

NONPROFIT ORG.
US POSTAGE PAID
SAN ANGELO, TX
PERMIT NO. 44

DIocese of San Angelo
PO BOX 1829
SAN ANGELO TX 76902-1829
ADDRESS SERVICE REQUESTED

JUST 4 KIDS

This month in "Just 4 Kids," Jesus teaches others about fasting.

Page 13.



West Texas ANGELUS

Serving the Diocese of San Angelo, Texas

Volume XXVII, No. 3

MARCH 2006

'Singing priest' called back to Philippines

Reprinted from the
Midland Reporter-Telegram

By Jimmy Patterson
Editor, *The Angelus*

Were it not for a dream Arturo Pestin had when he was a youth, he likely would be spending his days and

nights designing, developing and testing aircraft. Instead, the **Rev. Art Pestin** spends his days and nights preparing, repairing and retooling souls as priest and pastoral administrator at Our Lady of San Juan Church on Midland's south-side.

But not for much longer,

much to the sadness of the more than 1,000 families who bid him farewell this month as he returns to his native Philippines at the calling of his bishop.

Pestin, the singing priest, has become a mainstay in

(Please See FR. ART/14)



Liturgical Directions for Holy Week

PALM SUNDAY

· It is strongly recommended that the Blessing of the Palms with procession be celebrated at least once at the principal Sunday liturgy.

HOLY THURSDAY

· The Mass of the Lord's Supper must be celebrated in the evening with procession to the altar of repose.
· Adoration of the Blessed Sacrament continues until midnight.
· For pastoral reasons, one other Mass may be celebrated during the day.

GOOD FRIDAY

· The Liturgy of the Lord's Passion should be celebrated around 3:00 p.m. For pastoral reasons, this celebration may be moved to a later time.
· Other paraliturgical celebrations are suggested and recommended at the discretion of the pastor (Viacrucis, 7 Palabras, Pesame a maria, etc.)

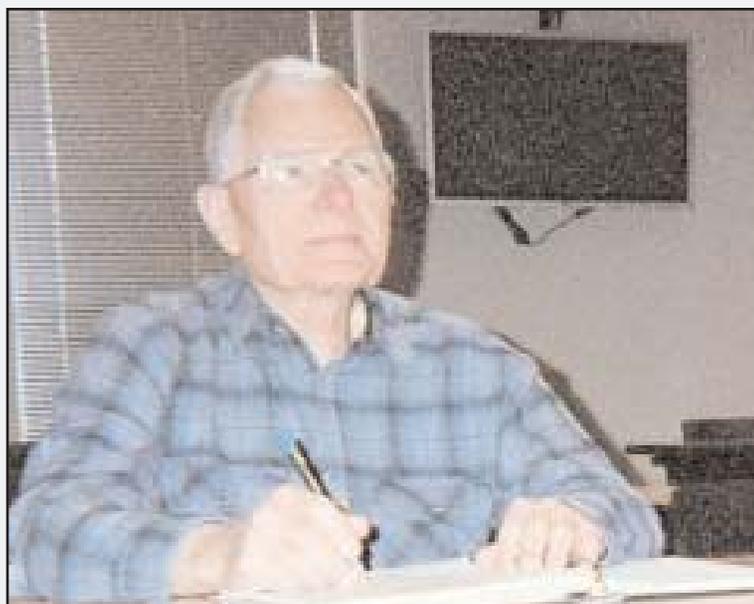
HOLY SATURDAY

· The entire celebration of the Easter Vigil takes place at night. It should not begin before nightfall; it should end before daybreak on Sunday.
· According to the rubrics for the Easter Vigil, no Eucharist may be celebrated prior to the Easter Vigil. If a pastor feels that pastoral reasons an additional Mass is needed AFTER the vigil, he may consult the Bishop for permission.

INSIDE ...

Diocesan Briefs	2
Obituaries	2
Traditions of the Church	4
Saint of the Month	4
Diocesan Dates	5
Letters to the Editor	5
The Ordination of Fr. Emilio Sosa	6
Lent 2006	8-9
The Human Side	10
Family	12
Just for Kids	13
Coming of Age	13
The Back Page	16

STUDENT PRIEST



Fr. Bernard Gully, of Andrews, loves learning and keeps the education process going as he audits a course on music history. The course, offered through UT-Permian Basin, is also offered through satellite TV at the Community Learning Center in Andrews, where Gully serves as parish priest.

Andrews' Fr. Gully takes music history class through UTPB

By Jimmy Patterson
Editor
The Angelus

ANDREWS -- He's like any other college student taking a music history class. Well, except for the fact that he's a priest who'd never heard of the Rolling Stones until he saw them on the Super Bowl halftime show in January.

But everything else makes sense. Especially his age. Fr. Bernard Gully just turned 17 1/2, the age of many college freshmen.

Born February 29, Gully only officially celebrates his birth date every four years, making him somewhat younger than his actual 70 years. Unlike most college students, though, Fr. Gully's musical preference is liturgical and he's found opera to be his main interests when he attends the music history course he is

(Please See GULLY/14)

From the Bishop's Desk

'We implore you ... be reconciled to God'

Based on the message of Lent --
We implore you on behalf of Christ,
be reconciled to God (Second
reading of Ash Wednesday)

By Bishop Michael Pfeifer
Diocese of San Angelo

At the heart of the season of Lent is the call to reconciliation and conversion. This is the message that Paul stresses in the second Reading that we hear for Ash Wednesday which

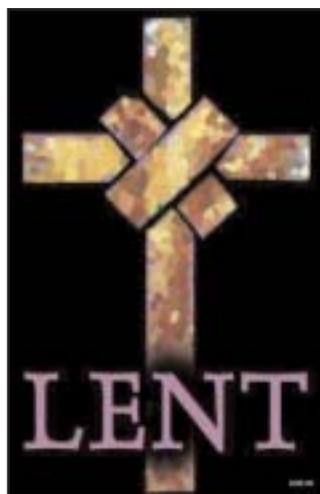
The Most Rev.
Michael D. Pfeifer
is
Bishop of San
Angelo



begins these special 40 days in preparation for the greatest event of Christianity, the resurrection of Christ. Paul exhorts us in that Reading, "We implore you on behalf of Christ, be reconciled to God."

We are in the special Year of Reconciliation for our Diocese, and the Church in the Lenten season provides us with many liturgical celebrations, Scriptural passages and teachings that help us to be reconciled to our God, to be reconciled within our hearts and to our neighbor.

William Shakespeare wrote in one of his plays about
(Please See BISHOP/14)



The West Texas Angelus

Official Newspaper of the
Diocese of San Angelo, Texas
POSTMASTER: Send all address
changes to:

WEST TEXAS ANGELUS
P.O. Box 1829
SAN ANGELO, TX 76902-1829

Bishop Michael D. Pfeifer, OMI
Publisher

Jimmy Patterson
Director of Communications
Editor

Kenneth Grimm
San Angelo Standard Times
Production Manager

Member
Catholic News Service
Catholic Press Association
Texas Catholic News

Published the first Monday following
the first Saturday of each month and
delivered to all registered parishioners
in the Diocese of San Angelo.

Subscription rate for all others:
\$10 per year

THIRD CLASS POSTAGE PAID AT
SAN ANGELO, TEXAS

Printed by the
San Angelo Standard Times
A Scripps-Howard Company

Submissions:

Story suggestions, calendar items,
parish briefs and all other
submissions should be emailed to
JimmyLPatterson@grandecom.net.

COPY, PHOTO DEADLINE:
Third Friday of every month.

Photos should be sent in jpeg format.

Letters to the editor are welcome, and
should be emailed to
JimmyLPatterson@grandecom.net.
Letters to the editor are printed at the
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

Jay Ewing: 'When I die, I'll have it made'

I met a remarkable man recently. He's 42 years old, has three kids, a wife of 18 years. He enjoys fresh air, The Travel Channel, hearing his kids talk to him about their days at school and taking in God's beauty. He says his life has been blessed and, in a good way, sheltered.

Jay Ewing has an ever-present smile on his face, emitting joy and good feelings about life. His attitude



Patterson

is infectious. It's hard not to feel that same joy when you are around him.

Except for one thing: Jay suffers from Amyotrophic Lateral Sclerosis. Lou Gehrig's Disease to put it another way. He was diagnosed five years ago when he started falling and scabbing his knees during his work in the oilfield. For a year he didn't know what it was from which he was suffering.

The fact that his conditions isn't improving -- and won't unless some 11th hour miracle cure is discovered -- doesn't phase Jay. He's never been angry with

God, only thankful, and his amazing attitude keeps him going for maybe longer than it would those with lesser outlooks.

He starts each day with prayer and Bible study, goes outside for a breath of fresh air, then lunch, a nap, and up when his kids come home to talk about their day. He talks openly with his sons about death. He is an example for them.

"When (my kids) see me, they hopefully see my faithfulness to God and my good attitude and me being able to have

Please See PATTERSON/14

DIOCESAN BRIEFS

Spanish Radio Ministry to continue

EWTN's Spanish-language ministry will continue at radio stations in Abilene, Odessa and San Angelo for another year thanks to the generous sponsorships offered by a number of individuals in the diocese. EWTN's *La Hora Catolica* can be heard Sundays from 10-11 a.m. on KSJT (107.5 FM) in San Angelo; in Abilene, from Noon-1 p.m., on KJTZ (106.9 FM), and on KOZA-AM in Odessa from 11 a.m.-Noon. The diocese thanks Fr. Maurice Voity and the Parish Council at Sacred Heart Cathedral in San Angelo for totally funding the San Angelo effort, and Msgr. Fred Nawarskas and the Holy Family Parish Council in Abilene for helping fund that effort. Additionally, a thank you to Trudo's Religious Store in San Angelo for its financial assistance in the program.

Business Manager needed

St. Ann's Parish in Midland announces an opening for Parish Business Manager. The position involves supervision of parish and school finances, supervision of some staff members and volunteers, and property/plant maintenance. The applicant must have a BA and some expertise in accounting, being familiar with the use of the computer. The applicant must be Catholic. Salary ranges depend on education, experience and degree of responsibility in a parish the size of St. Ann's. Please direct inquiries and resumes to Msgr. Larry J. Droll, P.O. Box 1231, Midland, TX 79702. Call during business hours at 432-682-6303 or e-mail ljdroll@aol.com.

Criminal Justice Ministry Training Sessions

Criminal Justice Ministry (CJM) - Information and Training Sessions will be held in Midland, Thursday, March 23, 7-9 p.m. in Rms. 1&2, St. Stephen's Parish Hall. These sessions are open to everyone: experienced and new volunteers, as well as those that might have an interest in becoming involved. No commitment is required. For more info, contact Deacon Bob Leibrecht at 432-889-3858.

Cursillo Schedule

The Cursillo is a "short course" in Christianity. It is a three-day retreat filled with educational talks, morning prayers, night prayers, daily Mass and grace-filled sacraments. The Cursillo is a life-changing experience. Is Christ calling you to live your Cursillo?

Upcoming Cursillo dates are:

Abilene Deanery - @ Holy Family Parish - Women - March 16-19; Men - April 20-23; Contact person - Joey Light jlight@wylie.esc14.net or 325-695-0503. **San Angelo, Midland deaneries** dates are later in the year and will follow in future *Angelus* editions.

Retreat-Big Lake

St. Margaret of Cortona in Big Lake will offer a reconciliation/healing retreat in Big Lake for St. Margaret, St. Francis (Iraan) and St. Thomas (Rankin) Saturday, March. 18 from 9 a.m.-5 p.m. Fr. Gerry Weber, OMI, Director of Our Lady of Lourdes Shrine, San Antonio, will preside. There will be a time for confessions during the retreat.

Obituaries

Rev. Frank Colacicco

Father Frank Colacicco, a retired priest of the San Angelo Diocese, who resided at St. Isidore Parish in Danville, California for the last eight years, died February 14, 2006, in Nicaragua. Funeral Mass of Christian Burial was celebrated in Nicaragua. Memorial Mass was celebrated for Fr. Frank at St. Isidore's Church on Wednesday, February 22nd at 7:30 PM. A memorial service was also celebrated in Stanton.

Fr. Frank was born Sept. 22, 1930, in San Francisco to Francisco Colacicco and Josephine Descagnia. He had five sisters and two brothers.

He was ordained in the Diocese of San Angelo May 19, 1979 and retired on July 1, 1997. Within the diocese he served at St. Theresa, Carlsbad; Our Lady of Lourdes, Andrews; St. Joseph, Ft. Stockton; Sy. Theresa, Junction; Sacred Heart, Menard, and Sacred Heart Cathedral, San Angelo.



David King

David Harold King, 74, of Big Spring died Sunday, February 5, 2006, at his home after a long illness. David was born in Corpus Christi, February 28, 1931, the youngest of eight children. After high school, he was drafted and served in the U. S. Army in Europe. He attended college on the G.I. Bill supplemented by his own hard work. He started Del Mar College in Corpus Christi in 1953, receiving an Associate of Arts degree, and then went to Texas A&I for his Bachelor's in 1956 and M. A. degree in 1958. He married Susan Craven, a classmate from Del Mar, in the Corpus Christi Cathedral in August of 1958.

David served as school board member and principal of the Catholic school at Immaculate Heart of Mary Parish in Big Spring.

When the Catholic Church began ordaining a few married men as permanent deacons, he was the first man in the San Angelo Diocese to appeal to the bishop to be considered for the diaconate, and was appointed to a committee to set up a suggested course of study.

After his son, William, became a member of the Big Spring Police Department, David received permission to attend the Big Spring Police Academy. At the time, he was 57 and was the oldest person to go through a police academy in Texas. He worked as a non-paid volunteer reserve officer for BSPD.

David is survived by his wife, Susan, daughter Elizabeth Treece and husband William Treece; his son, William King and wife Wanda, and four grandchildren: Sterling King, Kristin King, Geoffrey Treece, and Judith Treece, all of Big Spring. He is survived by one brother, Roy King and his wife Rose of South Texas, and many beloved nieces and nephews.

David is remembered by his family and friends for his generous spirit, his dedication to education, his love of jokes, his gift of making friends, his passion for justice and fair play, his courage, and the strength and dignity and jokes with which he faced his final illness.

His family suggests memorial gifts to the David and Susan King Endowment Fund, % Jan Foresyth, 1001 Birdwell Lane, Big Spring, Texas, 79720, of to the donor's favorite charity.

Papal encouragement for those not permitted Holy Communion

by Bishop Michael Pfeifer, OMI

A particularly painful problem is the topic of Communion for the Faithful who were not married according to the norms of the Church, or who are divorced and remarried. Because of their irregular marital union, they are excluded from Eucharistic Communion. None of us has a ready-made formula to solve these situations, and each situation has many variable differences.

In his recent statement and dialogue with priest, religious, and deacons, Pope Benedict XVI addressed this painful situation with the following compassionate,

pastoral directive.

Even if these people cannot go to sacramental communion, they are not excluded from the love of the church or from the love of Christ. A eucharist without immediate sacramental communion is not of course complete; it lacks an essential dimension. Nonetheless, it is also true that taking part in the eucharist without Eucharistic communion is not the same as nothing; it still means being involved in the mystery of the cross and resurrection of Christ. It is still participating in the great sacrament in its spiritual and pneumatic dimensions, and also in its ecclesial dimension, although this is not strictly

sacramental.

And since it is the sacrament of Christ's passion, the suffering Christ embraces these people in a special way and communicates with them in another way differently so that they may feel embraced by the crucified Lord who fell to the ground and died and suffered for them and with them. Consequently, they must be made to understand that even if, unfortunately, a fundamental dimension is absent, they are not excluded from the great mystery of the eucharist or from the love of Christ, who is present in it. This seems to me important, just as it is important that the parish priest and the parish

community make these people realize that on the one hand they must respect the indissolubility of the sacrament, and on the other, that we love these people who are also suffering for us. Moreover, we must suffer with them because they are bearing an important witness and because we know that the moment when one gives in "out of love," one wrongs the sacrament itself and the indissolubility appears less and less true.

On the one hand, therefore, is the good of the community and the good of the sacrament that we must respect, and on the other, the suffering of the people we must alleviate.

El Camino hacia la Pascua comienza con cenizas

por el Obispo Miguel Pfeifer, OMI

Ya esta por comenzar la Santa Cuaresma. En varias parroquias los sacerdotes están quemando las diversas palmas que quedaron del Domingo de Ramos del año pasado. Las cenizas que quedan, después de quemar esas palmas, son las que se usan para poner una cruz en la frente de los fieles que acudan a la iglesia el próximo Miércoles de Ceniza.

Es importante recordar como están conectado el Domingo de Ramos y Miércoles de Ceniza. Ambos son días centrados en Cristo pero de manera diferente.

El Miércoles de Ceniza es el comienzo de la Cuaresma. El Domingo de Ramos es el comienzo de la Semana Santa.

El Miércoles de Ceniza es acompañar a Cristo al desierto. El Domingo de Ramos es acompañar a Cristo en su entrada triunfal a Jerusalén.

El Miércoles de Ceniza es comprometerse con actitudes de penitencia. El Domingo de Ramos es Cristo quien se compromete con el camino de la cruz que le espera.

El Miércoles de Ceniza es comprometerse con intensificar nuestra vida de oración. El Domingo de Ramos es el comienzo de la semana de oración mas intensa de Cristo.

El Miércoles de Ceniza es comprometerse con mayores actos de caridad y amor. El Domingo de Ramos abre la semana de máximo amor demostrado por Cristo.

El Miércoles de Ceniza es nuestro morir a los excesos y placeres. El Domingo de Ramos es Cristo quien se compromete a morir por causa de nuestros excesos y placeres.

El Miércoles de Ceniza es el comienzo de cuarenta días de abrazar con mayor intensidad a Dios y al prójimo. El Domingo de Ramos es el comienzo de siete días donde Cristo nos abraza más intensamente a nosotros y nos dice "Yo te amo, Yo te perdono, recibe la vida eterna."

Dios nos invita a un retiro muy especial. No es en una parroquia ni casa de retiro. Este retiro espiritual no será en un centro de convenciones ni en un parque. El retiro a que yo me refiero es el retiro espiritual de toda la Iglesia, la Santa Cuaresma. El retiro comenzara este próximo Miércoles de Ceniza, dura cuarenta días, y se llevara a cabo en tu corazón. Vívelo y terminaras con una semana Santa llena de amor pues la estarás viviendo junto al Señor.

Chastity: a virtue that helps us to lead holy, healthy and happy lives

By Bishop Michael Pfeifer, OMI

The virtue of chastity is closely related to the virtue of temperance, which regulates the use of food and drink and sex.

Regulation is in order precisely because these things are good. If they were not, we would be obliged to shun them—nor regulate them. Chastity empowers us to make the right use of the great gift of sexuality which is given to each human being by God. We are all aware of the many abuses of this great gift, and the consequences that it has on our Christian call to live holy, happy, and healthy lives.

The Catechism of the Catholic Church gives this Christian teaching about chastity:

Chastity means the successful integration of sexuality within the person and thus the inner unity of man in his bodily and spiritual being. Sexuality, in which man's belonging to the bodily and biological world is expressed, becomes personal and truly human when it is integrated into the relationship of one person to another, in complete and lifelong mutual gift of man and woman.

The virtue of chastity, therefore, involves the integrity of the person and the integrality of the gift. The above teaching of the Catholic Church is based on Sacred Scripture which makes it clear that we do not possess our bodies, as if they were apart from us, rather we are bodily persons. God created us bodily persons and communal in nature by being

related to him and one another.

This teaching from the Bible has serious moral implications as regards how we live out the gift of human sexuality. What people do in and to their bodies touches the core of their person. Chastity, as a principle of personal integration, is vitally important to holiness and happiness—to being healthy and integrated human beings. Chastity has meaning for everyone – both married and non-married. The Church's message about chastity is simple: the great gift of sex may not be separated from procreation, love, and marriage. Sexual intimacy and sexual relations are only appropriate between a man and a woman united in marriage. Consent is not enough. Faith and reason should govern and guide desire and passion.

Unchaste persons can hardly say with Mary, "Behold, I am the handmaid of the Lord; let it be done to be according to your word." [Luke 1:38] Unchaste people do as they please, not as pleases God. All should recall the warning of Scripture: "No immoral or impure person—has any inheritance in the Kingdom of Christ and of God." [Eph.5:5] The oldest piece of Christian writing outside the Bible is "The Teaching of the Twelve Apostles." Known as the Didache, it calls abortion, infanticide, fornication, and adultery a way of death.

Unchaste behavior leads to loss of peace of mind, unwanted pregnancy, AIDS, sexually transmitted diseases, break up of marriages and families, and abortion.

Perhaps some unchaste people try to justify their way of life, or reduce their guilt, by saying, "God is a God of mercy. He doesn't condemn people." Yes, God is merciful, but always calls us to live the commandments. Some say Jesus didn't condemn the woman caught in adultery, did He? However, as we look at this incident from the eighth chapter of John's Gospel, we read, "Then Jesus straightened up and said to her, 'Woman, where are they? [who condemned you]. Has no one condemned you?' She replied, 'No one, sir.' Then Jesus said, 'Neither do I condemn you. Go, and from now on do not sin anymore.'" No, Jesus didn't condemn her, but Jesus didn't excuse her. She would escape condemnation by sinning no more. This is a message we must all take to heart.

Chastity has never been easy and perhaps more difficult today, but it is the true way that leads to happiness, holiness and a healthy life. As chastity is essential to the Christian life, God gives us the means to practice this important virtue so as to live out our human sexuality in a meaningful way. We have many helps and encouragement. The way to live a chaste life is by studying the Scripture about the importance of this virtue, living by the teaching of the Catholic Church about the purpose of the gift of sexuality and our call to holiness, developing a prayer life, receiving the Sacraments, and avoiding the occasions of sin.

(Please See **CHASTITY/15**)

El escritorio del obispo

En nombre de Cristo les pedimos que se reconcilien con dios

El mensaje de cuaresma: 'En nombre de Cristo les pedimos que se reconcilien con dios.' [Segunda Lectura de Miércoles de Ceniza]



Pfeifer

por el Obispo Miguel Pfeifer, OMI

En el corazón de la temporada de Cuaresma está la llamada a reconciliación y conversión. Este es el mensaje que Pablo enfatiza en la segunda Lectura que

escuchamos el Miércoles de Ceniza que empieza 40 días especiales de preparación para el gran evento de cristianidad, la resurrección de Cristo. Pablo nos exhorta en la Lectura, "En nombre de Cristo les pedimos que se reconcilien con Dios." Estamos en el año especial de Reconciliación para nuestra Diócesis, y la Iglesia en la temporada Cuaresmal nos provee con muchas celebraciones litúrgicas, pasajes bíblicos y enseñanzas que nos ayudan a reconciliarnos con nuestro Dios, y ser reconciliados en nuestros corazones y con nuestro prójimo.

William Shakespeare escribió en una de sus obras sobre la necesidad de tomar ventaja de esos momentos cuando las oportunidades parezcan estar en marea alta. Las más significativas mareas en nuestras vidas espirituales son los momentos cuando la gracia se nos ofrezca en abundancia. La Cuaresma es uno de esos tiempos espiri-

tuales especiales de marea alta, y corre sobre nosotros como una inundación de gracia que nuestro Dios nos ofrece para aceptar el don del perdón, conversión y reconciliación.

El trabajo de reconciliación no es fácil, y toma tiempo y esfuerzo, pero sobre todo toma la gracia—y toma la misericordia y perdón de Dios. La gracia y misericordia de Dios están allí con solo pedir. La Cuaresma es un tiempo lleno de gracia en que nosotros podemos aceptar la gracia que se nos ofrece nuestro Dios misericordioso y para cambiar nuestras vidas, y donde sea necesario, dejar caminos pecaminosos, y para cambiar nuestras maneras negativas de pensar y actuar, y tomarse la mente y corazón de Cristo.

En la Lectura de Miércoles de Ceniza, Pablo enfatiza que la gracia de Dios se nos ofrece hoy, y ahora es el tiempo para recibirla y actuar sobre la gracia que está antes nosotros. "Pues bien, ahora es el tiempo favorable; ahora es el día de la salvación."

Durante nuestra jornada Cuaresmal, necesitamos tomar tiempo para presentarnos quieta y humildemente ante Cristo crucificado en la cruz, para entender como reconciliarnos con Dios, uno con otro, y para recibir esa reconciliación—esa paz y tranquilidad—que queremos para nuestros corazones. Necesitamos llegar a un entendimiento nuevo del misterio del sufrimiento, el significado redentor que Cristo ha traído al sufrimiento. El sufrimiento es una parte integral de nuestra vida de fe. Con cada momento doloroso que soportamos, tenemos la crucifixión de Jesús ante nosotros, quien nos enseña el camino y nos da la fuerza para cargar nuestras cruces.

Somos recordados que al final de nuestra jornada de sufrimiento y sacrificio nos esperan la victoria y gloria que nos prometió Cristo.

Para ayudarnos entrar más profundamente en el misterio de reconciliación de Cuaresma, también necesitamos reflexionar seriamente sobre las palabras de Dios que nos da el Profeta Joel en la primera lectura de Miércoles de Ceniza.

Esto dice el Señor: "Todavía es tiempo. Vuélvase a mí de todo corazón, con ayunos, con lágrimas y llanto; enluten su corazón y no sus vestidos. Vuélvase al Señor nuestro, porque es compasivo y misericordioso, lento a la cólera, rico en clemencia, y se conmueve ante la desgracia... Y el Señor se llenó de celo por su tierra y tuvo piedad de su pueblo."

Durante la temporada de la Cuaresma, recordamos el tema principal del Año de Reconciliación

para nuestra diócesis que es el Sacramento de Reconciliación y Penitencia, el Sacramento de Confesión. Es un momento maravilloso para estudiar la enseñanza de la Iglesia sobre el Sacramento de la misericordia de Dios. La temporada Cuaresmal es un tiempo para continuar o re-establecer la práctica de confesarse frecuentemente que es la gran manera sacramental de reconciliarnos con Dios, y con nuestro prójimo. La gracia de este Sacramento maravilloso nos ayuda a vencer el pecado y esos obstáculos y tentaciones que presentan barreras para lograr la gracia reconciliadora que Cristo nos ofrece a cada uno de nosotros.

DIOS TE ESPERA ESTA CUARESMA

por el Obispo Miguel Pfeifer, OMI

Ahora que estamos para comenzar el tiempo de cuaresma les presento un minuto de reflexión sobre estos 40 días en preparación para la Pascua. Esta breve reflexión se toma del Misal Mensual de la Buena Prensa de Febrero 2005.

Dios te Espera esta Cuaresma

¿Dónde?

- ✓ en la puerta de cualquier confesionario, en cualquier iglesia
- ✓ en la persona de cualquier sacerdote, viejo o joven
- ✓ en el único tribunal donde la sentencia es siempre absoluta

¿Para Qué?

- ✓ para perdonarte todos tus pecados
- ✓ para ayudarte a que no vuelvas a cometerlos para devolverte la paz y la tranquilidad
- ✓ para que comiences una nueva vida, sin cuentas pendientes

¿Cómo?

- ✓ sin ningún rencor
 - ✓ con los brazos abiertos
 - ✓ como al hijo que se había ido y que ahora vuelve al hogar paterno
 - ✓ con un nuevo plan para ti, mejor que el que echaste a perder
- "Conviértanse (convertirse es arrepentirse de los pecados y querer cambiar de vida) y crean en el evangelio".

Traditions of the Church

Article 8: 'We believe in the Holy Spirit'

This is part 8 of a 12-part series looking at the different articles of the Nicene Creed.

The Holy Spirit, whom Christ pours out on his members, builds, animates and sanctifies the Church.

The Catholic Catechism (No. 689) tells us: "The One whom the Father has sent into our hearts, the Spirit of his Son, is truly God. Consubstantial with the Father and the Son, the Spirit is inseparable from them, in both the inner life of the Trinity and his gift of love for the world... In their joint mission, the Son and the Holy Spirit are distinct but inseparable. To be sure, it is Christ who is seen, the visible image of the invisible God, but it

is the Spirit who reveals him."

"The Holy Spirit, the third person of the Trinity, is the proper name of the one whom we adore and glorify along with the Father and Son," said Michael D. Pfeifer, Bishop of San Angelo.

"In Baptism, the Holy Spirit fills our soul with God's life and love. In Confirmation, the life of God is confirmed through the power of the Holy Spirit, and we are given wonderful gifts to enrich our lives and to build up the Body of Christ in service and charity.

"In Sacred Scripture and in the Tradition of the Church, there are symbols of the Holy Spirit. One is water, another is anointing, and also fire. The dove is also a symbol used for the Holy

Spirit."

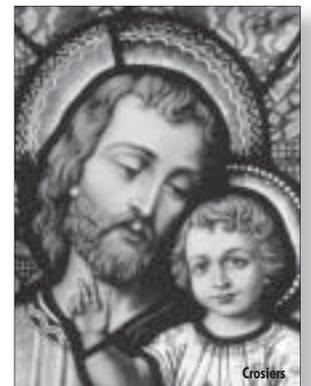
Pfeifer reminds that it is on the day of Pentecost -- June 4 this year -- the promised Holy Spirit came down upon the members of the Church community and empowered them to begin their mission of bringing Christ and the Good News of His Gospel to the ends of the earth.

"That powerful Holy Spirit is still alive in the Church, and in each one of us," Pfeifer said, "The Spirit wants to continue to fill us with many wonderful gifts, but especially the greatest gift of love so that we can fulfill the two great commandments of loving God with all our hearts, minds, and souls, and to love our neighbor as Jesus loved us."

Joseph

first century
feast – March 19

Joseph, the Jewish carpenter called by God to complete the Holy Family, became the patron of the universal church in 1870. In the Gospels, he is named in the genealogies (Mt 1:16; Lk 3:23); as "a righteous man" who planned to divorce Mary quietly until an angel intervened (Mt 1:18-25); as the family protector on the flight to Egypt (Mt 2:13-15, 19-23); as Mary's betrothed, "of the house of David" (Lk 1:27); in the infancy narrative (Lk 2:1-19); as a parent fearing for a lost child (Lk 2:41-52); and in descriptions of Jesus as his son (Jn 1:45; 6:42).



DIOCESAN DATES**Bishop's Calendar****MARCH**

8 – SAN ANGELO: Soup and Sermon, Noon, St. Mary
9-12 – SAN ANGELO: MACC Program, Welcome the Stranger, Christ the King Retreat Center.

14-17 – Private Lenten Retreat
19 – BIG SPRING: Federal Prison, Mass, 10 a.m.

21 – SAN ANGELO: Staff Lenten Retreat, 10 a.m.-1 p.m., Christ the King Retreat Center.

22 – ABILENE: Lenten Night of Prayer with Priests, Sisters, Deacons and Wives of the Abilene Deanery, 7 p.m., Holy Family.

23 – SAN ANGELO: Workshop at Boys and Girls Club for Nano Kids Technology, 6 p.m.

25-26 – SAN ANTONIO: University of the Incarnate Word - Mass to Celebrate the Quasiquicentennial of the University -4:30 p.m.

28 – SAN ANGELO: Lenten Night of Prayer for Priests, Sisters, Deacons and Wives of San Angelo Deanery, 7 p.m., Holy Angels.

APRIL

1 – MIDLAND: St. Ann - Diocesan Schools Commission at 9:00 a.m. Eldorado, Our Lady of Guadalupe - Confirmation at 5:00 p.m.

3 – SAN ANTONIO: Oblate Renewal Center - Meeting of the Catholic Health Association of Texas at 8:00 a.m.

3 – Texas Catholic Conference - 10:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m.

4 – SAN ANGELO: Sacred Heart Cathedral - Christ Mass at 11:00 a.m. and Presbyteral Council meeting at 1:30 p.m.

5 – ABILENE: Ecumenical Service Celebrating the 125th Anniversary of the City of Abilene - 7 p.m., Abilene Civic Center

6 – ABILENE: Abilene Civic Center -6:30 p.m. Just People, Inc., Banquet -Sister Helen Prejean -Main Speaker

9 – SAN ANGELO: Sacred Heart Cathedral - Palm Sunday Mass at 9:45 a.m. Holy Angels - Seder Meal at 5:30 p.m.

11 – WALL: Confirmation, St. Ambrose, 6:30 p.m.

13 – SAN ANGELO: Holy Thursday Mass, Sacred Heart Cathedral, 7 p.m.

14 – SAN ANGELO: Way of the Cross, St. Margaret, 1 p.m.

14 – SAN ANGELO: St. Joseph - Good Friday Service at 7:00 pm

15 – SAN ANGELO: Easter Vigil Mass, Sacred Heart Cathedral, 8 p.m.

16 – SAN ANGELO: Easter Sunday Mass at St. Margaret at 9 a.m.

17 – SAN ANGELO: Easter Dinner for Bishop's Staff at 6:00 p.m.

18-20 – Rest and Prayer

21 – BROWNWOOD: Confirmation, Mary, 6:30 p.m.

23-24 – SAN ANTONIO: MACC Board Meeting

26 – ROWENA: Confirmation, St. Joseph,

6:30 p.m.

27 – ABILENE: Confirmation, Holy Family, 6:30 p.m.

28 – OZONA: Confirmation, Our Lady of Perpetual Help, 6 p.m.

29 – ODESSA: Confirmation, St. Joseph, 7 p.m.

30 – MIDLAND: Confirmation, Our Lady of Guadalupe - Confirmation at 10:00 a.m.

Chancellor's Calendar

(CKRC = Christ the King Retreat Center)

MARCH

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.

APRIL

1-2 – St. Ann's Midland Confirmation Retreat, CKRC.

1-2 – Region 10 Young Adult Encuentro continues (Austin)

1 – Basic Formation, St. Francis, Abilene, 8:45 a.m.

2 – Confirmation Retreat, CKRS, 9:30 a.m.

3 – Advanced Formation, St. Marys Odessa, 8:45 a.m.

8 – Deacon Discernment, CKRC, 9 a.m.

14 – Good Friday, DOSA Offices

14 – Holy Land Collection

20 – DRE, CRE, CYM Day of Reflection, 10 a.m.

22 – Mustard Seed (tentative), CRKC

23 – Confirmation Retreat, CKRC, 9:30 a.m.

24-27 – Why Catholic? Launching Sessions

25-26 – International Priests Gathering, CKRC

27 – DOSA Budget Group 2, Pastoral Center, 10:30 a.m.

30 – Catholic Home Missions Appeal.

MAY

1-5 – Diocesan Priest Retreat, CKRC

6 – Basic Formation Retreat, 8:45 a.m., St. Francis, Abilene

6 – Deacon Discernment, 9 a.m., CKRC

18 – Joint Finance, Presbyteral Council meetings, 11 a.m., Pastoral Center

19-21 – Engaged Encounter, CKRC

21 – Catholic Communications Campaign

29 – Memorial Day, DOSA Offices closed

Necrology-March

11 – Rev. Leopold J. Bujnowski (1976)

11 – Deacon Albert Libertore (1977)

21 – Deacon Franke Trudo (1992)

26 – Rev. Serran Braun (1999)

26 – Deacon Audon Saldivar (2000)

Letters to the Editor**A Catholic school in every city in the Diocese?**

Today, the feast of the presentation of the Blessed Virgin Mother we celebrated Catholic Schools week. I believe this celebration should be held in every parish in the Diocese of San Angelo because graduates of our Catholic schools are enriching every parish.

Just recently, I had a funeral and two young men came forward and offered to do the reading. I was not acquainted with them, but they knew me from back in the '70s when they attended St. Mary's Central Catholic School. As they read the Reading of the Mass, it was very evident to me that they were very much at ease. They were doing what they did as young students at St. Mary's.

I am sure they are using these same gifts in the parish they now attend, bringing their Catholic School to that particular parish.

Over the years I have recognized those who attended a Catholic School.

Sometimes it has been from a far away city back east, but more often they attended St. Ann's in Midland or Sacred Heart in San Angelo or some who are a bit older attended Catholic school in Pecos or Alpine.

Are your Religious Education teachers or Parish pastoral council members the product of Catholic schools? If you asked, you may be surprised the influence Catholic Schools are having in your parish. I know many of our priests and sisters, long ago, received the gift of a Catholic education. I know that I have.

-- Rev. Francis Frey
Odessa

St. Raphael: God's special healer

One of God's greatest gift to mankind is his angels. It seems at times that we tend to forget about them. We all have a guardian angel but there are many more who want to assist us in our journey from our life on earth to our final home in heaven. There are three angels who are named in the Bible: Michael, Gabriel and Raphael.

Most people know Michael led the angels who threw the fallen angels out of heaven and into hell and Gabriel appeared to our Blessed Mother at the Annunciation. Raphael is not as well known to most people but possibly has the most human mission of these three. Raphael means "God has healed." He is God's medicine and healer.

The Book of Tobias tells us of Raphael curing the blindness of Tobias. It also tells us of the son of Tobias (also named Tobias) going on a journey and being guided by a stranger (St. Raphael). During the journey, Tobias the son takes a wife, Sara. Sara had been married seven times before but each husband died on their wedding night. A demon had caused the deaths and Raphael chained the demons to the desert so that Tobias and Sara could

marry.

I first met St. Raphael in the summer of 2000. My son Mark had gone to the optometrist and it was determined that he should see a retina specialist. I realized that this might be a serious genetic disorder due to family history on his mother's side. I was very worried about this and one night I looked on the Internet and found out the patron saint of eye disorders is St. Raphael. A few days later I was at St. Mary's in Ballinger. I was praying the Rosary and for St. Raphael's intercession and was on the front row with my head bowed I had been praying a short time when I heard a voice from the altar, about 15 feet away. Very clearly, the voice said, "I will cure your son if you will spread my name. I did not hear the voice through my ears but in my head. I said that I would and I finished the Rosary.

I write this to help keep my promise to spread devotion to this wonderful angel. St. Raphael can chain the demons in our lives and throw them into the desert as he did for Sara. I wonder if there has ever been a time in human history when mankind needs to be healed as badly as we do now. I believe that God is sending St. Raphael to help heal the world. I ask you to read the book Tobias in the Old Testament, go to a religious store and buy prayer cards and reading material about St. Raphael. St. Raphael is also the patron saint of travelers. Place the cards in your vehicle and give them to your relatives and friends and say the prayer on the back every day, especially while travelling. You will soon realize that St. Raphael can heal our bodies if God chooses and that he can cure our hearts and our souls if we choose.

Located just south of Ballinger on a hill overlooking town is the 100-foot tall cross built by Jim and Doris Studer. Near the cross are two shrines. One is of Our Lady of Guadalupe and the other is to the archangels. If you are in the Ballinger area please drive south out of town on Hwy. 83 and you will see the cross east of the highway as you cross the river.

The following is a prayer to St. Raphael from the back of a prayer card:

Glorious Archangel St. Raphael, great prince of the heavenly court, you are illustrious for your gifts of wisdom and grace. You are a guide to those who journey by land or sea or air, consoler of the afflicted and refuge of sinners.

I beg you, assist me in all my needs and in all the sufferings of this life as once you helped the young Tobias on his travels.

Because you are medicine of God, I humbly pray you to heal the many infirmities of my soul and the ills that afflict my body. I especially ask you the favor (name it) and the great grace of purity to prepare me to be the temple of the Holy Spirit. Amen.

-- Bill Baird, Sheriff
Runnels County,
Ballinger

The Ordination of Father Emilio Sosa

Submitted by Joseph Lopez

I have been to a couple of priestly ordinations in the past and upon both occasions I, like many others, saw and heard what was going on but didn't grasp the full meaning.

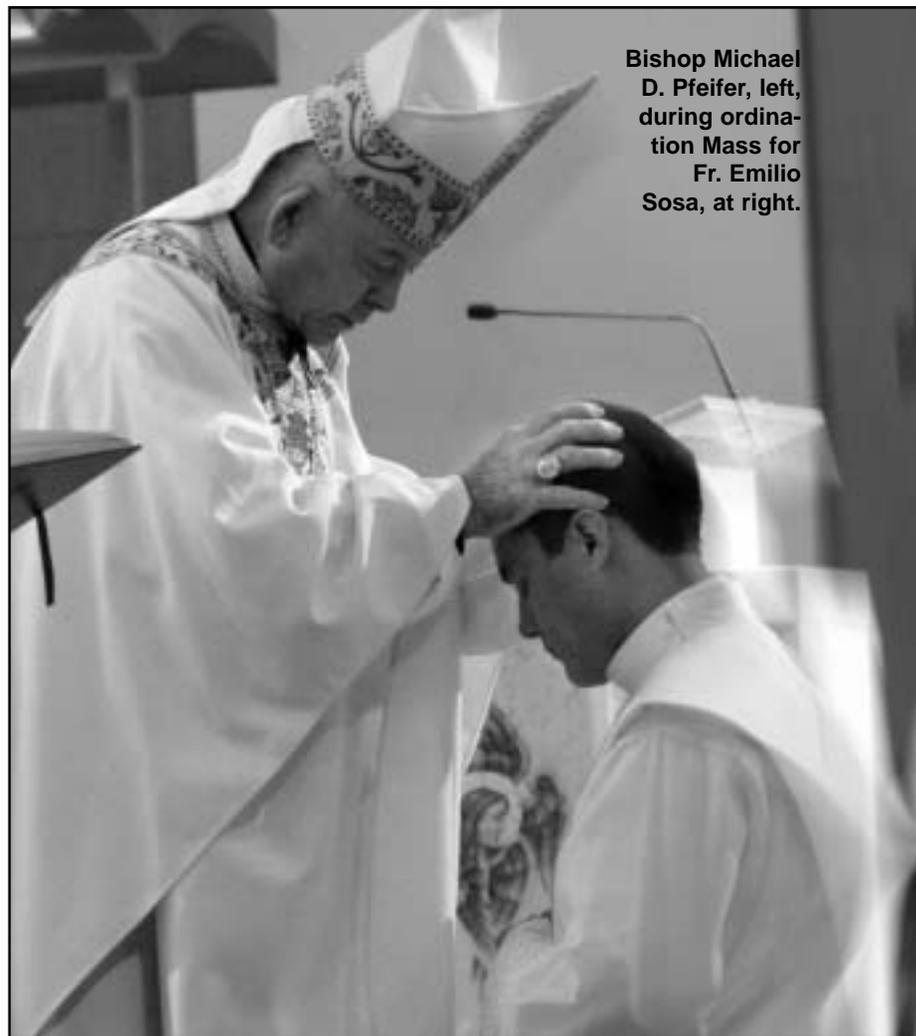
Now I understand what was happening: our Lord Jesus was setting up his succession and ordination of priests. Like most there on Jan. 14, 2006, I was there for the first time to witness the sacred event of a transitional deacon to priesthood. I am also Fr. Emilio's friend and I wanted to support and offer my congratulations into his sacred journey.

When I reflect now on what really happens during a priestly ordination I find that it is breathtaking and almost indescribable to the layperson. The commitment these young men are willing to make to God for the rest of their lives is truly an answer to a call from God. As the candidates make their vows, we hear them speak their vows. What we do not hear is the true meaning of the vow: He was sent by the Father and he in turn sent the disciples into the world; through them and their successors, the bishops, he continues his work as Teacher, Priest, Shepherd. Priests are co-workers of the order of bishops. They are joined to the bishops in the priestly office and are called to serve God's people."

All I can think is that this can only be done by the grace of God in order for them to carry out what they are charged with and resolved to do. When we put it into perspective they are to be Christ-like. Through transubstantiation and God's presence, they have the power to change bread into the Body of Christ and wine into the precious Blood of Jesus, hear confessions and absolve us our sins; console us with holy oil when we're sick and much more in the name of Jesus.

In all my years of going to church it is normal to call a priest "Father" and a bishop "Most Reverend." But I had never heard a bishop call any man "son" except when advancing a candidate to the order of the presbyterate. What a celebration it must be to father and son (bishop and newly ordained priest) and especially to God the Father, Son and Holy Spirit and all the angels and saints. During ordinations I have witnessed, all I could see was love. Love for God and our mother Church from the newly ordained priest is expressed as he prostrates himself with much humility in front of the altar of God, the bishop and all of God's people present.

This assignment was an eye-opener for me and a blessing that I will be able to participate in another ordination into the priesthood and be a part of this special celebration. In the last three years, my wife and I have been privileged to have been witness to such Godly events in our faith. I would wish everyone to be able to witness this Holy Sacrament at least once.



Bishop Michael D. Pfeifer, left, during ordination Mass for Fr. Emilio Sosa, at right.

Comments on Fr. Sosa's Ordination, Jan. 14:

"The Holy Spirit was truly present during this ordination ceremony. I was very motivated by Fr. Emilio's true example of humility."

-- Roman Venegas/SEAS Confirmation Teacher

"I found the Mass for Fr. Emilio's ordination to be very humbling and overwhelming. I felt the Holy Spirit moving as I witnessed an extremely special celebration. The presence of so many priests on the altar with Fr. Emilio was a privilege and an unforgettable moment." -- Nicolas Bryson/SEAS Teen

"Fr. Emilio is the epitome of a child of God. The attendance for the ordination and his first Mass was absolutely astounding, a response that can only come from the body of Christ who truly joined Fr. Emilio to celebrate with a brother on a most accomplished day." -- Dorothy Pepper/SEAS Youth Director

"How do you say 'I was showered by Grace?' Could I see it? Did I feel it? The answer: a resounding yes. Even now as I write this reflection I get a lump in my throat, the feeling of God's Holy Men and Women around. (Fr. Emilio's ordination) to each of us was faith-filled, personal and prayerful." -- Dolly Neff

"Fr. Emilio's day was so Holy! I was touched to the core of my heart. The ceremony was the happiest moment in Emilio's life. To participate in this celebration brought my Catholicism full circle." -- Danielle Pepper/Confirmation Teacher

I was grateful to have had this special opportunity. I feel that the eyes of other young men can be opened to consider the vocation of the priesthood."

-- Stephen Velasquez/SEAS Teen

Por Juan Ramos

Como candidato al Diaconado en discernimiento en la Diocesis de San Angelo, y con el privilegio que Dios me a dado de poder comunicarme con mis hermanos tanto que hablan Ingles como mis hermanos de habla hispana lo que considero una responsabilidad como catolico servir en lo que me es posible al pueblo de Dios.

Animado por la invitacion del Señor Obispo su Excelencia Reverendo Miguel Pfeifer, a escribir una pequeña reflexión tocante al ordenamiento del nuevo sacerdote catolico Padre Emilio Sosa el pasado 14 de enero del 2006 escribo mis impresiones en los dos idiomas.

Viniendo desde la ciudad de Midland, Texas, donde vivo y soy miembro de la parroquia de Nuestra Señora de San Juan. Fue una gran satisfaccion de haber presenciado este gran evento en la Catedral del Sagrado Corazon en San Angelo, Texas, donde se llevo acabo la ordenacion.

Me impresiono mucho la gran cantidad de personas que estuvieron presentes para presenciar la ordenacion y dar su soporte fisico y espiritual al nuevo sacerdote Padre Emilio Sosa. Un hombre que decidio entrar al servicio de Dios, de la iglesia, y del pueblo de Dios.

Tuvimos la presencia de nuestro Obispo Reverendo Miguel Pfeifer y el Obispo de Lubbock, Texas, Reverendo Placido Rodriguez, y un gran numero de Sacerdotes y Diaconos y algunas Monjitas que llegaron de la Ciudad de Mexico. Asi como un grupo de Seminaristas que se preparan para ser ordenados como sacerdotes en el futuro proximo.

Fue un evento impresionante lo que me hace pensar que nuestra fe Catolica esta viva en nuestra gente. Yo podria asegurar que esta Ordenacion fue tambien una evangelizacion y un acto del amor de Dios a nuestra gente que sige teniendo la necesidad y el hambre de conocer a Dios mas profundamente.

Yo pienso que no solo para mi sino que para todos aquellos que fueron testigos de esta Ordenacion nos llevamos en nuestros corazones la afirmacion de que Cristo vive entre su pueblo y que en este acto fuimos renovados por el Espiritu Santo.

El pueblo de Dios recibe a el Padre Emilio Sosa en nuestros corazones y con los brazos abiertos.

Sigamos trabajando y orando para mas vocaciones que Dios siempre escucha la necesidad de Su pueblo.

Que Dios nos siga bendiciendo a todos y cada uno de sus hijos e hijas.

Su hermano en Cristo y Nuestra madre Maria.

Nation/Vatican

Pope says Bible helps youths through dark times, deceit

By Carol Glatz
Catholic News Service

VATICAN CITY — The Bible should be the constant companion of young people so that it can help them navigate through life's dark moments and past the deceit and erroneous ideas present in today's world, Pope Benedict XVI said in his message for World Youth Day.

Reading, studying and meditating on the word of God would help young people get to know Jesus and help them live "a life of consistent fidelity to Christ and his teachings," the pope said.

"I urge you to become familiar with the Bible and to have it at hand so that it can be your compass pointing out the road to follow," the pope said in his message, dated Feb. 22 and released Feb. 27.

The theme of the XXI World Youth Day message is "Your Word Is a Lamp to My Feet and a Light to My Path," a passage chosen by Pope Benedict from the psalms. Celebrations this year will be held April 9, Palm Sunday, on the diocesan level.

The pope urged young people to love and be faithful to the word of God and the church.

Just as a jewelry box keeps a precious gem safe for successive generations, the

church has been the depository safeguarding Jesus' word of salvation, he said.

"Without the church, this pearl runs the risk of being lost or destroyed," the pope said.

He urged young people to "love the word of God and love the church, and this will give you access to a treasure of very great value and will teach you how to appreciate its richness."

The church's mission is to show people the way to true happiness in a world "where people are often held captive by the current ways of thinking," he said.

While some people may think they are

free by being rid of God and his laws, "they are being led astray and become lost amid the errors or illusions of aberrant ideologies," he said.

"The darkness in which humankind is groping needs to be illuminated," he said, and "the lamp that dispels the darkness of fear and lights up the path even when times are most difficult" is God's loving presence through his word.

The world urgently needs a new generation of apostles who have built their lives on Christ and who accept the word with joy and put its teachings into practice, he said.

SRO Masses sign of shifting NOLA population

By Peter Finney Jr.
Catholic News Service

NEW ORLEANS — In a post-Katrina world marked by massive population shifts in the New Orleans area, the term "television Mass" has a new meaning.

Unlike the TV ministry provided to shut-ins who cannot attend Mass, St. Luke the Evangelist Parish in Slidell offers a closed-circuit video feed to bring Mass to about 100 people in a community adjacent to the main church who cannot fit inside its 550-seat worship space.

The community room is set up with folding chairs and has glass doors that people can use to enter to receive Communion. A sound system and television set provide the liturgy live "so that the people are participating in the Mass and hearing and seeing everything that goes on," said Father Rodney Bourg, St. Luke pastor.

Slidell is north of New Orleans and near the north shore of Lake Pontchartrain. And like most other north shore parishes, St. Luke has experienced a 22 percent increase in Mass attendance in

the last several months as displaced residents from various parts of New Orleans have migrated north to find temporary or permanent homes.

St. Luke currently offers five weekend Masses, and Father Bourg said three of the four Sunday Masses are standing room only.

"In the beginning we were worried that we might have to add a second Mass at the same time," Father Bourg told the Clarion Herald, archdiocesan newspaper. "We haven't done that yet, but that's the next option."

At Mary Queen of Peace in

Mandeville, Father Ronald Calkins said while the parish officially had registered 150 new families in the four months after Katrina he knows there are many new churchgoers who have not yet registered.

"We are definitely seeing a lot more people in church," he said.

A common experience among north shore pastors, Father Calkins said, is that each week the congregation seems to be dotted with different people.

At right, people crowd into a cry room to celebrate Mass in Slidell, La.



With naming of two new cardinals, U.S. contingent will number 15

By Cindy Wooden
Catholic News Service

VATICAN CITY — After the March 24 consistory for the creation of new cardinals, 15 of the 193 members of the College of Cardinals will be from the United States.

Pope Benedict XVI expanded the U.S. contingent in the college Feb. 22 when he announced he would give the red hat to Archbishop William J. Levada, prefect of the Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith and former archbishop of San Francisco, and to Archbishop Sean P. O'Malley of Boston.

After the consistory, the U.S. contingent will be second in size only to the Italians. Of the 15 U.S. cardinals, 13 will be under age 80 and eligible to vote in a conclave to elect a new pope.

U.S. Cardinal William W. Baum, former archbishop of Washington and for-



Archbishop William J. Levada, 69, the Vatican's doctrinal chief and former San Francisco archbishop, left, and Boston Archbishop Sean P. O'Malley, 61, were named cardinals by Pope Benedict XVI Feb. 22

mer head of the Apostolic Penitentiary, a Vatican court, is the only U.S. cardinal named by Pope Paul VI.

The other U.S. cardinals under age 80 are:

- Edward M. Egan of New York.
- Francis E. George of Chicago.
- William H. Keeler of Baltimore.
- Bernard F. Law, archpriest of Rome's

Basilica of St. Mary Major and retired Archbishop of Boston.

- Roger M. Mahony of Los Angeles.
- Adam J. Maida of Detroit.
- Theodore E. McCarrick of Washington.
- Justin Rigali of Philadelphia.
- J. Francis Stafford, head of the Apostolic Penitentiary and former arch-

bishop of Denver.

● Edmund C. Szoka, president of the commission that governs Vatican City State and former archbishop of Detroit.

The two U.S. cardinals over age 80 are:

- Cardinal Anthony J. Bevilacqua, retired archbishop of Philadelphia.
- Cardinal Avery Dulles, a Jesuit theologian.



Trudo's
Religious Store

Over 70,000 items in stock!
Celebrating **25 years** serving
West Texas Catholics!

Mon-Fri
9 a.m.—6 p.m.
Saturday
9 a.m.—5 p.m.



624 West Avenue N
San Angelo, TX 76903

Out of Town? Call 800-759-1807

Rosaries, Jewelry, Statues, Crosses, Bibles, Books,
Quinceanera, Wedding and Confirmation items.
First Communion Dresses, Veils and gifts.
Habla Espanol - Phone orders are welcome!

325-653-8011
trudors@wcc.net

Why not give up TV for Lent this year?

By Mark Pattison
Catholic News Service

Lenten Dates

Wednesday, March 1 -- Ash Wednesday
Sunday, March 5 -- First Sunday of Lent
Sunday, March 12 -- Second Sunday of Lent
Sunday, March 19 -- Third Sunday of Lent
Saturday, March 25 -- Annunciation of the Lord
Sunday, March 26 -- Fourth Sunday of Lent
Sunday, April 2 -- Fifth Sunday of Lent

Sunday, April 9 -- Palm Sunday
Thursday, April 13 -- Holy Thursday
Friday, April 14 -- Good Friday
Saturday, April 15 -- Easter Vigil
Sunday, April 16 -- Easter Sunday

Sunday, April 23 -- Divine Mercy Sunday
Sunday, April 30 -- Third Sunday of Easter
Sunday, May 7 -- Fourth Sunday of Easter
Sunday, May 14 -- Fifth Sunday of Easter
Sunday, May 21 -- Sixth Sunday of Easter
Thursday, May 25 -- Ascension of the Lord
Sunday, May 28 -- Seventh Sunday of Easter
Sunday, June 4 -- Pentecost Sunday

WASHINGTON — Television is like the weather. Everybody complains about it, but nobody does anything about it. But what if the one thing that could be done about it is nothing?

You could simply turn off your TV. And keep it off. That's something the people at TV-Turnoff Network wouldn't mind if you did. The Washington-based organization picks a week, generally each spring, to unplug the tube. (This year, it's April 24-30.)

But why confine yourself to one week when you could leave it off throughout 40 days?

Lent is here. Ash Wednesday marked the arrival of Lent March 1.

Could you give up TV for Lent?

Remember that "giving up" things for Lent is not simply an exercise in self-denial. It may be admirable to give up doughnuts for Lent, but forsaking doughnuts to kick-start a diet plan as a way of catching up on some forgotten New Year's resolution wasn't what the church had in mind when it cited prayer, fasting and almsgiving as ways for Catholics to spiritually prepare themselves during Lent for Easter.

The key word is "spiritually." Can you identify ways to strengthen yourself spiritually as a result of giving up TV? What would you do in place of sitting in front of the set for hours on end on a near-daily basis? What would take the place of TV as background noise in your household?

You might have noticed that TV announced in January it was going on its own diet when the WB and UPN networks said they'd merge come September into a new network called the CW. Don't look for any local channels to go dark, though. All they need to do is find a replacement for the 30 hours of programming each week the WB gave its affiliates, or the 10 hours each week UPN gave its member stations.

Nature abhors a vacuum. So does television. TV types may not like the fact that fewer eyeballs are looking at their shows, but since they can't force you to watch there's not a thing they can do about it.

Like New Year's resolutions, it can be all too easy to grow

lax in Lenten intentions. TV is almost inherently alluring. It doesn't ask anything more of you than to watch.

And watch some more. Chris Rose, an attorney who lives in Sutton, Alaska, in an essay published in the Anchorage Daily News, cited a study by Rutgers psychologist Robert Kubey which found that millions of Americans are so hooked on TV that they fit the criteria for "substance dependence" as defined by the American Psychiatric Association's Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders.

Those symptoms include using TV as a sedative; indiscriminate viewing; feeling loss of control while viewing; feeling angry with oneself for watching too much; an inability to stop watching; and feeling miserable when kept from watching.

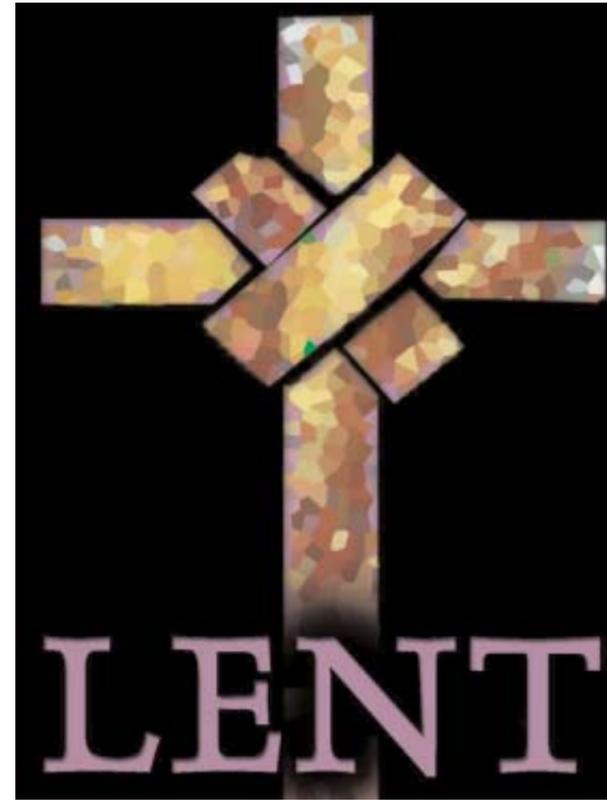
"It's really not too far of a stretch to liken people being 'on' TV with people being 'on' drugs," Rose concluded.

If you quit TV for Lent, you may be doing yourself and your family a favor.

And if you do quit, I'd like to hear your experiences. Did you have pangs of withdrawal? What did you do to slam the door on the craving? How did you occupy your time? Did you have any moments of weakness? And what did you do when Easter rolled around?

It's hardly as scientific a survey as Kubey did at Rutgers, but if it sheds more light than heat, the anecdotal evidence could be valuable.

Pattison is media editor for Catholic News Service. When you keep your eye on TV, what do you see? What are your likes or dislikes? What are your concerns and criticisms? Be as general or as specific as you wish. Send your comments to: Mark Pattison, Media Editor, Catholic News Service, 3211 Fourth St. N.E., Washington, DC 20017.



By Antoinette Bosco
Catholic News Service

Ever since I was just a young girl I have had a practice of trying to find what I would call "the perfect book" to read during Lent. In my younger days, that was easier because I was too ignorant and too unscathed yet by life to have any real clues to what Lent really meant. I could settle for "feel-good" religious books.

It was only after life crucified me with searing pain that I understood Lent, the dark, dry time where we are always in danger of being immobilized, stunted in our journey, haunted by an all-too-elusive God. Lent for me became yearning for an essential lifeline -- called hope.

Now every Lent I search for a book that will give me spiritual food, nourishing my hope that I'll keep moving forward on my ever-challenging spiritual journey. And this year I lucked out. I found not one book, but a trilogy, three books by author John Kirvan: "Raw Faith," "Silent Hope" and "God Hunger" (Sorin Books). From my life experiences, I could relate to what he wrote: "Our spiritual journey will not be a return to Eden, but a passage into mystery. Everywhere, in everything, in everyone, there is only God's silent, mysterious presence. The journey that begins in hunger, that is sustained by raw faith, is lived out in hope."

In each of these books, Kirvan seeks out "good company," noted spiritual writers and saints, from Simone Weil, Father Henri Nouwen and C.S. Lewis

Making Lent work for you this year

to St. Francis of Assisi, Dietrich Bonhoeffer and Dorothy Day. He takes their wisdom, added to his own, and gives us hope-filled "meditations meant for praying," as he puts it.

I could feel that this author has an overwhelming empathy for fellow humans, mirroring what he believes originates in God. As he put it, "Our true hope is in God's perfect vision of who we are and his faultless memory for the kind of creatures he made, walking monuments to imperfection." That's us! God looks on us with unconditional love. No wonder we should live with hope!

I called Kirvan to ask about his motivation in writing this trilogy, and I heard what I expected. For a generation, he has met people hurting for reasons that range from emotional trauma, debilitating illnesses and the devastation of AIDS to extreme poverty and discrimination -- all trying to sustain their lives "with almost nothing to nourish them." They may have some "leftover fast food" from childhood religious exposure, but "people are starving to death" for God, he says convincingly.

Being here, almost like a long Lent, "is life in the desert, and you just have to admit you're hungry," says Kirvan, who lets Simone Weil elaborate: "The danger is not that the soul should doubt whether there is any bread [God], but that, by a lie, it should persuade itself that it is not hungry."

Perhaps unknowingly, this author has defined Lent as I have learned it to be from my life experiences: "What counts is our willingness to go on walking when our souls ache and the vision that once fired our dreams is dim and hidden from us behind the walls of weariness."

But he moves beyond Lent, assuring us that "spirituality is about achieving a profound self-esteem, that is, coming to see ourselves as God sees us, the object of infinite love, unremitting solicitude, the bearers of God's greatest dreams for humanity." And that, I maintain, is our post-Lent legacy, given to us by Jesus on his Great Sunday.



CCC offers English, Spanish Lenten retreats on radio, Internet

WASHINGTON (CNS) — For people too busy to go on a Lenten retreat, they may want to take their retreat via the radio or the Internet.

Franciscan Radio developed a series of six half-hour programs in English and six in Spanish for the Catholic Communication Campaign, the U.S. bishops' mass-media ministry that develops media programming, projects and resources.

The CCC has made the retreat programs available to radio stations, but for those who cannot find the programs on their local stations, the series is also available on the Web at: www.radioretreat.org.

The programs, hosted by Elia Castillo, feature a bishop as a retreat guide and homilist. Different bishops were lined up for each of the English and Spanish programs, except for the Third Sunday of Lent, when Bishop Gerald R. Barnes of San Bernardino, Calif., is to deliver both the English and Spanish homilies.

Each show features a sung version of the Our Father, a song for meditations and a question-and-answer segment with the bishop on his homily theme, plus a wrap-up from host Castillo and a blessing from the bishop.

The first of the programs was to be available both over the air and on the Web Ash Wednesday, March 1. The Web site will have retreat programs archived for retreatants to catch up on any individual programs they missed.

The Web site will contain descriptions of each program, background information on the bishops, and links to other Lenten spiritual resources. The programs can be downloaded as MP3 files for podcast or personal use.

A Message from Pope Benedict: Lenten journey is 'a privileged time of interior pilgrimage'

VATICAN CITY (CNS) — Here is the text of Pope Benedict XVI's message for Lent 2006. Dated Sept. 29 and released by the Vatican Jan. 31, the text is copyright 2005 by the Libreria Editrice Vaticana.

"Jesus, at the sight of the crowds, was moved with pity" (Mt 9:36)

Dear Brothers and Sisters!

Lent is a privileged time of interior pilgrimage toward him who is the Fount of Mercy. It is a pilgrimage in which he himself accompanies us through the desert of our poverty, sustaining us on our way

toward the intense joy of Easter. Even in the "valley of darkness" of which the psalmist speaks (Ps 23:4), while the tempter prompts us to despair or to place a vain hope in the work of our own hands, God is there to guard us and sustain us. Yes, even today the Lord hears the cry of the multitudes longing for joy, peace and love. As in every age, they feel abandoned. Yet, even in the desolation of misery, loneliness, violence and hunger that indiscriminately afflicts children, adults and the elderly, God does not allow darkness to prevail. In fact, in the words of my beloved predecessor, Pope John Paul II, there is a "divine limit imposed upon evil," namely, mercy

("Memory and Identity," pp. 19ff). It is with these thoughts in mind that I have chosen as my theme for this message the Gospel text: "Jesus, at the sight of the crowds, was moved with pity" (Mt 9:36).

In this light, I would like to pause and reflect upon an issue much debated today: the question of development. Even now, the compassionate gaze of Christ continues to fall upon individuals and peoples. He watches them, knowing that the divine plan includes their call to salvation. Jesus knows the perils that put this plan at risk, and he is moved with pity for the crowds. He chooses to defend them from the wolves even at the cost of his own life. The gaze of

Jesus embraces individuals and multitudes, and he brings them all before the Father, offering himself as a sacrifice of expiation.

Enlightened by this paschal truth, the church knows that if we are to promote development in its fullness, our own gaze upon mankind has to be measured against that of Christ. In fact, it is quite impossible to separate the response to people's material and social needs from the fulfillment of the profound desires of their hearts. This has to be emphasized all the more in today's rapidly changing world, in which our responsibility toward the poor emerges with ever greater clarity and urgency. My

venerable predecessor, Pope Paul VI, accurately described the scandal of underdevelopment as an outrage against humanity. In this sense, in the encyclical, "Populorum Progressio," he denounced "the lack of material necessities for those who are without the minimum essential for life, the moral deficiencies of those who are mutilated by selfishness" and "oppressive social structures, whether due to the abuses of ownership or to the abuses of power, to the exploitation of workers or to unjust transactions" (ibid., 21). As the antidote to such evil, Paul VI suggested not only "increased esteem for the dignity of others, the turning toward the spirit of poverty, coop-

eration for the common good, the will and desire for peace," but also "the acknowledgment by man of supreme values, and of God, their source and their finality" (ibid.). In this vein, the pope went on to propose that, finally and above all, there is "faith, a gift of God accepted by the good will of man, and unity in the charity of Christ" (ibid.). Thus, the gaze of Christ upon the crowd impels us to affirm the true content of this "complete humanism" that, according to Paul VI, consists in the "fully-rounded development of the whole man and of all men" (ibid., 42).

(Please See POPE/15)

Sister Roberta gives much to troubled youth



Sister Roberta

First came her biological children. Then, the ones she has taken under her arms. Sister Roberta Thompson loves them all.

Sister Roberta, a Baptist at birth, converted to Catholicism at 24. She married, had children and, following her "unfortunate divorce," she took her vows to the church as a Clinical Pastoral Educator. That turning point in her life ultimately led her to serving youth that are troubled and in juvenile correctional facilities in West Texas.

In fact, Sister Roberta, 76, has been ministering to the juveniles in the San Angelo area for nearly 10 years. She is able to drive, but needs a walker to get around and uses oxygen to help her breathe. Sister Roberta's friend Madeline Seidel helps and wheels her around in a wheelchair for her service. Sister Roberta teaches the Catechism and prepares youths for receiving the sacraments. She goes to the Texas Youth Commission (TYC) facility in Bronte every week, even receiving a recent honor by the facility's owner, GEO, for her contributions. She also brought Catholic education and Christianity to the offenders at the Roy Robb facility in San Angelo before it was shut down as a youth facility.

"We teach the Catechism and the fundamentals of the Catholic faith and many of the young men have been baptized," Sister Roberta said. "They are always perfect gentlemen when we see them. I wear my habit there for official occasions, and I think they respect that. And I think they look at Madeline and me as their grandmothers and they take to us."

Sister Roberta's three grown children include Linda Maher who lives with her husband Dr. Roger Maher in Kansas City; the couple has 10 children. Buddy, a prison guard, and his wife, Martha, live in Calif., and David and his wife Nancy live in San Angelo. All tolled, she has 31 grandchildren and great grandchildren.

-- Jimmy Patterson

Ask Fr. Webster ...

The hows and whys of fasting

Q. Every Lent we are told about the "power of fasting," or that we should fast and pray about a particular problem. I know the rules about fast days, but can you explain more about why people fast and how? (Indiana)



Fr. Webster

A. Interestingly, fasting of some sort is observed by adherents of nearly every religion in the world. It takes many forms, perhaps total restraint from food and drink for a whole day or more, or "one full meal" with occasional snacks, or anywhere in between.

There are numerous valid and "practical" reasons people fast: to withdraw occasionally from one's normal intake of food and drink, to feel more alert and healthier, to sleep better, to lose weight, to gain self-control and so on.

Whatever else it may be, however, from the Christian perspective fasting is above all a religious act that puts people in better touch with God. It is a unique way of expressing praise, love, hope and faith in God, of keeping ourselves open to the Lord's continual desire to fashion us

in the image of Jesus Christ, into the complete human beings we were created to become.

The renowned second-century theologian St. Irenaeus wrote that God shaped us and continues to do so. Our job is to offer the Creator a heart that is soft and malleable. Let the clay be moist, he says, so we don't grow hard and lose the imprint of his fingers.

A major challenge with fasting, as with all practices of self-denial, is that they can become mere external formalities, an end in themselves, and lose touch with their spiritual implications.

The prophet Isaiah once described how the people complained because they fasted faithfully but God didn't seem to notice (Chapter 58). God's reply was that they fasted, but then they quarreled and fought, they were selfish and cheated each other.

"This rather is the fasting I want," he said: Free the oppressed, share bread with the hungry, shelter the homeless and don't turn your backs on each other. Then, said God, people will fast and he will listen. Marvelous words to reflect on during this Lent!

Food and drink are one of the great treasures of our lives. They are blessings God obviously wants us to enjoy intensely. One of the great motives for fasting, therefore, is the

one we find presented most often in the Scriptures. It is a way of responding to God's persistent flirting to get our attention, of telling God we're really serious about what we pray for, whether the prayer is praise and worship, asking some favor, giving thanks or any other intention.

Some relatively recent and excellent books about fasting are on the market. One of them is "Fasting Rediscovered," by Paulist Father Thomas Ryan (Paulist Press). He tells how in the Old Testament God falls all over himself to convince his people that he is there to give them what they need; they respond by telling God in this way how urgent are their wants.

Father Ryan describes how his father used to ride his bicycle around the block where his mother lived, hoping to get a glimpse of her through the window. Our sense of God, he says, must be like what his mother felt. She knew he was out there circling, watching, hoping. When she went to the window, she knew he would know her, would listen to her concerns and would make a loving response.

As Father Ryan says: "Fasting is sending God a message. He's very good about answering his mail." That is something people of faith who fast often already know.

The Human Side

Green people: eccentric, yes, but visionary, too

By Father Eugene Hemrick
Catholic News Service

When my sisters informed me that I was a "green person," I didn't know what they were talking about. "The day you bought your Prius hybrid car is the day you became a green person," they told me.

Basically, a green person believes in conservation. It is also a person who grows his or her own food, recycles glass bottles and aluminum cans, and pushes the cause of conservation, preservation and healthy living.

One of my sisters described a green person who showed up at a lecture on conservation as "coming into the room wearing cycling shoes, tights, shirt and backpack, eating a banana and drinking Gatorade."



Fr. Hemrick

Although green people can sometimes be eccentric, they speak to the need for a new consciousness in American life. In purchasing a Toyota Prius, I became much more aware of how unaware we are when it comes to wasting gasoline.

The first day I drove my Prius to work, I thought it had malfunctioned. When I stopped at a red light, it suddenly went dead silent. In actuality, I learned that every time the car stops for more than a few seconds, the motor shuts down, and then it starts up as soon as the brake is released.

After discovering this, I began to notice how many stoplights I sit at while going to and from work, and how long they are. Some take as long as a minute. I also learned that I probably spend five to 15 minutes sitting at stoplights daily. Add this up over a month and it comes to hours worth of burning gasoline while not moving.

I likewise became aware of how many times I find myself stopped and waiting in a lane behind someone trying to make a turn.

These observations taught me that time, energy and pollution are closely connected. A motor at rest during waiting time equals no gas consumption and no fouling of the air.

Interestingly, I also became more aware of the energy that is saved by allowing people to make right turns at stoplights. On the other hand, I'm now much more aware that gridlock during rush hours wastes gasoline and contributes to pollution.

Pondering all of this, I began to see the need for mass transportation and especially the need for light-rail trains. Even though a light-rail train makes several stops along its route, it is far less prone to being stuck in traffic, it doesn't emit pollution and it transports more people on less energy.

Whether we ever will give up our love affair with automobiles is questionable. They not only represent status, but independence.

One thing that isn't questionable is that energy-savers like hybrid cars make us all the more aware of how wasteful we are.

DIOCE-SCENES



Rev. Bernardito Getigan, parish priest at St. Lawrence (above photo at right) sprinkles holy water on a statue of St. Mark, which was dedicated in memory of Deacon Mark Reeh, who died of cancer Feb. 20, 2005. At left, deacons Reuben Reyes of Ft. Stockton and Deacon Paul Hinojos of Odessa, process in carrying the statue.



St. Margaret of Cortona in Big Lake welcomed the Pilgrim Virgin Statue of Our Lady of Fatima on February 13. The statue was brought to Big Lake by its custodian Carl Malburg and his assistant, Charles Urban.

In the photos above, parishioners are seen processing from the parish hall to the church (top) and inside the church, led by Rev. Hilary Ihedioha.

Our Lady of Fatima statue comes to Abilene's Sacred Heart

Submitted by Catherine Clarke

ABILENE -- "Awesome" was the word Sacred Heart parishioner Vicci King used to describe the ceremony celebrating Our Lady's visit to Sacred Heart Catholic Church in Abilene. Approximately 400 people came to see the International Pilgrim Statue of Our Lady of Fatima and to honor Our Blessed Mother. Among this large crowd of people were the Guadalupanas from the St. Francis parish in Abilene, the Legion of Mary from Sacred Heart and St. Vincent, and the Knights of Columbus.

The ceremony took place Sunday, February 5th at 6 P.M. Before the ceremony began, the Statue of Our Lady of Fatima was welcomed with a procession, beginning in front of the church. Throughout the ceremony, the choir, consisting of members from the Abilene parishes, led the congregation in Marian and Adoration hymns in four languages. The Custodian of the Statue, Carl Malburg, spoke about the Peace Plan Mother Mary revealed to the children at Fatima, in which she called for offering reparation for sin through prayer and penance. The Blessed Sacrament was

exposed during the ceremony for adoration. People had the opportunity to receive a Brown Scapular. Father Bob Bush led the congregation in the Rosary as well as the Acts of Consecration to the Immaculate Heart of Mary and to the Sacred Heart of Jesus and the Litany of Loreto.

Following the benediction, the Statue was carried in a procession to the Perpetual Adoration Chapel of Sacred Heart of Jesus. The chapel was quickly packed with people serenading Our Lady. The Statue remained in the Adoration Chapel until noon on Monday, February 6th and was then taken to Ballinger.

The Statue of Our Lady, sculpted in 1947, has traveled to over 100 countries, including Russia and China. It was truly a blessing that the Statue was brought to Abilene and that so many people were able to encounter the message of Fatima. "Jesus will always bless those who honor His Mother," said Mr. Malburg, while outside the Adoration Chapel.

For more information on the Statue, visit www.pilgrimvirginstatue.com. Sources: Melczek, D.J., Most Reverend. "Our Lady of Fatima: Our Mother Comes to Us" Pilgrim Virgin Committee website www.pilgrimvirginstatue.com.

FAMILY

From the Easy Chair

When God takes a loved one, he gives us grace in return

This whole death thing has me a bit confused on the one hand; a lot sad on the other hand, and, if I had a third hand, I suppose I'd be astonished, really, at what death teaches us amid the sadness.

Mother Teresa said once that the only hands Jesus Christ has on earth are yours and mine. Perhaps it is at the hour of our death, or the deaths of our loved ones when the Hand of Christ is at work for us so tirelessly.

Death is so very blessed an event for those who go ahead of us to their forever home.

It's for the survivors that death is so difficult. But it is during this time when we are showered with God's grace.

Certainly my father is having and will for a long time have difficulty dealing



Patterson

with being without his wife of 59 years. Yet as loneliness seeps in, so, too flows the work of God. The grace. A son and his wife who move in across the street from Dad -- on the very December day Mama goes into the hospital for her final 18 days; a daughter and her husband who give so much time taking care to make sure Dad spends as few lonely minutes as possible.

That's God's grace.

So, too, is what happened the week of Mama's death. Certainly we were all saddened at her passing. Puzzled at why she had to suffer so much for so long. Yet, there our family was, together like few other times. Talking, laughing, crying, sharing. We don't have many problems in our family. We've been fortunate. To be able to share in our sorrow, remember stories about Mama ... that's God's grace at work.

During her funeral, I was privileged to be able to say a few words about her life. It was both difficult and necessary. People needed to remember the stories about her. Laugh, cry, love, cry, remember.

As I stood there talking about her, I looked to my right into the congregation and saw an old friend I hadn't seen in six or seven years. She had driven in about 30 miles to offer support.

Then I looked to the middle section of the church and saw a friend from high school and her husband. They had driven 250 miles from near Houston. I smiled a little more.

Then I looked over to the left and saw my two best friends from high school. We haven't seen each other -- the three of us together --- in probably 10 years. One of them had driven in from Plano. The other flew to Dallas from Denver.

In front of them sat my best friend from Midland. He got in his truck at 5 o'clock that morning and drove 325 miles.

I was amazed. Seeing these people who had given so much of their time to make such a long journey. It spoke so highly not only of them, but of God's grace.

I am a lucky man. For many reasons. To have friends so giving gave me an

appreciation for friendship I'm afraid I've never had in my life until now.

I had so much joy that these people would make these sacrifices that it gave me one other reassurance: my friends and all of our family members who could not make it to Mama's funeral -- *they were really there*. They were there in spirit even if they couldn't be there in body. And there were so many of them, we would've needed Joel Osteen's great big Houston church to fit them all in.

My Dad will be OK. He will make it. He will be lonely. He will spend hours in a quiet house. But he will be OK.

Because he is showered with the care of those near him, and with God's grace, which is all around him. God didn't take without giving. When Mama left this earth to be with God, in return, God bestowed upon Dad and all of his family His unending grace.

Jimmy Patterson is editor of the Angelus.

Your Family

'That's not fair!' ... no, that's life

By Bill and Monica Dodds
Catholic News Service

No one sounds more indignant than a child declaring, "That's not fair!" We all said it when we were little. We all still think it even though we're big.

How can such an obvious truth be such a hard lesson? How is it we're surprised -- disappointed and miffed - when a small unfairness crops up? How is it we're shocked - devastated and, at times, seething -- when a huge unfairness hits us?

A small one? We're the one who gets pulled over for speeding when every other car on that stretch of highway was going just as fast. Or faster. A huge one? Still seemingly in the prime of his or her life, someone we dearly love now faces a terminal illness. Or we're given that diagnosis.

Why me? Why someone close to me? There are no answers that satisfy. Yes, there is the relationship



Bill & Monica Dodds

between original sin and the suffering that has followed but, no, unlike the people of biblical times we don't think every calamity is brought on by our sins or the sins of our parents.

This year Lent starts March 1. If you're still considering how you might mark this liturgical season, consider cracking open your Bible. Go to the Old Testament and find the Book of Job. The first of the "wisdom books," it's just before the Book of Psalms.

As the introduction in the New American Bible notes: "The Book of Job, named after its protagonist [main character], is an exquisite dramatic poem" that looks at "the problem of the suffering of the innocent."

Its opening line lets you know that Job was "a blameless and upright man" who "feared God and avoided evil." And what happened to him? No fair!

Parents Aren't Fair

In one sense, parenting is never fair because it can't be. We moms and dads can love our children equally but that doesn't mean we spend the same amount of time, energy and money on each of them. Nor should we.

Some children -- those with special needs, for example -- typically take more of a parent's time and attention. Those with particular conditions - teeth that need braces, for instance - take more money.

One pitfall of parenting is to focus so much on a child who needs those extras that we begin to overlook the others. They, of course, have needs too. Most of all, they need "us."

They need that one-on-one time and attention when it's "just Mom and me" or "just Dad and me." That's a real treat not just for the child but the parent. And parents should get to have some fun, too. It's only fair.

Counting Your Blessings

There's an old song about counting blessings instead of sheep. When we really think about it, that's a long list, isn't it?

God has given us incredible gifts. He's sprinkled our lives with incredible people. And, most fundamentally, he's created us because he loves us with an infinite and unceasing love, and invites us to spend eternity with him.

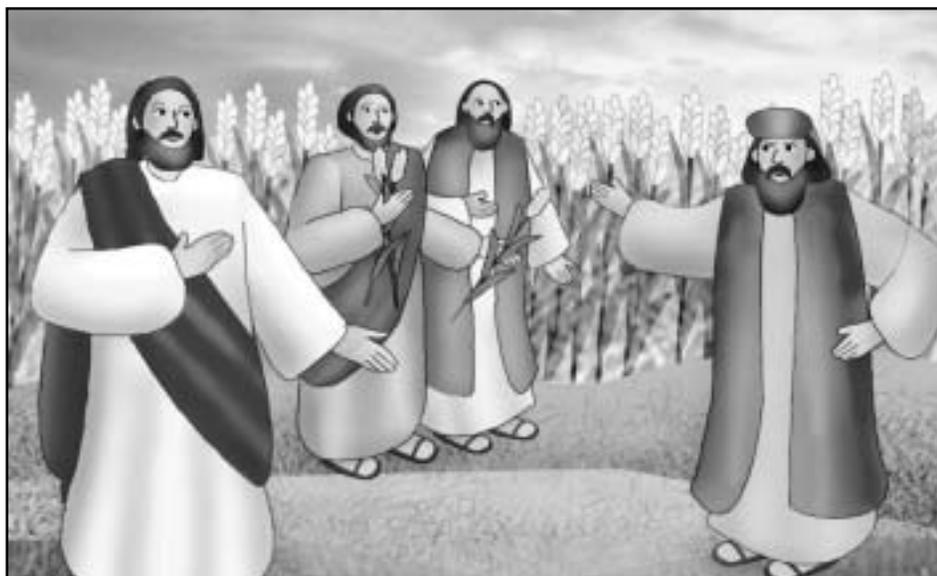
God wasn't fair when it came to his gift-giving. There's no way we deserve what he offers us.



© 2006 CNS

Answers

- | | |
|-------------|------------|
| 1. John; | 5. David; |
| 2. Mary; | 6. Joshua; |
| 3. Solomon; | 7. Isaiah. |
| 4. Adam; | |



Jesus teaches others about fasting

In spite of the miracles of healing he performed and his wise explanations of the Scriptures, Jesus would occasionally find people who wanted to challenge his words and deeds. Some of them came to Jesus and asked him a question. "Why do the disciples of John and the disciples of the Pharisees fast, but your disciples do not fast?"

Jesus answered the way he often answered questions, not with a direct answer, but with an illustration. "Can the wedding guests fast while the bridegroom is with them? As long as they have the bridegroom with them they cannot fast. But the days will come when the bridegroom is taken away from them, and then they will fast on that day."

The questioners looked at Jesus and at each other. They were not sure exactly what Jesus was trying to tell them. So Jesus gave them another example. "No one sews a piece of unshrunk cloth on an old cloak. If he does, its fullness pulls away, the new from the old, and the tear gets worse.

"Likewise, no one pours new wine into old wineskins. Otherwise, the wine will burst the skins, and both the wine

and the skins are ruined. Rather, new wine is poured into fresh wineskins."

With that, Jesus left without saying anything more. But people with questions continued to watch him. As he was walking through a field of grain on the Sabbath day, his disciples made a path by picking the heads of the grain.

The Pharisees, who saw this, thought that it violated the law against working on the Sabbath day. So they said to Jesus, "Look, why are they doing what is unlawful on the Sabbath?"

Jesus spoke very plainly to them, using an example from the Scriptures. "Have you never read what David did when he was in need and he and his companions were hungry? How he went into the house of God when Abiathar was high priest and ate the bread of offering that only the priests could lawfully eat, and shared it with his companions?"

Jesus knew that the Pharisees were very familiar with the story of David that was recorded in the writings of Samuel. He continued speaking. "The Sabbath was made for man, not man for the Sabbath. That is why the Son of Man is lord even of the Sabbath."

JUST 4 KIDS

READ MORE ABOUT IT:

Mark 2

Q&A

1. Why were the Pharisees angry with the disciples?
2. What did Jesus say about the Sabbath day?

BIBLE ACCENT

We know about the life and ministry of Jesus from the four Gospels: Matthew, Mark, Luke and John.

Jesus set the perfect example for us to follow. He showed love and compassion for everyone he met. He even performed miracles, yet there were people who were jealous of him and wanted to harm him. Jesus died because of his love for us, and he sent the Holy Spirit on the day of Pentecost to help us.

Jesus inspired spiritual men to write letters and other records. Some of them have been collected as part of the New Testament. These are the epistles, or letters, of Paul, Peter, James and others.

When we have questions about our faith, we can ask our parents, our religious-education teachers and our pastors. God wants us to understand how much he loves us.

SPOTLIGHT ON SAINTS St. Alexander

Alexander served as the bishop of Alexandria, located in northern Egypt. He devoted his life to studying the Scriptures, preaching and caring for the poor.

One of the greatest challenges he encountered was the heresy of a man named Arius, who was teaching lies about the existence

of God and the holiness of Jesus. Alexander tried to be nice to Arius and gently correct him, but Arius wouldn't listen.

The bishop had to call Arius before an assembly of clergymen, similar to a legal hearing. Arius argued with the assembly and was excommunicated. A second hearing was held by another council of clergy, and the excommunication was upheld.

The matter was brought before the Council of Nicaea and a representative of Pope St. Silvester. Arius was found guilty of heresy and banished from the empire. This is considered a triumph of the faith of Alexander.

Alexander died in the year 326, and we remember him on Feb. 26.

BIBLE TRIVIA

The Pharisees asked Jesus about fasting. What is fasting?

Answer: Going without food or drink for a purpose.

PUZZLE

Fill in the blanks with names that correctly answer the questions. Not all names on the list will be used.

Mary	Joshua
Peter	Michael
John	Adam
Isaiah	David
Solomon	Philip

1. One of the Gospels.
2. Jesus' earthly mother.
3. A wise king.
4. The first man.
5. He wrote many psalms.
6. He conquered Jericho.
7. An important prophet.

Coming of Age

Two failures, then a success ... how life often works for many of us

By M. Regina Cram
Catholic News Service

OK, here's the scene. You're strolling around a sprawling oceanfront estate that once belonged to President Calvin Coolidge. The spectacular views of the Atlantic Ocean are not the focus, however, for today is graduation day -- nursery school graduation day, to be specific. Folding chairs are neatly arranged for

adoring parents and grandparents to watch as their little darlings put on a special performance. I'm the pipsqueak cowering in the back.

My job was to recite a poem to the audience. According to my parents, I perfectly memorized the poem, and for weeks I'd wandered around the house practicing it. I'm pretty sure I drove them crazy.

So the big day came. I walked to center stage, took one look out at the hushed

crowd -- and I bawled. No amount of coaxing would quiet me down. Still bawling, I was dragged off the stage in shame.

I was a failure, at 4 years old.

The following year I was given a speaking role in the kindergarten Christmas pageant. Once again, parents gathered for what promised to be a spectacular entertainment. Once again I bravely walked onto the stage, opened my mouth, and started to cry -- and cried and cried. The

teacher had to haul me off the stage in disgrace.

Another failure.

In first grade, my teacher was not about to allow another disastrous performance, so before the big day she pulled me aside. "Now Regina," she said in her sternest voice, "I heard that you cried in nursery school and in kindergarten. You're not going to do

(Please See YOUTH/15)

FR. ART: Filipino priest uses humor, song in Mass celebrations

(From 1)

West Texas Catholic circles, spending time serving all four Midland parishes, most recently at OLSJ following the death a year ago of the Rev. Tom Kelley.

Pestín says he “gets bored” if he doesn’t crack religious jokes to liven up his homilies, or sermons.

“I love to sing a few lines to keep people awake and interested in what the joke is all about. I love to see people smile and enjoy life,” he said.

Pestín’s emotions were quite different on the night he turned 18 in the Philippines. He can still point to a specific day and time, and the vividness of a dream that changed his life forever.

“After graduating from high school, I enrolled to be an engineer (in the Philippines) and was planning to pursue aeronautics,” Pestín said. “From childhood until after graduation from high school I did not have the plan to be a priest. But I had a dream on September 28, 1973, my birthday.”

Pestín, 18 at the time, said that in the dream, visions of both Christ and the Virgin Mary appeared, apparently, as it turns out, nudging him toward a life in

the church.

“I was sitting by the window at midnight, listening to music when suddenly I found myself in the middle of a church, dark and quiet, digging for treasure,” he remembered. “I found a bronze crucifix and when I held it up there suddenly came a meteor-like fire with blinding light and it hit the altar. It exploded like a big light but with no sound.”

From there, Pestín said a vision of Mary descended and motioned for him. He said he thought he was going to die that night. Later in the dream, Pestín said he felt Jesus’ hand on his shoulder. Three times in the dream, Pestín said Jesus asked for his help and three times Pestín answered yes.

“(I woke up and) I found myself with half of my body outside the window with the full moon just above me,” Pestín said, “I checked my face, my shirt and it was drenched with tears. I had actually cried in the dream.”

Pestín came to Midland in March 1998 with permission from his superior in the Philippines on the assumption he would be here for a year. He was called home in 2000 but Bishop Michael Pfeifer, of the Diocese of San Angelo, requested he be

allowed to stay on longer.

He moved to St. Ann’s in 1999, where he “worked with many generous people” and soon-to-be Midland mayor Mike Canon, then president of the parish council. Pestín received a summons home in 2000 and again in 2003. Both times, he remained here. In 2004 he began service at a church in Odessa. In addition to his duties at all four Midland Catholic churches and at St. Joseph and St. Anthony churches, and St. Martin de Porras Mission in Odessa, he has been assigned to parishes in Stanton and Lenora and has also been Sacramental Minister at Midland Memorial Hospital.

After a five-month stay in the Philippines in ’04, Pestín was allowed to return to West Texas, a place he loved so much he spent the leave he was awarded for having served 25 years as a Dominican priest working here. Pestín reported to St. Stephen’s in Midland where he became pastoral associate for the Rev. James Bridges. He was at St. Stephen’s for six months and returned to the Philippines where he again received permission from a new superior to return to Midland.

He arrived Feb. 21, 2005, the day

Kelley died, and received orders to become the pastoral administrator at Our Lady of San Juan, where he has served until hearing of the need for him to return home yet again.

“I love working with our people on the south side,” Pestín said.

The United States has given much to Pestín, including an even greater love of food -- his favorite dish is actually one his mother used to make him: steamed rice topped with raw egg -- and an almost insatiable appetite for golf.

“A few months after I arrived here, a friend gave me a set of golf clubs,” Pestín said. “I started hitting balls. My best score is 75. I hope to lower it sooner or later.”

He has loved his time in West Texas, but says the promises he made to God soon after his dream must supersede his desire to stay here. He leaves in mid-March for the Philippines.

“I am a Dominican priest and by virtue of my vow of obedience I must obey God through my superiors,” Pestín said. “I have to go back home. As Jesus puts it in a very trustful way: ‘Not my will, Father. By Yours be done.’”

GULLY: Prefers older music taught at course

(From 1)

auditing at UT-Permian Basin’s satellite learning center at the brand new Community Center in Andrews.

“I was interested in this interactive TV and how it worked in a class and with those things together the opportunity was there,” Gully said. “I registered and am auditing a course (taking a class, but not for credit and with no testing) on music history, and it’s three hours a week. Since it’s right here and it’s only an hour a day for three days it’s rather convenient.

Fr. Gully said the course provides study of the more historical forms of the art, from

Gregorian chant, to 16th-18th century opera. And he says it is fascinating.

Gully says he’s doubtful the course will bring him all the way to current music -- and likely prefers it that way.

“One act I’m not fond of and had never heard of is the Rolling Stones,” he said. “I was watching the Super Bowl part time while also watching ‘Monk,’ and I would switch back and forth, and I also had my closed-caption on and all the words Mick Jagger was singing were written on the TV and I could see what he was saying in addition to all the gyrations, and it was highly suggestive to say the least.”

PATTERSON: Man’s outlook is inspiring

(From 2)

joy in all circumstances. They see me in other ways, too. Some days I tell myself have a bad day and I tell everyone to leave me alone, that I’m gonna have a bad day all day, and I tell myself. And I get it out of my system and the next day it’s back to happiness and joy.

“Death is part of life and it’s coming. The more you talk about it the easier it will be when it comes. When I die I’ll

have it made. “We’re all dying. Some just a little faster than others.”

(Editor’s Note: View Jay Ewing’s comments about living with Lou Gehrig’s disease. Click on www.mywesttexas.tv. At the menu, select Jay Ewing.)

Jimmy Patterson is Director of Communications for the Diocese of San Angelo.

BISHOP: To understand reconciliation, humbly stand before Christ on cross

(From 1)

the need to take advantage of those times when opportunities seem to be running at high tide. The most significant tides in our spiritual lives are the times grace is being offered to us in abundance. Lent is one of those special spiritual high tide times, and it flows in on us with a flood of grace that our God is offering for us to accept the gift of forgiveness, conversion, and reconciliation.

The work of reconciliation is not easy, and it takes time, it takes effort, but most of all it takes grace—and it takes the mercy and forgiveness of God. God’s grace and mercy are there for the asking. Lent is a grace-filled time for us to accept the grace that is being offered to us by our merciful God and to change our lives,

and where necessary, to give up sinful practices, to change negative patterns of thinking and acting, and to take on the mind and heart of Christ.

In the Ash Wednesday reading, Paul stresses that God’s grace is being offered to us now, and now is the time for us to receive it and to act on the grace that is before us. “Behold, now is a very acceptable time; behold, now is the day of salvation.”

During our Lenten journey, we need to take time to quietly and humbly stand before the crucified Christ on the cross, to understand how to be reconciled to God, to one another, and to receive that reconciliation—that peace and tranquility—that we all want for our hearts. We need to come to a new understanding of the mystery of suffering, the redemptive meaning

Christ brought to suffering. . . Suffering is an integral part of our faith life. With every painful moment that we endure, we have the crucifix of Jesus before us, who shows us the way and give us the strength to carry our crosses. We are reminded that at the end of our journey of suffering and sacrifice awaits us victory and glory that is promised to all of us by Christ.

To help us enter more deeply into the Lenten mystery of reconciliation, we also need to reflect seriously on the inspired words of God given to us by the Prophet Joel in the First Reading of Ash Wednesday.

“Even now, says the Lord, return to me with your whole heart, with fasting, and weeping, and mourning. Rend your hearts, not your garments, and return to the Lord, your God. For gracious and

merciful is he, slow to anger, rich in kindness, and relenting in punishment... Then the Lord was stirred to concern for his land and took pity on his people.”

During the Lenten season, we recall the main theme of the Year of Reconciliation for our Diocese which is the Sacrament of Reconciliation and Penance, the Sacrament of Confession. This is a wonderful moment to study the Church’s teaching about this Sacrament of God’s mercy. The Lenten season is the time to continue or re-establish the practice of frequent Confession which is the great sacramental way of reconciling us to God, and to our neighbor. The grace of this wonderful Sacrament helps us to overcome sin and those obstacles and temptations that present barriers to achieving the reconciling grace that Christ wants for each one of us.

CHASTITY: Catholic schools stress value of remaining chaste

(From 3)

Also, it is very important that we have a trusted friend and director with whom we can share about our struggles and receive guidance. To live holy and chaste lives, we also need the support of the Christian community. Many persons and groups have roles in educating children and young people and adults in chastity. The need for such education is greater than ever today because of the miseducation in unchastity that American children and young people receive from so many other sources.

Parents should teach their children from an early age that chastity is to be prized and cherished and that unchaste behavior

is sinful and separates us from God. Parents must, of course, be models of chaste behavior themselves. They can help their children develop self-mastery by cautioning them against unchaste thoughts and immodest behavior, and by selecting good entertainment for them, and by denying them access to movies, TV shows, internet sites, and other sources of lewdness and pornography that leads to unchaste behavior.

Catholic parents have a grave obligation to see that their children learn and practice their faith, and that they be given a true proper understanding of the beautiful gift of human sexuality. In the present unhealthy cultural environment, faith and virtuous behavior cannot be taken for granted.

Our parishes and Catholic schools and religious education programs are obliged to support and reinforce the teaching of our Catholic Church, and to help our parents teach and form their children in the essential virtue of chastity. Like responsible parents, teachers face a serious task, given the fact that children are bombarded with enticements to be unchaste, and perhaps many have hardly heard the word, chastity, much less learn what it means and how to live out this virtue.

My brother priests need to speak the truth about human sexuality and sexual sins in our homilies and in our teaching. In our homilies, our priest need to stress the importance of the virtue of chastity in the life of every human being, and espe-

cially point out the means that God gives us to live chaste lives in a happy, holy and healthy way.

Among the Saints, we have many examples of heroic ways of living the virtue of chastity. However, we all need to take the Blessed Virgin Mary, our Mother, as our model and guide. As the Second Vatican Council remarked, Mary "preserves with virginal purity an integral faith, a firm hope and a sincere charity." Her special spiritual fruitfulness comes from purity and openness to the Father's will. By imitating her, we, too, can be spiritually fruitful.

(Some thoughts taken from the Pastoral Letter "Chastity," by Bishop Joseph Martino)

YOUTH: Fear of public speaking stunted writer early

(From 13)

that this year, are you?"

I was outraged. How could she think that I, a sophisticated 6-year-old, would do such a thing?

And I didn't. As I remember, I was awesome.

Two failures, then a success. How often life works this way.

Fortunately, failures in childhood do not necessarily translate to failures in the teen

years. Brilliant child that I was, I flunked traffic signals when I was in kindergarten. (I really was a loser, wasn't I?) For years afterward, I thought that meant I never would be allowed to get my driver's license. I'm happy to report that I did, in fact, get a license, and I'm a pretty good driver, despite what everyone says about me.

But back to that public speaking thing. In junior high I wanted to run for student council, but I chickened out because it involved giving a speech to all my class-

mates. I hadn't forgotten my preschool fiascos and couldn't guarantee it wouldn't happen again.

The funny thing is that as an adult my work involves giving speeches, and I actually enjoy it. The transformation started in high school when I did some volunteer work with a small group of junior high girls. That was easy, so I did a little more speaking in college, then still more in my first job. After awhile I was fine in front of any size group. I even liked it.

But do you think my family will forget my preschool failures? Fat chance. They insist on showing home movies of me sobbing on my first day of kindergarten, wearing a poofy dress and being nearly carried inside by the teacher. You'd cry too if you had to wear a poofy dress!

But I have great ammunition to get back at my family. I simply threaten to tell loser stories about them in my next speech.

Sweet.

POPE: Lent's integral salvation points us toward Christ

(From 9)

For this reason, the primary contribution that the church offers to the development of mankind and peoples does not consist merely in material means or technical solutions. Rather, it involves the proclamation of the truth of Christ, who educates consciences and teaches the authentic dignity of the person and of work; it means the promotion of a culture that truly responds to all the questions of humanity.

In the face of the terrible challenge of poverty afflicting so much of the world's population, indifference and self-centered isolation stand in stark contrast to the gaze of Christ. Fasting and almsgiving, which, together with prayer, the church proposes in a special way during the Lenten season, are suitable means for us to become conformed to this gaze. The examples of the saints and the long history of the church's missionary activity provide invaluable indications of the most effective ways to support development. Even in this era of global interdependence, it is clear that no economic, social or political project can replace that gift of self to another through which charity is expressed. Those who act according to the logic of the Gospel live

the faith as friendship with God Incarnate and, like him, bear the burden of the material and spiritual needs of their neighbors. They see it as an inexhaustible mystery, worthy of infinite care and attention. They know that he who does not give God gives too little; as Blessed Teresa of Calcutta frequently observed, the worst poverty is not to know Christ. Therefore, we must help others to find God in the merciful face of Christ. Without this perspective, civilization lacks a solid foundation.

Thanks to men and women obedient to the Holy Spirit, many forms of charitable work intended to promote development have arisen in the church: hospitals, universities, professional formation schools and small businesses. Such initiatives demonstrate the genuine humanitarian concern of those moved by the Gospel message, far in advance of other forms of social welfare. These charitable activities point out the way to achieve a globalization that is focused upon the true good of mankind and, hence, the path toward authentic peace. Moved like Jesus with compassion for the crowds, the church today considers it her duty to ask political leaders and those with economic and financial power to promote development based on respect for the

dignity of every man and woman. An important litmus test for the success of their efforts is religious liberty, understood not simply as the freedom to proclaim and celebrate Christ, but also the opportunity to contribute to the building of a world enlivened by charity. These efforts have to include a recognition of the central role of authentic religious values in responding to man's deepest concerns, and in supplying the ethical motivation for his personal and social responsibilities. These are the criteria by which Christians should assess the political programs of their leaders.

We cannot ignore the fact that many mistakes have been made in the course of history by those who claimed to be disciples of Jesus. Very often, when having to address grave problems, they have thought that they should first improve this world and only afterward turn their minds to the next. The temptation was to believe that, in the face of urgent needs, the first imperative was to change external structures. The consequence, for some, was that Christianity became a kind of moralism, believing was replaced with doing. Rightly, therefore, my predecessor, Pope John Paul II, of blessed memory, observed: "The temptation today is to reduce Christianity to merely human

wisdom, a pseudoscience of well-being. In our heavily secularized world, a 'gradual secularization of salvation' has taken place, so that people strive for the good of man, but man who is truncated We know, however, that Jesus came to bring integral salvation" ("Redemptoris Missio," 11).

It is this integral salvation that Lent puts before us, pointing toward the victory of Christ over every evil that oppresses us. In turning to the Divine Master, in being converted to him, in experiencing his mercy through the sacrament of reconciliation, we will discover a gaze that searches us profoundly and gives new life to the crowds and to each one of us. It restores trust to those who do not succumb to skepticism, opening up before them the perspective of eternal beatitude. Throughout history, even when hate seems to prevail, the luminous testimony of his love is never lacking. To Mary, "the living fount of hope" (Dante Alighieri, *Paradiso*, XXXIII, 12), we entrust our Lenten journey, so that she may lead us to her son. I commend to her in particular the multitudes who suffer poverty and cry out for help, support and understanding. With these sentiments, I cordially impart to all of you a special apostolic blessing.

THE BACK PAGE

Catholic college grad competes on new 'Apprentice'

By **Mary Frances McCarthy**
Catholic News Service

ARLINGTON, Va. — **Tarek Saab** does not even own a television, but the Catholic college graduate is about to appear on television screens across the nation in the fifth season of NBC's "The Apprentice," where he will compete with 17 other men and women for a chance to work for Donald Trump.

The fifth season premiered Feb. 27 and will air Monday nights on NBC.

Saab, a 27-year-old Maronite Catholic and the son of a Lebanese father and an American mother, lived in war-torn Lebanon as a child before he and his family came to the U.S. and moved into public housing projects in New Bedford, Mass.

He earned a scholarship to a boarding school in Massachusetts and then studied engineering at St. Anselm College in Manchester, N.H., where he obtained a bachelor of arts degree in 2000.

A year later, he earned a bachelor of science in electrical engineering from The Catholic University of America in

Washington. Saab now lives in Dallas and works as a global marketing manager for Texas Instruments, where he started in sales.

In an interview for "The Apprentice," Saab said he has lived the American dream because he achieved a successful business career "with little guidance and without a dime" in his pocket.

Susan Gabert, director of campus ministry at St. Anselm College, described Saab as being "very self-assured" and someone who "knew what he was about. He was a natural leader."

At the Manchester college, he worked with campus ministry and participated in an alternative spring break in Maine building a home in a poor community.

Benedictine Father Jonathan DeFelice, president of St. Anselm's, still keeps in touch with Saab and described him as "a young man of great ability and great values."

"I certainly hope he is successful on the show, but I know that Tarek will make a positive difference in the world wherever he works," he said.

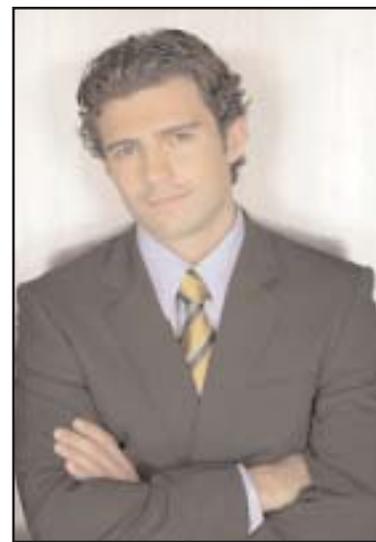
Saab was also involved in campus min-

istry at Catholic University, where he led a spiritual retreat for athletes and helped organize a spring break trip to build a meeting room for cloistered nuns in Connecticut.

"Tarek, the athlete, the partier, says 'Hey, let's go to the abbey,' and about eight people went," said Therese Bermpohl, former associate campus minister for community outreach at Catholic University.

She described Saab as "a bit of a schmoozer," but added, "Tarek wants to do the right thing and wants to live his faith out. He really embraced his faith in a more profound way at Catholic."

Saab attends daily Mass and is godfather to nine children. He mentors youths



and speaks at high schools on how faith can influence success. During his college years he also gave chastity talks to high school students.

"He has enough confidence in himself to say, 'I believe in this message and I will try to live it out,'" Bermpohl told the Arlington Catholic Herald, newspaper of the Arlington Diocese.

But at the same time, she said, it was not unusual to see him on weekends at a bar frequented by college students.

"He was so faithful, but also so mainstream. They

can joke, they can laugh, they can have a beer," she said about Saab and his circle of friends.

When asked how she thinks he will fare on reality TV, Bermpohl said, "I'm hopeful that his faith life will help him, and the fact that he's a charmer."

New books bring focus on Lent, Easter

"**God, I Have Issues: 50 Ways to Pray No Matter How You Feel,**" by Father Mark E. Thibodeaux, SJ. St. Anthony Messenger Press (Cincinnati, 2005). 192 pp., \$12.95.

"**Lent and Easter: Wisdom From Pope John Paul II,**" compiled by John V. Kruse. Liguori (Liguori, Mo., 2005). 116 pp., \$9.95.

"**First Fruits of Prayer: A 40-Day Journey Through the Canon of St. Andrew,**" by Frederica Mathewes-Green. Paraclete Press (Brewster, Mass., 2006). 196 pp., \$19.95.

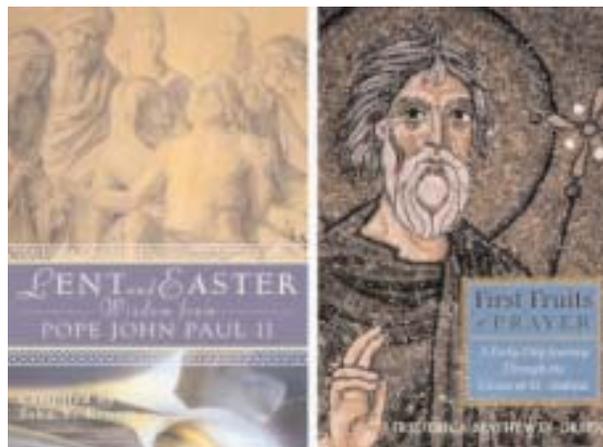
Reviewed by **Sister Mona Castelazo, CSJ**
Catholic News Service

These three books contain daily readings suitable for the season of Lent.

"**God, I Have Issues: 50 Ways to Pray No Matter How You Feel,**" by Jesuit Father Mark E. Thibodeaux, provides 50 readings that fit particular emotions or situations. Father Thibodeaux describes the entries as "prayer starters." Each entry begins with a related scriptural passage, followed by a reflection that is personal and pertinent, and a list of suggested scriptural references. The author then supplies "prayer pointers," suggestions on how to meditate on the entry. Each section ends with lines of quotations or poetry to keep in mind during the day.

Topics include joy, pride, anger, fear, despair, doubt, loneliness, sadness, indecision, stress, worry, hurt, gratitude and contentment. The situations are listed in alphabetical order, with a cross-referenced index at the end. Father Thibodeaux shares helpful personal stories in addition to giving solid spiritual and psychological insights.

Entries are engaging and fresh, approaching each emotion from several dimensions, employing humor, beauti-



ful poetry, and quotations worth pondering. Some examples: "I know that God won't give me anything I can't handle. I just wish he didn't trust me so much (Mother Teresa)," "It's your church, Lord, I'm going to bed (Pope John XXIII)," and "Blessed are they who laugh at themselves. They shall never cease to be entertained (Chinese proverb)."

"**Lent and Easter: Wisdom From Pope John Paul II,**" compiled by John Kruse, is a practical book for those who have difficulty finding time to pray regularly. It offers readings for each day from Ash Wednesday to the Second Sunday of Easter. Each reflection includes a passage from one of Pope John Paul's writings or addresses, a related scriptural reading, an appropriate prayer and a suggested practice for the day.

The daily themes include trust, love, listening, stead-

fastness, temptation, suffering and hope. Suggested responses range from spending time with someone, to praying during cooking or driving, to writing a letter for the cause of justice. Each reflection is approximately two pages long, so as to be easily fit into a busy schedule.

"**First Fruits of Prayer: A 40-Day Journey Through the Canon of St. Andrew,**" by Frederica Mathewes-Green, contains 40 readings from the Great Canon of St. Andrew of Crete. This epic-long hymn is sung during Lent in the Orthodox tradition. The author of several books on Eastern Orthodoxy, Mathewes-Green provides an excellent introduction on the nature of Eastern practices and monasticism. For each page of the book there is a facing page of annotations, giving exact scriptural references, quotations, comments and a reflection.

The verses by St. Andrew are mainly personal reflections on Scripture in which he compares himself to sinful figures with whom he identifies, asking God's mercy after each verse. Although Mathewes-Green offers good theology and insights, the original text seems quite harsh, punitive and acerbic for contemporary readers. Quotations such as "There is no sinner I have not surpassed," "I have sinned as the harlot never sinned," and "Heaven is closed to thee, my soul" appear throughout.

Women, in particular, may not resonate with the subject of the major reading inserted into the text in two parts. It is the story of St. Mary of Egypt, who after years of sexual depravity repented in the wilderness for 47 years without normal food and entirely without clothing, her body burned black by the sun. The Canon may be of interest to students of Eastern Orthodoxy, but seems too overly self-deprecating for daily prayers to a loving God.