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## Justice served – twice

Oblate exonerated  
 by Peter Micale, WTA

MIDLAND – Fr. Domingo Estrada, OMI, former pastor of Midland's Our Lady of Guadalupe Catholic Church, was acquitted by a Midland County jury Thursday, December 2, 2004, of charges of indecency with a child. The jury had deliberated for just over six hours. Fr. Estrada faced six charges, one for aggravated sexual assault of a child and five for indecency with a child, according to the Midland Reporter-Telegram.

Bishop Michael D. Pfeifer, OMI, Bishop of the San Angelo Diocese said: "Those are terrible charges to have against a person and especially a priest. Of course, we take such accusations very seriously when we become aware of them and immediately took actions by offering the alleged victim and his family counseling. They declined."

Bishop Pfeifer issued the following Press Release to the media of the Diocese, on Friday morning, December 3:

"On Thursday evening,

see "JUSTICE" page eight



The mosaic of the Immaculate Conception from the Basilica of the National Shrine of the Immaculate Conception in Washington depicts the Blessed Virgin Mary in glory. The Catholic belief that Mary was free from original sin from the moment of her existence was promulgated by Pope Pius IX in 1854. This year the feast of the Immaculate Conception, Dec. 8, marks the 150th anniversary of the dogma. (CNS photo courtesy Basilica of the National Shrine of the Immaculate Conception)

## Immaculate Conception:

Church marks anniversary of difficult dogma

by John Thavis  
 Catholic News Service

VATICAN CITY (CNS) – Pope John Paul II is leading celebrations of the 150th anniversary of the Immaculate Conception, a dogma that many modern Catholics do not fully understand.

The Vatican is hosting a four-day International Mariological Congress to mark the event, attended by Marian experts – Catholic, Orthodox and Protestant – from all over the world. Participants were to join the pope for a commemorative liturgy in St. Peter's Basilica Dec. 8, the feast of the Immaculate Conception.

The festivities also include a special "Concert for Immaculate Mary" in the Vatican's audience hall, featuring a number of pieces written in her honor.

Whether the fanfare at the Vatican will reverberate in local church communities is another question.

Some Vatican officials said candidly that while Marian devotion remains strong in the church, the Immaculate Conception is a complex concept that has interested theologians more than the ordinary faithful.

"There's been an incredible dumbing-down of Catholics in the last generation or two, so there's probably a fair amount of confusion about this," said Msgr. Arthur Calkins, a Vatican official and a member of the Pontifical International Marian Academy.

For one thing, Msgr. Calkins said, some see "IMMACULATE" page nine



## Christmas celebrates the fulfillment of God's promise of love and salvation

by Bishop Michael Pfeifer, OMI

"The angel said to them, 'do not be afraid; for, I bring you good news of great joy that will be for all the people. For today in the City of David a Savior has been born for you who is Christ the Lord.'" the angel of our Christmas gospel summarizes for us what is the wonderful, and we might say, almost unbelievable message of Christmas. The angel proclaimed: "Do not be afraid; for behold I proclaim to you good news of great joy that will be for all the people. For today in the City of David a Savior has been born for you who is Christ the Lord." Since the fall of Adam and Eve, humanity had waited to hear these words of hope and fulfillment about the promised savior.

On Christmas Day we remember and celebrate the fulfillment of God's promise of love and salvation that were made to humankind, even when humans rejected God's grace and love.

As we read the scriptures, both the old and the new testaments, we readily see that our God is a God of hope and promises, promises that are faithfully kept from generation to generation. The bible, God's book of promises, contains over 200 references to the promises God has made to God's people down through the ages. And all of us, beginning with our baptism. Have shared in these promises. A promise, which is a pledge of one's word, creates a powerful, personal bond between the one who gives and the one who receives the word.

On that first Christmas some 2,000 years ago, God fulfilled the promise of giving God's people a savior. That savior came in an unbelievable and mysterious way, because as we hear in the gospel, the sign of Christmas, is an infant lying in a manger. The eternal word of God comes to us in a form that is humble and unbelievable, but in a way and manner that touches our hearts in a profound way. The baby in the manger carries our full humanity as well as the fullness of divinity. God fulfilled God's promise of salvation by giving us a baby. And, this living promise would walk with us, teach us, love us, and die for us one day.

Christmas celebrates the fulfillment of God's promise in what we call the mystery of the **see "CHRISTMAS" page eleven**



Bishop Michael D. Pfeifer, OMI

## La Navidad celebra el cumplimiento de la promesa de Dios de amor y salvación

por el Obispo Miguel Pfeifer, OMI

"El ángel les dijo: No teman. Les traigo una buena noticia, que causará gran alegría a todo el pueblo: Hoy les ha nacido en la Ciudad de David un Salvador, que es el mesías, El Señor."

El ángel de nuestro evangelio navideño resume para nosotros lo que es el maravilloso, quizás diríamos, el mensaje de Navidad casi increíble. El ángel proclamó: "No teman. Les traigo una buena noticia, que causará gran alegría para todo el pueblo: Hoy les ha nacido en la Ciudad de David un Salvador, que es el mesías, El Señor." Desde la caída de Adán y Eva, la humanidad ha esperado oír esas palabras sobre el salvador prometido.

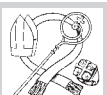
El Día de la Navidad, recordamos y celebramos el cumplimiento de la promesa de dios de amor y salvación que fue hecha a la humanidad, incluso cuando los seres humanos rechazaban al amor y la gracia de dios.

Mientras leemos las escrituras, ambos el antiguo y el nuevo testamento, fácilmente vemos que nuestro dios es un dios de esperanza y promesas, promesas que son fielmente cumplidas de generación a generación. La biblia, el libro de promesas de dios, contiene mas de 200 referencias a las promesas que dios ha hecho a su pueblo a través los siglos. Y todos nosotros, empezando con nuestro bautismo, hemos compartido en estas promesas. Una promesa, que es un juramento de nuestra palabra, crea un lazo poderoso y personal entre quien da y quien recibe la palabra.

En esa primera Navidad hace 2,000 años, dios cumplió la promesa de dar un salvador al pueblo de dios. Ese salvador vino en una manera increíble y misteriosa, porque como escuchamos el evangelio, la señal de Navidad, es un niño acostado en el pesebre. La palabra eterna de dios viene a nosotros en una forma humilde y increíble, pero en un modo que toca a nuestros corazón es en una manera profunda. El niño en el pesebre carga nuestra humanidad entera así como la plentitud de la divinidad. Dios cumplió la promesa de salvación dándonos un niño. Y esta promesa viviente caminaría con nosotros, nos enseñaría, nos amaría, y un día moriría por nosotros.

**see "NAVIDAD" page eleven**

### The Bishop's Schedule



#### December 2004

December 1-2: San Juan - Meeting of Texas and Mexico Border Bishops

December 3: San Angelo, Diocesan Pastoral Center - Mass for Staff at 8:30 a.m. Staff Meeting at 11:00 a. m. St. Joseph - Advent Night of Prayer at 7:00 p.m. for Priests, Sisters, Deacons and Wives of the San

Angelo Deanery

December 4-5: Washington - Celebration of 150th Anniversary of the Immaculate Conception Proclamation at the National Shrine December 6: Abilene, Sacred Heart - Advent Night of Prayer for all Priests, Sisters, Deacons and Wives at 7:00 p.m.

December 7: San Angelo, - Staff Christmas Party at Bishop's Residence at 6:00 p.m.

December 8: San Angelo, Cathedral Church of the Sacred Heart -

Feast of the Immaculate Conception at 9:00 a.m. First United Methodist Church - Advent Prayer and Reflection at 12:00 noon

December 9-10: Dallas

December 10: San Angelo, Santa Fe Depot - Tell Christmas Stories at 7:00 p.m.

December 12: Eden - Detention Center Mass at 1:00 p.m.

December 13: San Angelo, Cathedral Church of the Sacred Heart - Our Lady of Guadalupe Feast Mass at 7:00 p.m.

December 14: San Angelo, Diocesan Pastoral Center - Presbyteral Council meeting at 2:00 p.m. Christ the King Retreat Center Christmas Party for Priests, Sisters, Deacons and Wives at 5:30 p.m.

December 15: San Angelo, Shannon Womens' Clinic - Advent/Christmas Mass at 11:00 a.m.

December 16: San Angelo, San Angelo State School - Advent and Christmas Prayer Service at 1:00 p.m. St. Joseph - Posada at 6:30 p.m.

December 17: San Angelo,

Angelo Catholic School Sacred Heart Campus - Christmas Mass for Students and Faculty at 8:30 a.m. San Angelo, St. Mary - Penance Service at 7:00 p.m.

December 19: Sanderson, St. James - Mass at 11:00 a.m.

December 20: San Angelo, Cathedral Church of the Sacred Heart - Penance Service at 7:00 p.m.

December 21: San Angelo, Cathedral Church of the Sacred Heart - 40th Priestly Anniversary of Bishop Pfeifer and 40th Anniversary of the Consecration of the Cathedral Mass at 6:30 p.m.

December 22: Brady, St. Patrick - Penance Service at 7:00 p.m.

December 24: San Angelo, Tom Green County Jail - Mass at 9:00 a.m. Cathedral Church of the Sacred Heart - Christmas Midnight Mass December 25: San Angelo, Goodfellow Air Force Base Christmas Day Mass at 9:00 a.m.

December 26-29: Rest and Prayer

**January 2005**

January 1: San Angelo, Cathe-

dral Church of the Sacred Heart - Mass at 9:00 a.m.

January 2-6: San Antonio - Retreat for the Bishops of Region X

January 7-9: San Angelo, Cathedral Church of the Sacred Heart - Forty Hours Devotion

January 11: San Angelo, Holy Angels - Presentation on Mary to the RCIA at 6:30 p.m.

January 12-13: Dallas - Meeting of the Texas Conference of Churches and Baptist General Convention

January 14: Odessa, St. Joseph - Mass for Lucy Ortiz at 6:30 p.m.

January 16: Sanderson, St. James - Mass at 11:00 a.m.

January 17: San Angelo, Cathedral Church of the Sacred Heart - 12:00 noon Ecumenical Service in honor of Dr. Martin Luther King

January 18-20: Dallas - Southwest Liturgical Conference

January 21: San Angelo, Diocesan Pastoral Center - Staff Mass at 8:30 a.m. and Staff Meeting at

**see "SCHEDULE" page ten**

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# Vocation Circle

## Quick look at U.S. bishops' 2004 fall meeting in Washington

by Catholic News Service

WASHINGTON (CNS) – At the U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops' Nov. 15-17 fall general meeting in Washington, the bishops:

- Adopted, by a vote of 218-10, the 456-page "U.S. Catholic Catechism for Adults" and sent it to the Vatican for confirmation.

- Agreed, in a 195-20 vote, to begin a National Pastoral Initiative on Marriage that will include a survey, symposium and focus groups and lead to a pastoral letter on marriage in 2007.

- Accepted a proposal to join Christian Churches Together in the USA, by a vote of 151-73, marking the first time that the U.S. Catholic Church will be a partner church in a national ecumenical body.

- Received, without public comment or discussion, a three-page report from their Task Force on Catholic Bishops and Catholic Politicians which called for development of a reader about Catholics in public life and further study of church teaching on Communion.

- Decided, on a 137-85 vote, to gather annual information from dioceses on the number of new sex abuse allegations against clergy and other church workers, the resolution of existing cases and the costs involved.

- Approved streamlining the process for the 2005 diocesan audits related to sex abuse, by a 189-35 vote.

- OK'd changes, in three separate votes, in Spanish-language liturgical texts to formally incorporate important Latin American rituals into U.S. church services for infant baptism, marriage and the "quinceanera," which marks a 15-year-old Hispanic girl's passage to adolescence.

- Selected Bishop William S. Skylstad of Spokane, Wash., USCCB vice president for the past three years, as their new president, and Cardinal Francis E. George of Chicago as vice president.

- Using an electronic voting system for only the second time, elected Bishop Dennis M. Schnurr of Duluth, Minn., as USCCB treasurer-elect and chose two new committee chairmen and 12 chairmen-elect.

- Overwhelmingly approved a series of recommendations aimed at limiting the conference's projects to those mandated by the Vatican or the bishops themselves.

- Agreed to create an ad hoc committee to aid the church in Africa, which would collect and distribute contributions for the church in Africa.

- Approved a \$129.4 million budget for 2005, 1.8 percent higher than the previous year's budget.

- Sent back to committee a proposal to issue a pastoral statement on the use of the Bible by Catholics.

- Expressed little support for

convening a national plenary council or U.S. regional synod of bishops, but agreed that they needed to spend more time discussing major problems facing the U.S. church.

- Marked the 25th anniversary of their pastoral letter on racism with a Mass at the Basilica of the National Shrine of the Immaculate Conception.

- Heard an assessment of the turbulent past three years and a cautiously optimistic view of the future of the conference from Bishop Wilton D. Gregory of Belleville, Ill., who completed a three-year term as USCCB president.

- Authorized Bishop Gregory to issue a statement calling on the United States and the international community to provide sufficient support to the African Union to stop the violence in western Sudan's Darfur region.

- Launched a \$25 million capital campaign for the North American College, the U.S. national seminary in Rome.

- Learned that the Vatican has given approval to the "National Directory for the Formation, Ministry and Life of Permanent Deacons in the United States," which the bishops approved in 2003.

## Christ the King Retreat Center December Calendar

- 7 Adoration of the Blessed Sacrament
- 8 Immaculate Conception Feast Day - Office Closed
- 10 Women's Evening Retreat in English Honoring Mary as Our Lady of Guadalupe
- 12 Our Lady of Guadalupe Feast Day
- 13 CKRC Christmas Party- All San Angelo Deanery Church Staffs
- 14 Adoration of the Blessed Sacrament  
Bishop's Christmas Party for Priests, Deacons, Women Religious
- 15 CKRC Employees' Christmas Party
- 20 - Jan 3 CKRC Closed - Holidays

## Intentions of the Holy Father for November

*General* – That children may be considered as precious gifts of God and may be given due respect, understanding and love.

*Missionary* – That Jesus Christ's Incarnation may be the model of genuine enculturation of the Gospel.

## TCC Scripture Conference

by Fr. Michael Udegbumam and Fr. Tom Barley

AUSTIN – From October 25-28 nine members of the Diocese of San Angelo attended the annual Texas Catholic Conference Scripture Conference in Austin. For some this was the first trip. For others it was an annual event. Gina Hens-Piazza, Ph.D. presented "Violence in the Bible" and the ideas of forms of violence and the violence of forms, resisting violence, attending to minor characters, becoming non-violent readers of the Bible, learning about the curses in Scripture,

praying the Psalms in response to violence. Sr. Mary Barbara Green, OP, Ph.D. presented "Jonah" and the questions of "getting our feet wet or being swallowed up?" and "in the belly of the fish – danger or refuge?" Fr. Tom Barley from St. Ambrose in Wall was the celebrant of the Tuesday Mass. The conference was a learning experience for all who attended. Fr. Michael Udegbumam of Eden and Junction said that he left the conference "with more admiration and love for the Bible as the 'Book of books' and more energized biblically and

spiritually to continue loving, worshipping, and adoring God – the ultimate Author of the Bible."

Next year the Scripture conference will on October 10-13, 2005 with Fr. John Donohue presenting a biblical perspective of the authority of Peter and Fr. Michael Himes presenting on Doctrine: Are all doctrines equal? What is the difference between a dogma and authentic teaching? This annual conference is open to all with advance registration through the Texas Catholic Conference in Austin.

## December Necrology

Please pray for the following priests and deacons whose anniversaries of death are during the month of December.

- 1-Rev. John A. Pierce (1979)
- 12-Deacon Nestor Perez (1993)
- 12-Rev. James Aaron, (1999)
- 20-Rev. John Waldron (1995)
- 28-Rev. Nicholas Femenia, C.M. (1999)
- 30-Rev. John Hoorman, C.P.P.S.(1995)



# The 150th Anniversary of the Proclamation of the Dogma of Mary's Immaculate Conception

**["All honor to you, Mary! From you arose the sun of justice, Christ our God."]**

*(Communion antiphon for the Solemnity of the Immaculate Conception)*

by Bishop Michael Pfeifer, OMI

SAN ANGELO – On December 8th of this year we will recall that it was exactly one hundred and fifty years ago that Blessed Pope Pius IX proclaimed the dogma of Mary's Immaculate Conception as divinely revealed. This dogma was already a part of the faith of the Universal Church, including here in the United States, where in 1846 at the first Council of Baltimore our Bishops placed this nation under the patronage of Mary in her Immaculate Conception.

This anniversary enables us to remember that, in the words of Blessed Pope Pius IX, "the most

Blessed Virgin Mary was, from the first moment of her conception, by a singular grace and privilege of almighty God and by virtue of the merits of Jesus Christ, Savior of the human race, preserved immune from all stain of original sin" (*Ineffabilis Deus*). Throughout history the Church has seen Mary as the new Eve, the sinless mother of the Redeemer and the redeemed. In reflecting upon the angel's greeting to Mary at the Annunciation as "full of grace" (Lk 1:28), the Church recognized that this fullness of grace extended to the moment of her conception and thus meant her freedom from original sin (cf., *Cate-*

*chism of the Catholic Church*, no. 491).

Mary was the first to know the power of Christ's saving work. The doctrine of the Immaculate Conception points to her Son, the Redeemer of all mankind through his life, death, and resurrection. She was already redeemed by him from the very beginning of her existence and thus, filled with extraordinary faith and love, she was able to give her free assent to God's call to her to be the mother of the savior (cf. *Catechism of the Catholic Church*, no. 491).

This is summed up in the opening prayer for the Eucharistic Lit-

urgy on the Solemnity of the Immaculate Conception which proclaims that God "let her share beforehand in the salvation Christ would bring by his death, and kept her sinless from the first moment of her conception." At the same time we see God's "sign of favor to the Church at its beginning, and the promise of its perfection as the bridge of Christ, radiant in beauty" (Preface, Solemnity of the Immaculate Conception). This feast, therefore, connects Mary to all the disciples of her Son. It is a feast of the Church, called by God to holiness in imitation of Mary and accompanied toward that holiness by her maternal intercession. For that reason, as Bishop of the Diocese, I remind all of our brothers and sisters of the obligation and privilege to participate in the Eucharist on December 8th. On that day, we celebrate what God has done in and through Mary, we give thanks to God because Mary shows us our call to holiness, and we pray for her continuing intercession.

This anniversary recalls also God's gift of teaching authority to the Church in order to ensure the Church's fidelity to the deposit of faith. In 1854, Blessed Pope Pius

IX exercised that teaching authority in its most solemn form when, as chief teacher and pastor of the Church, he declared the dogma of the Immaculate Conception to be divinely revealed and thus to be accepted by all members of the Church with faith. Such an act of infallible teaching is rare in the life of the Church, but it underlines the significance of that teaching for the members of the Church.

We need to recall also that, in our nation, human life faces threats in its most vulnerable stages. Mary's Immaculate Conception reminds us of the inherent value and dignity of human life from the moment of conception. The Solemnity of the Immaculate Conception urges us to strengthen our commitment to the defense of life in all of its stages.

On the Solemnity of the Immaculate Conception this year, December 8, 2004, I hope that all of the people of our Diocese will gather in great numbers to give honor to the Patroness of our nation, so that her Son, the sun of justice, may bring to perfection the work that our Heavenly Father has begun in us. Reflections I have taken from a letter of Bishop Wilton Gregory.

## Adviento: prepararse y vigilar

**"También ustedes estén preparados porque a la hora que menos lo piensen vendrá el Hijo del hombre." (Mt. 24, 44)**

por el Obispo Miguel Pfeifer, OMI

SAN ANGELO – La temporada de Adviento nos llama a prepararnos para la gran fiesta de la Navidad, y prepararnos para el último día de la venida del Señor. Jesús nos invita a pensar en estos días más allá del comer, beber o casarse. Hay que ver el mundo en el curso de la historia; y estar preparados para todo.

En el tiempo de Adviento, hay que prepararnos y vigilar en oración, en contemplación, en servicio a los demás, y en obras de caridad, en recibir los sacramentos, para celebrar debidamente el cumpleaños de nues-

tro Señor en la Navidad. Así estamos preparándonos para la venida final de nuestro Señor - sea cuando sea.

El acontecimiento de la venida del Hijo del hombre se presenta en medio de las ocupaciones diarias. No se trata de olvidarse de cosas de este mundo, es necesario seguir trabajando; pero eso sí, con la actitud del padre de familia que siempre está vigilando y alerta para que el ladrón no se meta a su casa.

En el tiempo de Adviento, estamos donde estamos, es importante preguntarnos por qué y para qué hacemos las cosas. Es también importante saber dis-

cernir y distinguir qué cosas son las que nos salvan y cuáles son las que nos pierden.

"También ustedes estén preparados, porque a la hora que menos lo piensan vendrá el Hijo del hombre." Son las palabras que Cristo nos dirige en estos días en preparación

para su cumpleaños. Que en este tiempo de Adviento, el Señor nos encuentre despiertos y vigilantes y, sobre todo, haciendo lo que a él le gusta practicando la justicia, el amor, la misericordia, dedicándonos más a la oración, a leer la Biblia y viviendo en la presencia de Dios.

## Advent is a time to prepare the way for the Lord

by Bishop Michael Pfeifer, OMI

SAN ANGELO – To prepare the world for the coming of the Messiah, our Savior Jesus Christ, during that first Advent 2000 years ago, God sent John the Baptist. John knew his role was only to prepare and stated about the one to follow him: "He must increase; I must decrease. [John 3:30] This must be our attitude during the days of Advent. We are in the season of Advent, a period of some four weeks, to "prepare the way of the Lord." [Mark 1,3] As we celebrate once again the birthday of Christ and prepare for his coming, whenever that day might be, to take us into God's eternal Kingdom, we are exhorted "to prepare."

With Christmas coming in just a few more weeks, many of us may be feeling the pressure of too little time left for all the shopping, decorating, baking, card writing, gift wrapping, and socializing that has come to be associated with Christmas. In our frenzy and in our many activities, we often act as though Christmas itself depended on our preparations.

Christ has come, and Christ will come again, and the important thing on our part as we prepare for His coming is that we have open hearts that focus our lives on Christ and His message as we prepare for Christmas. With so many activities with their many material demands,

see "ADVENT," page nine



# How to receive our King in Holy Communion

by Bishop Michael Pfeifer, OMI

SAN ANGELO – Recent Vatican documents, as well as statements from the U.S. Catholic Bishops have indicated that the more proper way to receive Holy Communion is in the hand. Of course, there is still the option of receiving our Eucharistic Lord on the tongue.

How are we to receive Jesus, Christ the King, when we receive Him in Communion in the hand? In the early Church, the custom was to receive Communion in the hand, and St. Cyril of Jerusalem, way back in the 4th century, gave some good instructions for communi-

cants that, I believe, still apply very well to all of us today as we receive Communion in the hand. I ask all to heed the advice of this wise and pastoral Saint, and for parents to teach their children to receive Jesus in Communion according to the instruction of Cyril of Jerusalem.

Cyril's advice is: "So when you come forward, do not come with arms extended or fingers parted. Make your left hand a throne for your right, since your right hand is about to welcome a King. Cup your palm and receive in it Christ's Body, saying in response, 'Amen . . .' being careful not to drop not a par-

ticle of it . . . after partaking of Christ's Body, go to receive the chalice of His Blood."

It is the image of the "left hand as a throne for your right" that conveys both the reverence and dignity associated with open hands awaiting the arrival of the Lord.

The open hands signify the welcome that we extend to our King of Kings that we receive in each Holy Communion, and are also the sign of our willingness to share what we have in our hands with our brothers and sisters who have less than we do.

# Natural Family Planning questions answered

by Mary Martin, M.D.

OKLAHOMA CITY, OK – *The following questions are answered by Mary Martin, M.D., F.A.C.O.G. of Oklahoma City, Oklahoma. Dr. Martin is an ob/gyn.*

Q. Is there ever a medical reason for using the Birth Control Pill?

There is always an alternative which may uncover the problem which caused the gynecologic disorder for which the pill was prescribed. There is always a reason why women don't ovulate normally, have intermenstrual bleeding, have pain or infertility. To prescribe OCP's for these symptoms may delay or prevent a diagnosis.

Q. Is it true that the Birth Control Pill's third action is to abort if a baby is conceived?

Oral contraceptive pill (OCP) package inserts and the Physicians Desk Reference are two widely available sources which say explicitly that one of the mechanisms of action is to prevent implantation. When the potential abortifacient effect is argued, it is the definition of when life begins which is in dispute. Physicians who consider themselves prolife may continue to prescribe OCP's with the argument that ovulation is prevented or that

life does not begin until implantation, but studies have shown that ovulation occurs far more often now on low dose pills than the ones first introduced in 1960. And the definition of life beginning at implantation allows the manufacturers of IUDs (Intrauterine Device), emergency contraceptives ("Morning after" pills) and progesterone-only shots and pills to proclaim that these products are not abortifacient.

Q. Are all Birth Control Pills designed that way?

Yes.

Q. What if a woman has a serious medical reason for avoiding pregnancy what would you advise her?

God only gives us roughly 96 hours of shared fertility per month. Couples who should avoid pregnancy for medical reasons should be taught Natural Family Planning. There is no additional benefit to chemical contraceptives or sterilization on the contrary, there are many additional risks. NFP is as effective or more effective than chemical contraceptives, is inexpensive, side-effect free and does not rely on remembering to do something to prevent pregnancy. Rather, it relies on a couple choos-

ing each and every cycle whether to use the gift of their fertility.

Q. Why do physicians give the Birth Control Pill to regulate cycles?

While this may sound rather arrogant, in my opinion, it is because they don't truly understand the endocrinology of the menstrual cycle. Even reproductive endocrinologists (fertility specialists) recite the same data that was published in the 1940s and 50s. Fortunately, research has revealed much about the cycle since then, but seems to be the domain of NFP researchers. Common knowledge says that women can't tell when they are fertile, which is untrue and has been since the "red flow" and the "white flow" was described by Aristotle centuries ago. A major medical journal published an article in January of 2003 claiming that women can ovulate more than once in a cycle. Simply not true. While waves of follicles (egg cells) are recruited every month, not all ovulate. Ovulation can occur only once in a cycle. How long it takes a follicle to ripen determines how long the menstrual cycle is. When OCPs were introduced in 1960 the statement that the average menstrual

## PRINCIPAL NEEDED

**A small, family-oriented Catholic elementary school (K-6) with strong parish and community support is seeking a new principal. Requirements: practicing Catholic, commitment to and zeal for Catholic education, creative vision, good administrative and communication skills, collegial leadership style, elementary school teaching experience (preferably in a Catholic school), some experience in school administration (preferably in a Catholic school), willingness to participate in the life and ministry of the parish. A master's degree in any field with at least some graduate-level coursework in educational leadership is desired.**

**Send resume and list of references (with contact information) to: Principal Search Committee, attn: Fr. Robert A. Busch, St. Anthony of Padua Catholic School, P.O. Box 1029, Dalhart, Texas 79022. Application deadline: January 10, 2005.**

cycle is 28 days was introduced into the vernacular leading women to believe that anything more or less is "irregular" and needs to be "regulated."

Q. What is the rationale for giving the Birth Control Pill for irregular bleeding?

See statement above. Pharmaceutical companies sponsor all of the medical research, medical education and the cost of writing textbooks. They are a tremendously powerful lobby. Promoting NFP and the research behind it is not only out of the mainstream but counterproductive for them. Since the medical field is taught by the same professors whose research is funded and published by pharmaceutical companies, we are not exposed to NFP or NFP research in training.

Q. What kinds of side effects are common with using the Birth Control Pill?

High blood pressure, increased risk of stroke, especially in women who have migraine or a familial risk of blood clotting disorders, increased risk of deep venous thrombosis which may result in fatal pulmonary embolus, intermenstrual bleeding, pap smear abnormalities, and worsening of insulin resistance, which is a pre-diabetic disorder, depression and decreased sex drive, breast and cervical cancer, to name a few.

Q. What do you tell your patients who are looking for birth control?

I offer to teach them the Billings Ovulation Method, which can easily be taught in a few minutes and am candid about the fact that prescribing artificial contraception is a moral and ethical dilemma for me as a faithful Catholic. Most seem to appreciate a physician who practices according to conscience and are amazed to find that detecting fertility is such a simple thing. For those who are seeking OCP's for medical reasons, I diagnose the gynecologic disorder. I don't win them all over, of course, but my job is to plant the seeds and let the Holy Spirit do the rest. My partners provide prescriptions for the 4 or 5 patients per month who are unconvinced.

Q. Why don't more physicians know about Natural Family Planning? Isn't it taught in medical schools or are they ignoring it because it takes more time than writing out a prescription?

Most text books have a simple line or two about "periodic abstinence" or "the Rhythm Method" and nothing about NFP and the exhaustive and currently ongoing research behind NFP. But remember who educates us. And remember, our culture teaches us that we should provide contraception as an essential human right.



# Now is our time Region 10 Youth Conference

by Sister Adelina Garcia, OSF

*OKLAHOMA CITY, OK*—*Now Is Our Time* was the rallying cry of young people as they gathered at the Cox Convention Center in Oklahoma City, Oklahoma. The desire of the Young Church of Region 10 (Arkansas, Oklahoma and Texas) is to *talk, walk and live* their faith in authentic ways that invite others to journey with them.

The Friday night opening reflected the Native American flavor of the local area. Local tribes as well as youth animators from the region led the prayer with incense, drums, song and blessings. There was an air of excitement as Doug Brummel with his multiple characters led the group through the Paschal Mystery cycle in our daily lives. Through the lenses of a child and as an older man he shared how suffering, death and resurrection is a recurrence in all of our lives.

A variety of workshops and activities were offered on Saturday to

broaden our concept of Catholicism and deepen our faith. One of the highlights of the weekend was a prayer pilgrimage to the Oklahoma City National Memorial. What a powerful witness to see 2,500 people walking in silence to the beat of a drum. Once at the site a prayer service was held for the victims and those who continue to die as victims of terrorism. As Catholics we are challenged to be a people of justice and peace.

Bishop Michael Pfeifer attended the conference and took part in the different activities. His young heart and spirit rallied the youth at the opening night activities and the Saturday evening dance with DeeJay Anna Scally from Cornerstone Media.

The closing liturgy on Sunday was presided by Archbishop Eusebius J. Beltran of Oklahoma City and the many clergy attending the conference.



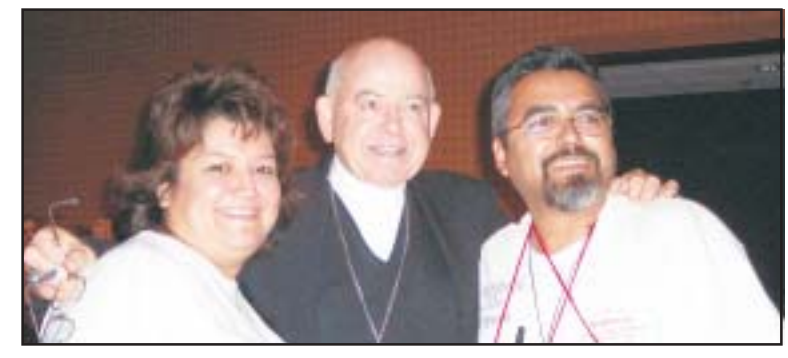
(Above and left) Early morning departure from Pastoral Center by participants from San Angelo and Wall. (Photos by Peter Micale.)



Everybody returning home by bus. (Photo by Sr. Hilda Marotta, OSF.)



Participants from the Diocese of San Angelo at the Oklahoma National Memorial in Oklahoma City. (Photo by Sr. Adelina Garcia,



Bishop Pfeifer with participants from another diocese. (Photo by Sr. Adelina Garcia, OSF.)

# Baseball, broadcast legend

## Joe Garagiola talks about his Catholicism

by Noel Fletcher  
Catholic News Service

ALBUQUERQUE, N.M. (CNS)—Although Joe Garagiola is famous for his quick wit, Major League Baseball days as a catcher, his “Today Show” tenure as a co-host, his baseball commentaries, and opposition to chewing tobacco, few know of his deep Catholic faith.

That he always carries a rosary in his pocket is among the lesser-known aspects of a man long in the public eye.

At age 16 he was signed to play for his home-town team, the St. Louis Cardinals, for five seasons, including a 1946 championship. He also was a catcher for the Pittsburgh Pirates, Chicago Cubs and New York Giants.

After his pro career ended in 1954, he became a broadcaster for the Cardinals and the Yankees before co-hosting the “Today Show.” He was a broadcaster for NBC for 27 years and also for the California Angels baseball team.

Currently, he does TV baseball

broadcasts for the Arizona Diamondbacks. His awards include a 1973 TV Peabody Award and Baseball Hall of Fame induction in 1991 for broadcasting.

Speaking in Albuquerque Oct. 22 at a fund-raising dinner for Catholic elementary and secondary education in the Archdiocese of Santa Fe, Garagiola told of his youth in St. Louis, when life consisted of the “great triangle — not necessarily in that order — of family, church and sports.”

Born to John and Angeline Garagiola, young Joe grew up in a neighborhood called “The Hill” across the street from baseball great Lawrence “Yogi” Berra.

The two remain close friends today and joke that they are both “getting to the age when we’ve got to think about certain things” like “wanting to go to heaven, but no one wants to make the trip.”

Throughout his talk, Garagiola often referred to his childhood with Yogi. He reminisced about the time Yogi had to say the rosary as pen-

ance for stealing the sponge for his catcher’s mitt from the holy water font at church.

He also recalled the long lines in front of “Father Lupo’s” confessional because the priest didn’t speak English.

Joking about being a “big venial sin guy” in the old days, Garagiola attended St. Ambrose School and St. Mary’s High School in St. Louis. He credited his seventh-grade teacher with his good penmanship on autographed baseballs.

One day, he said, while trying to get a laugh out of a nun in religion class, he answered the question “What was St. Paul’s vision on the way to Damascus?” by writing “20/20” and thought, “You’re a genius, Joe!”

Many times during his speech, Garagiola stressed that the lessons he learned from the nuns and priests in school remain with him today. For instance, he recalled a priest explaining to him that “it’s not easy to be a good Catholic, but the fact that you are a Catholic makes it easier to be strong.”

Garagiola talked about his devotion to the Blessed Mother.

“If you ever want anything, go to the Mother,” he said, adding that her month of May is his favorite month.

He recited his favorite prayer, from childhood, called “To Our Lady,” that begins “Lovely lady, dressed in blue.” He said that when he dies he wants to hear Jesus say, “Yeah, my mother told me about you.”

He spoke of three levels of prayer as being “give me, help me and use me.” “Level three is where we want to be. That’s when we say, ‘Use me,’” he said, adding that people are just “conduits.”

From his home in Phoenix, Garagiola devotes himself to helping the children at St. Peter’s Indian Mission School on the Pima Indian reservation. He listed diabetes, obesity, sexual molestation and alcoholism as the gravest problems facing those who live on the reservation.

He mentioned helping raise money so the children could have new bathrooms in the school. There were only two urinals for 97 boys, and the girls had stalls without doors.

“When I wake up in the morning, I say, ‘I love you Jesus, I trust you, I know you have a job for me to do and don’t let me screw it up,’” Garagiola noted. “All of us in this room can make a difference. I pray



Joe Garagiola, pictured in an undated file photo, is famous for his quick wit, his days as a Major League Baseball catcher, his tenure on the “Today Show” as a co-host, and his baseball commentaries. But few know about his deep Catholic faith, which he talked about during a recent visit to New Mexico. (CNS photo courtesy Arizona Diamondbacks)

almost all day long ‘cause I’m talking to Jesus.”

He concluded by giving his 700 listeners a final word of advice.

“There’s a saying in baseball that you don’t run to the bag, you run through it,” he said. “God brings you to it, and God will see you through it. Whatever you get, he’s your go-through-it man.”



That’s right, son. The Wise Men brought gold, frankincense and myrrh. No toys.

© 2004 CNS Graphics

## Wanted: Knights To Help Knights

The Knights of Columbus Insurance program provides needed Insurance coverage to over one million policyholders. We currently have in excess of \$43 billion of life insurance in force.

Because of the growth of the Order’s insurance program, we are in need of Knights who can represent the order as agents or, if qualified, even supervisory and/or management positions may be available.

This full-time career opportunity offers:

- Professional level earnings potential
- Non-contributory pension plan
- 401K
- Contributory life and health insurance
- Non-contributory disability plan
- A chance to make a difference in people’s lives ...
- And much more

A pretty impressive list, isn’t it? Would you like to help provide benefits and services to Brother Knights and their families? Would you like to know more about how you can become an insurance representative?

If you are a practical Catholic and are eligible to join the Knights of Columbus, with or without insurance experience, and would like to know more about joining our ranks, mail, fax, or e-mail your response to: James W. Seideman FIC, CLU, Knights of Columbus, P.O. Box 93824, Lubbock, TX 79493, Phone: (806) 785-1670, Toll Free: 1-877-797-5632, Fax: (806) 797-0755, E-mail: kcinsurance@lubb.net



## Ethics and Integrity Workshop Dates

No additional Ethics Workshops are planned before Christmas. Workshops will be scheduled in each deanery in January for any new volunteers and employees, and then in May and June 2005 in anticipation of Vacation Bible School.

## The Three Simple Words

by *Dennis W. Heaney, President, The Christophers*

WASHINGTON – Beginning in college and for a couple of years after, around midnight on New Year's Eve, my Dad and I would exchange calls from our respective parties. The calls were brief, with a few reminiscences and then a "Happy New Year" and "Love you." With that it was back to our gatherings.

The ritual ended early in my marriage, when, having little ones, going out on New Year's Eve wasn't an option for us. I suspect my Mother, concerned about waking the babies, told Dad not to call me at midnight. Truth be told, with those kids in the house, New Year's Eve or not, I was asleep long before midnight.

The calls came to mind recently when I interviewed Jeffrey Marx and Joe Ehrmann for our *Christopher Closeup* series. Jeffrey, a Pulitzer Prize-winning writer, has written a book called *Season for Life*, a story about Joe, a former NFL player and now a minister in Baltimore, Maryland. As a coach and pastor, Joe has developed a program called "Building Men for Others" based on his work with teenage boys. The essence of the program is that a meaningful life focuses on living for others.

Jeffrey's story of the year he spent with Joe and the high school football team he coaches is very moving. He tells of coaches talking about their commitment to love their players and expecting the players to love one another, all the while building a championship team.

The highlight of the book for

me comes when Jeffrey talks about how the year with Joe and his program affected his relationship with his father. Jeffrey is the first to tell you how much he loves his father and how sure he was that his father loved him. But it was difficult for them to speak of that love with one another. One of the poignant but entertaining stories in the book has Jeffrey, at the end of a phone call with his Dad, saying "Love you, Dad" and his father responding "Love you, Son." The father was so excited at that breakthrough that he called Jeffrey's sister to say that they had told each other that they loved one another.

My New Year's conversations with my Dad came to mind while talking to Jeffrey because those calls were the only times we each said "I love you." I know that we both knew the other loved him but apparently we could only say it once a year.

Why is it that we are so hesitant to say "I love you" to our family or a dear friend? We know it, but verbalizing it seems to be so difficult – when it should be so natural. Sometimes, sadly enough, it goes unspoken until it is too late. Isn't it sad when someone dies and we hear a friend or family member say "I wished I'd said that I loved him/her more often?"

Give this some consideration: We are about to start a New Year and maybe God is giving us this great opportunity to promise that as of January 1, 2005 we will start telling others – family and friends – that we love them.

Someone has to break the ice. Why not you?

## All american scholarships now available

by *Ashlee N. Tondre*

SAN ANTONIO – Catholic Life Insurance, the nation's 9th largest fraternal life insurer, is now accepting applications for the 2005 All American Scholar Program. The program awards 25 non-renewable college scholarships in the amount of \$1,000 each to graduating seniors who are **Catholic Life Insurance members**.

The All American Scholar Program will be awarded to students whose academic achievement, lead-

ership skills, and community service set them apart from others. To be eligible, students **must** be a Catholic Life Insurance member at the time of application, be a graduating high school senior, and be enrolled in any private or public college, university or trade school full time beginning in the fall 2005. Scholarship selections will be based on community service, leadership skills and academic achievement. The scholarship winners will be announced in May.

Interested individuals may call the Catholic Life Communications Department at (800) 292-2548 or (210) 828-9921 or visit our web page at [www.cliu.com](http://www.cliu.com) for an application. **All applications must be received in home office by March 1, 2005.**

Founded in 1901, Catholic Life Insurance offers life insurance, IRAs and retirement annuities to businesses and individuals living in Texas, Arizona, Florida, Louisiana, Oklahoma, New Mexico and Mississippi.

## JUSTICE

from page one

December 2, 2004, I was gratified to learn that Fr. Domingo Estrada, OMI, was acquitted on all counts of indecency with a child of which he had been charged by the grand jury in Midland County, Texas. While as Bishop I have always had a primary concern for the rights of anyone who believes that he or she might be a victim of a crime; nevertheless, I am likewise concerned that justice be done. Yesterday, the jury has spoken and has discredited the allegations made by the young man who was the principal prosecuting witness against Fr. Estrada, who had from the beginning maintained his innocence.

I must note that contrary to testimony offered by the family during the trial, at the time when the allegations were first brought to me I had, in fact, offered professional counseling assistance to the young man and his family – an offer which I ordinarily extend to any alleging party – and an offer which, in this case, was declined by the family.

Similarly, the family denied that they had retained an attorney to press a claim against the diocese. To the contrary, I was able to find and transmit to defense counsel, a true copy of a threatening letter mistakenly sent to the Archbishop of San Antonio (rather than to me) expressing an intent to take legal action if the Church did not pay a financial settlement. I declined to do so.

As this trial is now concluded, I wish to thank the good people of the jury who sought to discern the truth throughout the trial and made it their priority to see that justice be done. I similarly pray that all the parties and people involved in these allegations receive God's healing, assistance, and the gift of peace."

## St. Ann's case dismissed

by *Peter Micale, WTA*

MIDLAND – District Judge Robin Darr Thursday dismissed a wrongful death lawsuit filed in 385th District Court after the Sept. 29, 2001 death of a 14-year-old girl who had attended a St. Ann's Catholic Church fair. The law suit was filed by Ratarsha Hutchinson on behalf of her daughter "Lucky." It alleged Lucky died of carbon monoxide poisoning from coming into contact with faulty carnival rides.

Bishop Michael D. Pfeifer, OMI, said on Friday that he had never thought the church or diocese was in any way responsible for Lucky's death at Midland Memorial Hospital. "While we sincerely sympathize with the family in their loss, we have nevertheless been advised the young lady suffered from a chronic health condition and was apparently stricken with a sudden medical crisis that day," Pfeifer said.

"Her death, though tragic, was from causes relating to her health condition. We are always saddened by the death of one of our young people."

Bishop Pfeifer issued the following Press Release on Friday, December 3, 2004:

"Late yesterday afternoon, December 2, 2004, I, as Bishop of the Roman Catholic Diocese of San Angelo, and Rev. Msgr. Larry J. Droll, as Pastor of St. Ann Parish of Midland, were notified by our trial counsel, Mr. Brian Carney of Midland, that a wrongful death lawsuit filed against us in Midland County, Texas has been dismissed. This was filed in 2001 by the family of a young lady who died in Midland Memorial Hospital.

We are always saddened by the untimely and tragic death of one of our young people. While we continue to sincerely sympathize with the family in their loss, nevertheless, we have been advised that the young lady who suffered from a chronic health condition was apparently stricken with a sudden medical crisis that day while attending the St. Ann Family Fair, and her death, though tragic, was from causes relating to her health condition.

The Midland Police, the medical community of the fine city of Midland, and the State Department of Health, conducted a thorough investigation of the incident. Neither the people of St. Ann nor the Diocese acted other than heroically in a vain attempt to save her life.

It is our hope and prayer that this sad chapter in the life of her family can now be closed, and the healing begun. I ask all to pray for all involved in this case. We thank you."





# What has this weekend meant to me and our relationship

## “God is the Man”

by Bishop Michael Pfeifer, OMI

One of the major programs of Christ the King Retreat Center is Engaged Encounter.

Engaged Encounter is a weekend experience that helps to prepare well couples who are contemplating marriage. At the end of the Engaged Encounter weekend, couples are asked to write down their reflections on what this experience has meant to them. I share with you one of the evaluations that was sent to me by a young man who recently made an Engaged Encounter weekend.

### What has this weekend meant to me and our relationship

*Three days ago I know she was my lady but I thought her religion was crazy and I did not want to be in Catholic land.*

*Today my love is strengthened stronger than ever, my belief in us will die, not never, and I don't want to let go when I hold her hand.*

*Next week I will remember that this place is great things were relaxed and, food was ate but I hope Mike Wheeler doesn't join a band.*

*You people are angels and this place was great to give the Lord my thanks I will not hesitate thank you for showing me “God is the Man”.*

## IMMACULATE

from page one

people wrongly assume the Immaculate Conception refers to the conception of Christ. In fact, it refers to the belief that Mary, by special divine favor, was without sin from the moment she was conceived.

But the main stumbling block for many Catholics is original sin.

“People today simply are less and less aware of original sin. And without that awareness, the Immaculate Conception makes no sense,” said one Vatican official.

The late Bishop Fulton Sheen

put it another way in 1974, speaking about the loss of the sense of sin: “It used to be that the Catholics were the only ones to believe in the Immaculate Conception. Now everyone believes he is the immaculately conceived.”

Pope Pius IX proclaimed the dogma in 1854, but the idea that Mary was born without the stain of sin did not appear out of the blue. It took shape after a long and complicated theological debate that, in some respects, still continues.

Already in the earliest Christian times Mary was held to be an ideal model of holiness, and by the eighth century Eastern Christians

were celebrating a feast in honor of Mary’s conception.

Medieval theologians took up the question, but they had to overcome their own biases and biological notions. For example, St. Bernard of Clairvaux argued in the 12th century that the Holy Spirit could not have been involved in anything so base as the conception of a child.

Other theologians were hindered by their belief that the human soul was infused into the fetus 40 or 80 days after conception – and thus Mary as a conceived unborn would have been subject to original sin until that moment.

For centuries, theologians hesitated to say that Mary was completely free from original sin because they thought it would contradict a major tenet of the faith, the universality of redemption.

In the 13th century, the Franciscan Duns Scotus found a new way to look at it, saying that Mary’s special role did not free her from the need of redemption – it simply required a different form of Christ’s mediating grace.

When Pope Pius IX proclaimed the dogma, he cited two key biblical sources. The Book of Genesis relates that God told the serpent that he would “put enmity between you and the woman, and between your offspring and hers. He will crush your head.” Pope Pius and others saw this as a prophecy of the Immaculate Conception.

But their understanding was probably influenced by a scriptural translation now considered inaccurate, which rendered the verse: “She will crush your head.” That’s why there are still so many statues of Mary crushing the head of the serpent with her foot.

The other passage cited by Pope Pius was St. Luke’s account of the Annunciation. The angel Gabriel’s salutation, “Hail, full of grace,” is understood as recognizing that Mary must always have been free from sin — an idea being developed and strengthened by Msgr. Calkins and other Marian experts.

In published articles, Msgr. Calkins has also contributed to a still-simmering debate in Marian theology: whether Mary should be recognized as “co-redemptrix,” or “co-redeemer,”

with Christ. The idea is to recognize that, albeit in a secondary and dependant way, no other human being collaborated in the work of redemption as Mary did.

But to many nonexperts, the title sounds as if the church were “putting Mary in the Trinity,” as one priest remarked. While that is not the intent of the idea’s promoters, the inevitable problem of explanation may be one reason why most Marian experts who met at the Vatican in 1997 opposed such a move; others still support it, however.

Some scholars say the fault line on this issue dates back to the Second Vatican Council. On one side were those who emphasized the analogy between Mary and Christ, stressing Mary’s active collaboration in the work of redemption; on the other side were experts who saw Mary as analogous to the church, embodying the ideal of the church’s response to the Lord.

The latter group, which views Mary more as “woman of faith” than a “mediator,” has dominated Marian scholarship since Vatican II. But some Mariologists view

that as a minimalist approach and say it is too intellectual to really inspire devotion.

In a recently published article on the Immaculate Conception in the Rome journal “Divinitas,” Msgr. Calkins titled a closing section, “The Immaculate Co-redemptrix.” That’s a term some Marian scholars are still hoping will find greater acceptance.

## ADVENT

from page four

it is easy to overlook the one who is the Reason for the Season. The important thing is to give time to Christ individually, and as a family, and to prepare our hearts to receive the new love and grace that He wants to bring to all of us.

Advent is the time to ask ourselves if there is something that is blocking the way of the Lord into our hearts. Is there some way of thinking or judging, some way of speaking or acting, that blocks Christ from being present more fully in our lives? Advent is a time to humbly look at our lives, and to see where we must decrease, so that Christ can increase.

*Merry Christmas from the Diocese of San Angelo and the West Texas Angelus staff!*

## Ecumenism for the 21st century

### What is Ecumenism?

### What can we do to foster Christian Unity?

To explore these and other questions regarding ecumenism join us at one of the following workshops:

**January 23, 2005 (Sunday) 2:00 pm - 4:00 pm**

**Our Lady of San Juan, Midland**

**January 24, 2005 (Monday) 7:00 pm - 9:00 pm**

**Christ the King Retreat Center, San Angelo**

This workshop will be presented in English and Spanish. Presenters are S. Cheryl Erb, RSM and Manuel Hernandez from RENEW International. The invitation to participate in the Ecumenism Workshop is extended to everyone, not just those who are involved in small communities. Parishes that are not involved in RENEW are also invited to participate.

*For more information call the Office of Education and Formation at 325-651-7500.*



# Knights' museum offers early view of Holy Land through lithographs

by Joseph Pronechen  
Catholic News Service

NEW HAVEN, Conn. (CNS) — With its newest exhibit, the Knights of Columbus Museum in New Haven is taking visitors on a trip to the Holy Land by way of the astonishing 19th-century lithographs of David Roberts.

Timed for the Christmas season, the exhibit "Jerusalem and the Holy Land Rediscovered" runs through Jan. 9.

The 90 prints transport visitors not only to Jerusalem, but also to timeless towns such as Nazareth and Bethlehem, to enduring sights along the road to Galilee, and to Petra and Sinai.

Mary Lou Cummings, the

museum's curator, called Roberts' prints "one of the most remarkable sets of lithographs ever to be produced in the art world."

They attracted the public's interest even before they were released from 1842 to 1844 because these were the first detailed pictures of the Holy Land and Near East that Westerners had seen.

The prints, on loan from the Nasher Museum of Art at Duke University in Durham, N.C., come from a rare edition that is in extraordinary condition. They look as if they were just produced.

Carl Anderson, supreme knight and CEO of the Knights of Columbus, said the show goes beyond presenting rare and beautiful depic-

tions of the Middle East in the 19th century.

"We hope the exhibit encourages not only a historical reflection on the Holy Land," he said, "but also a look to the future to see peace and tranquillity and reconciliation."

"In presenting this exhibit," he said, "we invite Christians, Jews and Muslims to focus on the values and beliefs we hold in common, and to share a hope that lasting peace will come to the Holy Land."

Roberts, a Presbyterian and a Scot, who said he was inspired by Jesus to capture images of the Holy Land, set out on an 11-month journey through Palestine and Egypt in 1838-39. He was the first profes-

sional Western artist given permission for such a project.

To avoid attracting attention on the journey, he dressed as a Bedouin as he traveled with escorts and discreet guards.

Visiting every major biblical site and sketching it from many angles, he made a major contribution to the growing field of biblical archaeology.

To produce these extraordinary prints, Roberts teamed with Belgian Louis Haghe, Europe's leading lithographer. With delicate sand tones as a base, they are all hand-tinted especially in the rich colors of the people and their dress.

Cummings called it an "incredible union done in the golden age of lithography in Europe."

Visitor Maureen Delahunt called the art magnificent. "It's so evocative of that whole part of the world," she said, remarking how details like the Bedouin colors stand out in such "stark contrast with the stone."

"The beauty of this exhibit is

that it appeals to many different kinds of people, religions and nationalities," Delahunt added.

Roberts' views of Jerusalem and the shrines are riveting, especially the interior of the massive early fourth-century Church of the Holy Sepulcher. Where Jesus' cross is believed to have stood, he includes priests in elaborate vestments at worship.

More than 30 international visitors distinguished by different clothing surround the stone on which Christ was anointed for burial.

"The artist captures in a unique way the spirituality that is so palpable in the Holy Land to people of every faith," observed David Waren, Connecticut's regional director of the Anti-Defamation League. "It's a remarkable exhibit."

Anderson said the exhibit "points to a time in the not-so-distant past where there was peace in the area among people of different faiths. And we think that must be the future."

# Head of bishops' child protection office plans to resign in February

by Agostino Bono  
Catholic News Service

WASHINGTON (CNS) — Kathleen McChesney, who set up the U.S. bishops' office to help dioceses implement child sex abuse prevention policies, plans to resign Feb. 25 after publication of the 2004 diocesan compliance audits.

Children are safer now under the church's policies but the bishops' Office of Child and Youth Protection will continue to function, McChesney said Nov. 15 to reporters covering the bishops' general fall meeting.

McChesney, 53, became the first executive director of the office Dec. 1, 2002. During her tenure she had disagreements with some bishops who opposed her idea that diocesan compliance audits should continue annually after the initial 2003 audit.

McChesney, a former FBI agent, said that as of yet she has no job plans for when she leaves her current post.

She told reporters that her two-

year contract called for her to set up the office, conduct a diocesan compliance audit and establish ongoing procedures to assure implementation of the bishops' policies.

These have been accomplished, she said, noting that she is staying beyond the term of her contract to finish the 2004 audits, which will be the second round of annual audits.

"I believe I've done what I was asked to do — set up an office and adequate structures," she said.

"Now is the time for other people with other ideas — and hopefully inspiration — to come forward and continue because the work is important," she said.

Because of extensive church prevention programs put in place since the clergy sex abuse scandal broke in 2002, the church now has "lots of people with lots of knowledge" who can replace her, she said.

"I am only saddened by the fact that there are many victims still out

there who are reluctant to come forward," she said. "There are people out there still suspicious about how the church will react."

At the same time more than 2,000 victims are receiving services through church outreach programs across the country, said McChesney.

"The outreach we provide is better than it has ever been," she said.

"The audits lead me to believe that most dioceses are implementing most of the charter," she said, referring to the 2002 "Charter for the Protection of Children and Young People," which lays out the bishops' prevention policies.

In many cases, noncompliance results from a lack of resources and personnel in a diocese, problems which the child protection office tries to help resolve, she said.

McChesney said that the child protection office is called for in the charter and needs to continue because its work is growing.

One of the office's main tasks has been to help dioceses in deter-

mining how to set up programs and procedures mandated in the charter but not spelled out.

Before leaving, she said, she hopes to formalize the system of gathering of data to keep track of the number of new abuse cases being reported.

Msgr. Francis Maniscalco, the bishops' spokesman, told reporters that a search committee will seek a replacement for McChesney.

Earlier this year, McChesney's deputy, Sheila Horan, announced she was retiring at the end of 2004. McChesney said that she hopes to replace Horan by the end of December.

As part of her job, McChesney traveled around the country to visit diocesan programs and give talks.

In an Oct. 26 talk in Cincinnati, she said that the sex abuse crisis has eroded the moral authority of the church, demoralized lay and clerical church workers, and caused grave financial problems for many dioceses.

At the time of her hiring, McChesney was the FBI's executive assistant director for law enforcement services. She was the

agency's highest-ranking woman and the No. 3 official at the bureau. She oversaw the work of 4,700 employees and controlled multiple budgets totaling more than \$1.1 billion.

## SCHEDULE

from page two

11:00 a.m. Midland, Blessing of New Life Center at 2101 West Wall Street at 5:00 p.m.

January 22: San Angelo, Cathedral Church of the Sacred Heart - Pro Life Mass at 11:00 a.m.

January 23: Brownwood, St. Mary - Mass at 11:00 a.m. and meet afterwards with Pastor, Pastoral and Finance Councils

January 24-26: Dallas - The National Catholic Bioethics Workshop for Bishops

January 27: Abilene, Holy Family - Bless new building at 6:30 p.m.

January 28-30: Midland - YOUTH 2000

January 31: Menard, Sacred Heart - 7:00 p.m. Meet with Pastor and Pastoral and Finance Councils



## CHRISTMAS

from page two

incarnation. The great mystery of the incarnation is that Christ shares his experience with each one of us. And he actively invites each one of us to enter into his or her own experience of God the father, sharing God's love.

The child in the manger, born like each one of us, reminds us that our God loves us, that our God has fulfilled the promise of giving us salvation. There is a little poster, a picture, that has great meaning for me, and I believe all of you have seen it. It is the picture, the poster, which shows a little boy resting his chin on his folded arms, and we hear him say: "I know that I am somebody special because God doesn't make junk."

The infant in the manger reminds us that our God does not make junk. The infant in the manger reminds us that even though we have not always honored and respected the image of God in us, that our God loves us, that our God forgives us. The infant Christ tells us that we are special, and that we all share in a certain specialness because we were made by God. Each of us is a uniquely created child of God.

The late and great archbishop Fulton J. Sheen once said, "if God wanted to reveal himself to birds, God would have become a bird." But God wanted to reveal himself to human beings, to those creatures made in the very image and likeness of God. And the best way that God could reveal God to those special creatures is by becoming one of them, by becoming human. The child in the manger, reminds us that our God loves us to the point of becoming one of us.

The child in the manger brings us God's hope, and offers us the gifts that our world so much seeks, which are the gifts of hope, trust and peace. What is hope? Hope is simply the following philosophy which says, "hang on, even when you think you are not going to make it." Do not fear, says the angel of Christmas. Hope means that we should not fear in the face of difficulties and trials. The hope which God gives us reminds us that even though we may fail, that we may sin, that possibilities of new life are everywhere.

The Christmas angel of our gospel first brought the message of hope and peace to the poor, to the shepherds who were living out in the fields watching their flock of sheep. The savior in the manger, the Christ child, tells us where true peace lies. Some people believe that peace means the absence of problems. But you know, it is never the problems that really get us down. It is what we let the problems do to us. Peace is choosing a different approach to life by accepting God's love and grace to make a new beginning. It is when we do not let our problems depress us, but rather impress us with new possibilities that our reactions to problems determine the peace we experience. Problems are opportunities for growth, and they can bring peace into our lives when we take our problems to the child in the manger.

Christmas celebrates the promise of God's gift of love and salvation for our world. This promise was fulfilled by God not by sending us a mighty warrior, a powerful king, or a great political figure, but rather a baby, an infant lying in a manger.

The baby in the manger is the fulfillment of God's promise, and reminds us that our salvation is found by becoming his disciples, following in his footsteps, and living his gospel. The infant in the manger also reminds us that his gospel, his way of life, at times, will be very different from the so-called gospel of the world, the gospel of power, privilege and position.

The humble, helpless infant in the manger would grow up to turn the value systems of his day upside down, asking people to accept that one becomes first by being last. He would tell us that it is better to forgive than to get even, and you find your life by losing it. He would also preach, especially by his example, that we that you and I – are to love our enemies, instead of vanquishing or destroying them. He would give us the challenge that the way to serenity and peace is through surrender of control in a world that values control above almost anything else. He would teach us by his example of apparent failure and defeat on the cross that one can be victorious even in what seems to be failure, and that every burden contains within it the seeds of a

blessing.

The tiny infant in the manger fulfills all of our promises and reverses the way of thinking about who God is, and how God behaves, and that we are most like our God when we are humble, when we love and serve one another. The mystery of the promise of Christmas is still at work in our world today – in you and in me.

## NAVIDAD

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La Navidad celebra el cumplimiento de la promesa de dios que nosotros llamamos el misterio de la encarnación. El gran misterio de la encarnación es que Cristo comparte su experiencia con cada uno de nosotros. Y el nos invita activamente a cada uno de nosotros que entremos en nuestra propia experiencia de dios padre, compartiendo el amor de dios.

El niño en el pesebre, nacido como cada uno de nosotros, nos recuerda que nuestro dios nos ama, que nuestro dios ha cumplido la promesa de darnos la salvación. Hay un póster pequeño, un retrato, que tiene gran significado para mí, y creo que todos lo hayan visto. Es el retrato, el póster, que demuestra a un niño descansando su cabeza sobre sus brazos cruzados, y oímos que dice: "Yo se que soy alguien especial porque dios no hace basura."

El niño en el pesebre nos recuerda que nuestro dios no hace basura. El niño en el pesebre nos recuerda que aunque no siempre hayamos honrado y respetado la imagen de dios en nosotros, que nuestro dios nos ama, que nuestro dios nos perdona. El niño Cristo nos dice que somos especial, y que todos compartimos en algo especial porque somos hechos por dios.

El difunto y gran arzobispo Fulton J. Sheen una vez dijo, "si dios hubiera querido revelarse a los pájaros, se hubiera convertido en pájaro." Pero dios quiso revelarse a los seres humanos, a esas criaturas hechas en la imagen y semejanza de dios. Y la mejor manera que dios podía revelarse a esas criaturas especiales fue en hacerse un ser humano. El niño en el pesebre nos trae la esperanza de dios, y nos ofrece regalos que nuestro mundo busca, que son los regalos de esperanza y

paz. ¿Que es la esperanza? Esperanza es simplemente la filosofía que dice, "hay que aguntar, especialmente cuando piensas que no puedes seguir. Que no lo vayas a poder." No temas, dice el angel de Navidad. La esperanza significa que no debemos tenerles miedo a las dificultades y pruebas. La esperanza que nos da dios nos recuerda que aunque fallemos, quizás pequeños, las posibilidades de una nueva vida están por alrededor de nosotros.

El ángel de Navidad de nuestro evangelio les trajo primero a los pobres el mensaje de esperanza y paz, a los pastores quienes estaban viviendo en el campo vigilando a sus rebaños de ovejas. El salvador en el pesebre, el niño Jesús, no dice donde está la paz verdadera. Algunas personas piensan que la paz significa la ausencia de problemas. Pero se sabe que nunca son los problemas que nos llevan abajo. Es lo que dejamos que nos hagan los problemas. La paz es escoger una nueva manera de enfocar la vida, aceptando el amor de dios y la gracia para comenzar de nuevo. Es cuando no dejamos que problemas nos depriman, más bien que nos impresionen con nuevas posibilidades que nuestras reacciones a los problemas determinen la paz que sentimos. Los problemas son oportunidades para crecimiento, y puedan traer la paz a nuestras vidas cuando le llevamos nuestros problemas al niño en el pesebre.

La Navidad celebra la promesa del regalo de amor y salvación de dios para nuestro mundo. Esta promesa fue cumplida por dios no en mandar un guerrero fuerte, ni un rey poderoso, ni una gran figura política, más bien un niño acostado en el pesebre.

El niño en el pesebre es el cumplimiento de la promesa de dios, y nos recuerda que nuestra salvación se encuentra en hacernos discípulos de el, siguiendo sus pasos, y su evangelio viviente. El niño en el pesebre nos recuerda que su evangelio, su modo de vida, a veces, será muy diferente del tal llamado evangelio del mundo, el evangelio de poder, privilegio y posición.

El humilde, indefenso niño en

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el pesebre crecerá y volteará el sistema de valores de su tiempo. Pi-diéndole a la gente que acepten que uno es el primero siendo el último. El nos dirá que es mejor perdonar que vengarse, y encontrarán sus vidas perdiéndolas. El también predicará, especialmente por ejemplo, que nosotros – tú y yo – debemos amar a nuestros enemigos, en lugar de vencerlos y destruirlos. El nos dará el reto para encontrar serenidad y paz por medio de perder el control del mundo que valora el control sobre todo lo demás. El nos enseñaría con su ejemplo del fracaso aparente y derrota en la cruz que uno puede ser victorioso aún en lo que parece ser una derrota, y que cada carga contiene semillas de bendiciones.

El pequeño niño en el pesebre cumple todas nuestras promesas y invierte la manera de pensar sobre quien es dios, y como dios se comporta, y que nosotros nos parecemos más a dios cuando somos humildes, cuando nos amamos y servimos unos a otros. El misterio de la promesa de la Navidad sigue trabajando en nuestro mundo actual – en tí y en mí.

*Pray for Peace*



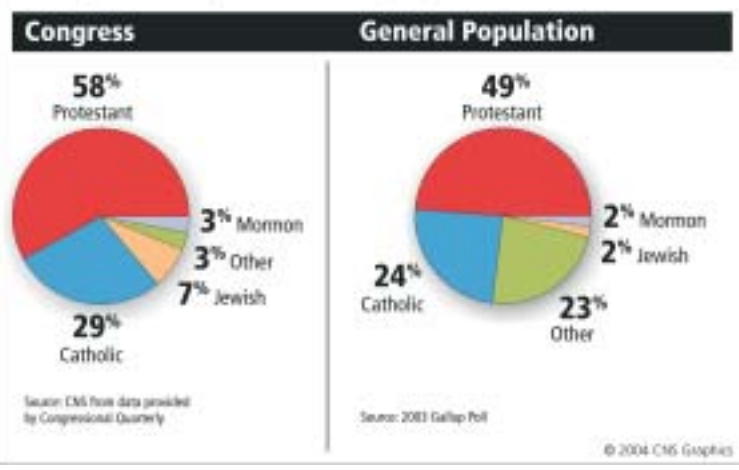
# All invited to two 40th anniversaries



*by Bishop Michael Pfeifer, OMI*  
 SAN ANGELO – Mark your calendars – All are invited to a Mass of Thanksgiving that will be offered on December 21, 2004 at 6:30 p.m. at the Cathedral Church of the Sacred Heart to honor the 40th anniversary of priesthood of Bishop Michael Pfeifer, OMI, and the 40th anniversary of the Consecration of the Cathedral Church of the Sacred Heart in San Angelo.  
 Priests who attend are most welcome to concelebrate this Mass of Thanksgiving with Bishop Pfeifer.

## American Faithful

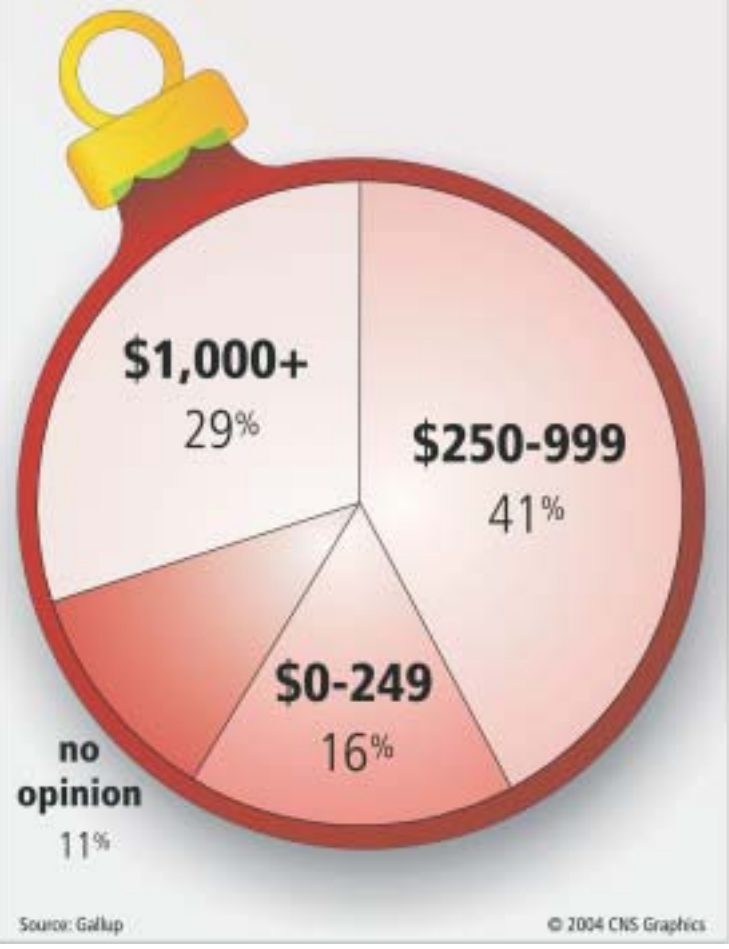
Here is a breakdown of the religious affiliations of Congress as compared to the U.S. population



A comparative study of religious affiliations shows that the religious makeup of Congress closely resembles that of the U.S. population. (CNS illustrations by Anthony DeFeo)

## HOLIDAY SPENDING

Most U.S. consumers say they will spend less than \$1,000 on Christmas gifts this year. For comparison, the average household donates more than \$1,500 annually.



Most U.S. consumers say they will spend less than \$1,000 on Christmas gifts this year. By comparison, the average household donates more than \$1,500 annually. (CNS graphic by Anthony DeFeo)



A painting of Mary, Jesus and Joseph sits on a windowsill at Holy Family Catholic Mission in the village of Blackwater, part of the Gila River Indian Community located south of Phoenix. A resident painted the image with features of the local people. The feast of the Holy Family is Dec. 26. (Oct. 29, 2004) (CNS photo by Nancy Wiechec)