Vine allows users to watch and post six second videos.

Why is it dangerous? While many videos are harmless, pornographic videos do pop up into the teen and child contacts easily search for and access pornographic videos. Additionally, predators utilize this app to search for teens and find their location. They can even connect with the teens via messaging apps.

**ChatRoulette and Omegle.** These apps allow you to video chat with strangers.

Why is this dangerous? Not only are users chatting with strangers, they could be chatting with fake strangers. Chat sites like ChatRoulette and Omegle have done their best to produce systems that warn users when people they are chatting with are potentially using fake webcam software. However, developers still manage to slip under their radars with frequent updates. So, a predator could use a fake webcam and use images from another child or teen and convince your child to send inappropriate pictures or get information about your child’s location.

**Poof.** Poof hides other apps on your phone. You can select which apps you would like to hide and their icons will no longer show up on your smartphone screen.

Why is it dangerous? If a child has apps they want to hide from their parents, all they have to do is download Poof and their screen is clear of any questionable apps.

Remember, as a parent your child’s safety is more important than their privacy. As a parent, you aren’t being nosy or invading privacy by checking your child’s cell phone; you are being responsible. It is a good idea to establish family media rules, such as having to check with a parent before downloading a new app or game.

Also, explain to your child why you are asking them questions and checking their phone or tablet. Many children don’t understand how much information is on the world wide web, how dangerous it could be, and the potential life long implications.

10 Social Media Rules for Teens

- Never post or send anything on social media that you wouldn’t want the whole world to see.
- Never bully others on social media.
- Never post or send photos of yourself in any state of undress.
- Always ask permission before posting photos of others.
- Never post memes that are pornographic, racist, or otherwise hurtful to others.
- Never have an argument via text or on social media — work out your differences in person.
- Do not impersonate others on social media.
- Remember the golden rule when using social media. If you wouldn’t like someone writing something about you, don’t write it about others.

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Remaining 2019 special collections

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Daughters of the Sacred Heart founder sought to love as God does

Teresa Verzeri tried three times to become a Benedictine nun, but every time she entered the convent of St. Grata in Bergamo, Italy, she stayed a short while and then left. Finally, on the advice of her spiritual director, Canon Giuseppe Benaglio, she left the convent altogether and began teaching young girls at home. It was always Teresa’s intention to live the religious life and be an educator.

She was born in 1801 in Bergamo, the first of seven children in the family of Antonio Verzeri and Elena Pedrocchi-Grumelli. The family was very religious, and as a young woman Teresa yearned for the spiritual life of the cloister. But she was also very aware of how things were changing in Italy and that people were looking for new ways to interpret Christianity. It was a time marked with political changes, revolutions, and persecutions that did not spare the Church.

Editor Bernard Bangley writes in Butler’s Lives of the Saints that Teresa wanted people to rediscover a loving and trusting relationship with God. So, together with Canon Benaglio, she founded the Congregation of the Daughters of the Sacred Heart of Jesus in 1831 in Bergamo. With her first companions, she dedicated herself to diverse apostolic services including education of troubled girls, homes for orphans, retreats, and assistance to the infirm.

Canon Benaglio died in 1836 and Teresa dedicated herself totally to strengthening and expanding the work of the Daughters. She was confronted by many obstacles both from civil authorities and also by ecclesiastics who put her to the hard test. Dom Basil Watkins, OSB, writes in The Book of Saints that the Bishop of Bergamo was at first favorable to her, but then turned against her. The New Catholic Encyclopedia said that Teresa was noted for her ability at governing and writing, and still more for her vigorous spirituality, strong faith, and balance between contemplation and action.

As an educator, she showed originality, particularly in her preventive method. Teresa described the preventive system: “cultivate and attentively guard the mind and heart of your little girls while they are still young, to prevent as far as possible, any entrance of evil” (www.vatican.va/news-servicestliturgy/saints).

Teresa believed that the Daughters of the Sacred Heart of Jesus must burn with the same love of the Divine Heart for their neighbor; purest charity that has no aim save for the glory of God and the good of souls; universal charity that excludes no one but embraces all. Her Congregation was approved by Rome in 1841.

She wanted the Daughters to receive the mandate to go to every man and woman with a dedication that loves the poor with predilection, is open for every service and is always solicitous to promote the dignity of the person. Her mother and three of her sisters joined her Congregation.

When Teresa died in Brescia in 1852, she left a vast documentation including a Constitution, the Book of Duties, and more than 3,500 letters. Her relics are venerated in the chapel of the Daughters of the Sacred Heart of Jesus in Bergamo. She was beatified by Pope Pius XII in 1946 and canonized by Pope John Paul II in 2001. Her feast day is March 3.

Today, the Daughters have a ministry for street children in Central Africa, a mission for the poor in India, and missions in Italy, Brazil, Argentina, Bolivia, and Albania.

Mary Lou Gibson writes about the saints for the West Texas Angelus from her home in Austin.
Texas Mission Conference participants ‘transformed in mission’

By Leonor Spencer

The Texas Mission Conference (TMC) is hosted by the Texas Mission Council every year. It is held at the Oblate Renewal Center in San Antonio, Texas. This conference does not bring a record number of attendees, but it should. Past TMC themes have included: Youth in Mission; Mission in Light of the New Evangelization; “Living the Mission Spirit” — Across the Street or Across the Sea; “Bringing Mission Home.” This year’s theme was “Transformed in Mission.” Our agenda was packed with activity, sharing, and outstanding presentations and speakers. The theme introduction facilitated by Maryknoll educator Matt Russo asked: What do you think Pope Francis means in saying that the primary focus of mission needs to be face-to-face encounters with others? How should this affect what we do when we engage in mission? What are some actions on behalf of justice you think we need to be engaged in as we bring mission home? Which dimension of Pope Francis’ vision of pastoral ministry for missionary disciples do I find most challenging as I continue to be transformed in mission? These were just a few of the questions we were asked as an introduction.

This year’s keynote speaker was Father Ron Rolheiser. He asked us to name the present moment in the context of our faith and the church. He explained the importance of knowing and diagnosing the present moment we are in, and that it is prophetic to name the present moment. He pointed out that currently we are a mixture of pre-modern, modern, post-modern, and anti-modern peoples, and that this is worldwide. It should be recognized that this is a challenge for the church: how to frame, contextualize, our faith at home and being a missionary disciple.

In the naming, it’s important to recognize that not everything can be fixed or cured, but it should be named properly. He suggested a perspective for grounding our faith in the present moment. He pointed out that currently we are a mixture of pre-modern, modern, post-modern, and anti-modern peoples, and that this is worldwide. It should be recognized that this is a challenge for the church: how to frame, contextualize, our faith at home and being a missionary disciple.

In his absence, the gangs threatened Garcia, sending her on the migrant path with her children, ages 2 and 5.

Gangs in Honduras first threatened Denta Garcia’s husband six months ago, telling him to join with them or die. Her husband, a police officer, fled to the United States, arriving successfully. In his absence, the gangs threatened Garcia, sending her on the migrant path with her children, ages 2 and 5. Garcia, who recently arrived in this city across the U.S.-Mexico border from Eagle Pass, Texas, wants to apply for asylum in the United States, but it’s a slow process. U.S. officials process only a small fraction of the migrants seeking asylum on a daily basis, forcing them to stay in Mexico until their names are called from long waiting lists. Some asylum-seekers also now are being returned to Mexico — under a plan known as Remain in Mexico — as their claims are adjudicated.

As she waits for her name to be called, Garcia said she had hoped to stay in the diocesan-run Dignified Border shelter in Piedras Negras, but found it unable to accommodate long stays.

"We don't know if we can stay here because supposedly it's only (a few days) here and we were hoping for more," she said at the shelter. "We don't have anywhere to sleep after that."

Asylum-seekers like Garcia arrive at legal ports of entries the length of the U.S.-Mexico border, but increasingly face long waits to lodge their petitions with U.S. officials, forcing them to spend weeks or months in unsafe Mexican border cities.

In Piedras Negras, the waiting list of asylum-seekers was more than 300 names long, but it was expected to swell after more than 1,700 migrants traveling with a caravan arrived Feb. 5. Only 15 names are called from the list each weekday, according to staff at the Dignified Border shelter. Even fewer names are called if U.S. officials have to process someone pulled from the Rio Grande, which separates the two countries.

The arrival of so many asylum-seekers in border cities is straining many of the Catholic-run shelters established to provide migrants with short-term humanitarian assistance as they travel through Mexico.

The formation of caravans, which attract Central American migrants seeking safety in numbers and the ability to avoid paying smugglers, complicates matters even more as migrants converge on border towns with false hopes of crossing the border quickly, but end up having to endure unexpectedly long stays instead, according to shelter staff.

"There are people who have to be here for 15, 20 days, so those who are only passing through, we can't receive them. We have no space," said Father Fernando Jimenez, shelter director in Piedras Negras. Father Jimenez said the 80-bed shelter mostly serves migrants making a final push to the border. He said and La Exaltación de la Santa Cruz in Baracoa, Honduras, and St. Ann’s in Midland and Santísima Trinidad in Chamelecon, Honduras, have opened our eyes to each other’s realities and to being a church family.

I shared my experience of mission as encountering people where they are, accompanying, walking with them even when they are lost and integrating them, because in doing so I see how their gifts enrich the life of the Church to the point that they evangelize me.

Join us in 2020 in beautiful San Antonio on February 14. Everyone is welcome!
Message of His Holiness Pope Francis for Lent 2019

Dear Brothers and Sisters,

Each year, through Mother Church, God “gives us this joyful season when we prepare to celebrate the paschal mystery with mind and heart renewed … as we recall the great events that gave us new life in Christ” (Preface of Lent I). We can thus journey from Eastertime to the Easter Vigil, through the Paschal Triduum, the last week of the church year, and the season of preparation that follows. In the church year, we journey to the midst of the mystery of God’s love, we are immersed in the paschal mystery of God, and we reach the summit of that mystery, the Resurrection, at Easter. Each year, through Mother Church, God invites us to journey with him toward the fulfillment of the salvation we have already received as a result of Christ’s paschal mystery — “for in hope we were saved” (Rom 8:24). This mystery of salvation, already at work in us during our earthly lives, is a dynamic process that also embraces history and all of creation. As Saint Paul says, “the creation waits with eager longing for the revealing of the children of God” (Rom 8:19). In this perspective, I would like to offer a few reflections to accompany our journey of conversion this coming Lent.

1. The redemption of creation

The celebration of the Paschal Triduum of Christ’s passion, death and resurrection, the culmination of the liturgical year, calls us yearly to embark on a journey of conversion in the knowledge that our being is conformed to Christ (cf. Rom 8:29) is a priceless gift of God’s mercy.

When we live as children of God, redeemed, led by the Holy Spirit (cf. Rom 8:14) and capable of acknowledging and obeying God’s law, beginning with the law written on our hearts (cf. Rom 2:15), we learn that the same creation that longs for the revelation of the children of God, in other words, all those who enjoy the grace of Jesus’ paschal mystery may experience its fulfillment in the redemption of the human body itself. When the love of Christ transfigures the lives of the saints, it becomes a lens through which we may see the action of God in the human body, the body and soul, they give praise to God. Through prayer, contemplation and art, they also include other creatures in that praise, as we see admirably expressed in the “Canticle of the Creatures” by Saint Francis of Assisi (cf. Laudato Si’, 87). Yet in this world, the harmony generated by redemption is constantly threatened by the negative power of sin and death.

2. The destructive power of sin

Indeed, when we fail to live as children of God, we often behave in a destructive way towards our neighbors and other creatures — and ourselves as well — since we begin to think more or less consciously that we can use them as we will. Intemperance then takes the upper hand: we start to live a life that exceeds those limits imposed by our human condition and nature itself. We yield to those unremittable desires that the Book of Wisdom sees as typical of the ungodly, who “thirst for God or hope for the future” (cf. 2:1-11). Unless we tend constantly towards Easter, towards the horizon of the Resurrection, the mentality expressed in the slogan “I want it all and I want it now!” and “Too much is never enough,” gains the upper hand.

The root of all evil, as we know, is sin, which from its first appearance has disrupted our communion with God, with others and with creation itself, to which we are linked in a particular way by our body. This rupture of communion with God likewise undermines our harmonious relationship with the environment in which we are called to live, so that the garden has become a wilderness (cf. Gen 3:17-18). Sin undermines the God of creation, to see himself as an absolute master and to use it, not for the purpose willed by the Creator but for his own interests, to the detriment of other creatures.

Once God’s law, the law of love, is forsaken, then the law of the strong over the weak takes over. The sin that lurks in the human heart (cf. Mk 7:20-23) takes the shape of greed and unbridled pursuit of comfort, lack of concern for the good of others and even of oneself. It leads to the exploitation of creation, both persons and the environment, due to that insatiable covetousness which sees every desire as a right and sooner or later destroys all those in its grip.

3. The healing power of repentance and forgiveness

Creation urgently needs the revelation of the children of God, who have been made “a new creation.” For “if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation; the old has passed away; behold, the new has come” (2 Cor 5:17). Indeed, by virtue of their being revealed, creation itself can celebrate a Pasch, opening itself to a new heaven and a new earth (cf. Rev 21:1). The path to Easter demands that we renew our faces and hearts as Christians through repentance, conversion and forgiveness, so as to live fully the abundant grace of the paschal mystery.

This “eager longing”, this expectation of all creation, will be fulfilled in the revelation of the children of God, that is, when Christians and all people enter decisively into the “travail” that conversion entails. All creation is called, with us, to go forth “from its bondage to decay and obtain the glorious liberty of the children of God” (Rom 8:21). “Let us bear a everything to satisfy our voracity and being ready to suffer for love, which can fill the emptiness of our hearts. Prayer, which teaches us to abandon idolatry and the self-sufficiency of our ego, and to acknowledge our need of the Lord and his mercy. Almsgiving, whereby we escape from the insanity of hoarding things to ourselves, and we are enriched by the sacerdotal belief that we can secure a future that does not belong to us. And thus to rediscover the joy of God’s plan for creation and for each of us, which is to love him, our brothers and sisters, and the entire world, and to find in this love our true happiness.

Dear brothers and sisters, the “lenten” period that is marked by the Son of God in the desert of creation had the goal of making it once more that garden of communion with God that it was before original sin (cf. Mk 1:12-13; Is 51:3). May our Lent this year be a journey along that same path, bringing the hope of Christ also to creation, so that it may be “set free from its bondage to decay and obtain the glorious liberty of the children of God” (Rom 8:21). Let us not allow this season of grace to pass in vain! Let us ask God to help us set out on a path of true conversion. Let us leave behind our selfishness and self-absorption, and turn to Jesus’ Pasch. Let us stand beside our brothers and sisters in need, sharing our spiritual and material goods with them. In this way, by concretely welcoming Christ’s victory over sin and death into our lives, we will also radiate its transforming power to all of creation.

From the Vatican, 4 October 2018

Feast of Saint Francis of Assisi

Francis

Mensaje del Santo Padre Francisco para la Cuaresma

Queridos hermanos y hermanas:

Cada año, a través de la Madre Iglesia, Dios “concede a sus hijos anhelar, con el gozo de habernos purificado, la solemnidad de la Pascua, para que […] por el Espíritu Santo (cf. Rm 8,14)”, y que “ganan de la gracia del misterio pascual de Dios, a la manera en que esten los hijos de Dios, de ser conformados a Cristo conforme a él” (cf. Rm 8,29). Lent is a “travail” that conversion entails. All creation has been called, with us, to go forth “from its bondage to decay and obtain the glorious liberty of the children of God” (Rom 8:21).

1. La redención de la creación

La celebración del Triduo Pascual de la pasión, muerte y resurrección de Cristo, culmen del año litúrgico, nos llama a una vez más a vivir y ver la acción de Dios en el corazón de los santos, en el deseo de ser conformes a Cristo (cf. Rm 8,29) es un don inestimable de la misericordia de Dios.

Si el hombre vive como hijo de Dios, si vive como persona redimida, que se deja llevar por el Espíritu Santo (cf. Rm 8,14), y sabe reconocer y poner en práctica la ley de Dios, comenzando por la que está inscrita en su corazón y en la naturaleza, beneficia también a la creación, cooperando en su redención. Por esto, la creación —dice san Pablo— desea ardientemente que se manifiesten los hijos de Dios, es decir, que cuantos gozan de la gracia del misterio pascual de Jesús disfruten plenamente de sus frutos, destinados a alcanzar su madurez completa en la redención del mismo cuerpo humano. Cuando la caridad de Cristo transfigura la vida de los santos —espiritu, alma y cuerpo—, estos alaban a Dios y, con la oración, la contemplación y el arte hacen participes de ello también a las criaturas, como demuestra de forma admirable el “Cántico del hermano sol” de san Francisco de Asís (cf. Enc. Laudato si’, 87). Sin embargo, en este mundo la armonía generada por la redención está amenazada, hoy y siempre, por la fuerza negativa del pecado y de la muerte.

2. La fuerza destructora del pecado

Efectivamente, cuando no vivimos como hijos de Dios, a menudo tenemos comportamientos destructivos hacia el próximo y las demás criaturas y también hacia nosotros mismos…, al considerar, más o menos con-
scientemente, que podemos usarlos como nos plazca. Entonces, domina la intemperancia y eso lleva a un estilo de vida que viola los límites que nuestra condición humana y la naturaleza nos piden respetar, y se siguen los deseos incontrolados que en el libro de la Sabiduría se atribuyen a los impíos, o sea a quienes no tienen a Dios como punto de referencia de sus acciones, ni una esperanza para el futuro (cf. 2,1-11). Si no anhelamos continuamente la Pascua, si no vivimos en el horizonte de la Resurrección, está claro que la lógica del todo y ya, del tener cada vez más acaba por imponerse.

Como sabemos, la causa de todo mal es el pecado, que desde su aparición entre los hombres interrumpió la comunión con Dios, con los demás y con la creación, a la cual estamos vinculados ante todo mediante nuestro cuerpo. El hecho de que se haya roto la comunión con Dios, también ha dañado la relación armoniosa de los seres humanos con el ambiente en el que están llamados a vivir, de manera que el jardín se ha transformado en un desierto (cf. Gn 3,17-18). Se trata del pecado que lleva al hombre a considerarse el dios de la creación, a sentirse su dueño absoluto y a no usarla para el fin deseado por el Creador, sino para su propio interés, en detrimento de las criaturas y de los demás.

Cuando se abandona la ley de Dios, la ley del amor, acaba triunfando la ley del más fuerte sobre el más débil. El pecado que anida en el corazón del hombre (cf. Mc 7,20-23) —y se manifiesta como avidez, afán por un bienestar desmedido, desinterés por el bien de los demás y a menudo también por el propio— lleva a la explotación de la creación, de las personas y del medio ambiente, según la codicia insaciable que considera todo deseo como un derecho y que antes o después acabará por destruir incluso a quien vive bajo su dominio.

3. La fuerza regeneradora del arrepentimiento y del perdón

Por esto, la creación tiene la irrefrenable necesidad de que se manifiesten los hijos de Dios, aquellos que se han convertido en una “nueva creación”: «Si alguno está en Cristo, es una criatura nueva. Lo viejo ha pasado, ha comenzado lo nuevo» (2 Co 5,17). En efecto, manifestándose, tambien la creación puede “celebrar la Pascua”: abrirse a los cielos nuevos y a la tierra nueva (cf. Ap 21,1). Y el camino hacia la Pascua nos llama precisamente a restaurar nuestro rostro y nuestro corazón de cristianos, mediante el arrepentimiento, la conversión y el perdón, para poder vivir toda la riqueza de la gracia del misterio pascual.

Esta “impaciencia”, esta expectación de la creación encontrará cumplimiento cuando se manifiesten los hijos de Dios, es decir cuando los cristianos y todos los hombres emprendan con decisión el “trabajo” que supone la conversión. Toda la creación está llamada a salir, junto con nosotros, «de la esclavitud de la corrupción para entrar en la gloriosa libertad de los hijos de Dios» (Rm 8,21). La Cuaresma es signo sacramental de esta conversión, es una llamada a los cristianos a encarnar más intensa y concretamente el misterio pascual en su vida personal, familiar y social, en particular, mediante el ayuno, la oración y la limosna.

Ayunar, o sea aprender a cambiar nuestra actitud con los demás y con las criaturas: de la tentación de “devorarlo” todo, para saciar nuestra avidez, a la capacidad de sufrir por amor, que puede colmar el vacío de nuestro corazón. Orar para saber renunciar a la idolatría y a la autosuficiencia de nuestro yo, y declararnos necesitados del Señor y de su misericordia. Dar limosna para salir de la necedad de vivir y acumularlo todo para nosotros mismos, creyendo que así nos aseguramos un futuro que no nos pertenece. Y volver a encontrar así la alegría del proyecto que Dios ha puesto en la creación y en nuestro corazón, es decir amarle, amar a nuestros hermanos y al mundo entero, y encontrar en este amor la verdadera felicidad.

Queridos hermanos y hermanas, la “Cuaresma” del Hijo de Dios fue un entrar en el desierto de la creación para hacer que volviese a ser aquel jardín de la comunión con Dios que era antes del pecado original (cf. Mc 1,12-13; Is 51,3). Que nuestra Cuaresma suponga recorrer ese mismo camino, para llevar también la esperanza de Cristo a la creación, que «será liberada de la esclavitud de la corrupción para entrar en la gloriosa libertad de los hijos de Dios» (Rm 8,21). No dejemos transcurrir en vano este tiempo favorável. Pidamos a Dios que nos ayude a emprender un camino de verdadera conversión. Abandonemos el egoísmo, la mirada fija en nosotros mismos, y dijíjamosnos a la Pas- cuca de Jesús; hagámonos próximos de nuestros hermanos y hermanas que pasan dificultades, compartiendo con ellos nuestros bienes espirituales y materiales. Así, acogiendo en lo concreto de nuestra vida la victoria de Cristo sobre el pe- cado y la muerte, atraeremos su fuerza transformadora tam- bién sobre la creación.

Vaticano, 4 de octubre de 2018.

Fiesta de san Francisco de Asís

Francisco
Marriage Retreats
Holy Spirit Parish

Holy Spirit Parish in Sweetwater hosted a marriage retreat that was offered in English and Spanish by their Vocations Committee. Topics discussed were Affirmation: Speaking Well of Your Spouse to Others; True Love: Being Best Friends With Your Spouse; No Grudges: Fighting Fair and Forgiving Quickly; and Not the Same Person: Understanding Your Spouse.

The retreat was held Feb. 2 in English. The topics were presented by Deacon Andrew and Judith Davis, Deacon Jesse and Jo Ann Martinez, Deacon Orlando and Rosa Mendoza, Deacon Ron and Wendy Stegenga, and Deacon David and Ellie Mendez. On Feb. 9 the retreat was held in Spanish, covering the same topics. Deacons assisting at the retreat were Deacon Jose and Gabby Vlahogas, and Deacon David and Ellie Mendez. Father Nilo Nakgon is pastor of Holy Spirit Parish.

World Marriage Day was observed at St. Joseph’s Church, Rowena, on Saturday and Sunday, Feb. 9 and 10. Married couples were invited by pastor Father Ariel Lagunilla to come before the altar to receive special blessings. A renewal of vows was also a part of the celebration. Upon entering the church, couples were encouraged to submit their names to have a chance to receive one of several gifts: a gift certificate to Lowake Steakhouse, a fresh bouquet of flowers, or a copy of the book Praying for and with your Spouse by Dr. Greg Popcek. Steven and Natalie Lange and Jeanette Wilde received the gifts at the Saturday evening Mass. Tony and Norma Multer, Michael and Sharon Wanoreck, Roy and Sandra Rollwitz, and Glenn and Cheryl Smetana were awarded the gifts at the Sunday Mass. St. Joseph Church is proud to have over 4000 years’ worth of marriage represented among their parishioners.

Over 100 people attended the Total Consecration Conference on Feb. 2, 2019, at the Cathedral of the Sacred Heart in San Angelo. Speakers spoke about total consecration, reflecting on books such as 33 Days to Morning Glory by Father Michael Gaitley, Totus Tuus by Father Brian McMaxin, and True Devotion to Mary with Preparation of Total Consecration by St. Louis de Montfort.

Adult Confirmation at St. Elizabeth Ann Seton Church in Odessa, Feb. 24. (photo by Alan Torre/APTorre Photography)
McCarrick removed from the priesthood after being found guilty of abuse

By Cindy Wooden
Catholic News Service

VATICAN CITY (CNS) — Pope Francis has confirmed the removal from the priesthood of Theodore E. McCarrick, the 88-year-old former cardinal and archbishop of Washington.

The Vatican announced the decision Feb. 16, saying he was found guilty of "solicitation in the sacrament of confession and sins against the Sixth Commandment with minors and with adults, with the aggravating factor of abuse of power."

A panel of the Congregation for Doctrine of the Faith found him guilty Jan. 11, the Vatican said. McCarrick appealed the decision, but the appeal was rejected Feb. 13 by the congregation itself. McCarrick was informed of the decision Feb. 15 and Pope Francis "recognized the definitive nature of this decision made in accord with law," making a further appeal impossible.

By ordering McCarrick's "dismissal from the clerical state," the decision means that McCarrick loses all rights and duties associated with being a priest, cannot present himself as a priest and is forbidden to celebrate the sacraments, except to grant absolution for sins to a person in imminent danger of death.

The only church penalty that is more severe is excommunication, which would have banned him from receiving the sacraments. The other possible punishment was to sentence him to a "life of prayer and penance," a penalty often imposed on elderly clerics; the penalty is similar to house arrest and usually includes banning the person from public ministry, limiting his interactions with others and restricting his ability to leave the place he is assigned to live.

McCarrick's punishment is the toughest meted out to a cardinal by the Vatican in modern times.

McCarrick's initial suspension from ministry and removal from the College of Cardinals in 2018 came after a man alleged that McCarrick began sexually abusing him in 1971 when he was a 16-year-old altar server in New York; the Archdiocese of New York found the allegation "credible and substantiated" and turned the case over to the Vatican.

At that point, in June, then-Cardinal McCarrick "was strongly exhorted not to travel and not to appear in public so as not to provoke further rumors," Cardinal Ouellet said, but McCarrick refused to travel and present those measures taken in his regard as "sanctions" decreed by Pope Benedict XVI and annulled by Pope Francis.

After re-examining the archives, I certify that there are no such documents signed by either pope."

Cardinal Ouellet's letter was published Feb. 16 by the Vatican, after McCarrick issued a statement saying that it would, "due course, make known the conclusions of the matter regarding Archbishop McCarrick."

In addition, Pope Francis ordered "a further thorough study of the entire documentation present in the archives of the dicasteries and offices of the Holy See regarding the former Cardinal McCarrick in order to ascertain all the relevant facts, to place them in their historical context and to evaluate them objectively."

The Vatican statement said it is aware "that, from the examination of the facts and of the circumstances, it may emerge that choices were made that would not be consonant with a contemporary approach to such issues. However, as Pope Francis has said: 'We will follow the path of truth wherever it may lead.' Both abuse and its cover-up can no longer be tolerated, and a different treatment for bishops who have committed or covered up abuse, in fact, represents a form of realism that is no longer acceptable."

McCarrick had been ordained to the priesthood in 1958 for the Archdiocese of New York. The first child he baptized after ordination, claimed that from the time he was 11 years old and for some 20 years, McCarrick sexually abused him.


At least three other cardinals have been accused of sexual abuse or improperity in the past 25 years. In the 1990s Austrian Cardinal Hans Hermann Groer was forced to step down as archbishop of Vienna and eventually to relinquish all public ministry after allegations of the sexual abuse and harassment of seminarians and priests; he died in 2003 without having undergone a canonical trial. Pope Benedict XVI forced Scottish Cardinal Keith O'Brien to step down as archbishop of St. Andrews and Edinburgh in early 2013; at an investigation, Pope Francis withdrew his "rights and duties" as a cardinal, although he retained the title until his death in March 2018.

The Australian Cardinal George Pell, facing charges of abusing minors, has been on leave from his post as head of the Vatican Secretariat for the Economy since mid-2017; he reportedly was found guilty of some charges in December, but the court has imposed an injunction on press coverage of the trial. Pope Francis told reporters he would not speak about the case until the court proceedings have run their course.
Summit emphasizes global nature of abuse crisis, need to put victims first

By Cindy Wooden
Catholic News Service

VATICAN CITY (CNS) — The clerical sexual abuse crisis has caused "serious scandal" in the Catholic Church and in society "because of the dramatic suffering of the victims, as well as the unjustifiable lack of attention to them" and attempts by church leaders to cover up the crimes of the guilty, Pope Francis said.

Speaking to the public, including dozens of abuse survivors, after his midday recitation of the Angelus Feb. 24, the pope promised measures to ensure children would be safe in the church and that the crime of abuse would stop.

The pope's remarks came just an hour after he concluded the Vatican's Feb. 21-24 summit on child protection and the clerical abuse scandal.

In his talk concluding the summit, Pope Francis said the Catholic Church would focus on eight priorities: the protection of children; "impeccable seriousness" in dealing with clerical sexual abuse; genuine purification and acknowledgment of past failures; improved training for priests and religious; strengthening and continually reviewing the guidelines of national bishops' conferences; assisting victims of clerical sexual abuse; working to end the abuse and exploitation of children and young people online; and working with civil authorities to end sex tourism.

The summit brought together Pope Francis and 190 church leaders — presidents of bishops' conferences, the heads of the Eastern Catholic churches, superiors of men's and women's religious orders and Roman Curia officials — for four days of listening to speeches, survivors' testimonies, discussions in small groups, a penitential liturgy and Mass.

In addition to the handful of survivors who spoke at the summit itself, dozens of survivors from around the world gathered in Rome in solidarity with one another and to speak to reporters and to individual bishops. Twelve representatives of the survivors were invited to meet Feb. 20 with the summit's organizing committee.

As the bishops met with the pope inside the Vatican's synod hall, the coalition Ending Clerical Abuse, which brought 40 survivors from 21 countries to Rome, organized vigils and a march to St. Peter's Square.

The survivors' groups were, in general, not satisfied with the summit and insisted the time to talk about the reality of abuse was long passed; it was time for action.

The summit, though, seemed designed more to ensure that every bishops' conference around the world recognized the gravity of the problem, even if in their country very few cases of clerical sexual abuse had been reported.

Addressing the summit Feb. 23, Nigerian Sister Veronica Openibo, congregational leader of the Society of the Holy Child Jesus, called out bishops, particularly in Asia and Africa, who dismiss the abuse crisis as a Western problem. She cited several personal experiences she confronted while counseling men and women who were abused.

Church leaders cannot think they can "keep silent until the storm has passed," Sister Openibo told them. "This storm will not pass by."

Preaching at the closing Mass, Australian Archbishop Mark Colbridge of Brisbane warned his fellow bishops that they would be called to account for what they did and what they failed to do to stop the abuse and assist the victims.

For too long, he said, bishops and church leaders tried to protect the church's reputation and not the church's children.

"We have shown too little mercy, and therefore we will receive the same, because the measure we give will be the measure we receive in return," he said. "We will not go unpunished."

Cardinal Luis Antonio Tagle of Manila, Philippines, gave the first formal talk of the gathering Feb. 21, providing a theological reflection on the meaning of Christ's wounds and on the obligation of the world's bishops to recognize how they have inflicted wounds on Christ's beloved children.

Touching those wounds and begging for forgiveness is an essential part of a bishop's mission, he said.

Archbishop Charles Scicluna of Malta, adjunct secretary of the Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith and longtime investigator of clerical abuse cases, outlined for participants the necessary, mandatory steps they must take when an allegation is made.

He insisted on making the victims a priority, but also used his talk to suggest that the "stewardship of prevention" includes helping the pope choose candidates for bishop appointments.

"Many demand that the process be more open — the input of laypeople in the community," Archbishop Scicluna said, a request later echoed by Sister Openibo.

When a priest or bishop or layperson is asked to comment on a potential candidate, the archbishop said, "it is a grave sin against the integrity of the episcopal ministry to hide or underestimate facts that may indicate deficits in the lifestyle or spiritual fatherhood" of the candidate.

Later, summit participants debated particular measures, such as a mandatory requirement that abuse allegations be turned over to police. Archbishop Scicluna insisted involving local police and other authorities was important, especially because while bishops exercise spiritual authority over their priests, they have no actual "coercive measures" and we don't have any nostalgia for the coercive measures of the Inquisition" — to force priests to cooperate with investigations and obey when punishment has been imposed.

Throughout the summit, bishops and other speakers tried to identify attitudes and issues that have contributed to the Catholic Church's sex abuse crisis; repeatedly they pointed to "clericalism," and especially an attitude that allows priests and bishops to think that they were somehow special and above the law and common human decency.

To understand the full depth of the crisis, Cardinal Jose Gomez of Bogota said Feb. 21, bishops must stop looking at outsiders as the cause of the damage within the church and recognize that "the first enemies are within us, among us bishops and priests and consecrated persons who have not lived up to our vocation."

Cardinal Oswald Gracias of Mumbai, India, told the gathering Feb. 22 that, as members of the College of Bishops, each bishop in every part of the world has a responsibility to root out abuse everywhere and that he has a moral obligation to "point out honestly to our brother bishops or priests when we notice problematic behavior in them."

Cardinal Blase J. Cupich of Chicago, one of the summit organizations, told the gathering he believed the Catholic Church needed a new structure in place to deal with bishops accused of abuse or of negligence in handling abuse claims.

His "metropolitan model" of accountability would rely on the metropolitan archbishop of a church region receiving claims made against a bishop and conducting an initial investigation with the help of qualified lay experts before turning the information over to the Vatican for further action.

The U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops currently is investigating the possibility of such a model.

Cardinal Daniel N. DiNardo of Galveston-Houston, USCCB president, told Catholic News Service Feb. 24 that it would be up to the full body of bishops to decide how to proceed, but he would not be surprised if they came up with a proposal that would combine a metropolitan-level system with a lay board to assist the metropolitan.

"In our proposals, the work of the laity will be to collaborate," which is something all the speakers at the summit emphasized, Cardinal DiNardo said. "We want to make sure the laity are involved" in a way that would give them a level of independence to investigate claims against bishops while, at the same time, making it clear the board is acting on behalf of the church.

In her presentation to the summit Feb. 22, Linda Ghisoni, a canon lawyer who serves as a consultant for the Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith and is undersecretary for laity at the Diaconia for Laity, the Family and Life, urged the pope to consider a revision of the "pontifical secret" covering canonical procedures and trials of clerics accused of abuse.

Ghisoni's suggestion was echoed by others, who insisted that while the accused have a right to a presumption of innocence and victims have a right to anonymity, the names of clerics found guilty of abuse, the crimes of which they were found guilty and their punishments should be made known, at least to the victims who brought the case.

German Cardinal Reinhard Marx of Munich and Freising, who spoke to the bishops about the importance of transparency, including in allowing police and prosecutors access to diocesan records, agreed with Ghisoni. He said he saw no convincing reason why the "pontifical secret" should apply "to the prosecution of criminal offenses concerning the abuse of minors."

One of the stronger presentations on transparency was the meeting's last speech, delivered by Mexican television journalist Valentina Alazraki.

Journalists are not the enemy of the church, she said, unless members of the church are abusing children or covering up such abuse.

"Keep silent until the storm has passed." Sister Openibo told them. "This storm will not pass by."

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Contributing to this story were Carol Glatz and Junno Arocho Esteves.
An honorable defeat

Father Ron Rolheiser

In 1970, the famed British writer, Iris Murdoch, wrote a novel entitled *A Fairly Honorable Defeat*. The story had numerous characters, both good and bad, but ultimately took its title from the travails of one character, Tallis Browne, who represents all that is decent, altruistic, and moral among the various characters. Despite being betrayed by most everyone, he stays the course in himself never betraying trust. But the story does not end well for him.

On the basis of his seeming defeat, Murdoch poses the question: Where’s justice? Where’s fairness? Shouldn’t goodness triumph? Murdoch, an agnostic, suggests that in reality a good life doesn’t always make for the triumph of goodness. However, if goodness sustains itself and does not betray itself, *its defeat will be honorable*.

So, for her, what you want to avoid is a *dishonorable* defeat, meaning: Defeat you will face, your goodness notwithstanding. Sometimes you cannot save the world or change that situation. But you can save your own integrity and bring that moral component to the world and to the situation and by doing that you preserve your own dignity. You went down in defeat, but in honor. Goodness then will not have suffered a dishonorable defeat.

That’s a beautiful stoicism and if you aren’t a believer it’s about as wise a counsel as there is: Be true to yourself! Don’t betray who and what you are, even if you find yourself as unanimity-minus-one. However, Christianity, while respecting this kind of stoicism, places the question of victory and defeat into a very different perspective.

Inside our Christian faith, defeat and victory are radically redefined. We speak, for instance, of the victory of the cross, of the day Jesus died as “Good Friday, of the transforming power of humiliation, and of how we gain our lives by losing them. Earthly defeat, for us, can still be victory, just as earthily victory can be a sad defeat. Indeed, in a Christian perspective, without even considering the next life, sometimes our greatest humiliations are what allows depth and richer life to flow into us and sometimes our victories rob us of the very things that bring us community, intimacy, and happiness. The paschal mystery radically redefines both defeat and victory.

But this understanding doesn’t come easily. It’s the antithesis of cultural wisdom. Indeed, didn’t even come easy for Jesus’ contemporaries. After Jesus died in the most humiliating way a person could die at that time, by being crucified, the first generation of Christians had a massive struggle with both the fact that he died and particularly with the manner in which he died. First, for them, if Jesus was the long-awaited Messiah, he wasn’t supposed to die at all. God is above death and certainly beyond being killed by humans. Moreover, as a creational being, he believed in the result of sin and, thus, if someone did not sin, he or she was not supposed to die. But Jesus had died. Finally, most faith-perplexing of all, was the humiliating manner of his death. Crucifixion was designed by the Romans not just as capital punishment but as a manner of death that totally and publicly humiliated the person’s body. Jesus died a most humiliating death. No one called Good Friday “good” during the first days and years following his death. However, given his resurrection, they intuited without explicitly understanding it, that Jesus’ defeat in the crucifixion was the ultimate triumph and that the categories that made for victory and defeat were now forever different.

Initially, they lacked the words to express this. For several years after the resurrection, Christians were reluctant to mention the manner of Jesus’ death. It was a defeat in the eyes of the world and they were at loss to explain it. So they remained mostly silent about it. St. Paul’s conversion and his subsequent insights changed this. As someone who was raised in the Jewish faith, Paul also struggled with explaining how a humiliating defeat in this world could be in fact a victory. However, after his conversion to Christianity he eventually understood how goodness could take on sin and even “become sin itself” for our sake. That radically flipped our conceptions of defeat and victory. The cross was now seen to be our faith’s ultimate triumph. The humiliation of the cross being a source of shame, it now became the crown jewel: “I preach nothing but the cross of Christ.” That gave us the passion narratives.

We live in a world that, mostly, still defines defeat and victory in terms of who gets to be on top in terms of success, adulation, fame, influence, reputation, money, comfort, pleasure, and security in this life. There will be plenty of defeats in our lives and if lack a Christian perspective then the best we can then do is to take Iris Murdoch’s advice to heart: *Realistically, goodness will not triumph, so try to avoid a dishonorable defeat.*

Our Christian faith, while honoring that truth, challenges us to something more.—

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.
Nueva York, el aborto, y un atajo hacia el caos

Fue la celebración lo que diozló especial-mente. En el 46° aniversario de la decisiónde Roe vs. Wade, el gobernador de Nueva York, Andrew Cuomo, convirtió un ley que se ha hecho prácticamente irrestricto al aborto, permitiendo el asesinato del no nacido hasta el momento del parto. Apenas ratificado, los que dores y partidarios corearon, gritaron, apoyaron y desplegaron un deprimente jú-bilo similar al que explotó en Irlanda cuando un referéndum legalizó el aborto el año pasado. Por supuesto, salió a reducir toda esa retórica acerca de los derechos de las mujeres, salud reproductiva y empo-deramiento, pero ¿quién puede ser tan ciego para no ver lo que está en juego? Si un niño, que duerme tranquilamente en su moisés en casa de sus padres fuera brutal-mente asesinado y desmembrado, todo el país estaría justamente indignado, y cla-maria por una investigación sobre el asesi-nato. Pero ahora una ley en Nueva York confirma que el mismo niño puede ser ex-traído impunemente, momentos antes de nacer, con fórceps del vientre de su madre donde descansaba en paz. Y la policía no podrá ser convocada; al contrario, parece que el asesinato es una excusa para cele-brar.

Una ideología, en sentido negativo, es un marco conceptual que nos ciega a la re-alidad. El propósito de todo sistema de ideas, por supuesto, es el de dar luz, el de traernos más cerca a la verdad de las ideas, por supuesto, es el de dar luz, el de brar.

Peregrinos de la Jornada Mundial de la Juventud dicen ¡sí! a Dios

“Hemos visto el rostro de Cristo en cada persona que conocimos”, dijo Carlos Pérez, una peregrina de Chicago que tiene raíces mexicanas. “Realmente puedo ver la iglesia universal”. Pérez estuvo entre los miles de peregrinos en la Jornada Mundial de la Juventud 2019 (conocida como JMJ) en Panamá. Para ella y otros peregrinos, incluidos los participantes de grupos con conexiones a las misioneros Maryknoll, el tema del fiat de Mary (“Háganse en mí según tu palabra”) estuvo presente du-rante la catequesis, las canciones y los discursos de la semana.

“El escuchar el fiat de María solo afirma mi vocación”, dijo María Thacker, quien viajó con una delegación de la Arquidiócesis de Portland, Oregon, y recientemente completó una visita de discernimiento en el Monasterio del Santísimo Sacramento en Farmington Hills, Michigan.

Andrea y Ernesto López, peregrinos de El Salvador, dijeron que la JMJ fue una renovación de sus votos matrimonia-ses. “Desde la misa de apertura nos hemos sentido llamados a dar nuestras vidas por el reino de Dios”, dijo Ernesto durante la vigilia de la noche a la mañana en el Convento de Panamá.

La pareja, que trabaja como vol-untaria en el consejo pastoral de su parro-quia, esperaba la misa de envío del 27 de enero. “Queremos animar a los jóvenes de nuestra parroquia a descubrir sus vocaciones para que puedan decir ‘sí’ como María”, dijo Andrea. “Los jóvenes, podemos caminar en nuestra sociedad y seguir diciendo ‘sí’, a pesar de las tribulaciones o los desafíos... porque el Señor nunca nos abandona”.

Jóvenes de 155 países tuvieron un largo recorrido hacia este evento global de la iglesia. Muchos eran jóvenes adul-tos comprometidos con ministerios pasto-rales quienes, inspirados por otros peregrinos, recargaron sus baterías para compartir el amor y la misericordia de Dios.

“Hemos hecho amigos de diferentes naciones y vamos a llevar esta experi-encia y alentar a otros jóvenes a decir sí en sus comunidades y familias, para que puedan llevar la “palabra de sus naciones”, dice José Reyes, de El Salvador.

A pesar de los desafíos, los sacrificios
‘Exceptions’ and the undermining of the moral law

Whenever we make small exceptions to universal moral rules, we shouldn’t be surprised that the rules themselves can be quickly undermined. Establishing an “exception” in one case makes people think they’re due an exception for their case as well. Certain norms of moral behavior, however, do not admit of any exceptions, and we risk undermining morality altogether if we don’t recognize them. Moral norms governing the protection of human life are one such example.

A recent and lengthy article in The Guardian took a look at the practice of euthanasia in the Netherlands. It led off with this provocative title: “Death on demand: has euthanasia gone too far?” Countries around the world are making it easier to choose the time and manner of your death. But doctors in the world’s euthanasia capital are starting to worry about the consequences. The article points out that, “As the world’s pioneer, the Netherlands has also discovered that although legalising euthanasia might resolve one ethical conundrum, it opens a can of worms — most importantly, where the limits of the practice should be drawn. In the past few years a small but influential group of academics and jurists have raised the alarm over what is generally referred to, a little archly, as the ‘slippery slope’ — the idea that a measure introduced to provide relief to late-stage cancer patients has expanded to include people who might otherwise live for many years, from sufferers of diseases such as muscular dystrophy to sepsis, and even dementia sufferers of dementia with even mentally ill young people.”

The logic behind these concerns is clear. If we are willing to make an exception to the rule that direct killing of an innocent human being is always wrong, then it only becomes a matter of juggling over the price. “If killing by euthanasia can be allowed for a deeply emotional reason, it can certainly be allowed for other reasons too, and soon for nearly any reason, making it difficult, if not impossible, to put the cat back into the proverbial ‘moral bag.’”

The almost instantaneous deployment of abortion-on-demand around the world several decades ago relied on very similar logic: first, grant a single exception, and in time virtually any instance begins to appear plausible and defendable. That exception, of course, was rape. By playing on the tragedy of sexual assault, abortion advocates managed to direct attention and blame towards the child, an innocent bystander, turning him or her, almost more than the rapist, into the culprit. After the child had been successfully targeted in situations of rape, he or she became generally targetable in other situations as well.

When it comes to abortion, the state of Louisiana in past years required some of the most comprehensive reporting in the US, and their detailed records are a helpful resource for determining how frequent abortions for rape really are. Abortionists were required to fill out a form entitled “Report of Induced Termination of Pregnancy” (Form #PHS 16-ab) for every abortion. The form stated at the top: “Failure to complete and file this form is a crime.” Item 9d on the form was entitled “Reason for Pregnancy Termination.” Statistics compiled from these forms over a 14-year period reveal the reasons for 115,243 abortions in Louisiana during that time:

<table>
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<tr>
<td>Mother’s physical health</td>
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<td>Fetal deformity</td>
<td>103</td>
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<td>Rape or incest</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

These data confirm other calculations indicating that, on average, about 550 women per year in the U.S. become pregnant as a result of rape. Assuming they all ended in abortion, this means that an average of 0.04% (one twenty-fifth of one percent) of all abortions have been performed for rape — or only one out of every 2,500! Yet for every one of the more than 50 countries that now have abortion on demand around the world, the initial step taken by abortion forces was intense lobbying for abortion in the so-called ‘hard cases’ — especially rape and incest. Once abortion advocates secured the availability of abortion for the ‘hard cases’, they went on to argue for abortion in any situation. Even if one granted, for the sake of argument, that rape justified a mother’s decision to end her child’s life, could that ever justify the other abortions that occur for non-rape related reasons? It is dualistic to justify 2,499 deaths from the one assault, unjust and traumatic as it may have been. By granting the exception, the moral rule has been, in effect, eliminated, and the doors have been thrown open to the practice of abortion for any reason. Encouraging exceptions is the entry point into a broader repudiation of our moral duties towards each other, the first of which is the duty to respect the inviolability of each other’s life.

From Tadeusz Pacholczyk, Ph.D.

World Youth Day pilgrims say ‘yes’ to God

“We have seen the face of Christ in everyone we meet,” said Carolina Perez, a pilgrim from Chicago who has Mexican roots. “I can really see the universal church.”

Perez was among thousands of pilgrims at World Youth Day 2019 in Panama. For her and other pilgrims, including those from groups related to Maryknoll, the theme of Mary’s fiat (“Let it be done according to your word”) was in the background throughout the week’s catechesis, songs and speeches.

“Hearing Mary’s fiat just affirms my vocation,” said Maria Thacker, who traveled with a delegation from the Archdiocese of Portland, Oregon, and had recently completed a discernment visit at the Monastery of the Blessed Sacrament in Farmington Hills, Michigan.

Andrea and Ernesto Lopez, pilgrims from El Salvador, said World Youth Day was a rare chance for people of the same marital status to embrace their openness to life. “Since the opening Mass, we have felt called to give our lives for God’s kingdom,” Ernesto said during the overnight vigil at John Paul II Field.

The couple, who volunteer in their parish’s pastoral council, looked forward to the concluding Mass on Jan 27. “We want to encourage young people in our parish to discover their vocations so they can say yes like Mary,” Andrea said. “Young people can walk in our society and continue to say yes despite tribulations or challenges. . . . Because the Lord never abandons us.”

Young people from 155 countries had a long journey to prepare for this global event of the church. Many were young adults committed to ministry who, inspired by other pilgrims, renewed their zeal for sharing God’s love among their peers.

“We have made friends from different nations and we are going to bring this experience and encourage other young people to say yes in their communities and families, so they can bring peace to their communities,” said Jose Reyes, from El Salvador.

Despite the challenges, sacrifices and what they discover.

A good comedian helps an audience to recognize common absurdities, inconsistencies and hypocrisies in any given cultural moment. Their real genius is helping audiences to recognize the ones in which they are also taking part.

In some ways, watching a good stand-up routine is like doing a guided examination of conscience. When done well, these routines help us pause and take an honest look at cultural tides. We laugh in part because we’re uncomfortable, but also out of relief. The truth does set you free.

Take for example the emerging comic Ryan Hamilton, who with wit and charm, is able to address the serious issue of the breakdown of natural communities and friendship through bits on geolocation dating apps:

“We have all of these devices constantly broadcasting our location, so here’s what dating has become in the modern world: who’s right here, right now? Who are you interested in? Everyone in a hundred-yard radius, basi-
Where is the Holy Spirit leading us?

Catholic Voices

Greg Erlandson
Catholic News Service

Amid the Fray

The cardinal seems to be suggesting that the Second Vatican Council, an epochal event in the history of the modern church but already 50 years old, may just now be having its moment. Indeed, despite all the changes and their attendant controversies and debates, it may only be now that Catholics are truly grappling with what the council was proposing.

This is a provocative thought. Perhaps Vatican II was not just the culmination of a century of theological and pastoral reflection about the church, the world and its people, but was in fact preparing Catholics for something unsuspected at the time.

Cardinal DiNardo quotes Pope Francis again, who told the bishops that this “new ecclesial season” may require “a new approach to management, a new type of listening and of leadership of a pastoral and spiritual nature, not in it together and for the long haul.”

None of this works if bishops, priests and lay people are not in it together and for the long haul.

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

Gratitude as a Lenten practice

Lent beckons, and that’s a good time to dust off my gratitude journal.

If you want a run-down on all the ways gratitude can help you, visit happierhuman.com/benefits-of-gratitude. Over 26 studies have chronicled how gratitude can help you sleep better, experience less physical pain, spend more time exercising, improve your mood and generally lead a better life.

Sounds fantastic, but what about growing in a relationship with God? To a believer, that's foundational. And fortunately, Scripture and the great spiritual writers, like St. Ignatius of Loyola, point to gratitude as integral to this foundation.

In Psalm 116, the psalmist asks us, "How can I repay the Lord for all the good done for me?"

First, you have to recognize and acknowledge that bounty, often hidden by our troubles and worries.

A gratitude journal can merge with the centuries-old Ignatian practice of the "examen." The "examen," a once- or twice-a-day practice of reviewing your day to see where God is with you in it, is a wellspring of gratitude. The focus of this examination is not what I did wrong — although that may be part of what you note — but where was God in this for me? It's part of the Jesuit tradition of finding God in all things.

A gratitude journal names things in your day for which you are grateful. You can do it anytime, but some suggest it helps you to sleep more peacefully if you record gratitude before bed.

Some people don't like to write. OK, you can do an "examen," or a gratitude review, mentally. I find it helps to write because then I can focus better, review my list and remember things I'd tend to forget. But you can pause at any time and give thanks for something without writing it down.

Some suggest a gratitude journal sounds too simplistic, Pollyanna-ish. "There's some things you should be angry about. Righteous anger is good," they say.

Of course. Tragedies happen. National politics drives us nuts. A guy on the freeway cuts us off dangerously. Who says thanks for that?

But the more I focus on gratitude, the more I see that thankful-ness is the flip side of every coin.

Of course I am angry when a government policy seems inhumane and violates Catholic social teaching. But I can focus on gratitude, for example, for people who are working at the U.S.-Mexico border to relieve the suffering of asylum-seekers and children who have been separated from their parents.

I can use this gratitude to become involved myself, or I can choose the flip side and simmer in my own anger.

God has a message for us in all circumstances, even the sad ones.

Gratitude is a choice. So are memories. A lesson for me is to choose good memories and not dwell on bad ones.

Some fear a gratitude journal will become repetitive, a daily litany of kids, spouse, shelter, food.

Dig deeper. I'm grateful for the nice note I received about a column I wrote. I'm grateful for the cookies my neighbor dropped off. I'm grateful for the opportunity to bring the Eucharist to someone, and grateful for the smile with which they rewarded me.

Sometimes we forget about these little things, even though they cheered us in the moment. Keeping a gratitude journal reminds us of life's little gifts.

Jesus asked the leper who returned to thank him for his healing, "Ten were cleansed, were they not? Where are the other nine?" Gratitude brings us into the Lord's presence, makes us the one who returned. That's why it's a great Lenten practice.
OBISPO
Continúa de Página 3
LA CONVERSACIÓN DE JESÚS CON EL HOMBRE RICO

En Marcos 10:17-30, Jesús es abordado por un hombre que le pregunta qué debe hacer para heredar la vida eterna. El hombre rico había seguido todos los mandamientos de Dios, y Jesús le dijo que, en su caso, había una cosa más que debía hacer: “Una cosa te falta: ve y vende lo que tienes, y dalo a los pobres, y tendrás un tesoro en el Cielo... porque donde esté tu tesoro, allí estará tu corazón también.” Los que idolatran ellos mismos (como Marta, María y Lázaro) tenían la misión de Abraham. En última instancia, Dios el Creador. En última instancia, Dios es dueño de todo lo que exis- te porque les venido encima desgracia...su oro y plata se han oxidado. El oxígeno se levanta como acusador contra ustedes” (Santiago 5:1-5).

Cómo obtenemos el dinero
El Séptimo Mandamiento dice: “No robarás.” Todas las llaves de nuestro tesoro en el cielo...porque donde esté tu tesoro, allí estará tu corazón también.” Los que idolatran ellos mismos (como Marta, María y Lázaro) tienen problemas en nuestra actitud: “No codiciarás los bienes de tu vecino.” Y no hemos traído al mundo, y no podemos llevarlo del mundo” (1 Timoteo 6:7). Algunas personas tienen un montón de dinero, y algunos tienen poco. Cada uno de nosotros, no importa la cantidad de dinero que tenemos, al final tendremos que rendir cuentas a Dios por la forma en que hemos tratado nuestro dinero. Nuestras actitudes y nuestras acciones con respecto al dinero son de importancia eterna. Damos gracias a Dios por los dones que nos ha dado, y oramos por la sabiduría para usarlos con prudencia y generosidad.

CONCLUSIÓN
“Nada hemos traído al mundo, y no podemos llevarlo del mundo” (1 Timoteo 6:7). Algunas personas tienen un montón de dinero, y algunos tienen poco. Cada uno de nosotros, no importa la cantidad de dinero que tenemos, al final tendremos que rendir cuentas a Dios por la forma en que hemos tratado nuestro dinero. Nuestras actitudes y nuestras acciones con respecto al dinero son de importancia eterna. Damos gracias a Dios por los dones que nos ha dado, y oramos por la sabiduría para usarlos con prudencia y generosidad.
AGENDA
Continued from Page 2
• supports enforcement measures which are targeted, proportional, and humane; and
• supports the reunification of immigrant families.

Restorative Justice

Why for the church, the state has primary responsibility to uphold justice, with the goals of achieving restitution, protecting the common good, deterring offenses, and rehabilitating offenders. However, our state struggles with overincarceration and overcriminalization, which have arisen from the harshness that so often accompanies all earthly justice. Therefore, the TCCB seeks mercy in order to help the state achieve the goals listed above. Specifically, the TCCB:
• opposes the imposition and use of the death penalty;
• supports bail reforms which depend upon the accused’s danger, not their wealth;
• supports the rehabilitation of offenders who commit non-violent state jail felonies;
• supports raising the age of criminal responsibility for 17-year-olds;
• supports parole board review of lengthy sentences given to juveniles; and
• supports efforts to reclassify rent-to-own defaults as a civil offense.

Education

The family is the sanctuary of life, in which parents teach children how they ought to live. Thus, the education of children is a primary right and serious duty of parents, and the state participates in education with the parents’ consent. Moreover, the central focus of public financing for education should always be the good of children. Therefore, the TCCB supports expanded educational opportunities for Texas parents and students. Specifically, the TCCB:• supports parental choice in education, including tax credit scholarships;
• supports measures ensuring all children have the benefit of a safe school environment, whether public or private;
• supports creating a do-not-hire registry of persons barred from school employment due to misconduct with students or minors;
• supports student-based education finance that is responsive to student demographics;
• supports the autonomy of private institutions;
• supports increased funding for tuition equalization grants;
• supports access to Pre-Kinder garden, and before- or after-school child care.

Healthcare

While modern science has given rise to nearly miraculous cures for human illnesses, it may also be used to destigmatize the sick and medically intervene continually on its work toward the dignity and transcendence of every human. To foster this, the TCCB promotes health and healthcare access in accord with the principles of bioethics. Specifically, the TCCB:
• supports healthcare which respects patient dignity and physician conscience;
• supports access to palliative care and monitors changes to the advance directive act;
• supports increased access to health insurance and healthcare, such as through Medicaid and CHIP;
• supports studies of maternal mortality and morbidity, and efforts to improve the health of Texas mothers;
• supports preventative care and education to help patients play a greater role in their health care and treatment;
• supports increased access to treatment for addiction.

Social Concerns

Texans have inherited remarkable economic opportunities, and employment arising from such opportunity has a special dignity. We are grateful for these gifts. However, showiness in wealth can be so highly prized that we forget the poor and vulnerable, who are our neighbors, and cannot be neglected in the work for the common good. Therefore, the TCCB seeks to assist those who are in the greatest need. Specifically, the TCCB:
• supports initiatives that reduce marriage penalties in public assistance programs;
• supports elimination of usurious loans, especially payday and auto-title lending;
• supports anti-poverty public assistance which incentivizes self-sufficiency;
• supports efforts to alleviate food insecurity and hunger, including through nutrition programs, school meals, and nutritional education;
• supports efforts to assist in the care and support of persons with disabilities; and
• supports efforts to combat human trafficking, caring for victims, and reunify families.

Religious Liberty

A Church feeds the hungry; accompanies the lonely; comforts the sick, dying, and grieving; helps the addicted; gives aid to widows and orphans; shelters refugees; strengthens the fellowship between neighbors, citizens, and spouses; softens earthly justice with divine mercy; and incalculates the morality that a free nation needs to function. Yet today, religious liberty is under attack by the state. Such liber- tarianism not only abstracts our ability to worship by going to Mass on Sunday or praying the Rosary at home. Rather, it is about whether Christians can make our contribution to the common good of all Americans. Therefore, the TCCB seeks to maintain and protect religious liberty. Specifically, the TCCB:
• supports efforts to protect religious liberty, especially as it pertains to human life, marriage, and family;
• supports conscience protection for individuals and organizations contracting with governments, especially healthcare providers, educators, and those who serve the poor and vulnerable; and
• supports incentives for charitable giving by taxpayers to programs maintained by faith-based nonprofit entities.

Creation

We should see nature with awe and wonder, but too often we tend to merely view ourselves as nature’s masters, who rightly employ it to satisfy our ever-multiplying desires. We thereby forget, or never learn, how to live wisely, think deeply, or love generously, and these are the requisite virtues to counter our current overmilitarization of our posterity. Therefore, the TCCB hopes to foster the prudent stewardship of creation. Specifically, the TCCB:
• supports an increased understanding of Texas’ water availability;
• supports efficiency and conservation in water use to maintain availability for irrigation and drinking;
• supports efficiency and conservation in energy use and efforts to mitigate pollution; and
• supports efficiency in disaster recovery coordination among non-profits.

The TCCB is a federation of all Roman Catholic dioceses and religious communities in Texas. There are 8 million Catholics living in our state. To contact us, call our office at 512-339-9882, email jennifer@txcatholic.org, or find TXCatholic on Facebook and Twitter. See https://txcatholic.org.

ASYLUM
Continued from Page 9
the composition of migrants started changing last summer, when asylum-seekers from as far away as Congo and Cameroon arrived in Piedras Negras. They thought it might be a safer and less-crowded alternative to border cities such as Nuevo Laredo and Reynosa to the east, where drug cartels commit crimes against migrants. The shelter in Piedras Negras is helping to house 40 families from Africa as they wait their turn to cross.

The focus remains on short-term stays and emergency situations, however, such as a pair of Hondurans rescued from the Rio Grande.

People Puerto, 25, spent three nights sleeping along the Rio Grande, hoping to find the right time to cross over — but the heavy security on the U.S. side kept thwarting his attempts to swim across.

Puerto, an Afro-Honduran and lobsterman from the Bay Islands, says he came to the United States looking for work and medical attention. In the border state of Coahuila, the state government provided buses for more than 1,700 caravans of migrants to reach Piedras Negras, where they were immediately housed in an abandoned factory and not allowed to leave until immigration officials processed them and issued humanitarian visas.

Rows of federal police and soldiers guarded the shelter, prompting complaints from some migrants, who spoke through a chain-link fence with reporters as rows of police in riot gear and soldiers in fatigues kept a watchful eye on the installations. “People here are so many police that we’re not criminals?” asked Arnold Salinas, 25, a barber from Honduras, who admitted not wanting to wait for Mexican officials to give him a humanitarian visa as he entered the country from Guatemala.

Like most migrants in Piedras Negras, Salinas showed no interest in staying in Mexico, saying, “They’ll never take away our American dream.”

Others seemed unaware of the wait that they confronted or cited false information on what is required to request asylum.

Brother Obed Cuellar, a Dominican missionary managing the Piedras Negras shelter, said many caravan travelers arrive at the border thinking they can enter the United States with ease.

“They’re told of a process that could take three, four or five months, they get upset,” Brother Cuellar said, explaining the migrants’ reaction is often, “They told me that at the border they will give us permission to work in the United States.”

Juan Andrade, coordinator of a Catholic-run shelter, said the caravans prompt U.S. officials to fortify the border, which drives up the price of hiring a smuggler. In Eagle Pass, U.S. border patrol agents block pedestrian lanes on the bridges to the ports of entry, have recently installed gates with concertina wire and parked patrol vehicles along their side of the river.

“Families of these migrants often don’t send money (for hiring a human smuggler) as promised (and) they often end up living in the street,” where they’re exposed to crime, Andrade said.

Local residents also voice suspicions, because caravans have been portrayed negatively in the Mexican media.

“Many people in Piedras Negras feel upset by this,” said Elizabeth Cardenas, a migrant advocate in the city. “They think that (the government) is putting more importance on foreigners than the residents of Piedras Negras.”

CLOWNS
Continued from Page 18
cally, I’m not interested in a long-distance relationship.”

Or Sebastian Maniscalco, who tackles our cultural obsession with taking photos of ourselves: “Taking a photo of yourself? They call it a ‘selfie.’ I call it a ‘lonely.’ Do you know how alone you have to be, that you can’t find anybody to take a photo of you?”

And against the backdrop of the sexual abuse crisis, distrust in Episcopal leadership and polarization among the church’s members, at least one Catholic comedian has emerged to help break the tension. Jeremy McLellan, who hones his comedic chops on Twitter, has taken to producing satirical videos in which he poses as a journalist reporting on Catholic news, but with ultimately challenge Catholics to offer a better, more consistent witness.

I’d venture to say that comedians are some of the only cultural commentators with the discipline to thoroughly examine a phenomenon at length before weighing in on it. Many who should have that responsibility, including everyone from public intellectuals to priests — seem unable to exercise restraint against the lure of public, reactive online commentary.

Comedians have become some of our wisest and most contemplative figures. They have the capacity for thoughtful, sustained reflection that is desperately needed today. In times like these, I say, send in more clowns.
exhaustion, the pilgrims' overarching feelings were hope, happiness and humble gratitude toward the welcoming people of Panama. Energetic worship music uplifted the spirits of pilgrims and bystanders, but the youth also engaged in moments of quiet worship. One such moment was the eucharistic adoration at the overnight vigil Jan. 26, where 600,000 pilgrims united in silent prayer.

"It was a peaceful moment; you would not expect it, being that we were so many people from different countries. It was beautiful," said Chicago pilgrim Nacxtielic Lemus. "God is present, and God is strong with all of us. So hopefully we are able to bring back what we learned and share it with all the youth who are hungry and don't know him yet."

Being young is not a "waiting room where we sit around until we are called," Pope Francis said to young people during the sending Mass. Their mission and vocation are not a far-off promise, but their current call.

"You, dear young people, are not the future... (but) the now of God," the pope said. "He invites you and calls you in your communities and cities to go out and find your grandparents, your elders; to stand up and with them to speak out and realize the dream that the Lord has dreamed for you."

Pilgrims from a parish in Brazil said that the pope's focus on "today" inspired and energized them. "The time of God is today," said Anna Catarina. "Let's say yes to God today — now."

PILGRIMS
Continued from Page 18

CENSUS
Continued from Page 4

the question an attempt to discriminate against immigrants.

"Adding a question about citizenship to the census would incite widespread fear in immigrant communities and greatly impair the accuracy of population counts," said Letitia James, New York's attorney general, in a Feb. 15 statement.

Civil rights groups and religious organizations have opposed the addition of a citizenship question that has not been used since 1950.

A Jan. 20 letter to Ross from the Leadership Conference on Civil and Human Rights called the citizenship question "unnecessarily intrusive" and said it could "jeopardize the accuracy of the entire count, leaving public, private, and nonprofit decision-makers with bad information for all purposes, for the next 10 years."

A few Catholic groups — Franciscan Action Network, the Catholic social justice lobby Network and the National Advocacy Center for the Sisters of the Good Shepherd — were among the 170 organizations that added their signatures to the letter, which emphasized that "mixed-status and immigrant households will be especially fearful of providing information to the federal government in 2020, given the heightened climate of fear that anti-immigrant rhetoric and policies have created."

This group joins other critics of the citizen question who have said it will undermine the form's accuracy because legal and unauthorized immigrants might refuse to fill it out. One government estimate notes that about 6.5 million people might refuse to participate in the census.

The census is rooted in the text of the Constitution, which requires an "actual enumeration" of the population every 10 years, with the House of Representatives to be apportioned based on "the whole number of persons in each state."
SANDOVAL

Continúa de Page 17
me cobrarán por reemplazarlo. Le avisé a mi esposa y pasé el resto del día en mi oficina haciendo otras tareas. Por fin, sintiendo cansancio y desánimo, me acosté para descansar un rato. Recordé que mi Mamá siempre le rezaba a San Antonio cuando perdía alguna cosa. Pero rechacé que San Antonio me ayudara porque no tenía fe en su fiama. Pensé que mi oración servía tan útiles como la costumbre de mi suegra de poner de la estatua de San Judas sobre su televisor cuando la recepción no estaba muy buena. No veía yo mejoramiento, pero eso le trae a ella algún consuelo. Al recordar todo eso, decidí que valía la pena buscar un poco más.

Continúa de Page 17
Continúa de Page 17

Sobre una cómoda de ropa mi esposa tiene muchas cajitas llenas de joyas. Ya había buscado en ellas varias veces, pero abrí una muy pequeña que originalmente era para monedas, pero ahora está llena de pendientes, o anillos. Vi entre los objetos lo que parecía ser parte de un anillo para mí. No podia creer mis ojos, y te-miendo desilusión no me cobrarán por reemplazarlo. Le avisé a mi esposa y pasé el resto del día en mi oficina haciendo otras tareas. Por fin, sintiendo cansancio y desánimo, me acosté para descansar un rato. Recordé que mi Mamá siempre le rezaba a San Antonio cuando perdía alguna cosa. Pero rechacé que san Antonio me ayudara porque no tenía fe en su fiama. Pensé que mi oración servía tan útiles como la costumbre de mi suegra de poner de la estatua de San Judas sobre su televisor cuando la recepción no estaba muy buena. No veía yo mejoramiento, pero eso le trae a ella algún consuelo. Al recordar todo eso, decidí que valía la pena buscar un poco más.

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National Catholic Sisters Week: March 8–14, 2019

By Sister Adelina Garcia, OSF

National Catholic Sisters Week celebrates the religious women who have dedicated their lives to serving the People of God. The Diocese of San Angelo has 19 women religious who serve in the Church: five are Carmelites, a contemplative order who reside in Christoval; three are sisters of the Institute of the Coadjutors of the Social Apostolate who serve in Midland at St. Stephen; five are Oblates of Notre Dame who serve in Odessa, Midland, and Sweetwater; four are sister of the Congregation of Divine Providence who serve in Midland and in the diocesan Office of Evangelization and Catechesis; and two are School Sisters of St. Francis who also serve in the Office of Evangelization and Catechesis at the Pastoral Center in San Angelo.

While they may not be as visible to the entire diocese, their work and prayers are surely touching the people. It is important that they be acknowledged and appreciated. Vocations to religious life rely on the encouragement of parents to their children and exposing them to the life of the sisters. This is an opportunity to talk with your children about religious life and the important role it plays in the Church.

The West Texas Nun Run will be held beginning in San Angelo at Christ the King Retreat Center on Friday, March 8, and proceeding to Our Lady of Grace Monastery in Christoval. The Run will conclude in San Antonio at Our Lady of the Lake Motherhouse. Breakfast, display tables, and discussions will be held.

On March 13, Holy Spirit Parish in Sweetwater will host a gathering for girls and parents to learn about religious life. The day will include a video, discussion, and a prayer service followed by a meal. Divine Providence Sister Joyce Detzel, Franciscan Sister Hilda Marotta and Franciscan Sister Adelina Garcia will be the presenters. Oblates of Notre Dame Sister Luisita Iglesias will host along with Fr. Nilo Nalugon, pastor.

Sister Rosalia Sabud, OND, Sister Alicia Realino, OND, Sister Maria Theresa Arzagon, OND, Sister Elizabeth Villegas, OND, and Sister Tita Iglesias, OND

Sister Guadalupe Ibañez Santos, ICAS, Sister Gertrudis Muñoz Mendieta, ICAS, and Sister Leonila Torres Bermudez, ICAS

Back row: Sister Mary Theodore Therese Sridhanyata, OCarm, aspirant Hope Swanson, Sister Mary Grace Erl, OCarm, and postulant Adriana Bernal; front row: Sister Imelda Kensinger, OCarm, and Sister Mary Michael Nerlinger, OCarm

Sister Elsa Garcia, CDP, Sister Marjorie Filler, CDP, and Sister Kate Fitzgerald, CDP

Sister Hilda Marotta, OSF, Sister Joyce Detzel, CDP, and Sister Adelina Garcia, OSF