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LENT: It's about more than giving something up. Pgs. 8-9

West Texas ANGELUS

Serving the Diocese of San Angelo, Texas

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FEBRUARY 2007

Midland woman retires to direct Catholic charity full time

By Jimmy Patterson
Editor
West Texas Angelus

MIDLAND. Following a 40-year career in newspapers, Mary Hardin stepped down from her advertising executive position with the *Midland Reporter-Telegram* in January to assume the full-time directorship of Helping

Hands, one of Midland's leading charitable organizations, founded by the Rev. Jim Bridges, pastor of St. Stephen's.

Hardin, a native of Hudson, N.Y., refuses to take any credit for the running of the organization, giving it instead – all of it – to Bridges. Another thing she won't take is a paycheck:

Hardin's role as E.D. is without pay.

"We try to help out our clients with total need," Hardin said. "We don't really have any priorities in taking care of the poor. We kind of follow Mother Teresa's rule: you take care of one person and then when you're done, you take care of another."

(Please See **HARDIN/6**)



Mary Hardin, right, and Fr. James Bridges of St. Stephen's in Midland.

The Online Angelus

Please stop by The Online Angelus, updated Monday-Friday with daily readings, events in the diocese, reprints of stories in the Angelus, Catholic News Service headlines, feature stories and any breaking news that may be occurring in the Diocese of San Angelo. You can find us at <http://theonlineangelus.wordpress.com>.

If your parish would like something posted on The Online Angelus, please send the information to JimmyLPatterson@grandecom.net.

Stories Welcome

We're always looking for stories on West Texas Catholics at The Angelus.

While it is somewhat easier to learn of people in the diocese's larger cities, sometimes the smaller towns and parishes seem to get overlooked. We want to try to include parishes of all sizes in our coverage in *The Angelus*, but we often won't know unless you tell us.

If you know someone who exhibits their faith in a special way in their day to day activities -- regardless where they live or what parish they attend -- please drop a note to JimmyLPatterson@grandecom.net.

Coming of Age

My first big failure with honesty occurred at the ripe age of 7. A friend dared me to steal a pack of Sweet Tart candies from the local convenience store using a fake nickel if I wanted to avoid being banned from her jump rope game at recess. I did it. / Pg. 13

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YOUTH 2000

Father Solanus, originally from Midland, leads a discussion Sunday morning during the Youth 2000 retreat at St. Stephen's in Midland. Story, Photos/Pg. 4

PHOTO BY
MARK STERKEL



Hungry Hearts: Conversion a lifelong process

By Jimmy Patterson
Editor

SAN ANGELO. The deeper we dig into our faith, the hungrier we become for an even greater knowledge and understanding of God. Such is the

theory of Tom Zanzig (at right), keynote speaker at the annual Diocesan Conference Day, Feb. 3, at the San Angelo Convention Center. The conversion process, Zanzig said, is a lifelong process.

(See **ZANZIG/5**)



From the Bishop's Desk

This is the fasting that I wish: A plan for Lent from Isaiah

Taken from Isaiah 58:6



Bishop
Michael Pfeifer

By Bishop Michael Pfeifer, OMI

The season of Lent is traditionally a time to center our lives more on the suffering and death of Christ, making more time for prayer, fasting and penance to prepare us for the greatest feast of Christianity—the Resurrection of Christ that we celebrate on Easter. While the

Church has certain norms for fasting and abstinence during the season of Lent, I propose here a plan of fasting as given by the great prophet, Isaiah, that will truly help us to center our lives on Christ and on loving our neighbor.

"This, rather, is the fasting that I wish: releasing those bound unjustly, untying the thongs of the yoke; Setting free the

(Please See **PFEIFER/9**)

Pfeifer: W. Texas in the throes of a drug epidemic

By Bishop Michael Pfeifer, OMI

The Present Situation

The recent drug busts that netted some 50 drug dealers in the rural communities of Ozona, Big Lake, Rankin and McCamey—and perhaps others—have sparked comments by

▶ A Pastoral Message on the Drug Issue

many that in these communities, and others, that the drug situation has reached epidemic proportions. From all reports that have been received, there is evidence that many youth in these communities are involved in heavy alcohol or drug use and other delinquent behavior that is detrimental to the well being of all the people of these communities. In these communities, linked to the drug situation, is domestic

(Please See **LETTER/11**)

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*Lenten Coverage
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mitting letters.



Rwandan holocaust survivor to speak in S. Angelo

By **Becky Benes**

It was a cold, rainy and dreary Good Friday, 2006. My children were happily playing in their rooms, the house was somewhat clean, the laundry was washing and I was desperate to escape. I searched the T.V. to no avail, so I searched the house for anything that could take my mind somewhere else.

The only thing I found was a book. A book that was given to me as a "free gift with purchase." A book about a tragedy in some far off place involving people I did not know. A book I had avoided for two months. A book that, since my reading



it, has changed my life forever. That book is "Left to Tell: Discovering God Amidst the Rwandan Holocaust," by Immaculee Ilibagiza. Immaculee is a survivor of the Rwandan Holocaust and she believes she was left to tell the story of her people and her spiritual experience to bring awareness and peace to our planet.

The genocide began Easter weekend 1994, when the Rwandan President's plane was shot down. That very day the entire country shut down, businesses and schools closed, tending the fields stopped and the business of killing ensued. The tribal Hutu extremists began the slaughter of approximately 800,000 Tutsi tribal people in 91 days.

(Please See **IMMACULEE/10**)

Immaculee Ilibagiza March 8 in San Angelo

Presentation information: Immaculee will be the keynote speaker at the El Camino Girl Scout Women of Distinction Award luncheon, March 8th, 11:30 to 1p.m at First United Methodist Church in San Angelo; cost for this event is \$50. All proceeds support the El Camino Girl Scouts. She will also speak to the public that evening at the First Baptist Church from 7p.m. to 8 p.m. cost is free; however, there will be a love offering for the Girl Scouts of Africa.

For more information, call Becky Benes, 325-949-1450; hiyalltx@verizon.net or Melinda Springer at ECGS council: 325-655-8962.

Books are available at Trudo's and Hastings.

If you would like to send contributions to help underwrite this event, please send checks to El Camino Girl Scout Council, 304 W. Ave. A, San Angelo, TX 769040

DIOCESAN BRIEFS

'Courageous Love'

Courageous Love is a Bible Study on Holiness for Women. You are invited to join a bible study for women that examines the teaching of Sacred Scripture on women and the feminine pursuit of holiness for women of all ages and walks of life. If you are interested, please call the Our Lady of Guadalupe-Midland parish office, 432.682.2581, to reserve your spot so we can order your study book. This group meets Saturday mornings at 10 am.

Job posting

St. Stephen's Parish in Midland is currently recruiting for a full time Youth Minister. Qualifications: Bachelors Degree and 1-2 years of paid experience working with youth in a parish setting. For more information you can log onto www.catholicjobs.com or contact Dennis Robson, Pastoral Associate, 432.520.7394 or email at drobson@st.wtx-coxmail.com.

Peter's Pence Donation

Bishop Michael Pfeifer has announced that the 2006 diocesan collection for Peter's Pence to help the Holy See totaled \$32,898.59, and the diocesan contribution for 2006 for the USCCB Conference Assessment and the '06 Canon 1271 Contribution were \$21,531 each, meeting 100 percent of the diocesan goal.

World Day of the Sick

On **Sunday, Feb. 11**, the Catholic Church throughout the world will celebrate the 15th World Day of the Sick. The principle celebration of this day will be held in Seoul, S. Korea. On this special day, the Church turns her eyes to those who suffer and calls attention especially to the incurably ill, many who are dying from terminal diseases. There will be a special ANOINTING OF THE SICK at the 1:30 Sunday Mass at Our Lady of Guadalupe Church and Shrine.

Soup Kitchen Project

The Valentine's Day Soup Kitchen project and the Ambassadors of Peace and Love are looking for volunteers to help with this year's lunch, **Wednesday, Feb. 14**, 11 am-1 pm., at Wesley United Methodist Church Soup

A letter from Bishop Pfeifer

FEBRUARY 2007

Dear kind friends:

Pope Benedict XVI, in his first encyclical, God is Love (Deus Caritas Est), writes that "Love is the light – and in the end, the only light – that can always illuminate a world grown dim and give us the courage needed to keep living and working" (no. 39).

With a love that brings radiant light, Catholics in the United States help through the Collection to Aid The Church in Central and Eastern Europe to build parishes in many distant, unknown places. Your generous donations support seminaries, social service programs, youth ministry, pastoral centers, schools, church construction and renovation, and the spreading of the Gospel message through the mass media.

Your compassionate concern for the universal Church brings Christ's light to people and places once covered by a pall of darkness.

Spread the radiant light of love through your generous support of the Collection to Aid the Church in Central and Eastern Europe which will be taken up in the Diocese of San Angelo on Ash Wednesday, February 21, 2007. Thank you for your past generous assistance and pray for our sisters and brothers who are still striving to make a new beginning in these former communist countries.

May God bless you and all your families.

-- *Sincerely in Christ and Mary,*
Most Reverend Michael D. Pfeifer, OMI, Bishop of San Angelo

Kitchen. Volunteers are needed to cook, serve, decorate and entertain. We also need boxes of chocolates. We will be feeding between 60-100 people. Other needs: big pans of dessert to serve at the end of the meal, pre-packaged salads, help with the grocery etc. Every contribution helps make the event that much more wonderful. For information contact Deborah Michalewicz at 657-4354 or 484-3365 or Rashda Khan at 949-1232. The Ambassadors of Peace and Love is a group of a group of 2 Jewish, 2 Muslim and 2 Christian volunteers in San Angelo.

Men's ACTS retreat

St. Margaret of Scotland Parish in San Angelo will be hosting a Men's ACTS retreat on **Feb. 22-25** at Christ The King Retreat Center in San Angelo. This is an unforgettable weekend experience to get away and renew you faith with the Lord. Please register quickly due to the limited number of spaces by calling Margie at Christ The King Retreat Center (325-651-5352).

EDICTAL SUMMONS

Case: Alldredge -- Vaughn No: SO 07/03

The Tribunal Office of the Catholic Diocese of San Angelo Nila Janan Vaughn and her whereabouts unknown.

You are hereby summoned to appear before the Tribunal of the Catholic Diocese of San Angelo, 804 Ford St., San Angelo, Texas, 76905, on or before the 28th day of February, 2007. Mr. Thomas C. Burke, MCL, JCL, to answer to the petition of James Russell Alldredge, now introduced before the Diocesan Tribunal in an action styled James R. Alldredge and Nila J. Vaughn, Petition for the Declaration of INvalidity of Marriage," said petition being identified as CASE: ALLDREDGE--VAUGHN; PROTOCOL NO. SO. 07/03, on the tribunal docket of the Diocese of San Angelo.

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

Given at the Tribunal of the Diocese of San Angelo on the 19th day of January, 2007.

-- **Thomas C. Burke, MCL, JCL, Ponens**

Preparing to receive Christ worthily in the Holy Eucharist (Pt. 1)

By Bishop Michael Pfeifer, OMI

During their November, 2006 meeting, the U.S. Catholic Bishops published an important pastoral statement on the necessity of preparing to receive Christ worthily in the Eucharist. The official title of this statement is "Happy Are Those Who Are Called to His Supper: On Preparing to Receive Christ Worthily in the Eucharist." This statement stresses how all Catholics who are going to receive Communion should prepare well for the reception of the great gift of Christ's Body and Blood in the Eucharist. It also outlines reasons when one should refrain from receiving Communion.

The Bishops point out that those who decide appropriately to refrain receiving Holy Communion, nevertheless participate in the Mass, because in hearing the word of God and responding to it through acclamations, singing, and prayerful reflection, they can allow that word to help them to become worthy to receive the greatest gift Christ has left His Church.

Mortal sin, public scandal, and lack of adherence to

Church teaching are among reasons to refrain from receiving Communion, as the bishops clarify in this statement.

In this article, and in a subsequent article in the next edition of the *West Texas Angelus*, I am sharing with you highlights of this important statement on the teaching of the Church as regards what we should do to prepare to receive Christ worthily in the Eucharist.

The celebration of the Mass is the center of the life of the Church. The heart of the Mass is the eucharistic prayer, for through this prayer Christ's sacrifice is both recalled and made present, and we give our thanks and praise to God. The consummation of the Mass, however, occurs in holy communion, when we eat and drink the body and blood of Christ. At each Eucharistic liturgy, Jesus speaks his healing word to us and gives to us his life-giving body and blood—his very self.

WHAT DO WE BELIEVE ABOUT HOLY COMMUNION?

Holy communion is a sharing in the eucharist in which

Christ is truly present. The priest, recalling the words and actions of Jesus at the Last Supper, consecrates the bread and wine, which are changed by the power of the Holy Spirit into the body and blood of Christ. This is why the church has traditionally employed the word *transubstantiation* to describe the change that takes place. The substance (what something is) of bread and wine is totally changed into the substance of Christ's body and blood. While the appearance of bread and wine remain, the risen Lord Jesus is actually present, and so it is he who is actually received in holy communion—body and blood, soul and divinity.

WHAT IS THE SIGNIFICANCE OF BEING UNITED TO CHRIST IN HOLY COMMUNION?

The Catechism of the Catholic Church teaches that "the principal fruit of receiving the eucharist in holy communion is an intimate union with Christ Jesus." This union encompasses at least three significant elements.

Please See **EUCHARIST/10**

National Black and Indian Collection set for March 4

By Bishop Michael Pfeifer

Together we are the Church and we help each other. We are especially the Church when we reach out to help our brothers and sisters who are most in need and see in them the very face of Jesus Christ. It is with much gratitude that I write to you for the past cooperation that you have given to the National Black and Indian collection. Much of your financial assistance was given to Archbishop Alfred Hughes in New Orleans and other bishops where there was so much devastation caused by the hurricanes and flooding. The financial assistance to the hurricane area certainly helped—but it will be a decade or more before the evangelization ministry, liturgies and programs are back to normal.

In this letter, I encourage you to be generous to the National Black and Indian collection that will be taken up in our Diocese on March 4, 2007. This collection began in the Church in 1885, and is the oldest national collection and has been serving the American Indian and Black communities without even one year of interruption. As I pointed out already, the collection last year played a big part in being able to allocate special grants to the areas affected by the hurricanes and flooding. The generosity of people throughout

the United States and in our Diocese was overwhelming for this collection which was a big success and assisted so many of our sisters and brothers in a moment of crisis.

Besides the continued assistance needed for the hurricane victims, there are dioceses that span the United States who every year count on the annual allocations from this collection so that they can continue the Church's work of evangelization, and developing programs that help our people with their education, their spiritual development and their total human development.

I ask everyone in our Diocese to be as generous as possible to this 2007 National Black and Indian collection that will be taken on Sunday, March 4. As I express my gratitude for your past assistance, let us make this collection another good one, knowing that we are sharing in rebuilding the efforts of the Church that has suffered so very much. Most of all, let us ask God's blessings for the success of this collection and on the people and many ministries who benefit from your generosity.

*Your brother in Christ and Mary,
Most Rev. Michael D. Pfeifer
Bishop of San Angelo*

Fr. George celebrates 30 years

Father George Thirumangalam, CMI (order of the Carmelites of Mary Immaculate) celebrated thirty years of having been ordained into the priesthood on December 28, 2006.

Born in India in 1947, he was named Vargis. His parents were Joseph and Annamma Chacko. He has one brother and a sister, and also has three nieces and one nephew.

He graduated high school in 1963 and at that time joined the Carmelites as an aspirant to the priesthood. Three years later in 1966 he made his religious profession of the vows of chastity, obedience and poverty.

While a student at the seminary from 1967 through 1977 he completed studies in philosophy, economics, public administration, and government.

Ordained December 28, 1976, he continued his studies and earned his Bachelor's Degree in Theology and graduated from the seminary in 1977.

He attended graduate school and took a Masters Degree in English Language and Literature. In 1981 he took a position as a professor of English at the University of Kuriakose. He would serve in that capacity for 18 years; at the same time, he served as pastor of a parish of neo-Catholics from 1982-1987. From 1987 through 1999 he was a chaplain to a community of religious sisters (nuns).

In 1999 he arrived in the United States where he joined the Diocese of San Angelo May 9, 1999.

After a six-week's crash course in Spanish Father George was assigned as priest of St Patrick's Parish in Brady. He served there until May 1, 2001 at which time he was assigned to St. Joseph's Parish in Stanton. He returned to Brady Jan 2, 2004.

He returned to Brady January 2, 2004.

Several area priests joined and assisted Father George in offering the Mass. They included Father Joseph Vathalloor from the Eldorado Parish Our Lady of Guadalupe, Father Baskar Morugubi, St Joseph's in Rowena, Father Romanus Akamike of St. Joseph's in Eden, Father Michael Udegbunam from The Sacred Heart Church in Menard. Also assisting in the service was Deacon Charlie Evans of Brady.



Fr. George Thirumangalam, left, cuts his 30th anniversary cake.

Serving as ushers were three members of the Knights of Columbus, they included Jerry Engler and Phillip Martinez of Brownwood and Arley Maguinness of Brady.

Some members of the local clergy association were on hand to lend support of the solemn occasion.

Following the service, a meal prepared by Robert Silvera was served to some 100 people.

Father Joseph of Eldorado told the parishioners present that he and Father George were from the same community; he added however, that he was only three years old when the ordination occurred.

At the end of the meal Anna Alfaro presented Father George a framed copy of all his stops during his priesthood. She also read and presented him with a poem by an author unknown entitled "The Hands of Holy Orders"

The poem which recited in part the many sacraments the priest dispenses with his hands,

Part of it read: "We wish we could take you by the hand and stand in the busiest intersection in town and shout to the world, look everyone... this is our beloved priest in whom we are well pleased...."

Thank you for faithfully loving and serving us. We are so proud that you are OUR beloved priest."



Bishop Pfeifer dialogues with youth in the diocese about religious beliefs and young people.

Youth, bishop have dialogue about religion

By S. Adelina Garcia, OSF

Sunday, January 7, 2007 young people gathered at Christ The King Retreat Center in San Angelo to meet with Bishop Michael Pfeifer on the National Study on Youth and Religion (religious beliefs and practices of young people). S. Adelina Garcia gave an overview of the study to those present and then gave an opportunity for feedback. The afternoon gave Bishop Pfeifer an opportunity to listen to what the young people had to say on the study.

The youth present affirmed many of the findings of the study. The adults met separately and expressed their concerns in the area of youth catechesis and youth ministry. All expressed thanks for the opportunity to share their ideas with the bishop. Both Bishop Pfeifer and the staff of the Office of Education and Formation were pleased with the feedback and will take that into consideration in the ministry to the youth.

The day ended with Sunday Liturgy presided by Bishop Pfeifer. Parishes represented were St. Ann-Midland, Holy Family-Abilene, Our Lady of Lourdes-Andrews, St. Patrick-Brady, St. Ann-Sonora, St. Mary-Odessa and St. Mary-Brownwood.

YOUTH 2000



Father Terry reads scripture to the youth during the Youth 2000 retreat January 27, at St. Stephen's Catholic Church in Midland.

560 youths experience Youth 2000

MIDLAND. Over 550 youths representing 26 parishes were on hand Jan. 26-28 at St. Stephen in Midland for the Youth 2000 retreat, a weekend featuring Franciscan Friars of the Renewal from New York. The retreat also featured the Rev. Fr. Solanus, an ordained Franciscan priest whose home parish is St. Stephen's in Midland.

"The building at St. Stephen's that had once been a basketball gym was spiritually transformed into a sanctuary with the actual presence of the body, blood, soul and divinity of Jesus Christ," said Dennis Robson, Director of Religious Education at St. Stephen's. "From all the amazing speakers and their phenomenal messages to the lively music it was truly a life-changing experience for all."

Youths came from throughout the diocese and

also from parishes in Hobbs, N.M., for the powerful weekend of spiritual transformation.

One young adult leader said the most intense moments for her came when teenagers spoke to the crowd professing they did not want to attend the event, but had come away changed because of the messages they had received.

"As one youth said, 'I was transformed, I felt unworthy, I bowed with reverence and wept,'" Robson noted.

San Angelo Bishop Michael Pfeifer led a celebration of the Eucharist as the weekend concluded and he and seven other priests were on hand to lead the Sacrament of Reconciliation.

Several Franciscan priests and brothers were also present at the retreat, which normally visits hosting parishes every other year.



Holy Communion is offered, above, and time spent in prayer, at left, at the Youth 2000 Retreat at St. Stephen's in Midland in January.

Photos by Mark Sterkel

DIOCESAN DATES**Bishop's Calendar****FEBRUARY**

8 -- ABILENE, St. Francis – Pastoral Visit with the Pastor and People of the Parish at 6:30 p.m.

9 -- SAN ANGELO, Diocesan Pastoral Center – Presbyteral Council meeting 10:00 a.m. to 12:30 p.m.; 1:00 to 4:30 p.m. – Sacred Heart Cathedral – Workshop on Marriage for Priests by Father Robert Ruhnke, C.S.S.R.

10 -- SAN ANGELO, Sacred Heart Cathedral – Scout Awards Mass at 5:00 p.m.

11-13 -- AUSTIN, Texas Conference of Churches

15-- SAN ANGELO, Diocesan Pastoral Center – Personnel Board meeting at 12:30 p.m.

16 -- SAN ANGELO, Diocesan Pastoral Center – Staff Mass at 8:30 a.m. and Staff Meeting at 11 a.m.

18 -- MERKEL, Our Mother of Mercy – Mass at 11:30 a.m.

20 -- SAN ANGELO, Holy Angels – Presentation to RCIA at 6:30 p.m.

22 -- AUSTIN – Give Opening Prayer for Texas Legislature

24 -- SAN ANGELO, United Methodist Church – Ecumenical Program – “Pilgrims on a Common Journey”

25 -- SAN ANGELO, Rite of Election at Sacred Heart Cathedral at 2:30 p.m.

27 -- BIG LAKE, St. Margaret – Confirmation at 6:30 p.m.

28 -- SAN ANGELO, Mass at Newman Center at 12:00 noon

MARCH

1 -- SAN ANGELO, St. Margaret – Lenten Night of Prayer for the Priests, Sisters, Deacons and Wives of the San Angelo Deanery at 7 p.m.

2 -- WALL, St. Ambrose – Meet with the Pastor and All People of the Parish for Dialogue on the Life of the Parish at 7:00 pm

4 -- MERTZON, St. Peter – Mass at 9:45 a.m.

5-8 -- SAN ANGELO, Christ the King Retreat Center – Convocation of Priests

9 -- SAN ANGELO, Diocesan Pastoral Center—Staff Mass at 8:30 a.m.; Staff Meeting at 11 a.m.

13-16 -- Private Lenten Retreat

18 -- ABILENE, Holy Family – Mass at 10:30 a.m.

20 -- SAN ANGELO, Christ the King Retreat Center – Lenten Retreat for Diocesan Pastoral Staff at 10:00 a.m.

20 -- SONORA, St. Ann – Meet with the Pastor and All People of the Parish for Dialogue on the Life of the Parish at 7 pm

21 -- SAN ANGELO, St. Mary -- Soup and Sermon at noon.

22 -- MIDLAND, Our Lady of Guadalupe – Lenten Night of Prayer with the Priests, Sisters, Deacons and Wives of the Midland/Odessa Deanery at 7 p.m.

24 --MIDLAND, St. Ann – Meeting of the Diocesan School Commission at 9:00 a.m.

25 -- SWEETWATER, Immaculate Heart -- Mass, 10:30 a.m. After Mass Meet with Pastor and all people of the Parish for Dialogue on the Life of the Parish

26 -- SAN ANGELO, Sacred Heart Cathedral – Day of the Unborn Mass at 12:00 noon

27 -- BIG LAKE, St. Margaret – Meet with the Pastor and People of the Parish for Dialogue on the Life of the Parish at 7:00 p.m.

28 -- SAN ANGELO, Diocesan Pastoral Center – Meet with Diocesan Legal Team at 11:00 a.m.

29 -- SAN ANGELO, Sacred Heart Cathedral – Chrism Mass at 11:00 a.m.; 1:30 p.m. Presbyteral Council Meeting

30 -- SAN ANGELO -- American Cancer Society at 11:00 a.m.

Necrology – March

11 -- Rev. Leopold J. Bujnowski (1976)

11 -- Deacon Albert Libertore ('77)

21 -- Deacon Frank Trudo (1992)

26 -- Rev. Serran Braun (1999)

26 -- Deacon Audon Saldivar (2000)

DIOCE-SCENES

Bishop Michael Pfeifer, at right in photo to left, blessed a new altar and pulpit at Our Lady of Guadalupe in a special Mass January 6. The Altar was donated by Luis and Irene López, in memory of their parents Juan and Luisa López, and Inez and Leonor Valenzuela. It was hand-carved by Luis' nephew Mario Lopez from Juarez, Mexico. The Ambo (Pulpit) was donated anonymously in memory of Fr. Bill Meagher, OMI, and former Pastor of Our Lady of Guadalupe. The donation for the refinishing of the chairs above was made by Ricardo and Cristina Nieto and Family.

**Christmas Play**

On 17 December our Church, St. Margaret of Scotland hosted a dramatic musical "He is Born - Child Divine". The musical was performed by the parishioners under the direction of our Music Director, Mrs. Maryla Buck. The musical turned out to be a great success. The audience was charmed by the story and enveloping music. We would like to thank Mrs. Buck for creating such a masterpiece and hope that she will continue sharing her creativity and musical gift with us on future occasions.

**ZANZIG: Conversion is a lifelong process of learning, relearning****(From 1)**

"We can often forget who we are," Zanzig said. "Conversion is a relearning of what God has taught us from early in our spiritual life."

Zanzig called our yearning for a deeper understanding a "hunger," or "a recurring sense that no matter how fully we have said yes to God, no matter how good life is, there is always a sense that something's missing. That hunger, he said, is often expressed through questions and doubt. Zanzig noted that some of history's top spiritual authors and scholars have professed to experiencing that hunger most when they have come from or are currently in a particularly dark chapter in their lives.

"Hunger," the Wisconsin native said, "is God's way of

saying, 'You're doing great, but you can go even deeper.'"

Zanzig worked through a graphic that showed the model conversion is cyclical in nature. Hunger leads to searching which leads to awakening which leads to our response to that awakening.

Zanzig also outlined 10 principles for ministering to someone on a search, an outline that works well for young people seeking God. The 10 points to nurturing the seeker's conversion include:

1. Get in touch with the real hungers of those who seek;
2. Look for conversion on many levels, not just religious;
3. Help them name their operative hungers, then share what you see in them.
4. Explore ways they might search that are life giving and within reach;
5. Lift up, name and celebrate their awakenings;
6. Tell them stories related to their

hungers, issues, needs; 7. Share your personal experiences as your own; 8. Encourage their response to their awakenings; 9. Pray for -- and perhaps with -- them, and 10. Give up illusions of power and control. Trust them.

In concluding, Zanzig said, "The goal of Christian conversion is not simply that we follow Jesus as we might a guru. Rather it is the deep and profound transformation of who we are as people that involves four steps: inspiration, imitation, integration and identification."

JUST A MINUTE: Zanzig also recommended that in our busy days, perhaps the best way to pray is to block out prayer times 1 minute at a time, at points during the day that would nurture routine. "You can get a lot prayed about in just one minute," he said, exhibiting just how much can be prayed about in a minute by observing several moments of quiet that were 60 seconds in length.

Making Sense of BioEthics

Pacholczyk: Final analysis shows rape no justification for abortion

Recall once hearing a story about a philosopher who visited with a group of junior-high students at a private school in the Midwest. He had a discussion with them about ethics, and offered a few arguments to suggest that direct abortion was always unethical and unjust. A 14-year-old girl put up her hand and asked him if he would make an exception for rape in his position



Fr. Pacholczyk

against abortion. He put the ball back into her court by asking her to carry out a kind of "thought experiment." He asked her to consider the hypothetical case that her own father became a rapist: "If your dad goes out and rapes somebody, and we convict him of that rape in a court of law, do you think it would be right for us to then say, 'O.K., because your dad is guilty of that rape, we're going to kill

you, his 14-year-old daughter?'" The girl and her classmates unanimously replied, "No". He pursued the same line of logic a bit further, asking if it would be acceptable if, instead of 14 years old, she were only 2 years old, or 2 months old. Again, they said, "No." Finally, he asked, "So how could I say that I'm going to let abortion happen because of rape? If I permit abortion because of rape, I am killing a child in the womb for a crime committed by his or her dad. Is that right?" His coherent and dispassionate approach helped the students appreciate the need to scrutinize their own assumptions and move beyond emotionalism when important ethical or bioethical issues are being debated.

Rape is always a grave and unconscionable crime, a tragedy of enormous proportions. If a woman becomes pregnant following sexual assault, abortion is sometimes offered as a path to fixing the rape. But the decision to encourage a second trauma after the first trauma of sexu-

al assault represents, ultimately, a misguided response to a situation that needs to be handled with much greater sensitivity and compassion. A kind of unexamined emotionalism and anger can arise in these situations, directed towards the child, even though the child conceived in rape is an innocent bystander, and a victim of the same awful set of circumstances as the mother. He or she clearly ought not be treated as some kind of surrogate for the rapist. The real malefactor and culprit is always the rapist and never the child. The perpetrator of the crime needs to be apprehended and punished to the full extent of the law, and insofar as sentencing for such crimes may be too lenient in certain regions or locales, our legal system must vigorously work to correct it. Women who have suffered the indignity of rape deserve better, and trauma ought not be layered with even more trauma. Our first obligation is to reach out in love and acceptance to the woman who has been victimized, and when a child is con-

ceived, she and her child need our loving assistance all the more. Sometimes in certain bioethical situations, an apparently compassionate response may be offered which is, in fact, profoundly unethical. In tragic situations like sexual assault, it can be difficult to perceive the right lines, and to think with reason rather than emotions.

Oftentimes we may be tempted to imagine that a child conceived by rape would only serve as a reminder to the mother of the original traumatic event she had suffered, and that she would be "better off" without that reminder. Interestingly, however, in a study published in March of 2000, that conclusion was found to be invalid. David C. Reardon, Julie Makimaa, and Amy Sobie sifted through nine years worth of testimonies gathered by the Elliot Institute and Fortress International to get a true picture of the effects of abortion on a woman who had suffered from the trauma

(Please See **BIOETHICS/10**)

Embajadora de Dios por el mundo

por Marilyn H. Fedewa

Creo con todo mi corazón que la Venerable Sor María vivió de forma desbordante la heroicidad de virtudes y que a ella se le pueden atribuir muchos milagros tanto en vida como después de su muerte. (Criterios estos para declarar santa a una persona, según el papa Juan Pablo II en la constitución apostólica "Divinus Perfectionis Magister" del 25 de enero de 1983).

Y, puesto que soy una americana, puedo también atestiguar que el lugar de sor María en la historia americana es destacado. Ella es la "Dama azul" que se apareció sobrenaturalmente a los americanos jumanos para predicarles el evangelio de Jesucristo. Sus más de 500 bilocaciones se recogen en muchos textos históricos del sudeste americano.

Sin embargo, además de los criterios formales para proclamarle a una persona santa, creo que la esencia verdadera de la santidad agredana consiste en la inspiración que la Venerable transmite para ayudar a todos a progresar significativamente en el amor y conocimiento de Dios. La estima más grande y el agradecimiento más profundo a sor María en América hunden sus raíces en la lectura y meditación de la Mística Ciudad de Dios. Esta biografía devota y ferviente llena los corazones que tienen hambre de aprender más sobre la Madre de Dios, para así convertirse más ellos mismos a Dios. En América y en todo el mundo los nuevos convertidos y los católicos ya veteranos consideran esta obra como un regalo precioso y eterno de Dios. Incluso Mel Gibson leyó la Mística Ciudad de Dios para preparar su película sobre la pasión de Cristo.

En los cuatro años que lleva mi página web en la red, muchas personas de los Estados Unidos la han visitado. Ellos me escriben alabando la obra de sor María, como la rica herencia que nos ha legado a perpetuidad. Sus testimonios rezuman agradecimiento porque a través de ella reviven la importancia que tiene la Madre de Dios, aumentan su fe y se sienten más cerca de Dios.

-La Mística Ciudad de Dios refleja la más clara y sublime enseñanza y espiritualidad católicas que yo he leído de siempre. Me ha ayudado mucho en la comprensión de Nuestra Señora y también en muchas otras áreas religiosas. (R.Grosh de Pennsylvania).

-Las revelaciones maravillosas de María de Ágreda se han convertido para nosotros en la fundación de una vida cristiana renovada. Estos volúmenes maravillosamente escritos han profundizado el conocimiento de nuestra fe católica más allá de lo que nuestras palabras puedan expresar. (D.y E. Witting de Missouri).

-La Venerable María de Ágreda está siendo un instrumento de profundización en mi conversión. Ella aumentó mi fe en general y mi dedicación a la Virgen María. (B.Cadman de Londres).

-Ningún otro libro, excepto la Biblia, ha contenido tanta verdad para que otros puedan leerla. (M.Cioffoletti de California).

-Creo que es innecesario decir que la Ven.María de Ágreda es una persona santa y que muy pronto lo reconocerá la Iglesia. (C.Tucker de Michigan).

-Me es imposible expresar en palabras cómo la obra de María de Ágreda me ha acercado más a Dios. (A.Busceme de Tejas).

-Uno mis rezos a los suyos para que la canonización de sor María sea pronta; será una forma de reconocer el trabajo extraordinario que Dios ha realizado a través de ella. (A.Elliott de California).

Hoy la Mística Ciudad de Dios nos ayuda a todos a abrir nuestros corazones y nuestras almas a Dios y así profundizar en nuestra fe. Ésta es la herencia de santidad que sor María nos ha dejado, y la que me ha empujado a promover su causa tan extensamente como me sea posible en América a través de mis escritos.

Primero publicado en el boletín #47, Convento de la Concepción, Ágreda, España Por Marilyn H. Fedewa www.cambridgeconnections.net/Maria.html

HARDIN: Midland woman retires to lead Helping Hands charity organization

(From 1)

Under Bridges' direction, Helping Hands has experienced phenomenal growth in its short existence. In 2000, 726 families were helped with rent, utilities, medical and transportation at a cost of more than \$68,000. In 2006, Helping Hands provided funding in excess of \$405,000 for 1,251 families for the same needs. During the same period, food, clothing and furniture needs were met for 740 families in '00 and 4,738 families last year, at a cost of \$214,000 and change.

"Fr. Bridges is Helping Hands," Hardin insisted. "He created it in 1998 and bailed us out financially three or four years when *he* actually ran out of money."

Hardin said working with the poor is not always easy and said those most heartfelt workers often have to "become poor" in order to know where those in need are coming from.

"Father has lifted us up spiritually on those times when we get down," Hardin said.

Helping Hands is itself helped by as many as 30 volunteers at a time. Additionally many high school students will help at the store to earn community service hours.

Financial help comes from collections, grants, such as from FEMA and Abell-Hanger, and merely from people walking in the door giving a donation.

"People see what we are doing -- we publish everything we do financially, and we remain 100 percent volunteer," Hardin said. "I think people like to see that when they contribute to us to help the poor, that every penny will go to the poor -- and not to a salary."

NATION/WORLD

Youth activist expands message to reach adults too

By Carol Zimmermann
Catholic News Service

WASHINGTON -- Craig Kielburger, the longtime youth activist who has worked to improve conditions for young people around the world, is now taking his message to a broader audience: adults.

Maybe that's because Kielburger, who started the group Free the Children, an international organization to fight child labor, when he was just 12, has run into adulthood himself at age 24. But as he puts it, it has more to do with the fact that young people have a lot of ideas, but "they don't live in isolation."

He is convinced that to tackle the overwhelming problem of world poverty young people need support, cooperation and also a fair amount of inspiration from their parents, youth leaders and educators. They also need to do simple things on an everyday basis to make tangible changes around them.

That's the message behind the new book written by Craig and his brother, Marc, "Me to We: Finding Meaning in a Material World," published in 2006 by Simon & Schuster.

The book includes plenty of anecdotes, including some from famous people such as Oprah Winfrey and retired Anglican Archbishop Desmond Tutu of South Africa about what it means to make a difference in someone's life. It also is loaded with suggestions on everyday actions that can make a difference for a neighbor or a stranger on the street and ultimately change the attitudes of those doing the good deeds.



Craig Kielburger, with a young villager in Africa.

"There are a lot of factors why young people care," Kielburger told Catholic News Service in a Jan. 12 phone interview from his home in Toronto just days after returning from the site of a future water project in Kenya. He said his own generation came of age when 24-hour news and the Internet were part of everyday life.

"We are truly a global generation," he said, noting that many young people see what's wrong in the world and want to act. Over the years, young people continue to be the main force behind Free the Children, but at the same time, the group also gets plenty of calls from educators and youth leaders wondering how to inspire youths.

To get to youths who do not realize they can make a difference and should, Kielburger calls on the grown-ups.

He realizes adults can be overwhelmed by all the problems in the world and might want to protect and shelter their children from violence and hardships, but he also sees danger in that. "Young people see the problems anyway and if they close their eyes to them, they might close their hearts too," he warned.

He advises adults to help young people acknowledge the troubles that exist and then give them simple ways to help, including writing letters to soldiers far from home or collecting food and volunteering at shelters.

"Yes, we live in a world with poverty, violence and fighting," he said, but in that environment parents cannot afford to raise "passive bystanders."

The Catholic brothers, who have led Free the Children for 12 years, primarily through the support of youth volunteers and their donations, have seen their initial vision of wanting to improve child labor conditions mushroom into huge undertakings: building more than 450 schools all over the world and providing health care clinics and services in remote areas of Africa, China, Latin America and Sri Lanka.

The organization has set up alternative income projects for those in poverty, sponsored entire villages, and provided systems for clean water and sanitation. The group also runs a youth leadership training program.

The brothers, who frequently speak at youth conferences and gatherings, have long relied on young people to help them with their work and have succeeded despite a perception that today's young people are not concerned with the global issues of poverty and social justice.

If we all take a step, a giant leap for mankind

Catholic News Service

In an address to Congress on May 25, 1961, President John F. Kennedy issued a bold challenge to the American people. "I believe that this nation should commit itself to achieve the goal, before this decade is out, of landing a man on the moon and returning him safely to the earth," said the president. "I believe we possess all the resources and talents necessary," he added, but said an urgent time schedule needed to be set to properly manage and marshal those resources.

Eight years later, the goal was realized with Neil Armstrong's "one small step for man, one giant leap for mankind."

Last Wednesday on Washington's Capitol Hill, another challenge was set before the U.S. people-- this time by a Catholic priest who was born and raised in Lincoln, Ill. Saying that society is judged by how it treats its poor, Father Larry Snyder, president of Catholic Charities USA, launched an ambitious campaign to cut poverty in America by half. And he set a goal: the year 2020.

Using words very much reminiscent of President Kennedy's, Father Snyder said: "We must marshal the strength and the collective will of our nation to take on this tragedy that affects 37 million people who are living in poverty in one of the wealthiest nations in the world."

We say, let's do it. And we believe Jesus, who repeatedly reached out to those at the bottom of society's social pyramid and urged us to "love our neighbor," commands us to do so.

Surely, if 1960s technology could get a man safely to the moon and back, the minds and spirits of our new millennium are sufficient to cut poverty in half. Father Snyder and the Catholic Charities' campaign even gave us more than twice as long to accomplish the goal.

The first step is raising awareness that we are in, as Father Snyder claims, a "moral crisis" because of the need in our land of wealth. And that first step may prove the most difficult. But this month another Catholic organization which has long labored in this quest, the Catholic Campaign for Human Development, unveiled a new public awareness campaign series called "The Poverty Line." Expect to see a lot of these well-done pieces.

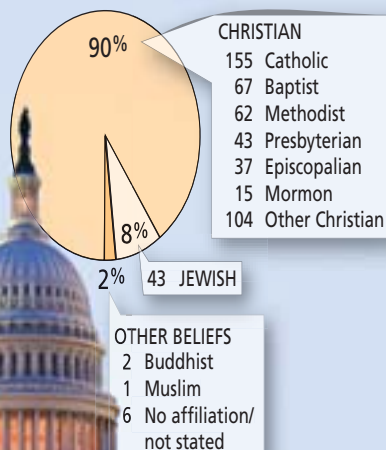
We hope Catholic Charities, with its established affiliates around the country including our diocese, and CCHD keep their foot to the pedal as they encourage government and the private sector to move toward the goal. But what can the common Catholic do?

Plenty. A visit to the Catholic Charities USA Web site, www.catholiccharitiesusa.org, will lead to a list of "20 things you can do to address poverty." The first step is to pray for those whose lives are impacted by poverty. Don't skip the first step. But don't stop there. The remainder of the steps urge us to get informed, get organized and get involved. Other good resources are found at the Catholic Campaign for Human Development Web site, www.povertyusa.org.

In Catholic Charities' bold initiative, there may not come an obvious historic moment when the goal is achieved. But whenever even one individual or family steps out of poverty, we believe it is one giant leap for mankind.

Capitol Believers

Although the 110th Congress is religiously diverse, 90 percent of its members are Christians.



Congress more religiously diverse

By Nancy Frazier O'Brien
Catholic News Service

WASHINGTON -- With one Muslim and two Buddhist members, the 110th Congress is the most religiously diverse ever.

Catholics remain the largest denominational group in Congress, with 155 members -- 25 in the Senate and 130 in the House. But there are fewer Catholic Republicans in both houses since the 109th Congress and many more Catholic Democrats.

In the last Senate, Catholic members were nearly evenly split between the parties, with 11 Republicans and 13 Democrats. Now there are 9 Catholic Republicans and 16 Catholic Democrats in the Senate.

In the House at the start of the 109th Congress, there were 129 Catholics -- 57 Republicans and 72 Democrats. Although the total number of House Catholics in the 110th Congress is nearly the same at 130, the current group includes 42 Republicans and 88 Democrats.

Even Rep. Keith Ellison, D-Minn., a Muslim who was sworn in as a member of Congress using a Quran once owned by President Thomas Jefferson, was raised a Catholic. He became a Muslim while in college at Wayne State University in Detroit.

Lent/Easter 2007 Calendar

FEBRUARY 21 Ash Wednesday
FEBRUARY 25 1st Sunday of Lent

MARCH 4 2nd Sunday of Lent
MARCH 11 3rd Sunday of Lent

MARCH 18 4th Sunday of Lent
MARCH 25 5th Sunday of Lent
MARCH 26

The Annunciation of the Lord

HOLY WEEK

APRIL 1 PALM SUNDAY

APRIL 5 HOLY THURSDAY

APRIL 6 GOOD FRIDAY

APRIL 7 HOLY SATURDAY

APRIL 8 EASTER SUNDAY

APRIL 15 Divine Mercy Sunday

MAY 17 The Ascension of the Lord

MAY 27 Pentecost Sunday



LENT '007



It's not just about giving something up



(But If you have to give something up, try these ideas on for size)

By Bob Zyskowski
The Catholic Spirit

So, you're looking for something to "give up" for Lent again, are you? Here are a few ideas to take us beyond giving up candy or desserts.

Let's give up looking for a pat on the back. This Lent, let's do at least one thing each day for someone who will never be able to repay us.

Let's give up trying to be comfortable all the time. Instead of seeking comfort, let's find something to be enthusiastic about and put God's gifts - our brains, our talents, our resources - to work on behalf of that activity, organization or program.

Let's give up trying to one-up others. There's a Hindu proverb that goes like this: "There is nothing noble in being superior to some other person. True nobility comes from being superior to your previous self."

Let's give up taking care of No. 1. Instead of thinking about how everything and anything impacts us, let's worry first about how others are going to be affected - by proposed new laws, by policies, by trends, by economic shifts - by our own actions and behavior.

Let's give up being practical. Instead, let's be kind. Blessed Mother Teresa once said, "Kind words can be short, but their echoes are endless."

Let's give up being in a hurry. Let's show patience - start in a store checkout

lane and extend it to every situation within our families and workplaces. Waiting in line, waiting on hold on the phone, waiting at a traffic light are all good times to say some extra prayers, to start a conversation with God, to listen to what the Lord has to say to us.

Let's not curse. We can vent in our minds if that'll help get over a bit of anger, but keep it internal. Let's not give voice to our anger, but instead give ourselves time to think of something constructive to say.

Let's not pile on. When someone is being taken to task, rather than joining in hitting an easy target let's think about how we might help solve the problem we face.

Let's not talk about people we have issues with. Let's talk with them. Beats stewing and conjuring up questionable reasons for whatever it is that is troubling us.

Let's not argue over small things. Let's save our passion and our energy for things that really matter. And let's argue about those things until others understand why we are so passionate.

Let's not be bitter. Rather than holding onto hurts, let's decide to have a forgiving spirit. Think of being bitter like taking poison and expecting someone else to die.

When we're bitter, we only hurt ourselves.

Let's not be crabby. Let's be able to remember Lent 2007 as the time when people started noticing what a great, upbeat, pleasant attitude we seem to have every day of our lives.

Bob Zyskowski is associate publisher of The Catholic Spirit, newspaper of the Archdiocese of St. Paul and Minneapolis.

Guidelines for the Lenten Season

By Bishop Michael D. Pfeifer, OMI

With Ash Wednesday, February 21, 2007, we begin the Lenten season, which prepares us to celebrate the greatest feast of Christianity, the Resurrection of Jesus Christ on Easter Sunday, April 8, 2007.

The time of Lent is to be observed by Catholics as a special season of prayer, penance and doing works of charity. I share with you here the pastoral guidelines that hopefully will assist us during the season of Lent.

Ash Wednesday and Good Friday, in particular, are the most important penitential days of the liturgical year. They are days of both fast and abstinence. All Fridays in Lent are days of abstinence.

The rule of fasting states that only one full meal may be taken per day. Two small meals, "sufficient to maintain strength," are allowed but together they should not equal another full meal. Eating between meals breaks the fast but drinking liquids does not. The rule of fast-

ing obliges all Catholics from age 18 through 59.

Abstinence refers to the eating of meat of warm blooded animals (e.g., beef, lamb, chicken, pork). Under the present law, it does not include egg or milk products, meat broth or gravies. The rule of abstinence binds all Catholics 14 years of age or older. On days of abstinence, those who are eating in a school cafeteria may eat meat if it is served to them and there is no other main dish to choose.

The substantial observance of the laws of fast and abstinence is a serious obligation. Those whose work or health impairment make the observance difficult would be excused from fasting and abstinence. The individual conscience can decide if there is a proper cause to excuse. For more pastoral guidance on this point one may contact the local pastor. A more serious reason should be present to excuse from the Ash Wednesday and Good Friday penance.

Self-imposed fasting on the other weekdays of Lent is

recommended. Abstinence on all Fridays of the year is also highly recommended. The Peace Pastoral of the American Bishops, stating that prayer is incomplete without penance, urges Friday abstinence as something all American Catholics should offer for the sake of world peace.

Parents and teachers should see to it that even those who are not bound by the laws of the fast and abstinence because of age are brought up in an atmosphere that is conducive to a sense of penance.

The faithful should be clearly and positively encouraged to receive the Sacrament of Penance during Lent. There should be adequate time scheduled for Confessions before Easter. Communal penance services should not be scheduled for the last days of Holy Week.

All the faithful, after they have been initiated into the Most Holy Eucharist, are bound by the obligation of

(Please See LENT/15)

Este es el ayuno que a mi me agrada: Un plan de profeta Isaias

PFEIFER: Doing right 'will bring light from the darkness' (From 1)

oppressed, breaking every yoke; Sharing your bread with the hungry, sheltering the oppressed and the homeless; Clothing the naked when you see them, and not turning your back on your own.

"Then your light shall break forth like the dawn, and your wound shall quickly be healed; Your vindication shall go before you, and the glory of the Lord shall be your rear guard. Then you shall call, and the Lord will answer, you shall cry for help, and he will say: Here I am! If you remove from your midst oppression, false accusation and malicious speech; If you bestow your bread on the hungry and satisfy the afflicted; Then light shall rise for you in the darkness, and the gloom shall become for you like midday;"

por el Obispo Miguel Pfeifer

La temporada de la Cuaresma es tradicionalmente el tiempo para centrar nuestras vidas más en el sufrimiento y la muerte de Cristo, haciendo mas tiempo para rezar, ayunar y penitencias para prepararnos para la fiesta más grande de



el obispo Pfeifer

la cristiandad—la Resurrección de Cristo que celebramos en el domin-

go de Pascua. Aunque la Iglesia tiene ciertas normas para el ayuno y abstinencia durante la temporada de la Cuaresma, yo les propongo, aquí, un plan de ayuno dada por el gran profeta, Isaias, que verdaderamente nos ayudará centrar nuestras vidas en Cristo y en amar a nuestro prójimo.

"¿Eso es lo que ustedes llaman 'ayuno', y 'día agradable al Señor'? Pues no lo es. El ayuno que a mí me agrada consiste en esto: en que rompamos las cadenas de la injusticia y desates los nudos que aprietan el yugo; en que dejes libres a los oprimidos y acabes, en fin, con toda tiranía; en que compartas tu pan con

el hambriento y recibas en tu casa al pobre sin techo; en que vistas al que no tiene ropa y no dejes de socorrer a tus semejantes.

"Entonces brillará tu luz como el amanecer y tus heridas sanarán pronto. Tu rectitud irá delante de ti y mi gloria te seguirá. Entonces, si me llamas, yo te responderé; si gritas pidiendo ayuda, yo te diré: 'Aquí estoy.' Si haces desaparecer toda opresión, si no insultas a otros ni les levantas calumnias, si te das a ti mismo en servicio del hambriento, si ayudas al afligido en su necesidad, tu luz brillará en la oscuridad, tus sombras se convertirán en luz de mediodía."

BIOETHICS: Almost all abortions that occur are unrelated to rapes

(From 6)

of rape. They wrote a book that debunks the argument that abortion is necessary or helpful after sexual assault. Co-author Amy Sobie has summarized it this way: "The vast majority of the women (and their children) who responded advanced the view that abortion is NOT a good solution to sexual assault pregnancies and that it often leads to further physical and emotional trauma for the women. Conversely, none of the women who carried to term expressed regret that they had chosen to give birth or a wish that they had chosen abortion instead."

In the final analysis, rape is unable to ever justify abortion, even though in *every one* of the more than 55 countries that now have abortion on demand, the initial step taken was intense lobbying for the availability of abortion in so-called 'hard cases' — especially rape and incest. Of all abortions performed, 99.96% occur for reasons unrelated to rape, so the very rare exception has been carefully employed to provide cover for all other cases. Playing the emotional card has been largely successful in the public arena, reminding us of the urgent need for a more level headed and dispassionate discussion of the real goods that are at stake. As former abortionist Dr. Bernard Nathanson once put it, "If a part of a human community were not at stake, no woman should be required to undergo the degradation of bearing a child in these circumstances, but even degradation, shame, and emotional disruption are not the moral equivalent of life. Only life is." By respecting the life of the vulnerable and innocent child, we steer clear of the grave error in reasoning that tries to suggest that evil can justify further evil. True compassion invites us *to suffer with*, to be present to, and to aid the victims of sexual assault, by offering them our unconditional love, acceptance, and support, rather than short-circuiting the situation in favor of easy and inauthentic "solutions."

Rev. Tadeusz Pacholczyk, Ph.D. earned his doctorate in neuroscience from Yale and did post-doctoral work at Harvard. He is a priest of the diocese of Fall River, MA, and serves as the Director of Education at The National Catholic Bioethics Center in Philadelphia. See www.ncbcenter.org.

IMMACULEE: Catholic survivor story miraculous

(From 2)

During those 91 days, Immaculée and seven other women hid in a 3x4 bathroom in a house that was searched regularly.

"I heard the killers call my name. They were on the other side of the wall, and less than an inch of plaster and wood separated us. Their voices were cold, hard, and determined. 'She's here . . . we know she's here somewhere. . . Find her—find Immaculée.' ... 'I have killed 399 cockroaches,' said one of the killers. 'Immaculée will make 400. It's a good number to kill' ... I believe God spared my life, but I'd learn during the 91 days I spent trembling in fear ... that being spared is much different from being saved ... and this lesson forever changed me. It is a lesson that, in the midst of mass murder, taught me how to love those who hated and hunted me—and how to forgive those who slaughtered my family," Immaculée writes in her book's introduction.

For me, Immaculée's story was and is the perfect modern day Easter story. It is a story of friends and family who throughout their lives loved, supported and cherished each other. They helped feed, educate and raise each other's children, and they celebrated each other's successes despite an underlying current of prejudice among the tribes. This is the embodiment of the spirit of Jesus' ministry and Palm Sunday.

When Immaculée arrives home with her family, the children want to discuss the increasing unrest and negative propaganda against the Tutsi people spreading throughout their country, yet her father only wants to celebrate and embrace his family at supper. This was to be their Last Supper.

After the death of the President, thousands of Tutsis gathered in Immaculée's family's yard seeking refuge, hope, and direction. This was a time of deliberation, prayer and agony. Jesus' agony in the Garden.

It was a time when Immaculée's dad sought help from the local authorities, who were his friends, but who were also Hutus. Instead of help, they sent extremist to slaughter the Tutsis in his garden.

The following 91 days were filled with unjust torture, jeering, slaughter and death. The Passion and Crucifixion.

Immaculée's time in the bathroom was her time on the cross; she meditated, prayed, questioned and fought away the demons in her mind. She called out (silently) from the depths of her soul, just as Jesus did "My God, my God, why have you forsaken me?" (Matthew 27:46). She came to the realization that we are all God's children and that forgiveness and love were the only response to the horror surrounding her, just as Jesus knew, "Father, forgive them, they know not what they do." (Luke 23:34). She also experiences the surrender of her soul. She thirsted for God to fill her spirit with love and forgiveness and she surrendered her life and her soul to God. Jesus said, "I thirst." . . . When Jesus had taken the wine, he said, "It is finished." (John 20:28-30).

Coming out of her confinement in the bathroom, Immaculée experiences freedom and a new life, resurrected from the depths of hell. She was born anew, left to share the Good News of forgiveness and hope, spreading the message of peace and oneness with all people throughout the world. The Resurrection.

Immaculée's story has inspired me to say, "Yes" to God, to spread the message of love, hope and peace; to raise the awareness of the global injustices; and to make a difference in the lives of others. This new awakening and awareness within me inspired the idea for Immaculée to come to San Angelo to share her poignant and powerful message.

It is with humble thanks to the El Camino Girl Scout Council who said, "Yes!" to the idea and to the many donors who have graciously given their time and money to support her visit.

EUCCHARIST: Faithful encouraged to receive communion frequently and worthily

(From 3)

Participating in the One Sacrifice of Christ

Jesus, our great high priest, lovingly offered his own life on the cross as a holy sacrifice to the Father for our sins. As the spotless "Lamb of God, who takes away the sin of the world" (Jn.1:29), Jesus established the everlasting covenant—"the new covenant in my blood" (Lk.22:20)—with the Father.

Communion With One Another

The reception of holy communion is an act of the church as the body of Christ. While we each personally receive holy communion, it is not a private devotion. Rather, the reception of holy communion is an integral part of our worship as a community of faith.

Likewise, the term *communion* accentuates the fact that in receiving holy communion we are united to Jesus and thus to one another. As we become one body

with Christ in receiving holy communion, so we are also united with one another. "Because the loaf of bread is one, we, though many, are one body, for we all partake of the one loaf" (1 Cor.10:17).

Sharing in Jesus' Resurrection and Divinity

In holy communion we receive the risen and glorified Jesus, who once died upon the cross for us. Thus, we are nourished here and now on Jesus' own risen life and so become a new creation in him (see 2 Cor. 5:17). Holy communion, then, anticipates and is a pledge of our own bodily resurrection, when we will share fully in the heavenly banquet of everlasting life.

As Jesus stated: "Whoever eats my flesh and drinks my blood has eternal life, and I will raise him on the last day...[For] whoever eats my flesh and drinks my blood remains in me and I in him" (Jn.6:54,56).

Because the reception of holy communion is able to have such a profound effect

upon those who receive it worthily, the Catholic Church encourages all of the faithful to receive it frequently and worthily. "It is clear that the frequent or daily reception of the blessed eucharist increases union with Christ, nourishes the spiritual life more abundantly, strengthens the soul in virtue and gives the communicant a stronger pledge of eternal happiness."

WHO MAY RECEIVE HOLY COMMUNION?

Through baptism and our shared faith in the Gospel of Jesus Christ, we become members of the visible church under the apostolic authority of the pope and bishops. The celebration of the eucharist expresses and enacts this communion in Christ.

With few exceptions, only those who are members of the Catholic Church may receive holy communion at a Catholic Eucharistic liturgy. Being baptized and sharing in the church's faith are therefore conditions for full participation in the sacrament of the eucharist, which culmi-

nates in the reception of holy communion.

SHOULD WE EVER REFRAIN FROM RECEIVING COMMUNION?

In virtue of our membership in the Catholic Church, we are ordinarily free to receive holy communion. In fact it is most desirable that we receive the Lord's body and blood, so that holy communion stands out clearly as a participation in the sacrifice actually being celebrated. Indeed, we should all cherish the grace given to us in the eucharist. We should strive to receive holy communion regularly, gratefully and worthily.

We may find ourselves in situations, however, where an examination of our conscience before God reveals to us that we should refrain from partaking of the body and blood of Christ. Moreover, we should be cautious when making judgments about whether or not someone else should receive holy communion. [As this is a rather lengthy article, it will be continued in the next edition of the *Angelus*.]

LETTER

(From 1)

violence. In one school, all 9th graders indicated they had experienced or knew someone who had experienced domestic violence. Recent information received from the other cities and towns of the 29 counties that make up the Diocese of San Angelo indicate that we are dealing with the tip of a huge iceberg of evil, a serious drug problem throughout West Texas.

Sadly, this is an issue that many people are not willing to address or feel helpless to take any action to help resolve. However, as responsible citizens and Christians, we are called to be more proactive and to take a community stance based on the Gospel of Christ against this evil that is having a serious detrimental effect on families and especially on our youth in West Texas. When I travel the Diocese to celebrate Confirmation, I always meet with the youth alone before Mass. As I ask them about the prevalence of drugs, usually about 75% say they know other youth who use or push drugs.

The report from the San Angelo drug statistics indicate that for the city of San Angelo from November 2005-November 2006, 58% of narcotics arrests were youth and young people, ages 14-26; 40% are ages 27-50. It is very disturbing that the 14-26 year age group covers a 12-year span—half that of the 27-50 year age group, but represents 50% more arrests than the older group. Information from the city of San Angelo also indicates that during 2005, marijuana and meth accounted for 98% of the drug seizures. During 2006, 80% of the drugs seizures were marijuana and 14% were meth, representing 94% of the drug seizures for the year.

The drug culture has infiltrated practically all cities and towns of our Diocese. Texas Ranger Brooks Long who covers several counties points out that illegal drugs are relatively easy to attain but they are very expensive because of the manufacturing process, so the more common drug that is being produced and offered is methamphetamine, commonly known as meth. The components for creating meth are readily available in most homes. Because of its low manufacturing cost, meth is becoming the preferred drug and is very addictive. Youth are also the preferred target for those who sell meth. As an example, a packet of meth sells for approximately one fourth the cost of a packet of cocaine. The Ranger points out that people using meth experience rapid radical changes in their lifestyles, often leading to hallucinations, belligerence, and violent aggression. Meth can kill in just a few years.

A report from one of our priests from the south side of Odessa points out the following facts from information acquired

from the Odessa records department. From 2000 until 2005, there was an increase in the arrests for drug crimes. The police narcotics division points out there is a relation between the economy and drug usage. When the economy is doing well, people are more prone to buy drugs. The most prevalent drugs in the area are: cocaine, both power and crack; heroin and marijuana. Most of this comes from Mexico. Also, LSD seems to be making a comeback. In Midland County, there have been 1,400 arrests for drug violations for 2006. Of those arrests, the greatest offenders at 9% of the total were 19 years of age. About 30% of all arrests were young adults between 18-21 years of age. For those over 25, the number of offenders drops off. In the age range 30 to 45, the number of arrests is still substantial and fairly flat.

As regards the seriousness of the drug problem, one of our Church leaders points out that Coleman County and the city of Coleman have had a drug problem for a long time. He indicates that the manufacturing of meth is easy and extensive, and several labs have been raided in the past few years.

A Church official states that the drug situation in Mitchell County is very bad, centered mostly in and around Colorado City. He points out that meth and crystal are the two types of drugs that are distributed in and around the area. This official goes on to say that the local churches are trying to make people aware of the danger of drug abuse, but points out that sermons do not convince a drug addict to give up the use of drugs. Some time spent in jail or prison can awaken them to the realities. Students in local schools are warned of the consequences of drug abuse and the authorities are on the lookout for any presence of drugs in the facility.

Church representatives from the Abilene area point out that crystal meth is more common among the Hispanic community. It is cheap, easy to obtain and purchase from outside sources. They go on to say that marijuana is still the most widely used drug. In 2005 in the city of Abilene, there were over 1,270 investigations associated with potential drug violations.

The reports from Fort Stockton area sadly point out that illegal drugs are rampant in this area. Cocaine is widely used, and most drugs are from Ojinaga Mexico.

Deacon Bob Leibrecht, who heads the criminal justice ministry for the Diocese of San Angelo, points out that in the Federal Bureau of Prisons, 54% of the prison population has been charged with drug offenses. Within the Texas Dept. of Criminal Justice, 25% of the population is incarcerated for drug/alcohol offenses, and another 50% say they were under the

influence of drugs or alcohol when they committed their crime. While much, if not most, of the drugs come from Mexico, the greater Fort Worth area serves primarily as a drug distribution and shipment point for West Texas. The Houston area is another big distribution hub for our area.

According to the U.S. Department of health and Human Services, approximately 40% of adults will use an illegal drug at some time in their lives. This leads to involvement in crime, high-risk sexual behavior, accidents and injuries. High at-risk groups like teenagers and young adults are more likely than others to have problems. What drives the terrible evil of the drug business is greed and unscrupulous people who play on the dimension of peer pressure among youth, fast money making, addiction, and manipulating of the emotions of youth who are experiencing family problems. Another major factor in the horrible drug culture is the influence of gangs, particularly among youth with family or acceptance issues.

These figures are very disturbing and indicate that we, as a community need to do more to give our youth the tools they need to make responsible decisions to resist using drugs and alcohol. While much is being done in some of our communities to educate our youth about the danger of drug abuse, it is obvious that education alone is not working. Perhaps one of the primary shortcomings in our drug education program is similar to a methodological problem that we have addressed in our catechetical program in the past—namely that the focus on drug education must do more than impart information; it must strive to promote formation—a change in attitude and lifestyle of young people to empower them to make appropriate life choices. I am convinced that a formational approach like we use in our catechetical process holds the key to success in drug education efforts. Catechesis—religious education—needs to connect faith with lived experience.

Our Catholic Faith Offers us Guidance and Hope

What can we do to address this critical situation? Already, some steps have been taken. I have personally attended meetings and have asked the Pastors and Pastoral Councils of the parishes of the affected communities to meet with parents, youth, school officials, law enforcement, government, church leaders, businesses, media, and other agencies to focus on how all of us as people of faith praying and working together can combat this evil, and hopefully to make our communities drug free. It was very encouraging to see large numbers of citizens from different communities at recent meetings.

Our Catholic faith and teaching offers

us inspiration, guidance and direction to deal with the current drug crisis. To deal with this critical issue the Church can offer support to the family, work towards building community, refer people to agencies that can help and teach parenting skills, communication skills to adults and counseling.

In our Catholic schools, our drug prevention curriculum should include basic messages of our faith about being children of God and respecting life. Along with the curriculum, there must be a strong commitment on the part of pastors, principals, teachers, the entire parish community as well as the students themselves.

Jesus said, “I have come that you might have life and have it in the fullest.” We, as Church, are called to directly address the problem of drug abuse in our society for it directly conflicts with the idea of living our life in Christ to the fullest. The Catholic Church is very clear about its position on this matter. The Catechism of the Catholic Church states that “Life and physical health are precious gifts entrusted to us by God” [No.2288], and that “the use of drugs inflicts very great damage on human health and life.” [No.2291] The Catechism goes on to state that “The production of and trafficking in drugs are scandalous practices. They constitute direct co-operation in evil, since they encourage people to practices gravely contrary to the moral law.” [No.2291]

The recent United States Catholic Catechism for Adults tells us that the Fifth Commandment is a commandment that promotes a culture of life, and that it forbids other sins that are harmful to our health and total human well-being such as the use of drugs or the abuse of alcohol. The words “Thou shall not kill” ring loud and clear when we see the devastation and death caused by those who prey upon others in the sale of illegal drugs.

The Challenge of Adolescent Catechesis provides us with one of the most important aspects of youth catechesis; and that is to help youth improve their life decision-making skills to empower them to make wise choices when it comes to morals and moral decisions. The document, “Renewing the Vision” tells us that we must foster the total personal growth of each person—physical, emotional, intellectual and spiritual. It also tells us that effective ministry promotes collaboration with leaders, agencies, and congregations in the wider community to not only share information, but to promote total formation and development. Our Catholic teaching and celebration of our faith in the Eucharist and the Sacraments of Confirmation and Reconciliation offer us the direction and

(Please See PASTORAL/14)

FAMILY

From the Easy Chair

Without love, we can do nothing, be nothing

By Jimmy Patterson

I again stand wowed by the youth of today. You hear so many stories filled with the darkness in teenagers, but I'll go out on a limb and venture a guess and say that most of them are pretty good people. Like adults, they just want to know they are heard and that their opinions are valid.

The other night at our Bible study we focused on love. Aside from being the most powerful emotion in the world, aside from love being what makes the world go around, aside from the word love being used in tens of thousands of songs, and why we do most everything we do in spite of not having nearly enough of it, "love" was also the focus of the second reading. In fact, that weekend's reading happens to contain some of the most beautiful and meaningful words ever written:

If I speak in human and angelic tongues but do not have love, I am a resounding gong or a clashing cymbal. And if I have the gift of prophecy and comprehend all mysteries and all knowledge; if I have all faith so as to



Patterson

move mountains but do not have love, I am nothing. If I give away everything I own, and if I hand my body over so that I may boast but do not have love, I gain nothing.

Love is patient, love is kind. It is not jealous, (love) is not pompous, it is not inflated, it is not rude, it does not seek its own interests, it is not quick-tempered, it does not brood over injury, it does not rejoice over wrongdoing but rejoices with the truth. It bears all things, believes all things, hopes all things, endures all things.

When I was a child, I used to talk as a child, think as a child, reason as a child; when I became a man, I put aside childish things. At present we see indistinctly, as in a mirror, but then face to face. At present I know partially; then I shall know fully, as I am fully known. So faith, hope, love remain, these three; but the greatest of these is love.

Breathtakingly beautiful in scope and meaning, Paul's words in 1st Corinthians are as valid or more so today than they were almost 2,000 years ago.

So, we talked about love that night, the teenagers and I. And we talked about how love is the most important thing you can have or hope to have. We talked about the different kinds of love and it was nothing new to any of these guys, who ranged in age from 14 to 18, both male and female. Familial love, romantic love, love of God,

your boyfriend, your girlfriend, your friends, even love of your dog or your cat. And we talked about love of yourself and how if it is not handled properly it becomes pride and that can easily be a destructive kind of love.

I told them love of self can and often does stand in the way of love of others who are more important.

Happened to me. While it's great to have your hopes and dreams, I told the kids not to be so all-consuming in their desire to achieve those hopes and dreams that they forget love of others. If you want to be a writer, for example, don't put all your focus on writing a book if your family stands the chance of suffering while all you do is sit and work on the computer at night. Bad thing.

And they understood, and even more so I think they appreciated hearing from an adult who is flawed; from an adult who has messed up his share of times and not an adult who is better or above them.

We are all on the same level. Being God's children, we all deserve respect, honesty, effort, forgiveness ... and love. We have to be equal in those regards or young people will turn us off faster than anyone with an ounce of sanity can flick off "The Maury Povich Show."

Kids can see a fake a mile away. The key then is real

Please See **PATTERSON/16**

Bill & Monica Dodds

God shows up in unexpected ways!

By Bill and Monica Dodds
Catholic News Service

Nobody likes being sick. Nobody likes being frail. Nobody likes being in chronic pain or disabled. Nobody likes being dependent on others.

Nobody likes being a "care receiver." That's a term the two of us have begun to hear and to use more and more. Last fall we visited parishes throughout western Washington

state in our work with the Friends of St. John the Caregiver, a Catholic organization that promotes care for family caregivers.

We spoke to general audiences, to caregivers and to extraordinary distributors of the Eucharist who bring Communion to the sick and homebound. And we listened to what members of each group had to say about their family, their ministry, their care receivers.

What we said, and what we heard,

was that giving and receiving care are both vocations.

The model that FSJC uses is the scene at the foot of the cross where Mary is "Our Lady in Need." A widow losing her only child, she has no one primarily responsible for taking care of her in her later years. From the cross, so close to death, the Lord asks St. John the apostle to meet that need. And he asks his mother to accept John's help.

In every parish, there are those who -- because of poor health, a chronic condition or the frailty of age -- are in need.

Today the Lord asks others to be caregivers. He asks those who need help to accept it.

Each vocation has its challenges. Each has its blessings. Each has its duties.

The U.S. Catholic bishops talked about the vocation of care receiver in their 1999 document "Blessings of Age." They noted:

"Even if you are frail or homebound, your service to others can continue. You may now have the time to admire a child's drawings or praise a report card. You may be able to speak more honestly with family members or friends as they deal with sensitive issues. You may

feel called to pray for the needs of your parish. You may want to pray about what you read in the newspaper or what you hear on the news. Ultimately, your example of steadfast faith in the midst of suffering can be a lasting gift to family and friends. What younger person, having witnessed the grace-filled final days of a parent or grandparent, cannot be attracted to that same faith?"

The World Day of the Sick

Since 1992, the Catholic Church has celebrated World Day of the Sick on Feb. 11 (the feast of Our Lady of Lourdes) under the sponsorship of the Pontifical Council for Health Care Ministry.

It was established to:

1. Remind people to pray for those who are sick.
2. Invite Christians to reflect on and respond to human suffering.
3. Recognize and honor all who work in health care and serve as caregivers.

Pope Benedict XVI has chosen Seoul, South Korea, to host World Day of the Sick 2007. This year's theme is "The Spiritual and Pastoral Care of Patients With Incurable Illnesses."

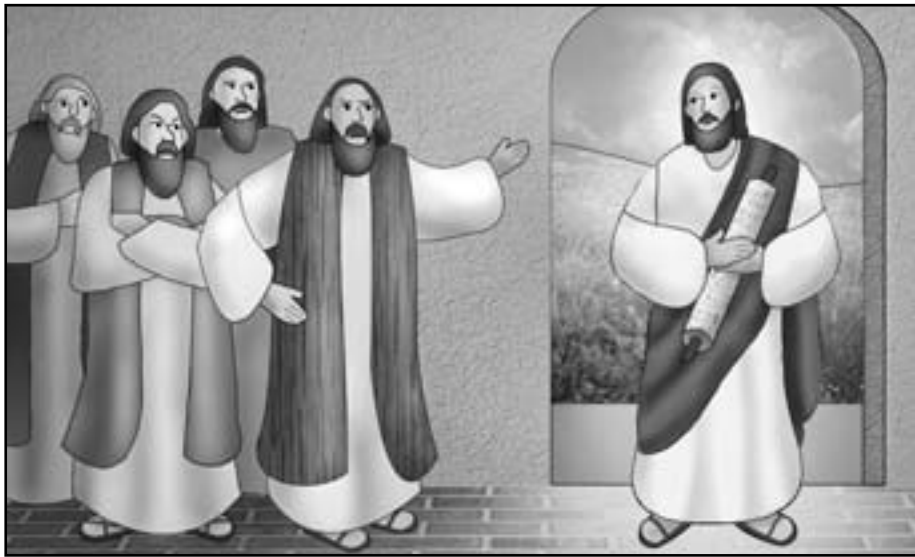


Bill & Monica Dodds



Answers

- | | |
|-------------|----------------|
| 1. Genesis; | 5. Revelation; |
| 2. Psalms; | 6. Acts; |
| 3. Job; | 7. Isaiah; |
| 4. Luke; | 8. Exodus. |



READ MORE ABOUT IT Luke 4 Q&A

1. What did Jesus say after he read from the scroll?
2. Who did the unclean spirit say Jesus was?

BIBLE ACCENT

If someone was sick during the time of the Old Testament, there was no clinic or hospital to go to. There were no doctors as we know them today either. Most medicines they had at the time were made from herbs and other plants and certain oils. Olive oil and sometimes honey were used as salves to treat wounds, and wine was one of the few painkillers available.

By the time of the New Testament there were practicing doctors, but their knowledge of medicine and biology was still very basic. Luke was a doctor. Archeologists have discovered some evidence that some doctors were surgeons who treated broken bones and even head injuries.

Some of the plant-based and herbal medicines discovered so many years ago still are used today because of their effectiveness. Some of the medical practices used today may seem strange to the people of the future.

Let us always pray to God for good health.

PUZZLE

Choose the Books of the Bible from the titles below that correctly answer the following statements. Not all names in the list will be used.

Psalms -- Exodus -- Timothy -- Luke -- Revelation -- Noah -- Genesis -- Acts -- Isaiah -- Job -- Esther

1. The first book of the Old Testament.
2. A book of songs and poems.
3. This book has the shortest title.
4. One of the Gospels.
5. John's vision.
6. Stories about the first Christians.
7. An important prophet.
8. The story of escape from Egypt.

JUST 4 KIDS

Jesus amazes people with words of wisdom

Jesus was in the synagogue on the Sabbath day. Someone handed him a scroll, which contained a passage from the prophet Isaiah. Jesus unrolled the scroll and read out loud. "The Spirit of the Lord is upon me, because he has anointed me to bring glad tidings to the poor. He has sent me to proclaim liberty to captives and recovery of sight to the blind, to let the oppressed go free and to proclaim a year acceptable to the Lord."

Jesus rolled the scroll back up and handed it to the attendant. Then he looked at the people in the synagogue and said to them, "Today this Scripture passage is fulfilled in your hearing."

Everyone was amazed by what Jesus said, and how politely and respectfully he spoke to them. They also asked each other, "Isn't this the son of Joseph?"

Jesus, knowing the thoughts and questions of the people, said: "Surely you will quote me this proverb, 'Physician, cure yourself.' ... Amen, I say to you, no prophet is accepted in his own place." Then Jesus reminded them of the prophet Elijah who was not sent to help a widow in Israel, but one who was in Sidon. And also of Elisha, who did not cleanse the lep-

ers of Israel, but only Naaman, who lived in Syria.

When the people heard these words, they no longer praised the gracious words of Jesus. Instead they felt insulted and became very angry. They rose up not as a group, but as a mob that wanted to hurt Jesus. They tried to take him to the top of a nearby hill and throw him off it, but the Spirit protected Jesus, and he walked through the crowd of people without being noticed, and he left in safety.

After leaving the synagogue, Jesus went to Capernaum, which is in Galilee.

Once again he amazed the people there with his words of wisdom.

A man with an unclean spirit challenged Jesus by saying: "What have you to do with us, Jesus of Nazareth? Have you come to destroy us? I know who you are -- the Holy One of God."

Jesus said to the spirit in the man: "Be quiet! Come out of him!" The spirit threw the man on the ground, but came out of the man without harming him.

The story quickly spread of this miracle about the power and authority of Jesus.

Coming of Age

It not only pays to be honest ... it's also cool, too

By M. Regina Cram
Catholic News Service

My first big failure with honesty occurred at the ripe age of 7. A friend dared me to steal a pack of Sweet Tart candies from the local convenience store using a fake nickel if I wanted to avoid being banned from her jump rope game at recess. I did it.

A vague sense of guilt gnawed at my insides for months afterward. Deep down, I worried whether little kids could be arrested and thrown in jail. Years later when the store went out of business, I was sure it was my fault.

Honesty. Is it all it's cracked up to be? Is cheating really that bad? Sometimes you hear that nice guys finish last. So the real question is, Does it pay to be honest?

When I was 15 I was tempted every day to cheat in geometry class. It didn't help that my

teacher had the personality of a bowl of oatmeal. He often stepped out of the classroom during tests, providing ample opportunity for answers to fly across the room. One day I succumbed to the temptation, snatching answers to several difficult problems. I aced the test.

But after several sleepless nights, I knew what I needed to do. I mustered the courage to speak with Mr. Oatmeal after class. I was shy and embarrassed but I managed to explain what I'd done.

He never said a word. He took out his marking book, crossed out "93," wrote "63" in its place, closed the book and returned to his work.

That was it. No acknowledgment that it took guts to come clean. Not even a rebuke for having cheated in the first place. Just a silent cross-out.

I was mortified walking out of that classroom. I thought, "Man, I'll never do that again!"

Unfortunately, it wasn't the cheating that I swore to avoid, it was the humiliation of admitting to it.

That geometry teacher missed a great opportunity to reinforce the value of honesty. If anything, he made cheating seem like a better option.

Fortunately the lesson didn't stick. What did stick occurred two years later in high school chemistry. I'd just taken my final exam and I needed an A to make high honors that year. I knew the material, studied hard and scored a 95 on the exam. I was ecstatic, until the next day.

As the teacher reviewed the test, I realized in dismay that one of my answers was wrong but had been marked correct. I'd done the calculation properly but had transposed the digits when I wrote the answer.

Surely that could justify keeping the 10 points, couldn't it? Besides, it was the teacher's

mistake; why should I pay the penalty?

I agonized as students argued for more points. After what seemed an eternity, I sheepishly approached his desk.

"This is going to kill me," I mumbled, "but you gave me 10 points too many."

Mr. Chemistry gazed at me for a long time. I could see the cogs in his brain turning, looking for a way to maintain the integrity of the marking system while reinforcing a kid's gritty honesty.

He slowly picked up his red pen, marked a dramatic X on the incorrect answer and said, "I'll have to take 10 points off." Then he circled a funny doodle at the bottom of the page, smirked a little and added quietly, "But I'll give you 10 points for artwork."

That day, Mr. Chemistry made it cool to be honest. I still think it's cool. And I still add a doodle to my work just in case.

PASTORAL

(From 11)

grace to combat this evil of drugs. We need to open the doors to our youth to help us deal with this situation.

The local level is where we must begin to address the drug situation, and I strongly encourage each parish to develop a pastoral plan and practical steps to combat the evil of drugs. This is an issue that needs to receive much more direct attention at a parish level by our pastors and pastoral councils, all pastoral leaders, in our preaching, teaching, and in our prayer and worship.

How to Address the Situation

To address this drug epidemic, the communities involved can have a more productive effect on the lives of our young people as all elements—schools, churches, city and county government, law enforcement, businesses, media, and other agencies—work together to overcome this evil.

To change the pattern of drug use and the influence of drugs in our communities, especially in the lives of our young people, there is a need to look at this situation through the wide-angle lens of community. This is a time to break new ground in our understanding of how communities working together impact positive youth development and help to create a better world. Communities, especially faith communities, do make a difference in the lives of our youth. If our communities unite their energies and resources and renew their commitment to work together, we can overcome the drug epidemic and make the world a better place for our youth to live.

Recommendations for the Entire Community

To Combat the Evil of Drugs

Here are some recommendations for community leaders to work and develop together a community effort and plan to eradicate drugs. Many of these recommendations come from the recent meetings that have been held in various communities of the Diocese to address this critical issue.

► **PARENTS AND FAMILIES.** The place to begin to address the diabolical drug situation is in our families. Parents who are the first teachers and mentors of their children have a serious duty to lead by example—no abuse of drugs in their own lives and moderation in the use of alcohol. Parents play a major role in the development of their children and need to educate themselves about this evil and be directly involved with their children whenever the school or community is trying to educate against all types of abuse.

However, to promote positive youth development at the community level, parents need to go beyond the confines of their own homes. Parents need to take responsibility for the welfare for not only their own children, but for all the youth in the community as regards overcoming the drug issue. The recent meetings with representatives of the communities where the drug arrests have occurred strongly indicate that parents have to make some hard decisions. They first must be educated themselves and commit themselves to be directly involved in eradicating drugs. They have to ask questions of their youth. They have to listen, but they also need to be aware of and discover what activities their children are involved in. They have to talk to their children. They truly need to know who their children's friends are. Most important—parents must make time for their children—quality time. By the time the law enforcement officials become involved, it is too late; a child is already into drugs. Parents need to take a pro-active role and be responsible for the conduct and environment for their children; and this is not a responsibility that they can ignore. It is important that parents volunteer to help not only with activities in which their own children are involved, but also in which children of other families are involved. While families are important to the individuals who live in them, the influence of family care and support does not necessarily carry beyond the family borders. Each individual does better when the community as a whole is working together to become more healthy. Parents need to advocate and support youth-serving organizations and school supported extra-curricular activities with financial help and volunteer hours.

Families need to link with other families and community leaders. When families link with other families and all areas of leadership of the community to become involved in making it a better place to raise children, we see differences, and are we able to overcome the evil of drugs. To overcome the evil of drugs, it is necessary for families and community leaders to work together to get our children involved in community activities, programs, and plans. It is most important for community leaders to become directly involved in this effort as volunteers, coaches, chaperones, and others in leadership roles bring together our youth for positive action and programs.

► **YOUTH.** The youth themselves have much to offer to help our communities overcome the evil of drugs, and to help other youth who are caught in a dragnet of drugs. The youth need to be involved in this discussion. It is necessary that we invite youth to be in contact with other youth—with their peers, and to offer them

new ways of living. Youth should be invited to help identify needs and planning as the community creates opportunities for youth to serve in the community. They need to be seen as positive and contributing members. We need to open the doors for the youth to assume more meaningful roles in decision-making for the schools and to participate in community-coordinating groups and task forces. This draws positive attention to youth as resources, not problems. Our youth can also help by asking adults to become involved in helping to work together to overcome the evil of drugs. Here there is a need for collaboration not confrontation. When a clear majority of the youth experience the involvement of the community, especially our families, churches and schools, and see the strength that the community offers, then there is new hope, and this will impact the overall community health.

► **SCHOOLS** play a large role in making our communities strong and in working to overcome the drug epidemic affecting so many of our communities in West Texas. When our schools work to develop good programs to help our students to become the best they can be, and to offer the knowledge, information, and specific ways on how to deal with drugs, to this extent, our communities will become healthier and more effective in carrying out the goals to combat the influence of drugs. It is encouraging to know that most of our schools have drug programs like DARE, Red Ribbon Week, Shattered Dreams, and random drug testing. But, more is needed. Schools can have a major influence in overcoming the epidemic of drugs, as schools are where the majority of structured activities of youth take place.

► **GOVERNMENT LEADERS.** To overcome the drug situation, there is a need for government officials at all levels to develop a clear and positive youth development policy that provides a vision of what community organizations and families can do to help youth in their communities, especially to prevent the drug culture from growing. Recent meetings have stressed that county funds for some projects should be retargeted for programs of prevention and for rehabilitation services because most of those who go to rehabilitation cannot afford to go outside of their community for treatment. There is an urgency to create coordinating task forces on youth activities and to use governmental power and influence to convene and empower other groups to become involved in solutions and to encourage direct involvement of youth. Local governments must recognize how to be most effective in empowering communities to function optimally for youth and propose ways to overcome the influ-

ence of drugs in the lives of our citizens, especially our youth.

► **CHURCHES AND RELIGIOUS ORGANIZATIONS.** Church involvement is one of the greatest and healthiest factors in overcoming the drug epidemic. Churches that show concern for their youth and involve them in the life of the church community, give them good religious education and formation and provide programs and activities for service by youth, can inspire and motivate many of our youth not to fall into the drug trap and destroy their lives.

Church leaders need to preach and speak out on the evil of drugs, how they demean the sacredness and dignity of each person made in the image and likeness of God and stress practical reasons why young people should not become involved in drugs. In all of this, we need more prayer for God's guidance and healing. Our churches need to establish prayer sharing groups based on Scripture involving youth and adults to pray and work together on solutions. Churches can work together with the non-sectarian community organizations in everything from advocacy to sharing facilities, joint programming and community-wide task forces. In dealing with this critical issue, there is a need to sponsor diverse social and religious activities that would reach beyond the ecclesial, ethnic, and social borders.

► **LAW ENFORCEMENT** is a major factor in counteracting the terrible influence of drugs. Sheriff Shane Fenton says that one of the things that the department tries to do is build relationships with students and the wider community. They do this by visiting schools and by going to the various sports events and other activities that the schools sponsor. They also have the DARE program and they take students on jail tours to open their eyes to the result of what can happen if you use drugs. Another thing they do is to allow students to see how the drug dogs work. All of these activities enable the law enforcement to be exposed and involved with the children as much as possible and to build a rapport with them. The Sheriff points out that one of the most important things that the community can do is to be aware of things that indicate drugs are being used in an area and to give them tips to apprehend drug users and drug pushers. There is a great need to work with other religious and non-religious sectarian community organizations in everything from advocacy to sharing facilities, joint programs, counseling, and community-wide efforts.

► **LOCAL BUSINESS** can also help very much in overcoming the drug cul-

Please See **SOLUTIONS/15**

CONCLUSIONS

(From 14)

ture. They can give parents and other employees time to attend functions and builds communities' strength through mentoring, coaching, leadership on committees, and a variety of other activities. Our businesses can help to develop schools/business partnerships and provide funding that begin to make both groups aware of the needs, challenges and resources of the other as we work together to overcome the drug culture. From a recent meeting, it was pointed out that there are three main things that the community needs to implement: (1) kids need to be more active after school; (2) the cities needs to be unified on working on common goals to overcome drugs; (3) the cities need some sort of rehabilitation facilities for those who have used drugs.

Programs that are Combatting The Drug Situation

To combat the evil of drugs, it is important that the community work together to establish more programs that can be used in our communities, especially in our schools and in our Church communities to counteract the drug problem. While the schools are using some programs to help educate students, much more needs to be done to prevent the spread of drugs, and to encourage young people with practical and moral reasons not to become involved in drugs.

One program that is being very effective in combating the drug situation is Friends for Hope in Big Lake, Texas. This program was founded by Nina Hallmark. The program is beginning its 8th year. The program was originally developed to work with domestic violence but over the years, Nina has been called on more and more to work with drugs and alcohol abuse. She said that drugs usually start with alcohol. Without exception she said that every domestic violence situation that she has ever seen involves drugs and alcohol. She indicates that you cannot fully address the drug problem for young people without addressing the alcohol problem. Nina has a number of teenagers with her who belongs to a group called STAR which is an acronym for Students Taking Action for Respect. Three years ago through the STAR kids Nina discovered that the number one problem with youth was alcohol and the number two problem was drugs. Regarding the drug problem they discovered

that youth preferred coke to marijuana. However, today meth is quickly taking the place of coke. Nina points out that kids who live in domestic violence situations invariably turn to alcohol to escape their problems. She also said that they are very often victims of sexual abuse. Nina states that she works with counseling services and that she has a number of programs and a great deal of information available and will work with other communities as funding allows. Her organization works from donations and she has hopes that she will be able to find leaders in the area's surrounding towns who could begin and organize and maintain a program similar to what she is doing. She said that it has been her experience that when you support the kids and give them the correct information, that they will normally make the right choice. After Nina spoke at a recent meeting she invited the teenagers who were with her to come up and say a few words to everyone. She said that these teens attend various workshops where they learn information that they can pass on to their peers. They study topics covering drugs, smoking, alcohol, sexual abuse, and rape. These teens then go to various places, schools and other organizations, and give presentations to other students.

Another fine program that is helping students to be informed about the evil of drugs and to overcome drug use is MASH (Movement Against Stupid Habits). This is a student-led organization at Wall High School whose mission is to reduce and eliminate underage drinking, drug abuse, and other risky behaviors among youth. This program works to educate youth in school and in the wider community of the extreme risks and dangers of drug use and consequences resulting from negative habits and poor choices.

Activities of MASH include making speeches and announcements to various church and school-affiliated organizations (such as Parent Open House Night, football games, Knights of Columbus and Catholic Daughters meetings) and inform parents of the laws and consequences of providing alcohol to minors. Those involved in this program also urge parents and community members to be better role models for their children.

Youth involved in this program proudly boast that MASH has become the largest on-campus organization. Students want to be part of this effort, which is very morally uplifting. The students involved in this program develop their own personal self-esteem and level of

excellence as they learn how to abstain from making poor choices. A strong dimension of this program is the peer participation. Teenagers who often perhaps will not listen to their parents are listening to other teenagers, hearing about the evils and negative consequences of using drugs.

The Middle School at Wall also has introduced another fine program to combat drugs called H-TEAM. H-TEAM stands for "Hawk Teens Educating on Alcohol Misuse." Hawk is the school mascot. This is a group of students committed to being alcohol, drug, and risky behavior free. The teens involved want to set a good example for their peers and have fun and enjoy life free of alcohol and drugs. The group's purpose is to make their school and community a better and safer place to live. The young people do this through educating their peers and the community on the dangers of underage drinking and other risky behaviors.

H-TEAM began with a small grant from Johnson and Johnson which helped send students to Youth Leadership Power Camp sponsored by MADD (Mothers Against Drunk Driving). This camp empowered the 7th graders to become leaders through the wealth of information they learned about the effects of alcohol and the resource connections given to them at the camp. H-TEAM has grown in membership each year, and currently has over 100 students in the middle school as members.

Conclusions

This is a time for all elements of the community, especially the efforts of the Church, to sponsor teams and other activities for youth, and to invest directly in youth service organizations and programs that have proven to be effective in preventing drug use. This is also a time to support academic, sports and work-readiness programs that motivate youth and provide developmental opportunities. This is a time for parents to assume their rightful role as first educators and role models for their children, working together to promote a culture of life and happiness for their children. Most of all, this is the time for prayer to ask for the guidance of the Holy Spirit to grant us forgiveness, respect for life, wisdom and courage, as we seek to build up new love and appreciation for all and work together to protect our greatest asset—our youth.

LENT: Directions for Palm Sunday, Holy Thursday, Good Friday and Holy Saturday

(From 8)

receiving Communion at least once a year, ordinarily during the Easter Season.

Funeral and Nuptial Masses are not allowed on Holy Thursday, Good Friday or Holy Saturday. The Funeral Rite outside of Mass, however, can be held either in church or at the chapel on those days, with a memorial mass later.

A Special Collection is taken up on Ash Wednesday to aid the Church in Central and Eastern Europe which continues to rebuild after decades of communist domination. Please be generous and offer

prayers for these churches.

The liturgical directions of the Sacramentary and the Lectionary must be faithfully observed regarding all the special Holy Week Liturgies

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.

The Back Page

'Because I Said So'

Pushing OK of premarital sex to new lows

By Harry Forbes
Catholic News Service

NEW YORK (CNS) -- Playing the "endearingly" overbearing mother of three young women, Diane Keaton's trademark charm and self-deprecating exuberance can be observed at full throttle.

But despite her strenuous efforts, "Because I Said So" (PG-13 -- Universal/Gold Circle) remains a mediocre and unfunny comedy about Daphne (Keaton), who, desperate to find a match for her unlucky-in-love caterer daughter, Milly (Mandy Moore), tries to match up the girl with Jason (Tom Everett Scott), a handsome if rather shallow architect whom she has pre-interviewed after secretly taking out a personal ad on Milly's behalf.

Musician Johnny (Gabriel Macht) has observed the interview process, and suggests he might woo Milly, but Daphne rejects him as an unreliable musician who would break her daughter's heart.

Still, Johnny pursues Milly on his own, and she quickly responds to his decent and sincere manner (and the fact that he's raising a young son on his own), but Daphne pushes Jason's case so determinedly that Milly finds herself not only dating the two men simultaneously, but engaging in a sexual relationship with both as well!

It soon becomes clear that Daphne's fervor has its roots in not wanting Milly to end up as lonely as she herself is. Fairly late in the film, Daphne meets Joe (Stephen Collins), Johnny's equally nice dad, and Daphne begins to soften.

Director Michael Lehmann's appalling chick flick pushes the contemporary acceptance of premarital sex to new lows, as the permissive Keaton character and her three daughters (Lauren Graham and Piper Perabo

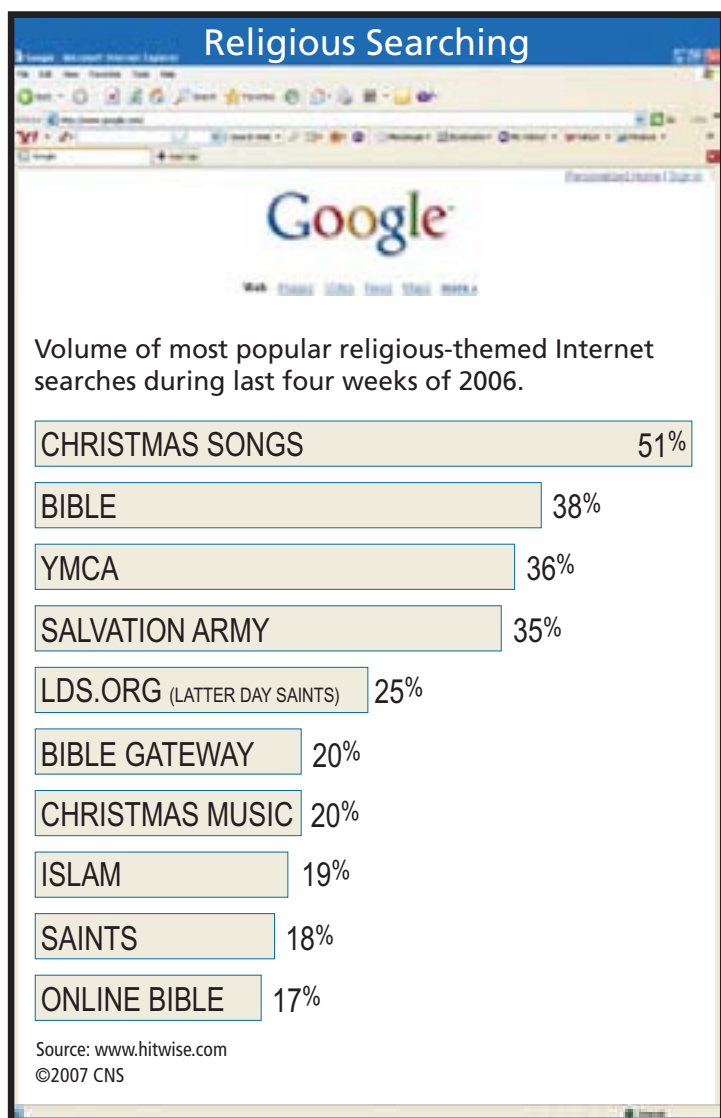


Mandy Moore, left, and Tom Everett Scott, in "Because I Said So."

are the others) blithely discuss their sexual experiences at every opportunity. It's no doubt a telling irony that we're meant to think Daphne's an old-fashioned gal at heart because she's obsessed with the creaky black-and-white version of "A Farewell to Arms" with Gary Cooper and Helen Hayes.

On the plus side, the film displays Keaton's comic prowess and appealing performances from Moore, Macht and Collins, while there are minimal expletives, a reasonably moral tie-up and an absence of graphic sex. But all these fail to balance a script (by Karen Leigh Hopkins and Jessie Nelson) that is morally -- and dramatically -- askew at almost every turn.

The film contains several nongraphic sexual encounters, permissive sexual mores, much sexual banter, innuendo and other questionable elements, casual acceptance of porn and an instance of profanity. The USCCB Office for Film & Broadcasting classification is O -- morally offensive.



PATTERSON: Love spilling forth from eight pens ... surely a good thing

(From 12)

ness. There's no sense in trying to make yourself out to be something you're not. If they see you've got your own set of problems but can still sit there, admit it and take the time to share something valuable with them, maybe they'll be more likely to open up. They may not talk more often, but they may hear more.

Toward the end of the lesson I gave each of them a sheet of paper and I told them to write a love letter. It could be to their boyfriend, their girlfriend, their parents, sister, brother or pet hamster. It didn't matter. I said, "Just write a letter to someone you love and tell them how much you love them and why you love them. I don't want to see it. You don't have to read it out loud when you're done. When you're finished with it, you can throw it away or you can give it to whomever you've written. Just write it. Maybe it'll make you feel better, or at

least differently, about that person."

And so they started. And I sat and wrote a love letter to Karen, my wife. I was finished in a few minutes. I wrote a half page. I figured I better do what I was asking them to do. If I don't, I'm just fakin' it.

So I finished my letter and I looked up, thinking I would have a room full of people staring back at me, waiting for me to finish.

But that's not what happened.

I looked up and they were all sitting there ... writing. And writing. And writing. Some of them wrote for five minutes longer than I. Some for 10 minutes longer. I didn't stop any of them. And they sure didn't look like they were sitting there writing something like, "Geez, this is soooo goofy." I looked at their eyes as they wrote. And there was a connection between their eyes and their paper. Whatever it was they were writing, they meant it.

Finally, the last person folded up his

paper and stuck it in his pocket. Another girl put hers in her purse.

"So?" I asked.

"I wrote to my sister," one said.

"It made me feel differently about my parents," said another. And then we talked for a few minutes and we said a prayer and went home.

And seeing all these people sitting and writing and listening and sometimes talking that night -- about love -- made me feel really good. Just for a few moments there were eight kids in a classroom and there was love moving in and out of their pens.

And that had to be a good thing.



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