



Vatican 2, born 40 years ago, has changed the Catholic Church dramatically. Coverage /Pgs. 2, 8-9

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International
Pilgrim
Virgin
Statue of
Our Lady of
Fatima

Fatima Statue in Diocese

The world famous International Pilgrim Virgin Statue of Our Lady of Fatima, which has been traveling the World since 1947, will be at different parishes in the Diocese of San Angelo through Feb. 21. Its journey to West Texas is courtesy of the members of St. Maximilian Kolbe Fraternity of the Secular Franciscan Order (SFO). To see when she will be at a parish near you, please see page 6.

Spanish radio appeal

For the past year, the Diocese of San Angelo has provided Spanish-language radio programming, the EWTN-produced *La Hora Catolica*, to Hispanic Catholics in Odessa, San Angelo and Abilene each week. Funding and sponsorship shortfalls leave the diocese faced with the potential termination of that programming.

Find out how you can help, Page 7

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Priestly Ordination

The Diocese of San Angelo will celebrate the Priestly Ordination of **Rev. Mr. Emilio Jose Sosa** in a 10 a.m. Mass **Saturday, January 14** Sacred Heart Cathedral San Angelo

After 3 years, priestly ordination held in diocese

By Jimmy Patterson

The January priestly ordination of Rev. Mr. Emilio Jose Sosa is the first in the diocese in three years. Sosa, currently a deacon and seminarian in his final months of formation and education at Assumption Seminary in San Antonio, was born in Pachuca,

Mexico, and raised in an orphanage. He began Catholic seminary in Mexico and later came to America. He will be assigned to St. Ann's Church in Midland.

"Ordination will be a huge step in a long journey toward the priesthood for Emilio," said Fr. Tom Barley, Seminarian Director for the Diocese. "He started in Mexico and

he's grown a lot and it's been a long time. He's had a lot of preparation."

In 2002, Fr. Rodney White (St. Ann's-Midland) and Fr. Joey Faylona (St. Agnes-St. Joseph's in Fort Stockton) celebrated their priestly ordinations, the most recent occurrence of ordinations in the diocese. Two additional will occur in the diocese in 2006.

WORK of HEART

Midland metal artist Jonah LaMonica had never before produced a piece of artwork without having to stop, start, stop, start. When he spent the better part of the last eight months working on *The Vine*, a sacristy he fashioned for Our Lady of San Juan parish, not once did he have to undo and re-do.

"Every night I worked on it, I would look in on it and it brought me closer to God. I would be out in the shop and look at it and I could just feel it," said LaMonica, 25, a former Texas Tech University student "This whole project didn't feel like my hands were doing it literally. I would stand back and feel amazed, amazed at how it was forming itself right in front of me. I really felt the strong presence of God."

LaMonica is the son of Deacon Mike LaMonica and wife, Madolyn, parishioners at Our Lady of San Juan.

-- Jimmy Patterson



VITALS

The Vine
By Jonah LaMonica

Weight:
Over 500 lbs

Height:
6 feet

**Hours of work
to complete:**
800

Materials:
16-gauge
cold roll steel

Created at:
Palladium Arts,
Midland
LaMonica's
metal art business

www.palladiumarts.com

From Bishop Pfeifer's Desk

Abortion remains the central moral issue

By Bishop Michael Pfeifer, OMI

Abortion is the central moral issue at this moment in our nation's history. January 22, 1973 for us who are pro-life, was a day filled with grief and sorrow, as that was the day that the highest court of our land in the *Roe v. Wade* decision gave the right



to kill the unborn at any stage of their development. Sadly, the Supreme Court failed to recognize in the Constitution the primary right given to every human person, the right to life, the right for an unborn child to celebrate a birthday. Regrettably, 33 years later, the court still has not found in our Constitution the most basic right to life for these precious pre-born citizens. The Justices of the highest

court of this land failed to capture the mind and spirit of the founders and framers of our Constitution who surely meant the right to life to apply to the born and unborn, as abortion was rightly considered when the Constitution was approved to be an abhorrent evil. On this anniversary of the tragic death decision of our court, we call on the

See **BISHOP/14**

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Photos should be sent in jpeg format.

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should be emailed to
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discretion of the editor and identities of
the writer are subject to
verification. Please include name,
address and phone number when sub-
mitting letters.



From the Editor

To this young Baptist, the Church didn't exist

Some people have stories that begin ...
"My only recollection" or "My first
recollection." When I was a kid, I
had zero recollection
of the Catholic
Church before I was
10. I'm not sure I
even knew it existed.

When I was an ado-
lescent, I do remem-
ber visiting the
Catholic Church in
Columbus, Ohio,
where my Aunt and
Uncle still live today.

My fond memories take me to a winter
day with snow on the ground, a walk
down the steps on the side of a large hill,
through a white-covered field and to my
Aunt and Uncle's parish. I remember how
much I looked forward to it. It seemed
almost adventuresome. A Baptist Royal
Ambassador like me, my religion con-
fined to the Southern Baptist worship
service, attending a Catholic Church. And
I was young and the church was so close
to their house and I remember thinking:
Man, Uncle Bill must be rich because he
has this huge church right in his backyard.

I remember being quite taken with the
Mass that first time I attended. The
solemnity of the occasion, the soft-spo-
ken parish priest who was in direct con-
trast to the fire-and-brimstone delivery of
the dearly departed, Dr. Henry Kinkeade,



Patterson

who to me still stands as a giant spiritual
figure in my own life.

But I knew when I left that Catholic
church that day in the 1960s I wanted to
at the very least know more about this
strange religion.

Strange ... to me ... because although my
Uncle was and is a practicing Catholic, the
religion was almost nonexistent to me
before that visit. The reason? Probably
because it had so recently enacted Vatican
II. Before then, to one young Baptist par-
ticularly, Catholicism was a foreign reli-
gion spoken in a strange language by
priests whose backs were toward the peo-
ple. There was likely a gaggle of other mis-
information floating around my and mil-
lions of other Protestant families, but what
else were they to do? How do you learn
about and accept other religions if they
don't even conform to the vernacular of the
people? That's certainly no way to ecum-
enize. Were it not for Vatican II, Catholics
would be nowhere near the world's largest
religion and you most certainly wouldn't
be seeing my photo atop this piece.

With the dust cleared, it is certainly
safe to say that Vatican II was a triumph
for the Church; a triumph that has
allowed it to become what it is today, and
for that I remain personally grateful, as I
think it is safe to say many of you do.

*Jimmy Patterson is editor of The
Angelus. He can be reached at
JimmyLPatterson@grandecom.net.*

DIOCESAN BRIEFS

Pro-Life Mass

The San Angelo Knights of Columbus coun-
cils invite all Knights in the diocese and their fam-
ilies to a Pro-Life Mass, 11 a.m., Sunday, Jan. 22,
2006, at the KC Hall, 3636 N. Bryant in San
Angelo. Bishop Pfeifer will offer the Mass. A small
reception will follow.

TMC 2006 Conference

The Texas Mission Council of the Texas
Catholic Conference will celebrate its annual
conference at the Western Inn Suites in Fort
Worth, January 27-29. The conference will fea-
ture Fr. Roger Schroeder, SVD, Professor of
Theology at the Catholic Theological Union,
who will offer the keynote address and direct a
dialogue on Baptismal commitment to the
Global Mission of the Church in the 21st
Century. Fr. Schroeder is co-author of the
recently completed "Constants in Mission." The
conference and its activities are open to the
public. For more information, contact TMC sec-
retary Awanda Whitworth at
mklawandaw@aol.com or 713.688.1060.

Catholic Radio gets new roof

The Guadalupe Radio Network would like
to thank all three Midland area Knights of
Columbus chapters for their generous help
in repairing the station roof. After years of
abuse from the weather here in West

Texas, the complex desperately needed a
new roof. Countless missing shingles,
leaks and rotten wood became common
sights around the complex. When the
winds would blow the station looked like a
giant bird ruffling its feathers. Needless to
say a new roof was needed; however, the
funds simply were not there. On November
4th and 5th the Midland area Knights of
Columbus Councils from St. Stephen, Our
Lady of Guadalupe and St. Ann united in
their efforts to help in a much need project
of improvement. They worked side by side
to replace and repair the roof on the entire
Guadalupe Radio Network complex. This
massive project (over 60 roofing squares)
was finished ahead of schedule on
Saturday by 2:30pm! These guys really
worked hard. Because of the generosity of
the Midland area Knights of Columbus and
several area businesses we were able to
replace the roof for only the cost of materi-
als. We are truly grateful for the help of the
Midland Knight's for doing a true labor of
love to help the Guadalupe Radio Network.
Currently the Guadalupe Radio Network
operates 9 stations across Texas and New
Mexico broadcasting "Radio For Your Soul"
24 hours a day, and streams around the
world on the Internet.

Bishop reflects on Vatican II changes

Recently The Angelus asked Bishop
Pfeifer to share his feelings on the
changes brought by Vatican II:

"Vatican II had a profound effect on us all.
I was still a seminarian when it happened
and I was ordained at the end of Vatican II
and I experienced a change in my formation.
The vernacular was starting to be used
although I offered my first Masses in Latin
for a couple of years. It had a great effect on
my own life and on my formation. So many
good things came out of it that I think we're
still learning to appreciate them and how to
implement them. It opened, too, the door for
full participation by all people, men and
women and opened many ministries that had
been reserved formerly for the priest."

On the misperceptions of pre-Vatican II
Catholicism by other Christian denomi-
nations:

"There was not as much openness in the
past about who we were and what we
believed and that led to a lot of confusion.
With Vatican II it brought about a new open-
ness in a very positive way as to how we
would share and it helped clarify how we
believed and what we held.

On its effect on the church's hierarchical
structure:

"I think it gave us a new sense of how to
function as a church and that we are a
church of all people where you have a hier-
archy sent to us by Christ through St.
Peter, and a Pope given authority given us
by God."

Study Week 2006

**Liturgy Evangelizing Life/
La Liturgia Evangeliza La Vida
January 18-21, 2006 Austin**

AUSTIN. The 44th Annual Southwest Liturgical
Conference Study Week, Liturgy Evangelizing
Life/La Liturgia Evangeliza La Vida is being co-
hosted by the Diocese of Austin and the
Southwest Liturgical Conference, **January 18-21,
2006** at the Doubletree Hotel at IH35 and 290 in
Austin.

Brother of Midland priest dies

Froylan Rodriguez Pinon, 71, of Morelia,
Mexico, died Sunday, Jan. 1. Services were held
in Mexico.

He was born May 25, 1934.

He is survived by his wife, Elita Ruiz; seven
daughters; one son; two sisters, and Fr. Gilbert
Rodriguez, priest at Our Lady of Guadalupe
Catholic Church in Midland.

(See Diocesan Dates/Pg. 5)

Pfeifer, USCCB says immigration reform bill would hurt nation, church

The Angelus

Despite Catholic Bishops' warning, the United States House of Representatives approved an Immigration Reform Bill (H.R.4437) on December 16, 2005, that causes severe and serious consequences for immigration, the nation and the Church, according to The Most Rev. Michael D. Pfeifer, Bishop of San Angelo. The proposed legislation, Pfeifer noted, calls for the building of a 700-mile fence along the U.S.-Mexican border and would make illegal presence in the U.S. a crime, rather than the civil offense it is now.

Pfeifer made his statements in opposition of the legislation in the form of a letter to the priests of the 74

parishes in the Diocese of San Angelo.

The U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops stands in strong opposition to H.R. 4437, and the Catholic Bishops of Texas discussed this vitally important issue during their annual retreat in San Antonio and have issued a special letter to all the people of Texas pointing out that this bill is an extremely punitive bill which is far broader than illegal immigration.

"If enacted," Pfeifer said, "this bill would unduly harm immigrants and their families, even those who are currently lawful residents. Moreover, the Bishops of Texas are deeply disappointed by the bill's enforcement-only focus and absence of reform in the U.S. legal immigration system that would address our current immigration

problems more comprehensively."

Of particular concern to the Texas Bishops are provisions in the legislation that would:

- expand expedited removal;
- expand the reach of offenses related to assisting persons who are unlawfully present in the United States and would subject these persons and entities, including humanitarian and Church groups, to severe criminal and civil penalties;
- make it more difficult for long-term residents to obtain citizenship and even restrict their ability to take action in District Court relative to their application for

See IMMIGRATION/15

Del Escritorio del Obispo

El aborto es la cuestión central y moral

por el Obispo Miguel Pfeifer, OMI

El aborto es la cuestión moral y central en este momento de la historia de nuestra nación. El **22 de Enero de 1973** para nosotros que somos pro-vida, es un día lleno de dolor y tristeza, como fue el día en que la corte más alta de nuestro país en la decisión de *Roe v. Wade* dio el derecho de matar al no-nacido en cualquier etapa de su desarrollo. Tristemente, la Corte Suprema falló en reconocer en la Constitución el derecho primario dado a cada persona humana, el derecho a la vida, el derecho de un niño no-nacido a celebrar su cumpleaños. Desafortunadamente, 33 años después, la corte todavía no ha encontrado en nuestra Constitución el más básico derecho de vida para nuestros preciosos ciudadanos no-nacidos. Los Jueces de la corte más alta de este país fallaron en capturar el espíritu y mente de los fundadores y autores de nuestra Constitución quienes seguramente tuvieron la intención que el derecho a la vida aplicara al nacido y el no-nacido, como el aborto fue verdaderamente considerado ser un mal aborrecible cuando la Constitución fue aprobada.

En este aniversario de la trágica decisión de muerte de nuestra corte, llamamos a los jueces de nuestra corte, a todos los líderes de gobierno, a reconocer el error en la decisión *Roe v. Wade* que quitó la verdad evidente que cada persona es creada con un derecho inalienable a la vida. Nosotros somos comprometidos, no importa cuanto tiempo se tome, no importa el sacrificio que se requiera, para cambiar esta decisión de muerte de la Corte Suprema.

Tristemente, para muchos en nuestra cultura Americana, la legalidad del aborto también afirma su moralidad. Ellos toman la legalidad del aborto como la norma máxima, y no notan la ley básica de vida como es dada a nosotros por Dios y por la ley natural. Muchos Católicos según llamados "pro-derecho a escoger" han sido engañados a creer que la legalidad del aborto hace el aborto una decisión legítimamente moral para aquellos quien lo busca. Declaramos, sin embargo, que Católicos y Cristianos y toda la gente tienen una obligación moral a proteger el primer derecho legal que nos es dado a nosotros por Dios, que es el derecho a la vida.

El aborto no es una cuestión entre muchos. El aborto es la cuestión central y moral, la cuestión de conflicto, de este momento de la historia de nuestra nación. El aborto es separado de otras cuestiones importantes y sociales como un salario justo, viviendas asequibles, y hasta el debate sobre la guerra, por una diferencia en tipo, no una diferencia en grado. Cada aborto mata deliberadamente a un ser humano inocente no-nacido—cada vez. No importa que tipo de gimnasia mental usemos, la matanza electiva de un no-nacido es un mal moral grave y no tiene ninguna excusa. Solamente nos implicamos en este acto abominable en tratar de inventar una excusa. En el debate sobre el aborto, Católicos deben de recordar que son llamados a ser primeramente ciudadanos del reino de Dios, y en segundo lugar, al reino de este mundo. Los Católicos tienen una responsabilidad moral y grave de seguir la enseñanza de la Iglesia en cuanto el aborto que es basada en la ley Divina. Es tiempo para establecer nuestras prioridades

en cuanto nuestro compromiso a la vida, y para seguir la palabras y ejemplo de un mártir, San Thomas More, quien dijo su vida por la verdad cuando declaró, "Yo soy un sirviente bueno del rey, pero Dios primero." Necesitamos seguir el camino de este hombre valiente. El aborto daña a nuestra cultura entera en maneras aun no imaginadas.

Nuestra creencia Católica en cuanto a lo sagrado y la dignidad de la vida humana, es basada en la Biblia, y una tradición larga de Judea-Cristiana, y la enseñanza constante de nuestra bella Iglesia Católica.

Cuando la parte judicial de nuestro gobierno permite el aborto, nuestro gobierno se convierte en un tipo de gobierno diferente del que fue fundado. Hay solamente dos formas de gobierno. La primera reconoce que Dios nos da nuestros derechos, y que el gobierno existe para asegurar esos derechos. En tal estructura, el gobierno no puede meterse con el derecho a la vida, y nunca puede autorizar su destrucción.

La segunda forma de gobierno dice que el gobierno es la fuente de esos derechos, y por eso tiene dominio completo sobre la vida y muerte. Sin embargo, el Papa Juan Pablo II comenta sobre este error en el *Evangelium Vitae* declarando lo siguiente: "En este modo la democracia, contradiciendo sus propios principios, efectivamente avanza hacia una forma de totalitarismo. El Estado ya no es la casa común donde podemos vivir juntos en la base de principios de igualdad fundamental, pero es transformada en un *Estado tirano*, que quiere arrogarse a si mismo el

(Mira OBISPO/14)

The role of the deacon in the Catholic Church

By Bishop Michael Pfeifer, OMI

As you know from previous correspondence, supported by the Presbyteral Council, I have approved another Deacon Training Program for men called to the Diaconate for the Diocese of San Angelo. Already there have been several meetings to select and prepare the new candidates for this important ministerial order for our Church. I thank those men, supported by their wives, who through proper discernment are presenting themselves as candidates for the Diaconate.

As we begin another four-year program of training and preparation for these new candidates, I believe it is important to share some reflections on the role of deacons in our Catholic Church. While priestly ordinations in the United States have decreased over the past three decades, the ministerial order of the diaconate has seen a steady rise. Today there are more than 15,000 deacons serving in parishes in the United States. We now have 62 deacons in our Diocese.

To understand the proper role of the deacon, we go back to the New Testament. In Acts 6, we read how the Apostles appointed seven men, among them Stephen, to serve the poor. As time went on, these men came to be known as deacons whose primary service was to the bishop, assisting him in proclaiming the Gospel, helping him to carry out his many other works, and serving the poor and the needy on the bishop's behalf.

As the number of priests began to increase in the fourth Century, the priests began to meet the pastoral needs of people, and the deacons found themselves in certain ways to be supplanted by the role of the priest. Also, the diaconate came to be seen as a step on the path to eventual priestly ordination. Hence, the order of the diaconate went into decline.

However, moved by the Holy Spirit, the Fathers at the Second Vatican Council restored the Permanent Diaconate, realizing the important service deacons

(See DEACONS/15)

Volunteers needed to help be 'the presence of Jesus' for offenders

The Angelus

A Criminal Justice (CJ) seminar held on Saturday November 19th attracted 50 attendees from around the diocese at Christ the King Retreat Center. The five speakers all pointed out the dire need for volunteers to be that presence of Jesus to those hidden behind the walls. The adults incarcerated truly are locked away to protect the public, and during their time of imprisonment, no significant effort is made to train and rehabilitate the offenders to prepare them for release. Besides this, most of the 60,000 inmates released each year from the Texas prisons, leave with little or no faith foundation, and within three years over 80 percent return. Religious volunteers can play a significant role in planting the seed of Jesus Christ who is truly the only one to lead them to rehabilitation and restoration.

For the juvenile offender, the situation is somewhat different in that the programs offered while incarcerated can offer a new direction for many of them; however, upon release the family environment in which they return is many times unchanged from what it was when

they committed their crime and after a brief stay they return, unless placement in foster homes is an option. Statistics support a high recidivism rate, in fact, 80 percent of offenders in the Texas prisons spent time in the juvenile justice system. Volunteers can offer love and support that many youth offenders never experienced in their childhood, and also teach them about Jesus and his love and forgiveness.

The Criminal Justice System in Texas has reached epidemic portions in that there are now over 1.1 million men, women and juveniles under some form of correctional supervision. There are 200,000 incarcerated, 540,000 on probation or parole, and another 360,000 bonded waiting to reappear in court. Increased adult incarceration over the last 10 years has had a dramatic impact on families, in that there are now over 1.5 million youth under the age of 18 that have at least one parent in prison. In many cases, grandparents are raising children, and even in some cases children are raising children. Mother Theresa has put it this way, "I deal with children that are dying of malnutrition of the body, while in the US, children are dying because of malnutrition of the soul."

Another factor that impacts many of the offenders is that once incarcerated they are abandoned by their families. This takes a dramatic toll on an inmate that has now lost everything. One of the seminar speakers, an ex-offender that turned his life around, was very blessed in that his wife stood by his side during eleven years of imprisonment. This is a rarity, but the sign of continual acceptance and love of his wife offered him the hope he needed to survive the loneliness of incarceration. As volunteer ministers in the prisons, we continue to go back because we can offer the inmates that glimmer of hope through our presence. More importantly, we bring the word of God and talk about Jesus Christ, as our Lord and Savior. Being a light for Jesus, we are able to see the Holy Spirit work in these inmates, as they begin to change their lives. It is just an awesome experience that you can't totally understand until you experience it yourself. You too can be that presence of Christ.

If you would like to know more about our diocesan ministry efforts, or want to volunteer and experience this power of the Holy Spirit firsthand, please contact Deacon Bob Leibrecht at 432-889-3858.

Christian, Muslims, Jews come together for evening of dialogue in San Angelo

The Angelus

To help promote a spirit of reconciliation and healing with peoples of other Christian denominations and other religions, Bishop Michael Pfeifer has scheduled a Dialogue on Peace that will be held in the gym at Sacred Heart Cathedral located at 19 S. Oakes in San Angelo at 7 p.m. on January 10. The evening of dialogue will feature representatives from the Muslim, Jewish, and Christian religions. There will be a panel representing

these three major religions, and presentations will be given on how each religion can promote peace at a world level, focusing on how peace can be promoted at the central place where these religions are located in Israel and at a national and local level.

Last fall, Bishop Pfeifer announced a Year of Reconciliation and Healing for all the people of the Catholic Diocese of San Angelo, a diocese that takes in 29 counties in West Texas. The observance began with the First Sunday of Advent, November 27, 2005 and will

conclude November 26. The Bishop has proposed many ways of how Catholics within the Diocese can promote reconciliation, healing, and peace within families, within each church, and the cities and towns where we live, and at a global level.

After the presentations on peace and reconciliation by representatives of these major religions, there will be time for discussion and questions by all those who attend.

The public is invited to this Dialogue on Peace.

Traditions of the Church

The Creed, Article 7

'He will come again in glory to judge the living and the dead; his kingdom will have no end'

As so many of the articles of the creed do, Article 7 reaffirms a key element of the Christian faith: the Second Coming of Christ. This article completes the mission that Christ set forth in the beginning when he promised to return to deliver believers to salvation in heaven.

"At that time, the whole world will be placed before God and general judgment will be issued to the whole world throughout all history based on the standards and norms Jesus has given us," said the Most Rev. Michael D. Pfeifer, Bishop of San Angelo.

Matthew 25 states that Jesus' unending kingdom puts us in the realm of the eternal and the realm of heaven.

Pfeifer said the three lines in the 7th article of the Creed "are filled with challenges and much hope, and they remind us that the mission of Jesus has not been completed until he 'Comes again in glory to

judge the living and the dead.'

"We also hear in Revelation that Jesus will hand over the kingdom to his father, that he will bring to conclusion the world and life as we know it on earth, and there will be a judgment passed on the whole world. How it will happen we can't begin to imagine, but God won't need a PA system. We'll be able to hear Him very clearly."

Pfeifer said "every word of the creed is filled with profound meaning.

"It took literally hundreds of years to develop the Creed," Pfeifer said. "The Council of Nicene came in 325 AD and it was refined in 381 to give us the words we have today. The Creed has literally been in the making since the time of Jesus."

Next: Article 8 -- We believe in the Holy Spirit, the Lord, the giver of life."

Blessed Marianne Cope

1838-1918

feast - January 23

This German-born nun's family moved to Utica, N.Y., when she was 2. After entering the Sisters of the Third Order of St. Francis in Syracuse, she was a parish teacher and hospital administrator before answering a call to assist Hawaiian leprosy patients. She and two other nuns opened a home for women and girls on Molokai in 1888, and she continued Blessed Damien de Veuster's work among men and boys with the disease after his 1889 death. She died on Molokai in 1918. Her birthday was announced as her feast day at her 2005 beatification Mass in Rome.



Saints for Today

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DIOCESAN DATES**Bishop's Calendar****JANUARY**

- 11-13 -- Rest and Prayer
 14 -- **SAN ANGELO:** Priestly Ordination of Emilio Sosa, 10 a.m., Sacred Heart Cathedral.
 16 -- **SAN ANGELO:** Dr. Martin Luther King Ecumenical Service, Noon, Sacred Heart Cathedral.
 21 -- **ODESSA:** Diocesan Schools Commission Meeting, 9 a.m., St. Mary.
 22 -- **SAN ANGELO:** Pro-Life Mass, Knights of Columbus Hall, 11 a.m.
 23-24 -- **SAN ANTONIO:** MACC Executive Board Meeting.
 26 -- **SAN ANGELO:** Mass celebrating the First Anniversary of Perpetual Adoration Chapel, 6:30 p.m., St. Margaret.
 27 -- **SAN ANGELO:** Mass honoring Santa Angela de Merici, 6:30 p.m., Visitors' Center.
 28 -- **SAN ANGELO:** Knights of Columbus District Council Banquet, 6:45 p.m., Holy Angels
 29 -- **SAN ANGELO:** Youth and Young Adult Encuentro, 1-7 p.m., St. Joseph.
 31 -- **SAN ANGELO:** Personnel Board Meeting, 11 a.m., Diocesan Pastoral Center.
 31 -- **SAN ANGELO:** Presentation to RCIA, 6:30 p.m., Holy Angels.

FEBRUARY

- 1 -- **WALL:** Presentation to the RCIA, 7 p.m., St. Ambrose.
 3 -- **CHRISTOVAL:** Preside over Election of Prioress, Carmelite Sisters Monastery.
 4 -- **SAN ANGELO:** Diocesan Conference Day, San Angelo Convention Center.
 4 -- **SAN ANGELO:** Knights of Columbus Exemplification, 6 p.m.
 5 -- **STERLING CITY:** Mass, 12:30 p.m., St. Paschal.
 6 -- **SAN ANGELO:** Staff Mass, 8:30 a.m.; Staff meeting, 11 a.m., Diocesan Pastoral Center.
 7 -- **SAN ANGELO:** Endowment Board Meeting, 7 p.m., Sacred Heart Cathedral.
 10 -- **SAN ANGELO:** Forty Hours Devotion Begins with Mass at 8:30 a.m., Sacred Heart Cathedral.
 11 -- **SAN ANGELO:** Holy Angels — Scouts Award Mass, 5:30 p.m.
 12 -- **SAN ANGELO:** Forty Hours Devotion Ends with Mass, 10 a.m., Sacred Heart Cathedral.
 13-15 -- **SAN ANGELO:** Priests' Clergy Day, Christ the King Retreat Center.

- 16-18 -- **LAREDO:** National Youth Congress
 19-21 -- **AUSTIN:** Texas Conference of Churches Assembly
 25 -- **SAN ANGELO:** Meeting with Leaders of Catholic and Episcopalian Cursillos, and Walks to Emmaus, Christ the King Retreat Center.
 26 - **BIG LAKE:** Mass, 11:30 a.m., St. Margaret.
 26 -- **SAN ANGELO:** Deanery Gathering of Hispanic Youth, 1-7 p.m., St. Mary.

Chancellor's Calendar

(CKRC = Christ the King Retreat Center)

JANUARY

- 7-8 -- Diocesan Year of Reconciliation Retreat, CKRC
 7 -- Basic Formation, 8:45 a.m., St. Francis, Abilene
 8 -- Encuentro, Abilene Deanery, 1 p.m., St. Francis, Abilene.
 9-13 -- Assumption Seminary's Seminarian Retreat, CKRC.
 10 -- Staff Mass, 8:30 a.m., Diocesan Pastoral Center, 8:30 a.m., San Angelo.
 10 -- Dialogue with Christian, Jews, Muslims, 7 p.m., Sacred Heart Cathedral Gymnasium, San Angelo.
 14 -- Advanced Formation, 8:45 a.m., St. Mary's, Odessa.
 14 -- Priestly Ordination for Emilio Sosa, 10 a.m., Sacred Heart Cathedral, San Angelo.
 15 -- Confirmation Retreat, 9:30 a.m., CKRC.
 15 -- Detention Center Mass, Bronte, 10 a.m.
 19 -- Mass, Wallace Unit Prison, Colorado City, 6:30 p.m.
 20 -- Staff Meeting, 11 a.m., Diocesan Pastoral Center, San Angelo
 20 -- Meeting with pastor, pastoral council, 6:30 p.m., Immaculate Heart, Big Spring.
 20-22 -- Engaged Encounter, CKRC.
 21 -- Youth Ministry, Justice & Service, 9 a.m., St. Joseph, Odessa.
 22 -- Encuentro, Midland-Odessa Deanery, 1 p.m., Our Lady of Guadalupe, Midland.
 22 -- The Church in Latin America Collection.
 29 -- Encuentro, San Angelo Deanery, 1 p.m., St. Joseph's, San Angelo.
 29 -- Mass, 9 a.m., St. Ambrose, Wall.
 29 -- Diocesan Seminarian Collection.

FEBRUARY

- 4 -- Diocesan Conference Day, all day, San Angelo Convention Center.
 5 -- Super Bowl Sunday.
 5 -- Souper Bowl Collection for Hunger.
 6 -- "Why Catholic?" information session, CKRC, 7 p.m.
 7-8 -- International Priests gathering, CKRC.
 11 -- Basic Formation, 8:45 a.m., St. Francis, Abilene.
 11 -- Deacon Discernment, 9 a.m., CKRC.
 12 -- Confirmation Retreat, 9:30 a.m., CKRC, San Angelo.
 13-14 -- Clergy Day, CKRC.
 17-19 -- Engaged Encounter, CKRC
 24-26 -- Beginning Experience, CKRC
 24-26 -- Billings Ovulation NFP Seminar, CKRC.
 26 -- Encuentro, San Angelo Deanery at St. Mary's, San Angelo.

MARCH

- 1 -- Collection for Aid to Church in Central and Eastern Europe.
 1 -- Operation Rice Bowl (thru April 16)
 2-5 -- St. Ann's Midland ACTS Women's Retreat at CKRC, San Angelo.
 4 -- Basic Formation, 8:45 a.m., St. Francis, Abilene.
 5 -- Collection for Black and Indian Missions.
 5 -- Confirmation Retreat, 9:30 a.m., CKRC
 11 -- Advanced Formation, 8:45 a.m., St. Mary's, Odessa.
 11 -- Deacon Discernment, 9 a.m., CKRC.
 17-19 -- Engaged Encounter, CKRC.
 26 -- Collection for Catholic Relief Services.
 30 -- DOSA Budget, Group 1, 10:30 a.m., Pastoral Center.
 31 -- St. Ann's Midland Confirmation Retreat, CKRC.
 31 -- Region 10 Young Adult Encuentro, Austin.

Necrology-January

- 10 -- Rev. Francis Beazley, OMI (1992)
 13 -- Rev. Joseph Walter (1989)
 16 -- Rev. Cyril Lange (1971)
 16 -- Msgr. Timothy Murphy (2004)
 18 -- Rev. Patrick Ryan, OMI (1975)
 19 -- Fr. Robert Kelly (1999)
 26 -- Deacon D.J. Goetz (2003)
 26 -- Jack Peterson (1987)

DIOCESAN CONFERENCE DAY 2006

February 4, 2006

San Angelo Convention Center
9 a.m. – 4 p.m.

(7:45 am registration and exhibits)

KEYNOTE SPEAKER:
Sister Terry Rickard, OP**WORKSHOP SPEAKERS:**
S. Terry Rickard, OP and
Fr. Abraham Orapankal**KEYNOTE:**
Why Be Catholic?
S. Terry Rickard, OP

This presentation will explore the question never asked by most Catholics a generation ago: "Why Am I Catholic?" Today we need to choose our faith and recapture the richness of our Catholic beliefs and traditions. What is unique about Catholicism? How do we strengthen our Catholic identity and live and share more fully our Catholic faith?

WORKSHOP I:
The Bible in Catholic Life
S. Terry Rickard, OP

This workshop will focus on our rich scriptural heritage as Catholics and present ways to deepen our Catholic biblical identity. We will explore how the Catholic Church is both a Bible-believing Church and a Sacramental Church.

WORKSHOP II:
Being Catholic in a Pluralistic Culture
F. Abraham Orapankal

This workshop will explore the challenges of professing and living our faith as American Catholics today. How can we live a mature faith in our pluralistic society? What does the Church teach us about our relationship with Christians of Evangelical churches, followers of Islam and other denominations/ideologies? In order that we may pass on the gift of faith to future generations, we will focus on the importance of strengthening our Catholic faith, while recognizing the good in other religions.

*This day will explore the richness of our Catholic faith***Cost: \$18 postmarked before January 20, 2006 \$20 postmarked after January 20, 2006***For more information contact the Office of Education and Formation at 325-651-7500*

Christ's healing power brought to his people through reconciliation

By Judith Phaneuf
Diocesan Liturgy Commission
Diocese of San Angelo

When receiving the Sacraments of Initiation, Baptism, Holy Eucharist and Confirmation, we are given a new life in Christ. These sacraments are only the start of a lifelong process of conversions. This is because our human frailty can cause us to be separated from God due to our sin(s). Christ knew this and established the Sacrament of Reconciliation to restore us to the fullness of God. "When he had said this, he breathed on them and said to them, "Receive the Holy Spirit. If you forgive the sins of any, they are forgiven them: if you retain the sins of any, they are retained." (John 20: 22-23) The Sacrament of Reconciliation is celebrated by the Church to bring the healing power of Christ to his people.

The Catechism of the Catholic Church points out the many dimensions of this sacrament:

"It is called the sacrament of conversion because it makes sacramentally present Jesus' call to conversion, the first step in returning to the Father from whom one has strayed by sin.

It is called the sacrament of Penance, since it consecrates the Christian sinner's personal and ecclesial steps of conversion, penance and satisfaction. (CCC 1423)"

"It is called the sacrament of confession, since the disclosure or confession of sins to a priest is an essential element of this sacrament.

It is called the sacrament of forgiveness, since by the priest's sacramental absolution God grants the penitent "pardon and peace."

It is called the sacrament of Reconciliation, because it imparts to the sinner the love of God who reconciles "Be reconciled to God. He who lies by God's merciful love is ready to respond to the Lord's call: "Go; first to be reconciled to your brother." (CCC 1424)

The United States Conference of Catholic Bishops wrote in Answering the Sacrament of Penance: Questions and Answers that there are three forms of this sacrament.

The Rite for the Reconciliation of Individual Penitents - this form is the reconciliation of an individual... with a new emphasis on the demand for personal dispositions and on the relationship to the word of God... This is the accustomed one, but enriched by a greater awareness, seriousness, listen-

See **RECONCILIATION/7**



150,000 pilgrims, the statue was blessed by the Bishop of Leiria at Fatima, to be the pilgrim, the traveler.

Sent out to bring the Message of Fatima to the world, the International Pilgrim Virgin Statue has traveled the world many times, visiting more than 100 countries, including Russia and China, bringing the great message of hope, "the peace plan from heaven," to millions of people. Many miracles and signal graces are reported wherever the statue travels including shedding tears many times.

In 1951, Pope Pius XII remarked: "In 1946, we crowned Our Lady of Fatima as Queen of the World and the next year, through Her Pilgrim Statue, She set forth as though to claim Her dominion, and the favors She performs along the way are such that we can hardly believe what we are seeing with our eyes.

The Pilgrim Virgin Committee was formed to carry out the mandate set down by the Bishop of Fatima in 1947 and now, after 58 years, the Late Pope John Paul II said that Message of Fatima is more urgent now than ever. So, the Pilgrim Virgin Committee continues to bring the statue to the world and the demand for visits of the statue remains.

For more information regarding the International Pilgrim Statue of our Lady of Fatima you can go to www.pilgrimvirginstatue.com. For more information regarding the Secular Franciscan Order you can go to www.nafra-sfo.org or www.ciofs.org

If you want to schedule your Parish for a visit, please call as soon as possible so we can fill in the open dates. For questions or information about the upcoming visit to the Diocese of San Angelo in February, 2006, you can contact the St. Maximilian Kolbe Fraternity through Dennis Robson, SFO at 432-978-6570 or at mandrobson@aol.com.

-- Submitted by Dennis Robson, Midland

Diocesan parishes to receive statue of Our Lady of Fatima Feb. 1-21

The world famous International Pilgrim Virgin Statue of Our Lady of Fatima, which has been traveling the World since 1947, is being brought to the Diocese of San Angelo by the members of St. Maximilian Kolbe Fraternity of the Secular Franciscan Order (SFO) between February 1st and 21st, 2005. She will be visiting several parishes through the Diocese during 21 days in February.

The Statue was sculpted in 1947 by Jose Thedim, based on the description of Sr. Lucia, one of the three young seers who saw Our Lady each month from May to October 1917 in Fatima, Portugal.

On October 13, 1947, in the presence of some

Scheduled Stops

The Statue and her custodian will be parishes within the Diocese of San Angelo on the following dates and times:

Our Lady of Guadalupe, Midland- Feb 1 (tentative); **Our Lady of Lourdes, Andrews**- Feb 2 (tentative); **Our Lady of Perpetual Help, Ozona**-Feb 3; **St. Francis of Assisi, Abilene**-Feb 5; **St. Mary Star of the Sea, Ballinger**-Feb 6 (tentative); **St. Stephen's, Midland**-Feb 7; **St. Joseph, Stanton**-Feb 8 (tentative); **Sacred Heart, Big Spring**-Feb 9; **St. Lawrence, Garden City**-Feb 10; **St. Margaret of Scotland, San Angelo**-Feb 11; **Mt. Carmel Hermitage, Christoval**-Feb 12; **St. Margaret of Cortona, Big Lake**-Feb 13; Feb 14-is available; **St. Agnes/St. Joseph, Ft. Stockton**-Feb 15; Feb 16 is available; **Immaculate Heart of Mary, Sweetwater**-Feb 17; **Our Lady of San Juan, Midland**-Feb 18; Feb 19, 20 are available.

Diocese 'in complete compliance' after third annual child protection audit

The Angelus

The Catholic Diocese of San Angelo recently completed its third annual audit for compliance with the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops (USCCB) Charter for the Protection of Children and Young People. During this comprehensive audit, the diocese was examined by an auditor from the Gavin Group, an independent firm engaged by the USCCB Office of Child and Youth Protection. Bishop Michael Pfeifer, OMI

is happy and grateful to announce that the Diocese of San Angelo was found to be in complete compliance with all articles of the Bishops' Charter, which serves as the guiding document in this crucial matter. During the previous two audits the diocese was also found to be in complete compliance.

The auditor had positive comments regarding diocesan efforts to promote a Safe Environment for Children through its many workshops and seminars throughout the diocese, not only for

church personnel, but for parents and children as well. The auditor was also pleased with the diocesan practice of conducting background checks for all church personnel - clergy, employees, and volunteers who work not only with children, but also those who minister to vulnerable adults.

Since May 2003, in an effort to prevent Sexual Abuse and promote a Safe Environment for Children, the diocese has conducted over 100 Ethics Workshops in which over 3,600 clergy, religious,

employees, and volunteers have been made aware of recognizing and reporting child sexual abuse. Realizing the scope of this terrible problem in today's society, the diocese has also conducted over 150 workshops for parents, and presented a Safe Environment Curriculum to over 13,000 students. The Diocese of San Angelo includes 73 parishes and missions in 29 counties serving over 89,000 Catholics.

Catholic Spanish Radio in need of funding to continue in diocese

For the past year, the Diocese of San Angelo has provided one hour of Spanish-language radio programming, the EWTN-produced *La Hora Catolica*, to Hispanic Catholics in Odessa, San Angelo and Abilene each week.

Funding shortfalls and a lack of sponsorships leave the diocese faced with the potential termination of that programming unless we can locate new sources of funding to pay for delivery of *La Hora*

Catolica.

"It is our hope to be able to find about five businesses in each of the cities we have where programming is heard," said Jimmy Patterson, the diocese's Director of Communication. "If we could do that, we'd go a long way in being able to continue to provide this spirit-filled hour every week for the Spanish-speaking parishioners among us. We have heard nothing but positive feedback on the

quality of the programming and we have Catholic radio employees at each station who are not only excited about providing the programming but who would be disappointed were it to be discontinued."

Six- and 12-month rate plans are being made available to potential sponsors. A six-month sponsorship, priced at \$700, would give advertisers not only weekly ads during *La Hora Catolica*, but also monthly ads in *The Angelus*, the dio-

cese's 18,000-circulation monthly newspaper. A 12-month rate package, priced at \$1,200, will bring advertisers weekly spots within *La Hora Catolica*, and 12 ads in *The Angelus*.

We hope you will consider helping the diocese in this important way.

To learn more or to become a sponsor for *La Hora Catolica*, contact Jimmy Patterson at JimmyLPatterson@grande-com.net or call him at 325.374.5856.

2005

TOP NEWS

STORIES

1. DEATH OF POPE JOHN PAUL II

The Polish-born pontiff died April 2. More than 2 million people waited outside St. Peter's Square to pay their respects at a public viewing.

2. ELECTION OF POPE BENEDICT XVI

3. HURRICANE KATRINA

4. TSUNAMI AID

5. CLERGY SEXUAL ABUSE AND HOMOSEXUALITY & PRIESTS

NEWSMAKERS

1. POPE JOHN PAUL II

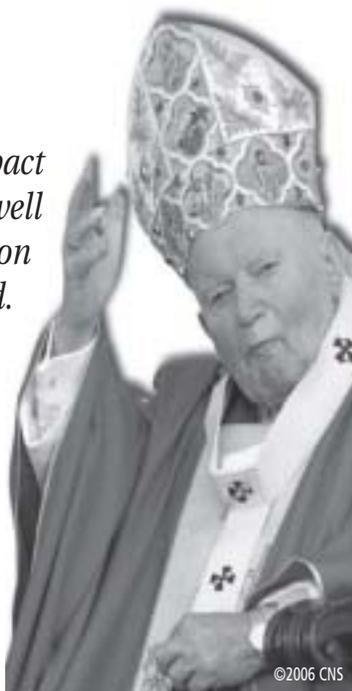
He had a significant impact on the secular world as well as a profound influence on the entire religious world.

2. POPE BENEDICT XVI

3. HURRICANE EVACUEES

4. TERRI SCHIAVO

5. CHIEF JUSTICE JOHN G. ROBERTS



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MAKING A DIFFERENCE

As part of their contribution to "Make a Difference Day 2005," parishioners at St. Monica's in Olfen created 29 quilts -- double bed, single and baby quilts -- for victims of last year's hurricanes.

-- Submitted by Mary Lou Multer, Rowena



RECONCILIATION: Penitent should be contrite confessor

(From 6)

ing, and so to speak, by a new outpouring of divine love and our own inexpressible joy in the knowledge of being restored to divine life..." The Rite for the Reconciliation of Several Penitents -- the second way of reconciliation is that of a communal preparation followed by individual confession and absolution. It combines the two values of being a community act and a personal act. It is a preferable form of reconciliation for our people when it is possible..." the third form Rite for the Reconciliation of Several Penitents with General Absolution -- a collective form of reconciliation with a single, general absolution. This form, however, is by way of exception, of necessity, in cases sanctioned by the bishops, and with the continuing obligation of individual (confession) of grave sins, that is, mortal sins, at a later time.

Regardless of the form of the sacrament we attend, we are there through the work of the Holy Spirit. We avail ourselves of this sacrament because we recognize that we have suffered a break with God and our Christian community, all is not right in our life. We call the break with God and our

Christian Community sin. Sin can be characterized as personal, that is, something that the individual either commits or omits that represents a turning away from God (CCC 1849). When we answer the call of the Holy Spirit, we acknowledge the need for conversion -- a need and desire for change. We realize that we are not living in a way that puts God first. Conversion is a lifelong process and involves growing spiritually and morally. It brings us closer and closer to God. The graces of reconciliation enable us to continue with our conversion.

The Sacrament of Reconciliation requires that we, as the repentant sinner, be contrite, confess and make satisfaction for our sins. To be contrite means that we should have true sorrow for our sins -- turning away from evil and converting to God. With the help of the Holy Spirit, we confess our sins. "Through such an admission man looks squarely at the sins he is guilty of, takes responsibility for them, and thereby opens himself again to God and to the communion of the Church in order to make a new future possible" (CCC 1455). The wrong that is done by our sins to others must be repaired and satisfaction offered. This satisfaction

is commonly called penance. Most often this is done by prayer, an offering, works of mercy, service of neighbor, voluntary self-denial, sacrifices, and above all the patient acceptance of the cross we must bear (CCC 1460).

God alone forgives sins. Jesus, however, conferred on his apostles and their successors, bishops and priests, the power to forgive sins. Holy Orders empower the confessor with the authority to forgive sins in the Sacrament of Reconciliation. He is representing Christ and announces the words of absolution on behalf of the church.

The healing brought about by this sacrament "consists in restoring us to God's grace and joining us with him in an intimate friendship. Reconciliation with God is thus the purpose and effect of this sacrament. For those who receive the sacrament of Penance with contrite heart and religious disposition, reconciliation is usually followed by peace and serenity of conscience with strong spiritual consolation (CCC 1468)."

Reconciliation brings us joy and peace by lifting the weight of sin and its accompanying guilt. We receive grace and are restored to friendship with God, others and ourselves.

40 YEARS



Before the liturgical changes of the Second Vatican Council, Catholics received the Eucharist by approaching and kneeling at the Communion rail. This photo was taken during Mass at the Paulist Center in Boston in 1955.

Vatican II changes continue to reverberate through Church

By John Thavis
Catholic News Service

VATICAN CITY — Forty years after the close of the Second Vatican Council, the deep transformation it set in motion continues to reverberate through the church at every level, from the halls of the Vatican to the pews of local parishes.

The council's four sessions from 1962 to 1965 and its 16 landmark documents modernized the liturgy, renewed the priesthood and religious life, enhanced the role of lay Catholics, opened dialogue with other churches and non-Christians, and identified the church as the "people of God" attuned to the problems and hopes of the world.

Although the council defined no new dogma, Catholics who lived through the Vatican II era will never forget the changes — some of them abrupt — that visited their church communities in the mid-1960s.

Altars were turned around so that priests faced the people. The Mass in Latin gave way to Mass in the vernacular. Other sacraments were updated and simplified. Men and women religious adopted a more modern form of dress.

Not all the changes were immedi-

ate, however. Church leaders began a long and sometimes contentious process of revising nearly every area of pastoral life, from the teaching of religion to lay ministries.

"The council represented a Copernican revolution for the church, which challenged itself by asking how it could reopen a dialogue with the modern world," said Father Dario Vitali, who teaches church history at Rome's Gregorian University.

"Through the council, the church drew closer to contemporary men and women and made the Gospel meaningful to them. If there had been no Vatican II, I think the church today would be a small minority, closed off in rites incomprehensible to the modern mentality," Father Vitali said.

Not everyone in the church sees the council as a positive thing. Some Catholics are still nostalgic for the old ways of worship, and at times some church officials — including several in Rome — have criticized the way Vatican II has been understood and implemented. In many cases, the ongoing debate reflects issues that were argued heatedly on the floor of the council.

Dec. 8 marks the anniversary of the close of the council in 1965, and this fall Rome and the Vatican are hosting

several commemorative encounters to reflect on how far the church has come over the last four decades.

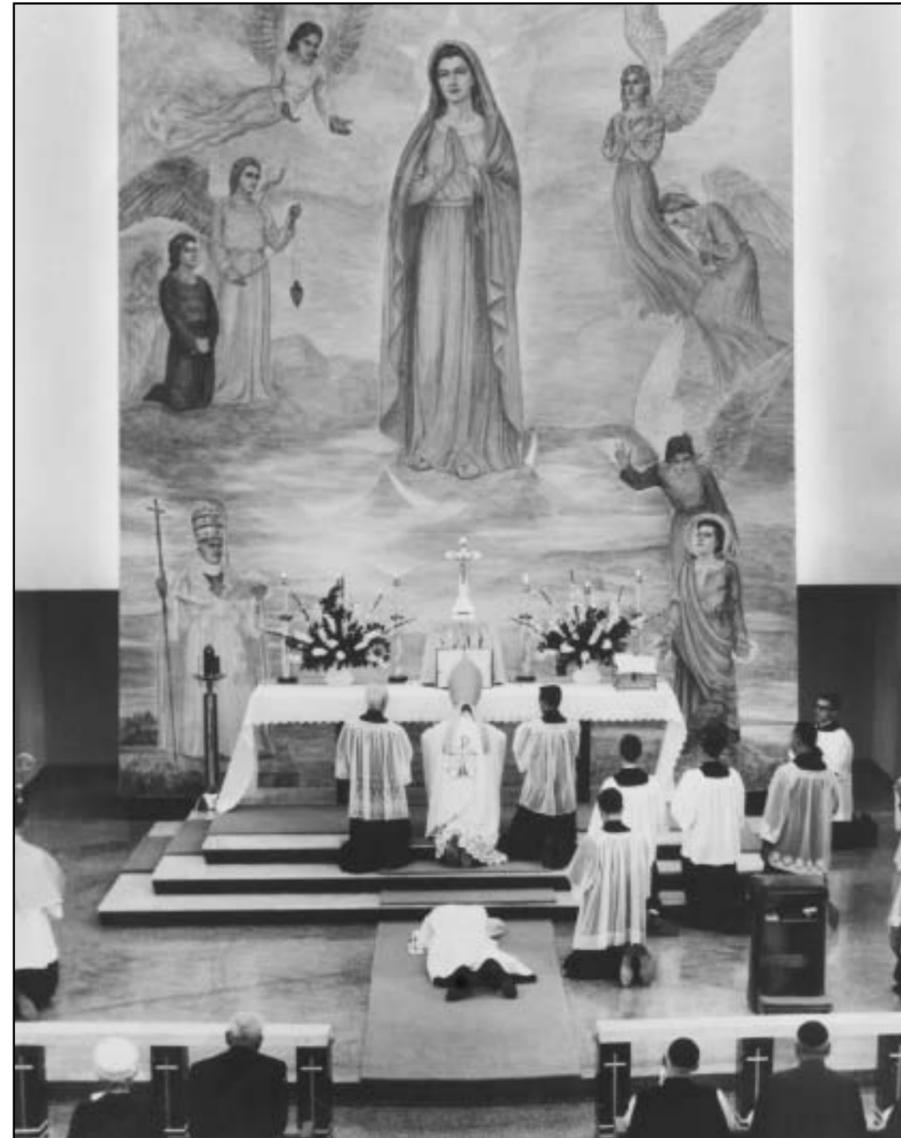
Pope Benedict XVI, who participated in the council as a theological expert, is expected to speak about the importance of the council's documents. Although he has criticized some postconciliar changes, the pope has made it clear that Vatican II will be the "compass" of his papacy. The compass, of course, sets direction; it will be up to the new pope to provide the details.

The pope also has emphasized that implementation of the council is an ongoing task in the church, not just something that happened 40 years ago. One goal is to make sure Vatican II is not viewed as ancient history by young generations of Catholics.

"Younger Catholics may not be as intellectually aware of the council, but they are continually experiencing its effects," said Alberto Melloni, a church historian of the Vatican II period.

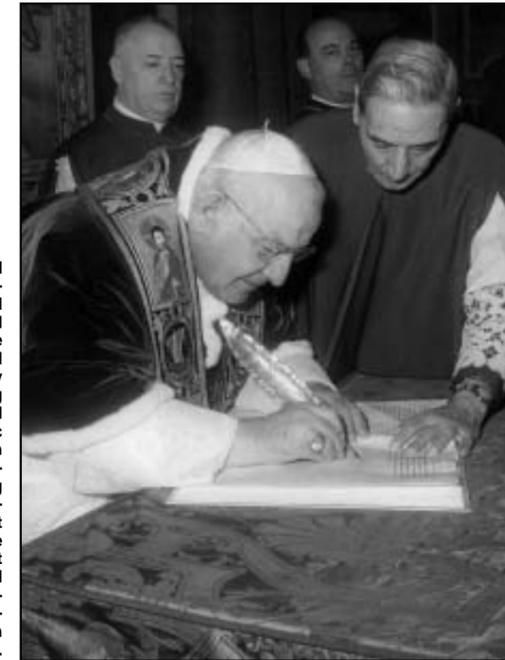
"Thanks to the council, young people have been taught to see the world not simply as a threat to Christian life, but as an opportunity to announce the Gospel," Melloni said.

See CHANGE/11



H E N C E

Pope John XXIII signs the bill convoking the Second Vatican Council Dec. 25, 1961. The document said modern society was advancing with technological and scientific progress for which there was no corresponding advance in morality. He wrote that he would convene the council so that the church would contribute positively to the solution of modern problems.



What Change Brought

In the years after its close, the renewal outlined by the council was refined and codified in a number of decrees, norms and changes in canon law. The church witnessed countless changes:

- ▶ The new Roman Missal was issued in 1970, with a new cycle of readings designed to offer a richer selection of Scripture. The liturgical calendar was simplified. The rites for sacraments were revised, emphasizing the communal aspects of their celebration. The Rite of Christian Initiation of Adults was revived and reformed. — Lay ministries multiplied. Lay readers and lay ministers of Communion appeared during Mass. Lay people were represented on parish councils and diocesan boards.
- ▶ Throughout the church, there was a renewed attention to Scriptures, in liturgy and in individual spirituality.
- ▶ Eastern Catholic churches were encouraged to return to their own traditions, ending a period of Latinization and opening a new appreciation of variety within the universal church.
- ▶ Ecumenism flourished, in formal dialogue between Catholic officials and other Christian churches, and in prayer and fellowship encounters at the local level.
- ▶ Religious life changed dramatically, as religious orders adopted Vatican norms and rewrote their own constitutions, taking a new look at issues of authority, community and identity.
- ▶ The council restored the permanent diaconate as a ministry and allowed married men to be ordained deacons.
- ▶ The council's teaching that the pope and bishops together form a single collegial body led to a new appreciation for bishops and bishops' conferences.
- ▶ Theology was revitalized, especially moral theology, which focused increasingly on biblical sources and the individual conscience, and less on church law or authority.
- ▶ The council underlined the church's solidarity with humanity instead of its separation from the secular world, and this led to a mushrooming of social and charitable activities.

Benedict, influenced by Vatican II, can shape its implementation

By John Thavis
Catholic News Service

VATICAN CITY — Pope Benedict XVI, a man deeply influenced by the deliberations of the Second Vatican Council, now stands in a position to shape the way the church implements its teachings.

Years ago, he warned that the church had experienced a "progressive process of decadence" in the name of a presumed "spirit of the council." He was particularly critical of liturgical reforms launched by Vatican II.

Yet, in his first sermon as pope in April, he said there should be no doubt that the council and its authoritative rereading of the Gospel would remain the "compass" for his papacy.

"As the years have passed, the conciliar documents have lost none of their timeliness; indeed, their teachings are proving particularly relevant to the new situation of the church and the current globalized society," he said.

In many ways, Pope Benedict embodies the full spectrum of the

Vatican II experience in the church:

■ As a theological adviser to German Cardinal Joseph Frings of Cologne, then-Father Joseph Ratzinger attended all four sessions of the 1962-65 council, enthusiastically embracing its early work and its bold approach to renewal.

■ He began to have misgivings in later sessions and worried that the council could leave the impression that the church worked like a parliament and that "the faith could be changed."

■ After the council's conclusion, he cautioned against wrong turns in implementation and eventually helped found a theological journal to counterbalance what he called the "ecclesial politics" approach to theology.

■ As the Vatican's top doctrinal official for nearly 24 years, he worked to curb abuses and clarify the council's teaching in areas that included theological experimentation, liturgical texts, biblical scholarship, lay ministries, the role of bishops' conferences, and interreligious and ecumenical dialogue.

U.S. author and scholar George Weigel said that as a young theological

expert Father Ratzinger understood a crucial truth about Vatican II: that "aggiornamento," or church updating, must be based on "ressourcement," a return to the sources of Christian wisdom and a deepening of the church's understanding of itself.

"Ratzinger ... understood that the two have to go together — that 'updating' without 'deepening' turns the church into simply another voluntary organization dedicated to good works," Weigel said.

Weigel, who addresses the subject of Pope Benedict and Vatican II in his new book, "God's Choice: Pope Benedict XVI and the Future of the Catholic Church," said the new pope has already had a huge impact on the council's implementation under the pontificate of Pope John Paul II.

Today, Weigel said, "the greatest test of Pope Benedict as an 'implementer' of Vatican II will be his success in finding bishops who embody the council's vision of the bishop-as-apostle."

Italian church historian Alberto

See BENEDICT/11

NATION/VIEWPOINTS

Pope: Christians are called to bring others to the faith

VATICAN CITY (CNS) -- With their witness of love, a reflection of the light of Christ, Christians are called to draw others to faith, Pope Benedict XVI said.

The light of the star of Bethlehem, which led the Magi to the baby Jesus in the manger, is the light of God, who is love, the pope said Jan. 6 as he celebrated the feast of the Epiphany of the Lord with a Mass in St. Peter's Basilica.

"The light that dawned at Christmas and today is manifest to the peoples, is the love of God revealed in the person of the Incarnate Word," the pope said.

In celebrating Christ revealed to the world as the one who reconciles everyone to God, the papal celebration of the Epiphany is also the occasion for the formal announcement of the date Easter will be celebrated, the pope said.

Sung in Latin by a deacon, the announcement proclaimed: "As we have rejoiced at the birth of Our Lord Jesus Christ, so we announce with joy the resurrection of our savior ... on April 16 we will celebrate with joy the holy Easter of Our Lord Jesus Christ."

In his homily, Pope Benedict said, "God revealed himself in the humility

of the human form, in the condition of a servant, in fact, in the crucified one."

God's hiding in such a humble form, he said, is "the most eloquent" revelation of who God really is.

The feast of the Epiphany also reveals the mystery of the church and its mission, he said.

"It is called to make the light of Christ shine in the world, being a reflection of his light just as the moon reflects the light of the sun," the pope said. "Taught by him to live in the style of the beatitudes," members of the church "must attract all men to God through the witness of their love."

One of the prayers offered during the Mass asked God to ensure that the church would "shine in the world as the place of Christ's presence" and that all peoples, "guided by the shining star of faith," would find their savior through the church.

Special prayers were offered for children who support the missions through the Holy Childhood Association and for Catholic youths that "they would be, like the Magi of the East, authentic adorers of God and heralds of the word of life for their friends and peers."

Ask Fr. Webster ...

A bishop's coat of arms

Q. Why do bishops still need a coat of arms? Is it a holdover from the days bishops had temporal, civil power?

A. Episcopal coats of arms are, at least in part, a vestige of a custom that began in a militaristic, political context. Insignia on military dress and equipment became customary in the 12th century. When warriors of all sides wore pretty much the same armor, the king's or leader's emblem served to distinguish one combatant from another.



Fr. Webster

Soon the blazon design appeared also on seals, for example, as evidence of authenticity of documents. As you note, Catholic prelates, who often held political and religious as well as military authority, adopted the use of coats of arms and related seals, but not only for their value in battle.

Prelatical coats of arms served to indicate episcopal status and ecclesiastical approval for such things as books, vestments and church buildings. Gradually they also served as designs in architecture and other art forms.

The number and color of tassels on the "shields" denote the prelate's rank as bishop, archbishop or cardinal.

Coats of arms, whether for Catholic or sec-

ular use, have a complex history, going through numerous evolutions. As the New Catholic Encyclopedia notes, however, after nine centuries of existence ecclesiastical heraldry is alive and will continue flourishing.

Whatever its origins, apart from the decorative attractiveness, its function today is primarily juridical.

Q. Our family would like to know why a white cloth is placed on top of the casket at a funeral Mass. I told them that when our Lord was taken from the cross and laid in the grave, his body was wrapped with a white cloth. Is this the reason?

A. That may be one interpretation, but the primary reason has to do with baptism. When the deceased Catholic was baptized as an infant or adult, water was poured, of course, and a white cloth or dress was placed on him or her.

The ritual with the cloth is inspired by the words of St. Paul, "For all you who were baptized into Christ have clothed yourselves with Christ" (Gal 3:27).

Ceremonies at the beginning of the funeral liturgy are intended to recall that event, which begins our Christian life, to thank God for his goodness and to remind everyone present of our own baptism commitments as we continue our journey.

Fr. John Dietzen of the Catholic News Service served as Fr. Webster this month.

The Human Side

Ask not what 2006 can do for us, but what we can do for it

By Father Eugene Hemrick

Now that 2006 has gotten under way, most of us no doubt are wondering what it holds in store.

I'm sure that reports of terrorism and efforts to combat it will continue to fill the newspapers. And too, the war in Iraq will dominate the headlines.

New diseases will be discovered, I'm sure, and old ones will be studied to learn ways of overcoming them. New drugs will hit the market, and some old ones will be removed.

Concerns about pension programs folding and noted companies consolidating will be more frequent. Holding onto or finding jobs will continue to be a primary topic of discussion, as will be the question of health benefits.

Gas and oil prices will fluctuate, the stock market will experience its ups and downs, as will the housing industry.

There will be weekly reports to keep up with on new legislation before Congress, and some controversial

cases will be decided in the Supreme Court.

We'll hear this year that some foreign nations like the United States, while other hate it.

Some cities and universities will cheer their winning teams, and others will lament their team's losses with great passion.

The year ahead will bring an endless stream of issues and events to our attention. As varied as my list of some of them is, it has a common denominator: concern about our physical and mental welfare.

Here we must ask: What about our spiritual welfare? Oh yes, we will hear and read about religious movements and the practice of Christian faith, hope and love. Sainly people will be canonized, and wholesome religious literature will be published.

But will we hear of people practicing a spiritual life that consumes as much of their time as do daily events? Will this make the headlines? Will 2006 bring them the peace that comes with putting God first in their lives?

Instead of ending or starting the day with 24-hour news and mundane concerns, will more people begin it by trying to learn what God might want of them instead of what the world is doing to them? In the evening, will the day be summarized in terms of news events or of

moments in which God's grace touched us and others?

I am not suggesting that we all become monks. Rather, these questions are meant to help us realize that there is another world besides the one we live in and that moving toward this other world is how we find the peace we desire.

Too often, the events that fill our days make war on our peace of mind, leaving us at odds with our best selves.

If we are to attain a certain peace of mind in 2006, we need to ask not what 2006 will bring us but what we can bring to it.

We live in the world, and we can't deny this. On the other hand, we have a holy escape from it that makes living in it so much more wholesome.

Fr. Hemrick is director of the Washington-based National Institute for the Renewal of the Priesthood. He is also a researcher with the Life Cycle Institute at The Catholic University of America, and coordinator of institutional research at Washington Theological Union. His column addresses issues pertinent to the church and the human spirit. Service.



Fr. Hemrick

CHANGE: Vatican 2 encouraged church to return source of faith

(From 8)

Vatican II is sometimes described as a revolution, but it did not appear out of the blue. There had been 20 previous ecumenical councils in the church's history, including the First Vatican Council in 1869-70. Vatican I defined the dogmas of papal infallibility and the primacy of papal jurisdiction, but the council was suspended when war broke out in Europe, and it never resumed.

The theological ferment of the mid-20th century helped lay the groundwork for Vatican II. Pioneering theologians like Dominican Father Yves Congar and Jesuit Fathers John Courtney Murray and Henri de Lubac were trying to build bridges between Christianity's ancient truths and the contemporary world. All three were silenced in some fashion by the Vatican during the 1950s, but re-emerged to become important voices of the council.

Pope John XXIII surprised almost everyone when, after only three months as pontiff, he announced he was convening the council. The pope spoke of the need to update the church and promote Christian unity; above all, he said, he wanted to show the modern world that the church had been transformed and intellectually reinvigorated.

Pope John said the world was marked by spiritual poverty and needed the

church's vitality. But, as he later told the council, the church wanted to offer the modern world the "medicine of mercy" and not severe condemnations.

Preparation for the council took almost three years, and Pope John, already diagnosed with cancer when it began, presided over only the first of four annual autumn sessions in 1962. The invitation to Protestants, Orthodox and other non-Catholics to attend had already made Vatican II a historic event.

Pope Paul VI guided the completion of the council's work, presiding over the other three sessions and directing the important follow-up work in areas of liturgy, ecumenism, religious life and evangelization.

Between 2,000 and 2,500 bishops attended each Vatican II session, and participants have said the debates ranged from free-wheeling to finely tuned, with verbal skirmishes not uncommon. To give just one example, when the first draft of the Dogmatic Constitution on the Church ("Lumen Gentium") was presented, it was roundly criticized as triumphal, clerical and legalistic; the document was adopted two years and many amendments later.

From the beginning, bishops recognized that their task was not just updating church practices but also a process of "ressourcement," or going back to the sources of the faith.

There was a sense among participants that they were indeed making history, said Bishop Frank Fernando of Chilaw, Sri Lanka, one of a handful of still-active bishops to have participated in a session of the council.

"The debate was very systematic, with a great exchange of ideas. The documents would come back again and again with amendments, which the bishops would study. That's why these are very polished documents — it was not just a matter of bringing them in one day and passing them the next," Bishop Fernando said.

In the end, the council issued four constitutions: on the liturgy, the church's structure and nature, on the church in the modern world and on divine revelation. It produced nine decrees: on the church and the media, ecumenism, Eastern Catholic churches, bishops, priestly formation, religious life, the laity, priestly ministry and missionary activity. It issued three declarations: on non-Christian religions, Christian education and religious freedom.

Most experts list the council's biggest achievement as a new way of understanding the church — as the "people of God" and not simply a hierarchical structure, and as a "sacrament" to the world with an active mission in all sectors of human society.

"Lumen Gentium" presented the church

as a mystery and a communion of baptized believers moving toward heaven as one body that is holy, yet imperfect while on earth.

Although organized hierarchically, the church as a communion is a living body whose individual members are called to holiness and who each have specific roles, rights and responsibilities, the document said.

The Pastoral Constitution on the Church in the Modern World ("Gaudium et Spes") was written more for the average reader and was approved in 1965, during the council's last vote.

Bishop Fernando remembers the moment well, and he said he considers "Gaudium et Spes" the most important thing to come out of the council. He said many bishops thought the council had spoken in previous documents primarily to experts and specialists and wanted this document to communicate a message to the whole world.

"Gaudium et Spes" called on the church to engage in dialogue with contemporary society and its problems, bringing church teaching and moral values to bear on a world too often torn by hatred, war and injustice. The document acknowledged that science and culture have things to teach the church, but also said the church has a mission to sanctify the world around it.

BENEDICT: Many think Pope may make changes in papal liturgies

(From 9)

Melloni said Pope Benedict brought great theological depth to Vatican II and remains a "son of the council" in many ways.

But with his election as pontiff, Melloni said, the implementation of Vatican II has become for Pope Benedict a question of governance and not just of intellectual or theological argumentation.

"What he did and thought at the council was important. But what counts much more now is what he will do as pope, especially in the critical areas of collegiality and ecumenism," he said.

In the years before his election, Cardinal Ratzinger's comments about the legacy of Vatican II drew keen attention, especially when he spoke about the liturgy. In 1997, he said the drastic manner in which Pope Paul VI reformed the Mass had caused "enormous harm" to the church. It was not that changes were not needed, Cardinal Ratzinger said; in fact, he said, in many respects the new Roman Missal was an improvement.

The problem in his view was that the old missal was suppressed. Instead of continuity, he said, the old liturgy was demolished and the new Mass constructed from its pieces.

"I am convinced that the crisis in the church that we are experiencing today is to a large extent due to the disintegration of the liturgy," he said.

Cardinal Ratzinger called for a "new liturgical movement that will call to life the real heritage of the Second

Vatican Council." In 1999 he wrote a book on the topic, saying modern liturgy needs to give greater space to silence, traditional Christian gestures, appropriate music and other elements that promote a reverential attitude.

Cardinal Ratzinger had already stirred debate in the 1990s when he said he agreed with theological arguments for returning the altar to its pre-Second Vatican Council position, in which the priest celebrated Mass facing East and with his back to the congregation. But he said it was probably too late to reverse the change without leaving Catholics more confused than ever.

Likewise, he said a general return to celebration of the Mass in Latin was impossible today, and perhaps not desirable.

Because of his past statements, many Catholics expect Pope Benedict to make sweeping changes in papal liturgies, cutting back on the multicultural elements that featured so prominently under Pope John Paul. So far, that has not happened. At World Youth Day in Germany, for example, the papal Mass was enlivened by African drums, a sitar and South American panpipes, and an evening prayer service featured a juggler.

Even more than liturgical details, Pope Benedict has always been interested in the theological and ecclesial thinking behind the liturgy. When the council began its dramatic debate on the sources of revelation in 1962, the young Father Ratzinger became a key player.

The discussion on revelation had to do with how Scripture and tradition relate to each other, and how they both relate to the magisterium, the church's teaching authority. It was a debate for specialists, but with deep

repercussions on the way the church understands itself.

In the view of Father Ratzinger, there was a dangerous trend in biblical interpretation that saw Scripture as the entire deposit of the faith — an approach that gave great authority to the interpreters of Scripture and little or none to the magisterium and to church tradition. The biblical interpreters often disagreed, he said, and that made the faith more vulnerable to changing hypotheses and opinions.

As the council deliberated the question, Father Ratzinger prepared a historical paper to show, as he later wrote, that "revelation ... is greater even than the words of Scripture," and that the church and tradition are both intrinsically involved in revelation.

Many of those arguments ultimately prevailed at the council. Pope Benedict later called the modified Dogmatic Constitution on Divine Revelation one of the outstanding texts of the council — and one that has yet to be fully understood by the church.

In a more general sense, what troubled the future pope in the aftermath of the council was the impression that everything in the church was open to revision and that the secular world's political approach could be transferred to church decision-making.

He warned against the rise of anti-Roman resentment and the idea of an ecclesial "sovereignty of the people" or "church from below" in which the people determine the definition of "church." He also worried that the new confidence Vatican II had instilled in theologians was making theologians feel as if they were no longer subordinate to bishops.

FAMILY

From the Easy Chair

Knowing Mama will see face of Jesus soon makes goodbye easier

It is something for which you can never adequately prepare: the death of a parent.

As I write this to you, my mom lies in her bed in an Irving hospital recovering from a heart attack and a prognosis that, if the doctor is right, will mean she will die in the next few weeks.

We call her Mama. Though Mom and Mother are more widely used, she was never either. She is Mama. Just Mama. Has been her whole life.

She had something called a "silent heart attack" sometime before Christmas and it was only discovered in the next few days. The heart attack, though, brought with it worse news: that her body had begun to reject dialysis. Her blood pressure falls to stupid levels like 40/12 and doing such will destroy any long-term prognosis.

Her condition has accelerated her Alzheimers and she drifts in and out of lucidity. Mostly out. She looked right at me



Patterson

one day following Christmas. Lying there in her hospital bed, and said, "Is Jimmy coming? When is Jimmy going to be here?"

Alzheimers is perhaps the cruelest of indignities to heap upon a senior when they already have so much more to deal with anyway. Seeing it attack the spirit of two grandmothers and now Mama I still don't understand the purpose of the torment. It angers me greatly. But the long list of her ailments, aside from Alzheimers, also includes diabetes, leukemia and the just-discovered Parkinson's, according to another in a seemingly endless stream of doctors caring for her.

Mama is a mess.

The worst of it all is that doctors have determined that soon, they will have to discontinue her from dialysis, and in doing so, her bloodstream will become a slow river of poison day by day.

When the decision is made to no longer give her dialysis, doctors say she will become increasingly incoherent and she will sleep more and more with each passing day. One day, 7-10 days after she is taken off dialysis, she will go to sleep and not wake

up again.

The doctor have told us that, ... uh, let me see how I can best put this ...it is a "good way to die."

That's good for Mama. She won't suffer. She'll be comfortable. And she'll go to sleep. And best of all, she'll be in that proverbial better place. Out of the pain. Out of the discomfort.

The family knows it is better for her, but it makes it no easier.

It is not possible to prepare for the death of a parent. No way. You can read all the self-help manuals and feel good books you want, but when it comes to the end and saying goodbye, if there's any love in you, nothing makes it easy.

We are grateful (you're right, that sounds like an awfully odd word to be using just now) that we have had some time to say goodbye. Our three kids got to say goodbye to their Nana, my wife to her mother-in-law, the week following Christmas. We sit now, and we wait for the phone to ring, not knowing how long Mama. Nana, is held hostage by her deteriorating physical body, the holder of her soul.

I continually am amazed at what other voices have to offer, and I was again comforted recently by a man who is not a Catholic.

A former co-worker and friend, Jane Inskeep, of Midland, died two days after Christmas. Her funeral, so full that mourners were forced to sit in the choir loft, was held at the Cotton Flat Baptist Church, just south of town.

The preacher spoke eloquently during her eulogy and he comforted the family by saying, "I know how deeply your mother and grandmother loved you. Despite that deep love, I know in my heart now that Jane wouldn't come back here even if she could. Because she has seen the face of Jesus. And she is with him."

The words dug in to me. Comforted me. And made it easier to handle what remains of my own Mama's life. And when she goes, she will be in a place where she will never have to leave, and never want to leave.

Jimmy Patterson is Director of Communications for the Diocese of San Angelo. Read more at Jimmy's blog: www.stickydoorknobs.typepad.com.

Your Family

The 10-percent rule for changing things

By Bill and Monica Dodds
Catholic News Service

Sometimes the best designs are the simplest. If your list of New Year's resolutions includes getting a little more exercise, spending more time with the children or praying more frequently, consider the 10-percent rule. It's simple in design and guaranteed to work.



Bill & Monica Dodds

You may already be familiar with this method if you've ever trained for a sport -- or had to get through physical therapy. Never increase an activity by more than 10 percent a week is this rule's instruction. That small addition is the safest, surest way to keep heading toward a goal without getting discouraged and giving up, and without injuring yourself by doing too much too soon.

Let's say that this year you want to set aside time every day for reading the Bible and private prayer. Begin with one minute. Sixty seconds per

day for the first seven days. Then, using "the 10-percent rule," bump it up to 66 seconds the next week. Yes, just one minute and six seconds. Make the second bump to 73 seconds. The third to 80 seconds per week; the fourth, 88; the fifth, 97; the sixth, 107; the seventh week of increase, 118. One minute and 58 seconds. Very close to two minutes.

You've doubled the amount because of the "rule of 72." It says that dividing 72 by a percentage rate will give you a good idea how long it takes for an amount to double. For example, a \$100 savings account earning an annual interest rate of 6 percent will be \$200 in about 12 years. (Seventy-two divided by six is 12.) A 10-percent increase per week means a doubling every seven weeks. (Seventy-two divided by 10 is about seven.)

Not impressed because it's been almost two months and, at this rate, you're still reading the Bible and praying only two minutes per day? Hang in there. Your time continues to double every seven weeks. In less than a year you'll move from 1 minute to 2 minutes, 2 to 4, 4 to 8, 8 to 16, 16 to 32 and 32 to 64. You're reading Scripture and praying an hour a day.

The numbers don't lie, whether they refer to time or distance. If you begin an exercise program walking only one-tenth of a mile a day, three days week, in less than a year you'll be at six miles. You could walk a 10K by next Christmas!

Physical therapists and sports trainers who stress the 10-percent rule and financial consultants who sing the praises of compound interest know that a consistent increase over a long period of time leads to fantastic results.

Fun With Math at Home

Have your children think of a number. Ask them to add 27 to it. Have them subtract 9 from that. Have them add 2 to that. Have them add 3 to that. Have them subtract their original number from that. Tell them they're thinking of 49. (For different formulas go to www.billdodds.com/math_mind_reader.htm.)

On the Web: Body and Soul

If you're serious -- or curious -- about walking a 10K (6.2 miles) and don't want to spend all year getting to that fitness level, check out the sensible training program at www.halhigdon.com/10ktraining/10kwalk.htm.



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Answers:

2. Herod
3. manger
6. census
8. Joseph
9. angels



John reveals Jesus as the Lamb of God

God sent a man named John to testify that a very special light was coming into the world. John often would proclaim, "The one who is coming after me ranks ahead of me because he existed before me. From his fullness we have all received, grace in place of grace, because while the law was given through Moses, grace and truth came through Jesus Christ."

Priests and Levites from Jerusalem went out to look for John. When they found him in Bethany, near the Jordan River, they asked, "Who are you?"

John answered them firmly. "I am not the Messiah."

They asked more questions. "Are you Elijah? ... Are you the Prophet? ... Who are you, so we can give an answer to those who sent us?"

Quoting from the prophet Isaiah, John said he was "the voice of one crying out in the desert, 'Make straight the way of the Lord.'"

Some Pharisees had come out with the priests and Levites. They

also had questions for John. "Why then do you baptize if you are not the Messiah or Elijah or the Prophet?"

John told them, "I baptize with water; but there is one among you whom you do not recognize, the one who is coming after me, whose sandal strap I am not worthy to untie."

The next day, when John was baptizing, he saw Jesus coming. He announced for everyone to hear:

"Behold, the lamb of God, who takes away the sin of the world. ... I saw the Spirit come down like a dove from the sky and remain upon him. I did not know him, but the one who sent me to baptize with water told me, 'On whomever you see the Spirit come down and remain, he is the one who will baptize with the holy Spirit.'"

John looked around at the people to be sure they were listening. Then he said, "Now I have seen and testified that he is the Son of God."

After that Jesus chose 12 men to be his disciples, including some who had been followers of John.

JUST 4 KIDS

READ MORE ABOUT IT:

John 1

Q&A

1. What did the priests and Levites ask John?

2. What did John see rest on Jesus?

BIBLE ACCENT:

John the Baptist prophesied that a very special person soon would appear. That person would be Jesus.

John lived in the desert on a diet primarily of locusts and wild honey, and he wore a robe of camel's hair. He probably had a wild and frightening appearance to anyone who saw him. His most important message for Israel was one word, "Repent."

People came in large crowds to hear John preach and to be baptized by him, which was a sign of their repentance.

Jesus himself came to John and asked to be baptized by him. Jesus then went into the desert, where he was tempted by the devil. He triumphed each time by quoting and relying on the Scriptures. After that he began his ministry.

Elizabeth, the mother of John, was related to Mary, the mother of Jesus.

SPOTLIGHT ON SAINTS:

St. Sturmi

St. Sturmi was born in Bavaria in the eighth century. He was cared for and educated by St. Boniface and St. Wigbert. He became a priest and worked in Westphalia as a missionary.

After deciding upon a place that was safe from bandits and Saxons, Sturmi founded a monastery in Fulda. St. Boniface appointed him its first abbot.

Unfortunately, Sturmi often disagreed with St. Lull, who replaced St.

Boniface, about how the monastery should be run. Lull tried to take control, but the other monks wanted Sturmi to continue to be their leader.

Wars continued to rage, placing the monastery and the monks in danger. After the monastery was saved, Sturmi became ill and died in 779.

He is believed to be the first German Benedictine monk. We remember him on Dec. 17.

KIDS' CLUB:

Share your thoughts on this week's Bible story with family and friends by writing an essay in response to this question:

What are some of the religious traditions your family follows to honor the day we celebrate the birth of Jesus?

PUZZLE:

Using only the letters in the grid (for each word use the grid letters only as often as they appear), how many of the following words and names can you find? Don't be fooled, some of them won't be there:

1. Bethlehem
2. Herod
3. manger
4. shepherds
5. myrrh
6. census
7. Savior
8. Joseph
9. angels

P	J	B	E	T
H	L	M	E	D
O	R	E	A	N
C	U	S	G	W
S	Q	B	D	

Coming of Age

When the lights go out ... don't forget the principles of your faith

By Kase Johnstun
Catholic News Service

The lights go out. The curtain opens. The popcorn crunches. The candy boxes shuffle. The seats recline. The movie begins.

Our thoughts sway from homework. Our eyes follow the moving pictures. Our hearts care.

We become completely concerned with the characters. We love. We hate. We

laugh. We cry. We scream. We suspend disbelief. We believe anything that happens on the screen. We give up doubt. We give ourselves wholly to the plot, scene and theme.

We believe.

It is the season for year-end blockbusters -- "King Kong," "The Chronicles of Narnia," "Harry Potter." We have been waiting for them. We have bought our tickets, and we have waited in line.

For two hours we believe a giant ape

from a land of prehistoric creatures and gigantic insects exists, or that a land within a wardrobe can magically appear, or that there is a school that witches and warlocks attend in the highlands of the United Kingdom.

When Kong comes on screen, no one shouts: "That's not true. How can you believe that?"

When a half-man, half-horse shares a cup of tea with a little girl, no one walks out of the theater because the film isn't

realistic or even possible.

When Harry battles a dragon to capture a golden egg or grows gills to swim in the lake, none of the viewers ask for their money back due to the fact that they have never seen anyone in their neighborhood grow gills and swim in the ditch.

We believe wholeheartedly without question.

But in a time in our society when we can't wait to believe the next fantasy

(See YOUTH/15)

BISHOP: Abortion the central moral issue

From 1

Justices of our court, on all of our government leaders, to recognize the flaw in the Roe v. Wade decision which took away the self-evident truth that all people are created with an inalienable right to life. We are committed, no matter how long it takes, no matter the sacrifice required, to bring about a reversal of this death decision of the Supreme Court.

Sadly, for many in our American culture, the legality of abortion also affirms its morality. They take the legality of abortion as the ultimate standard, and overlook the basic law of life as given to us by God and in the natural law itself. Many so-called "pro-choice" Catholics have been duped into believing that the legality of abortion makes it a legitimate moral choice for those who seek it. We state, however, that Catholics and all Christians and all people have a moral obligation to protect the first legal right which is given to us by God, which is the right to life.

Abortion is not just one issue among many. Abortion is the central moral issue, the conflict issue, of this moment in our nation's history. Abortion is separated from other important social issues like a just wage, affordable housing, and even the debate over war, by a difference in kind, not a difference in degree. Every abortion deliberately kills an innocent, unborn human being—every time. No matter what kind of mental gymnastics we use, elective killing of the unborn is a grave moral evil and has no excuse. We only implicate ourselves in this abominable act by trying to invent an excuse. In the debate about abortion, Catholics should remember that they are first called to be citizens of God's kingdom, and secondly, kingdoms of this world. Catholics have a grave moral responsibility to follow the teaching of the Church about abortion which is based on Divine law. This is a time to establish our priorities as regards our commitment to life, and to

follow the words and example of the martyr, St Thomas More, who gave his life for truth when he stated, "I am the king's good servant, but first God's." We need to follow the lead of this courageous man. Abortion harms our entire culture in ways not even begun to be imagined.

Our Catholic belief about the sacredness and dignity of all human life, is based on the Bible, and a long standing Judeo-Christian tradition, and the constant teaching of our beautiful Catholic Church. The Fathers of the Vatican II Council said almost 40 years ago: "This split between the faith which many profess and their daily lives deserves to be counted among the more serious errors of our age.... It is not a matter of one opinion versus another opinion... as the Catechism states in its section on abortion, when the unborn are not protected, the very foundations of a state based on law are undermined."

When the judicial part of our government allowed abortion, our government became a different kind of government than what it was founded to be. There are only two forms of government. The first acknowledges that God gives us our rights, and that government exists to secure those rights. In such a framework, government can not tamper with the right to life, and can never authorize its destruction.

The second form of government says that government is that source of those rights, and that therefore has full dominion over life and death. However, Pope John Paul II comments on this error in *Evangelium Vitae* stating the following: "In this way democracy, contradicting its own principles, effectively moves toward a form of totalitarianism. The State is no longer the common home where all can live together on the basis of principles of fundamental equality, but it is transformed into a tyrant State, which arrogates to itself the right to dispose of the life of the weakest and most defenseless members. When this happens, the process

leading to the breakdown of a genuinely human coexistence and the disintegration of the State itself has already begun. This is the death of true freedom" (No. 20)

Most abortions are performed for elective reasons, not for medical or health reasons. The Catholic Church's position against abortion is based on Divine and natural law and the constant teaching of the Church going back to the Apostles and continuing into our present time. While we must have a consistent ethic of life and rightfully care about all the life issues of our day, abortion and euthanasia are pre-eminent. Pre-eminent, by definition, means "greatest in importance, degree, or significance; superior to or notable above all others." This teaching is further enforced by these words of the Holy Father, in his September 1987 visit to America: "The dignity of America, the reason she exists, the condition for her survival -- yes, the ultimate test of her greatness -- is to respect every human person, especially the weakest and most defenseless ones, those as yet unborn." More than 44 million unborn children have been killed by abortion in our land since 1973. The hemorrhage must end if we are to survive as a society.

There are fundamental Life Principles which each American has a duty to uphold. They are based on the time-honored moral and civil law that no state and no human may intentionally kill an innocent human or consent to the evil deed. So, in summary, the Life Principles provide that the unalienable right to life endowed by our Creator given to each human at fertilization, also grants equal protection and care for each born and preborn human. When in doubt each human must opt for life, and when two or more humans are in a situation in which their lives are mutually endangered, all available ordinary means and reasonable efforts shall be used to preserve and to protect the life of each born and preborn human so endangered.

EDICTAL SUMMONS

CALENDAR - MELTON

The Tribunal of the Catholic Diocese of San Angelo to Christi Renee Melton and her whereabouts unknown.

You are hereby summoned to appear before the Tribunal of the Catholic Diocese of San Angelo, at 804 Ford Street, San Angelo, Texas 76905, on or before the 31st day of January, 2006, to answer to the Petition of Shane Lynn Callendar, now introduced before the Diocesan Tribunal in an action styled, SHANE LYNN CALLENDAR VS CHRISTI RENEE MELTON. Petition for Declaration of Invalidity of Marriage," said Petition being identified as CALLENDAR - MELTON Protocol No.: SO 06/06, on the Tribunal Docket of the Diocese of San Angelo.

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

Given at the Tribunal of the Diocese of San Angelo on the 1st day of January, 2006.

Reverend William R. DuBuisson,
OMI, MCL, JCL
Judicial Vicar

OBISPO: El aborto es la cuestion central y moral

(Para3)

derecho de disponer de la vida de los miembros más débiles y más indefensos. Cuando esto pasa comienza el proceso de derrumbamiento de una coexistencia genuina humana y la desintegración del Estado ha comenzado. Esto es la muerte de libertad verdadera" (No.20)

La mayor parte de abortos se realizan por razones electivas, no por razones médicas o de salud. La posición de la Iglesia Católica contra el aborto es basada en la ley Divina y natural y la enseñanza

constante de la Iglesia desde el tiempo de los Apóstoles y continua hasta el tiempo presente. Mientras necesitamos tener una ética de vida consistente y justamente preocuparnos de las cuestiones de hoy en día, el aborto y eutanasia son preeminentes. Preeminente por definición, es "lo máximo en importancia, grado o significado; superior a o lo más notable entre todos lo demás." Esta enseñanza es reforzada más con las palabras del Santo Padre, en su visita a América en Septiembre de 1987: "La dignidad de América, la razón que ella existe, la condición de su supervivencia—sí, la última prueba de su grandeza, es

respetar cada persona humana, especialmente los débiles y los más indefensos, aquellos no-nacidos." Más de 44 millón de niños no-nacidos han sido matados por el aborto en nuestro país desde 1973. La hemorragia tiene que terminar si vamos a sobrevivir con una sociedad.

Hay *Principios de la Vida* fundamentales que cada Americano tiene una obligación de defender. Están basadas siempre en la ley moral y civil que ningún estado o ser humano puede intencionalmente matar a un ser humano inocente o consentir a un mal hecho. Así pues, en resumen, los *Principios de la*

Vida proveen que el derecho inalienable a la vida dotado por nuestro Creador dado a cada ser humano en el momento de fertilización, también concede igual protección y cuidado para cada ser humano nacido y no-nacido. Cuando en duda cada ser humano debe optar por la vida, y cuando dos o más seres humanos estén en una situación en que sus vidas mutuamente están en peligro, todos los medios disponibles y todos los esfuerzos razonables serán usados para preservar y proteger la vida de cada ser humano nacido o no-nacido, que está en peligro.

DEACONS: Discernment first for those who feel called

(From 3)

could provide for the Church.

The word, deacon, comes from the Greek word, diakonos, meaning "servant" or "helper." Officially, deacons are one of the only three groups of ordained ministers within the Catholic Church—the other being bishops and presbyters. Deacons may be either single or married, and in the United States, they are required to be at least 35 years old, before being ordained.

The first role or responsibility of a deacon, supported by his wife if married, is to come into a deeper relationship with Christ through prayer and contemplation. By his baptism and through the Sacrament of Matrimony, the deacon is called to holiness. Before he can be a servant of the Lord in service, he must be a disciple of the Lord. The deacons are the sacramental signs to the Church and the world that Christ came to serve and not be served. Functionally, they are called to serve as ministers of the Word, the Sacraments, and charity. Their principal work is charity and service.

Briefly, here is a resume of what deacons can and cannot do:

DEACONS CAN – preach, teach, bring Communion to others, assist the priest as the first principal minister at Mass, witness marriages, baptize, officiate at wake and funeral services, lead prayer, wear clerics.

DEACONS CANNOT: consecrate, for-

give sins, ordain others, anoint the sick, confirm, run for political office [except by special permission from the diocesan bishop], be younger than 35 years of age.

The role or function of the deacon must be placed in the context of what Pope John Paul II has called "New Evangelization." A deacon, usually because of his family setting and his work situation, can be more directly involved in the lives of people than priests. Each day by the witness he gives, by the way he speaks, by the way he carries out his tasks in life, the deacon has many splendid opportunities to evangelize. To evangelize means to preach the good news to others, especially by bringing people into contact with the one who is God's great news—Jesus Christ. The deacon perhaps does more to bring people closer to Christ and the Church by the witness of a holy life that he gives in his daily setting, than by the preaching he does in Church.

What a deacon does is very important but secondary. Who he is and how he relates to Christ as he lives out the sacramental nature of his order is of primary importance. The defining mark of the deacon is not power, but being a servant for God's people. He embodies the service of Christ who made himself the servant of all, and he is most like Christ when he "washes the feet" of people.

To truly be a servant of Christ for God's people, the deacon candidate needs solid Scriptural and theological information,

strong spiritual preparation, and the development of a pastoral sense of service.

The Church, in its recent updated documents on the Diaconate, has stressed the standards and norms for diaconal training and service, which encompasses the human, the spiritual, and the pastoral dimensions. These standards are spelled out in the U.S. Bishops' document, the National Directory for the Formation, Life, and Ministry of Permanent Deacons, and in the document of the Vatican of the Congregation for Catholic Education, Basic Norms for the Formation of Deacons. A deacon's preparation must be one that is holistic, and an academic degree does not guarantee ministerial approval.

One who feels called to be a deacon, needs to go through a proper discernment process that should involve the Pastor, the local Pastoral Council, committees of the Diocese, and the final approval of the Bishop. A deacon must realize the need to balance his responsibilities and remember that his priority is to his wife and family. A deacon needs much discipline in his life in order to find time for prayer, for work, for family, and diaconal commitments.

As a deacon goes about his service, he daily must remind himself that he is first one of the sheep of the Divine Shepherd, and that to be effective in ministry, he needs to constantly call upon the power and the presence of the Holy Spirit.

From the Vatican

The following letter arrived at the Diocese of San Angelo from the Secretariat of State at the Vatican in December:

17 November 2005

Dear Bishop Pfeifer:

The Holy Father has asked me to acknowledge the offering of \$32,898.59 which you sent from the Diocese of San Angelo as Peter's Pence for the year 2005.

His Holiness wishes me to thank you for this gift, which will help him in the exercise of his universal ministry. He is aware of the devotion which motivated your people's contribution and he is deeply appreciative of this testimony to the bond of charity uniting the local Churches with the See of Peter.

Commending you and the clergy, religious and laity of the Diocese to the loving protection of Mary, Mother of the Church, the Holy Father cordially imparts Apostolic Blessing as a pledge of joy and peace in the Lord.

With fraternal good wishes, I remain

Yours Sincerely in Christ,
A Carol. Lodous
Secretary of State, The Vatican

IMMIGRATION: Bill will hurt nation, church, USCCB, Pfeifer agree

(From 3)

citizenship;

■ cause unlawful presence in the United States to be a crime, rather than a civil violation, as it is in the current law;

■ bar refugees and asylum seekers from legal, permanent residence and citizenship if they commit relatively minor offenses.

"H.R. 4437 has been presented as an antidote to our nation's immigration crisis. It is just the opposite," Pfeifer said. "In reality, this legislation would only exacerbate the problem by driving immigrants further underground and

compelling migrants in search of work to rely on other expanded smuggling networks to cross the border. A comprehensive solution to our immigration crisis, which includes legal status for migrants and legal avenues for immigration, is needed to fix a broken immigration system that exists in our country today.

"Now is the time to speak out in favor of our sisters and brothers who are strangers in our land and who are forced to be on the move. I ask you all to please contact our U.S. Senators and Representatives to express our opposition to this H.R. 4437 Bill, and ask for

a more comprehensive bill that would be friendly to our closest neighbor that would stress unification of families, and one that is built on respect of the human person.

As we work for fair legislation, let us also pray for the guidance of the Holy Spirit."

Our Senators and U.S. Representatives.

U.S. Representatives

Mr. Mike Conaway
511 Canon House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

Mr. Randy Neugebauer
429 Canon HOB
Washington, DC 20515

U.S. Senators

Kay Bailey Hutchison
284 Russell Senate Office Building
Washington, DC 20510

John Cornyn
517 Hart Senate Office Building
Washington, DC 20510

YOUTH: When the lights come on, remember faith never left

(From 13)

or fiction, many find it difficult to believe in something bigger than us -- a higher being, God and his miracles.

We hear someone every day shouting, "There is no God" or "God is dead." When a woman sky diver recently

jumped from a plane, both of her parachutes failed to open, but she survived to find out later that she was pregnant with a healthy baby. The chances of her survival were slim to none, but she lived. To imagine the hand of God catching her as she hit the earth is too much for us to imagine, but to imagine a broomstick carrying

children in the air is not an issue.

In a time when belief in the miraculous drives mainstream advertising, the miracles of God have been so easily forgotten. If we can let go of our doubts and have faith in a director, producer and actor, why can we not let go of our doubts in the existence of God?

I love movies. I am a movie fanatic, actually. To disappear into a dark theater and become drowned in a story is one of my favorite things to do, but in a couple of hours it has to end. Our faith in God does not, and with that faith, fantasy becomes reality.

THE BACK PAGE

Running cross country is a family activity for the Peters family, including parents Mary and Mark and their children, from left, Emily, 9, Tom, 7, Clare, 6, Will, 7, Daniel, 11, and Michael, 12. All of the children run cross country for the team at St. Matthew School in the Diocese of Nashville, Tenn., which their parents coach. Five of the six children won at least one race this season, with Michael winning four times.



Tennessee clan makes cross country running a family affair

By Ned Andrew Solomon
Catholic News Service

NASHVILLE, Tenn. — Meet Team Peters: Mom, Mary; Dad, Mark; 12-year-old Michael; 11-year-old Daniel; 9-year-old Emily; 7-year-old twins, Will and Tom; and 6-year-old Clare.

The Peters are parishioners at St. Matthew Church in Franklin, and all of the children attend St. Matthew School. They all run cross country too.

The family takes having fun at running very seriously. The Peters children participate in the Nashville diocesan cross-country running program, representing St. Matthew Church, and Mary and Mark Peters are coaches of the parish team.

The family's running passion was born years ago, when Mark lived in Akron, Ohio.

"I started running when I was in seventh grade, and have been running ever since," Mark Peters told the Tennessee Register, Nashville's diocesan newspaper. "I started running track to get in shape for football, and quickly realized I was not going to be a

SPORTS

very good football player.

"Then I started running cross country and continued through college and beyond. When I started dating Mary, running seemed to be part of our life together," he said.

His wife grew up in Nashville. The couple met while she was in the nursing program at Vanderbilt Hospital, where he was finishing a fellowship.

After Mark and Mary Peters married and children started coming on the scene, they just sort of fell into step.

"When Michael and Daniel were just babies, we'd take the stroller to the track, and I ran laps while Mary walked them," said Mark Peters. "Ultimately the boys would run or kick a soccer ball, or play in the pole vault pits. So they've just always seen me doing it, and over time they became interested in it too."

As Michael and Daniel have grown and more sons and daughters joined the Peters team, running just became an integral part

of the family picture.

"It's never been a forced effort," Mary Peters said. "It's just a fun, healthy lifestyle activity. And it's a life sport; it's something they can take with them anywhere."

The Peters children are racking up the accolades. All six of them ran in five different races in this year's final competition Oct. 16. Michael won an individual trophy, coming in first in the seventh- and eighth-graders' race, and the St. Matthew boys' team finished first.

At some time during the 2005 cross-country season, five of the six have won at least one race, with the oldest, Michael, winning four times.

But winning isn't everything. For many of the young competitors on the St. Matthew team, their goal is simply to improve on their own previous records.

"The beauty of cross country is that everyone can be a winner," said Mary Peters. "Many kids dramatically improve their times from one meet to the next. At St. Matthew, we really try to encourage each kid to achieve their 'personal best.'"

'Mother Angelica' tells story of influential nun

MOTHER ANGELICA: THE REMARKABLE STORY OF A NUN, HER NERVE, AND A NETWORK OF MIRACLES, by Raymond Arroyo. Doubleday (New York, 2005). 384 pp., \$23.95.

Reviewed by Patrick S. Lewis
Catholic News Service

"Mother Angelica" traces the life of a girl named Rita Rizzo, who grew up to be the abbess of a cloistered monastery and an icon of cable television. "The Remarkable Story of a Nun, Her Nerve, and a Network of Miracles" chronicles the life and challenges of Mother Angelica — a broken home, health problems and the founding of a media empire. Author Raymond Arroyo invites the reader to admire her unflinching store of humor, feistiness and faith in the power of God. The biography is an inspiring, entertaining, fast read that is difficult to put down.

Arroyo, the anchorman of the Eternal Word Television Network news program "The World Over," clearly admires Mother Angelica and the mission of the network she founded, which is also his employer. But he does not hesitate to show the nun's humanity or discuss controversy surrounding her, particularly in her disagreements with some American bishops.

Arroyo describes her as a woman of contradictions: a "cloistered, contemplative nun who speaks to the world; the independent rule breaker who is derided as a 'rigid conservative'; the wisecracking comedian who suffers near constant pain; the Poor Clare nun who runs a multimillion-dollar corporation."

Rizzo was born in Canton, Ohio, April 20, 1923. Her father abandoned his family, and Rizzo struggled with the stigma and instability of being raised by a single mother during the Depression. She emerges as a fighter — avoiding self-pity and defending those she loves, particularly her mother. She also endures intense physical pain, eventually undergoing a miraculous healing at the hands of a mystic and stigmatic. The book includes a powerfully disturbing black-and-white photograph of the stigmatic from the 1940s.

Through the instruction of this stigmatic, Rizzo grows spiritually, falling deeply in love with Christ and entering a cloistered convent, against the wishes of her mother. Arroyo describes the enterprising contemplative who becomes Mother Angelica, growing into a leader as she directs building projects and raises money for an Alabama monastery by selling fishing lures.

Interested in the evangelical potential of television, Mother Angelica founds EWTN. Arroyo says that because Mother Angelica sees her difficult childhood and long history of physical suffering through the eyes of faith she has been able to bring hope to a large television audience.

Arroyo recounts tales of Mother Angelica struggling to find donors for EWTN, always trusting in Christ to provide. He says she never kept a budget. Her unconventional fundraising efforts included her saying on television, "Some of you Catholics are loaded — with money, I mean." Arroyo captures the mood of each period in his subject's fascinating life — drawing the reader into her battles and joys.

