New Missal brings 17 additions to Proper of Saints

By Mary Elizabeth Sperry
USCCB Communications Office

When parishes start using the third edition of the Roman Missal, the texts of the prayers won’t be the only changes Catholics in the pews see. The new Missal will include 17 additions to the Proper of Saints, the part of the Missal that includes prayers for the observances of saints’ days. The Proper of Saints follows a calendar established by the Vatican and modified by the bishops of each country to include saints of local importance. Any changes to a national or diocesan calendar require the consent of the Vatican.

The saints new to the third edition of the Roman Missal include saints, like Augustine Zhao Rong, who were canonized after the second edition of the Roman Missal was published in 1985. Some, including Saint Lawrence Ruiz and Saint Andrew Dung-Lac, have been on the U.S. calendar for years. However, the new Missal will be the first time their prayer texts have been available in the printed book. Other added saints appeared on the liturgical calendar until 1969, when the calendar was simplified and many saints’ observances were removed. Also restored to the calendar are observances

(Please See MISSAL/20)

Odessa comes closer to new Life Center

By Jimmy Patterson
Editor

ODESSA -- Midland Life Center executive director Judy Rouse says her organization is growing and will soon open another location in Odessa. A director for the facility has already been hired, board and staff are busy looking for a site that will most benefit those who choose to utilize the center and Rouse says organizers hope a ground-breaking could be held in early 2012.

Rouse says it is the prayer of Life Center workers that they can find a

(Please See LIFE/24)

Lent ushers in Catholics’ special ‘Season of Prayer’

By Bishop Michael D. Pfeiffer, OMI

With Ash Wednesday, March 9, we begin the Lenten season, which prepares us to celebrate the greatest feast of Christianity, the Resurrection of Jesus Christ on Easter Sunday, April 24, 2011.

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 all to live the Lenten season in a more meaningful and prayerful manner.

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.

(Please See GUIDELINES/22)
From the Bishop’s Desk

**Mary: Not only the mother of God, but also our mother**

By Bishop Michael Pfeifer, OMI

Mary, the mother of God, is our mother, too. Just as Mary gave us Jesus cooperating with God’s grace, so Jesus dying on the cross in turn gave Mary to the Church, to all of us, when he said to the beloved disciple, “Behold, your mother” (Jn 19:27).

A mother is so much more than a “birth-giver.” “Motherhood,” writes Pope John Paul II, “is a relationship of person to person: a mother is not only mother of the body or of the physical creature born of her womb, but of the person she begets… Mary is the Theotokos [God-bearer or mother of God] not only because she conceived and gave birth to the Son of God, but also because she accompanied him in his human growth.”

Mary, our mother, helps us in our total growth, wanting always to make us more like her greatest son, Jesus. Her only gentle command is, “Do whatever He tells you.” (Jn 2:5) No matter how lost we are, no matter how conflicted, no matter how troubled, we are always hopeful in the knowledge that we have been given a mother who loves us with a constant, undying love. We can withstand whatever befalls us because Mary is our mother, and she always wants to take us by the hand to lead us.

Why do mothers possess the ability to raise us up when we stumble and fall? Because there is nothing abstract about a mother’s love; in the love of a mother we are given a face that shows us compassion, comfort and care. At the most excruciating moment of his Passion, Christ offers us to take his mother as our mother. In doing so, he reveals to us how crucial our own recourse to her is for our lives, especially in our suffering, and when we feel hopeless. In our relationship with the mother of God, the Christ we seek becomes concrete, and she makes us more and more into his image and likeness. Mary our Mother, teach us how to surrender our lives to Jesus as he speaks to us, “Behold, your mother.”

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**DIOCESAN BRIEFS**

**Catholic School Collection**

_February 12/13, 2011_

“Catholic Schools are a ministry of the whole Church. Catholic schools educate children for all parishes. Therefore, all parishes are called upon to support them,” wrote Bishop Michael Pfeifer last October, in announcing the first annual special collection for Catholic Schools in the Diocese of San Angelo. The collection will be taken up in weekend Masses February 12 & 13. The proceeds will be divided equally among Angelo Catholic, St. Mary’s (Odessa) and St. Ann’s (Midland) Schools.

When establishing this collection last October, the bishop encouraged the people of the Diocese of San Angelo to send their children to our schools, but also asked all the parishioners to assist these schools financially. The Bishops of Texas sponsored a Summit on Catholic Education in 2009, which dealt with many aspects of Catholic Education. One of these is financial viability. The follow-up summit in the Diocese of San Angelo and the Diocesan School Commission recommended this annual collection. The Presbyteral Council, an advisory council of pastors, unanimously endorsed it, as well.

The funds may be utilized in different ways. Angelo Catholic wants to attract more students. St. Mary’s has major renovations that need to be done. St. Ann’s wants to replenish scholarship funds.

There are many active Catholics in all parishes who have benefited from a Catholic school education. This collection will also be an opportunity for them to express their gratitude through their contributions.

**Convent to celebrate 10 years**

_CHRISTOVAL -- Bishop Michael D. Pfeifer, OMI, and the sisters of the Our Lady of Grace Carmelite monastery near Christoval will observe the monastery dedication’s 10th anniversary with an 11 a.m. Mass on Saturday, February 19._

The date marks the day 10 years earlier when the monastery was officially dedicated after the sisters relocated from their facility following dam-

age caused by a tornado in San Angelo. The convent was made possible thanks to a donation of land by former NFL Pro-Bowl lineman Pierce Holt, a San Angelo native and Angelo State Univ. graduate.

The convent was first occupied by the Carmelite sisters in May 2000, but Mass was not said in the facility’s chapel until it was completed and opened until February 3, 2001. That Mass was attended by 1,200 people.

The monastery currently has five resident cloistered Carmelite sisters: Sister Mary Grace, prioress; Sister Imelda, Sister Mary Michael, Sister Katherine and Sister Theodora, a novice. A pot luck lunch will follow the reception. The media is invited to attend.

“We are tremendously grateful to everyone who was part of a helping us in any way these past 22 years,” Sister Mary Grace said. DIRECTIONS: Take Ranch Road 2084 (“Toe Nail Trail”) 15 miles southeast out of Christoval. Turn left on County Road 339 (Rudd Rd.), a dirt road. Take a right after the fifth cattle guard. Follow the road until it dead ends into the monastery.

**EE Recruiting Day**

_Engaged Encounter Team Recruiting Day, offered to anyone who wants to serve in the ministry, will be Sunday, February 20 at Christ the King Retreat Center in San Angelo. Catholic Engaged Encounter is a weekend retreat away with other engaged couples with plenty of time alone together to plan for a sacramental marriage. It is designed to give couples planning marriage the opportunity to dialogue honestly and intensively about their prospective lives together-- their strengths and weaknesses, desires, ambitions, goals, their attitudes about money, sex, children, family, their role in the church and society--in a face to face way. If you are interested in attending this information day, please contact your priest or call Mary Ann Lewis at the diocesan Pastoral Center, 325.651.7500._

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**Holy Angels Cruise**

_Holy Angels Parish is hosting an Alaska Sawyer Glacier Cruise on July 1-9, 2011. You’ll cruise through the Inside Passage with its majestic fjords, islands and bays and see the lush greenery of Tongass National Forest, the world’s largest and northernmost temperate coastal rainforest. Alaskan ports of call will include Juneau & Skagway. In addition, you will spend a day in Victoria, British Columbia and a day & night in Seattle, Washington. A brochure can be found on Holy Angel’s website (www.telleypress.com/hollyangels) or you can call Lori Hines at Holy Angels to request one. For more information call Lori at (325)942-8192._

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** Scheduled Executions **

_The Angelus publishes the execution dates of Texas offenders on death row each month so that the faithful in the Diocese of San Angelo can pray for them. The following offenders face upcoming execution dates. Please pray for them as well as the victims, families and all who are affected by violence:_

- Offender/Scheduled Execution Date: Michael Hall/February 15
- Timothy Adams/February 22
Family Life and Marriage

Parish contacts help drive Family Life office

By Mary Ann Lewis
Family Life & Marriage Director

The Committee on Laity, Marriage, Family Life and Youth has been established by the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops to assist them in responding to “the faith needs of lay men and women, married couples and families, lay ecclesial ministers and young people in our pluralistic and culturally diverse society.” Their purpose in establishing this committee is to have assistance in promoting the faith formation and evangelization of these people in order to lead them toward a deeper commitment to Christ and his Church in the world. Laity in the world and in the Church, including the specific concerns of women and men; lay ecclesial ministry; youth; and young adults; marriage and family life, including natural family planning, falls under the committee’s responsibility according to the bishops’ mandate.

Recent studies, such as those by National Study of Youth and Religion, have tracked the emerging adults in our country. From the various studies, we realize the Catholic population has to refocus its formation opportunities to be more relational with God and community. Faith is not just about knowing information, but also about being connected with God and a faith community that gives a sense of identity and mentors young adults in their faith journey.

The Diocese of San Angelo’s Family Life & Marriage (FLM) Ministry has been established in the Office of Education and Formation and greatly supported by Bishop Michael Pfeifer. The ministry is available to assist parishes in strengthening and enhancing family life in the faith community and to promote awareness of the needs of young adults, families, and those preparing for marriage.

Pastors have been invited to identify an FLM Parish Contact from their parishes and missions. Their responsibilities will include:

- working collaboratively with their pastor and other parish leaders, e.g., CYM, CRE, etc., to promote family life by;
- identifying persons within the parish who can also help facilitate the growth and promotion of family life;
- affirming and supporting opportunities for family life promotion; and
- seeking to involve whole families in parish life so that lived faith is modeled by the whole faith community.

We now have 30 parishes with FLM parish contacts. MaryAnn Lewis, Associate Director of Family Life & Marriage, will be meeting with the contacts in the Abilene Deanery on January 29; with the Midland/Odessa Deanery Parish Contacts on February 5; and with the Parish Contacts in the San Angelo Deanery on February 19.

If you have questions or comments concerning the Family Life & Marriage Ministry or would like to discuss family life matters, contact MaryAnn Lewis at the diocese, at 325.651.7500.

Del Escritorio del Obispo

Maria: Made de dios y nuestra madre

Por el Obispo Miguel Pfeifer, OMI

María, la madre de Dios, es también nuestra madre. Así como María nos dio a Jesús, cooperando con la gracia de Dios, Jesús, muriendo en la cruz, en torno a María a la Iglesia, a todos nosotros, cuando dijo a su querido discípulo, “Ahí está tu madre.” (Jn 19:27)

Una madre es mucho más que solamente la que “dar a luz”. “La Maternidad” escribe el Papa Juan Pablo II, “es una relación de persona a persona: una madre no es solamente madre del cuerpo o de la criatura física nacida de sus entrañas, sino también de la persona que engendra...María es la Madre de Dios, según la teología de la Iglesia, es la Madre de Dios, no solamente porque concibió y dio a luz al Hijo de Dios, sino también porque lo acompañaba en su desarrollo humano.”

María, nuestra madre, nos ayuda en nuestro crecimiento total, siempre queriendo hacernos más como su gran hijo, Jesús. Su único tieno mandamiento es, “Hagan todo lo que Él les diga.” (Jn 2:5)

Obispo

Miguel Pfeifer
OMI

que tan perdidos andemos, no importa cuanto conflictivo tengamos, no importa que tan agitados estemos, siempre estamos llenos de esperanza en el conocimiento de que se nos ha dado una madre quien nos ama con un amor constante y eterno. Podemos aguantar cualquier cosa que nos sobrevenga porque María es nuestra madre, y siempre quiere tomarnos de la mano para dirigirnos.

¿Porqué poseen las madres la habilidad de levantarnos cuando nos tropecemos y caímos? Porque no hay nada abstracto del amor de una madre; en el amor de una madre se nos ha dado una cara que nos demuestra compasión, consuelo y cuidado. En el momento más doloroso de su Pasión, Cristo nos ofrece a que tomemos su madre como nuestra madre. Al hacer esto, nos revela que tan importante es nuestro propio recurso a ella para nuestras propias vidas, especialmente en nuestro sufrimiento, y cuando nos sentimos desesperados. En nuestra relación con la madre de Dios, el Cristo que buscamos llega ser concreto, y ella nos hace más y más a su imagen y semejanza. María nuestra Madre, enséñanos como entregar nuestras vidas a Jesús al decírnos, “Ahí está tu madre.”
Black History Month: Reason prevails over prejudice

By Bishop Michael Pfeifer

Black History Month is a remembrance of important people and events in the history of the African diaspora. Since 1976 this has been celebrated annually in the United States of America and Canada in February and this month is also referred to as African-American History Month.

This remembrance has its root in 1926 when the United States’ historian, Carter Woodson, spearheaded “Negro History Week.” Woodson chose the second week of February because it marked the birthdays of two Americans who greatly influenced the lives and social conditions of African-Americans: former President Abraham Lincoln and abolitionist and former slave, Frederic Douglass.

The celebration was expanded to a month in 1976, the nation’s bicentennial, when then President Gerald Ford urged Americans to “Seize the opportunity to honor the too-often neglected accomplishments of black Americans in every area of endeavor throughout our history.”

Carter Woodson believed in the dream that truth could not be denied and that reason would prevail over prejudice. Many years later, Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr., the great civil rights leader, would make this dream come alive. We recall his famous speech: “I Have a Dream.”

Black History Month honors generations of African-Americans who struggled with adversity to achieve full citizenship in American society.

The Black Awakening of the 1960s dramatically expanded the consciousness of African-Americans about the importance of black history, and the Civil Rights movement focused Americans of all color on the subject of the contributions of African-Americans to our history and culture.

Our country owes a great debt of gratitude to our African-American sisters and brothers who overcame the evils of slavery and segregation, and inspired us to have a new appreciation for all people, regardless of their race, religion, color, or social status and to see the image of God in each one.

Sister Langford tells CJM volunteers to never forget those imprisoned

› Annual Diocesan Criminal Justice Ministry retreat held at St. Stephens in Midland.

MIDLAND -- The Gospel of Matthew gives a most profound and dutiful statement: “I was imprisoned and you came and visited me,” which became a part of the theme for the annual retreat of the Diocesan Criminal Justice Ministry. The retreat had attendees from all cities and parishes of the diocese and was rewarding and inspiring.

“We heard good words of wisdom and encouragement by the main speaker, Sister Diane Langford, CDP,” said participant and CJM volunteer Robert Villescaz. “There were statements pertaining to the ministry to never forget those that are incarcerated and to also be compassionate and caring to those who have been victims of offenders. Special words of encouragement were repeated over and over again to never falter and lose hope and the vision that through a strong faith, and a stern and sincere commitment to helping all our brothers and sisters and families that are dealing with matters of incarceration.

Bishop Michael Pfeifer was the presider of a Mass at the end of the retreat. Pfeifer thanked the crowd of volunteers for their faithful and continuing service with the justice ministry, and additional thanks went out to those who helped with the event.

Many special thanks were also given to the Director of the Criminal Justice Ministry for the entire Diocese, Sister Estela Tovar from St. Stephens there in Midland, because of her dedication and loyalty to her deep Catholic faith and loving God through her work and guidance to many volunteers in the ministry.

--- Submitted by Robert Villescaz, CJM volunteer
Catholic educators in diocese working to implement goals

By Joan Wilmes
Principal
St. Ann's Catholic School

Catholic education communities continue aligning the Bishop Letter, “Renewing Our Commitment to Catholic elementary and Secondary Schools in the Third Millennium” to local school goals. From the letter, Texas bishops and superintendents focused on four areas at a state-wide Education Summit:
- Strengthening Catholic identity
- Attracting, retaining and serving Hispanics
- Providing for special needs students
- Assuring the long-term financial stability

Bishop Pfeifer asked the school communities and stakeholders to finalize goals and develop objectives into plans to better serve its constituents and remain viable in the future. St. Ann’s School Board and staff are working on all four areas. Let me comment on the first and last ones.

St. Ann’s School Board has standing and ad hoc committees who develop and implement the school’s strategic long range plan. Board members continuously work on Catholic identity, finances, curriculum development, scholarships, facilities, marketing, scholarship and grants. Through these committees, members have developed and incorporated action steps to achieve summit goals. Of course, some steps are easier than others and deciding where to start can get complicated. The board did discover that some goals and objectives had already been put into action.

As we move into 2011, the vision of providing Catholic values and nurturing the seed of faith is as meaningful today as when our doors first opened in 1950. St. Ann’s School continues to cultivate servant leaders for the church and the world. The strategic plan calls for the development and growth of our Catholic identity. Because adults are potential role models for students, staff members must be properly instructed in the essentials of the Catholic faith. School staff members are called to integrate faith formation in professional development opportunities and faculty meetings. Through the Diocesan Office of Education, staff members attend formation classes in Scripture, sacraments, liturgy, spirituality, ministry, morality and social justice. Formation classes are presented in local deaneries to allow for easier access for teachers and catechists. Our staff integrates on-going faith formation through faculty meetings, service opportunities and daily prayer such as “morning devotionals” before the start of each school day. Another area for the development of our Catholic Identity is the promotion of vocations. God calls all that are baptized to follow Him in holiness and service. Students participate in a Prayer Campaign for Vocations. During the weekly school Mass, several students receive a vocation bag. In each bag are items to promote learning and prayer for vocations as well as God’s plan for their own lives. Future Catholic identity objectives include the emphasis

(Please See SCHOOLS/20)

An estimated 136 young people, top photo, answered the call to vocations during the Youth 2000 retreat, at St. Stephen’s in Midland, January 28-30. Above, Bishop Michael D. Pfeifer presided over the weekend’s closing Mass Sunday; above right, six of the friars and religious who helped conduct the weekend. Organizers said 565 young people from 26 parishes in West Texas attended the event.
The Diocese of San Angelo Celebrates 50 Years

Diocese of San Angelo
50th Anniversary Mass

11 a.m.,
Sunday
October 16, 2011

San Angelo Coliseum
San Angelo

FROM THE ARCHIVES: APRIL 20, 1984

ARTIST’S RENDERING -- The new Holy Family Church will soon rise on parish property on Buffalo Gap Road in Abilene. The 18,000 square foot structure will consist of a worship area, classroom space and an atrium.

Abilene parish plans new church building

Editor’s Note: The following story was first published in the West Texas Angelus on April 20, 1984. Throughout the diocese’s 50th anniversary year of 2011, The Angelus will re-publish selected historic articles that have appeared in the newspaper.

ABILENE -- Holy Family Parish here will soon have a new home, according to Fr. Timothy J. Murphy, pastor. Final plans for the church are almost complete and a fundraising campaign is already underway.

The new structure will replace the old Central Catholic High School buildings used by the parish since its establishment in 1976. The old high school property located on Sherman Drive has been sold and new property has been acquired on Buffalo Gap Road in the southern part of the city.

The new parish buildings were designed by Jack Luther of the Abilene architectural firm of Tittle, Luther and Loving.

The buildings will consist of 18,000 square feet -- 9,000 for the church, which will seat approximately 450 people, and 9,000 for classrooms and a small atrium.

The church will be constructed of laminated wood arches, steel and brick. In addition, a large landscaped parking area will be constructed.

The parish fund drive, under the chairmanship of Dr. Jim Webster, is already underway. The parish seeks to raise $300,000 to add to the $1,300,000 already on hand from the sale of the former high school building and grounds.

Father Murphy expects the ground-breaking to be around the first of July, (Please See ARCHIVES/22)

Bishops accepting invitations

The following Church officials have responded to correspondence from the Diocese of San Angelo indicating their intentions to appear at the diocese's 50th anniversary weekend events in October:

Cardinal Daniel DiNardo, Archbishop of Houston-Galveston
Most Rev. Andrew McDonald, Bishop Emeritus/Chaplain, Little Sisters of the Poor, Palatine, Ill.
Most Rev. James A. Tamayo, D.D., First Bishop of Laredo
Most. Rev. Alvaro Corrado, SJ, Bishop of Tyler

50th anniversary logo

The diocese's official 50th anniversary medallion/logo, at left and on the cover of the Angelus, was designed by Midland graphic artist Kate Dominguez. Kate also designed the new Angelus masthead on Page 1. A big thanks to Kate.

Pioneer families

In preparation for its 50th anniversary celebration, the diocese is looking for pioneer families to be honored at a special dinner October 15 in San Angelo. To be considered for the honor, a pioneer family must have been Catholics committed to their local parish when the diocese was established in October 1961. To have a family or friends considered, send your nominees and why they should be honored to JimmyLeePatterson@gmail.com, or talk to your pastor and have him share your nomination with someone on the diocesan 50th anniversary committee.

One Mass

Bishop Michael Pfeifer has announced that on Sunday, October 16, the day that marks the 50th anniversary of the diocese's official establishment, only one Mass will be celebrated throughout the diocese — at 11 a.m. at the San Angelo Coliseum. No masses will be said except for the anniversary Mass in San Angelo and pastors should advise their parishioners of this. Ordinary masses of anticipation and perhaps added masses of anticipation will be said on Saturday, Oct. 15 at individual parishes, but there will be only one Mass in the entire diocese on October 16.” Those unable to attend the anniversary Mass in San Angelo are dispensed of their obligation the weekend of Oct. 15-16.
A Scout is many things, but mostly he is reverent

By Deacon Chano Sotelo and Deacon Daniel Vaughan

The life of a Boy Scout and a Girl Scout is one in which faith is of prime importance, as stated in the Scout Law; “a scout is reverent.” This reverence can be accomplished by being faithful in his or her duty to God. After all, the Boy Scout oath includes “to do my duty to God and my country.” Many of the Scouts in the San Angelo diocese have taken this further by giving special service and, in doing so, merit a religious emblem. This is not a Scouting award, but is conferred by a religious leader in the diocese. The award consists of bar pins, ribbons, and pendants, and are worn on the uniform above the left pocket on formal occasions. Additionally, the religious emblem square knot may be worn on the uniform over the left pocket by the youth or adult that has earned any of the religious rewards. It is the only knot a scout can achieve before Eagle Scout.

The awards are available for Boy Scouts ranging from Tiger Cubs (age 6) to Venturers (up to 21), and Girl Scouts from Daisy and Brownies (age 7) to Senior and Ambassador Girl Scouts (up to age 18).

This endeavor entails age-appropriate objectives to help the Cub/Boy Scout or Brownie/Girl Guide to understand and live his or her Catholic faith in the pack, troop, home, school, and in the greater society. The scout is given an activity book which he or she completes under the guidance of his or her parent or guardian. The Boy Scout program Ad Altare Dei is led by an adult facilitator and the Pope Pius is designed to be completed within the boys themselves; a facilitator is present during the program but it is designed for the boys to lead it. Typically, the activity can be completed over a few weeks. This helps the scout to understand that faith endeavors are long-term commitments, rather than one-time projects. Parents are encouraged to participate in the process, especially where help may be needed with Bible readings and getting information.

When the program is completed the scout leader informs the parish priest who will assign a member of the community to set up a board of review for all the Scouts that have completed the program. The Scout leader will then collect all the applications from their troop/pack with payment for the emblems and submit them to Chano Sotelo for ordering and processing of emblems. Chano will contact the diocesan chaplain once all emblems are received and the certificates can be signed. The emblems are presented by the church, knots are also presented at the parish level.

The religious emblem program helps in the discovery and growth in the appreciation of the presence of God in the scout’s daily life as a member of their families and parishes. It also encourages the scout to develop a positive self image through the contribution he or she can make to the group or community. Other objectives of the scouting religious emblem program include supporting the role of parents as the primary catechetics of their children and foster early family religious involvement. This program will also develop an awareness of God’s love and that the scout is a member of the body of Christ. It also will aid in the scout’s awareness of his or her responsibility that grows out of God’s love for us, along with growing in spiritual experience and in one’s relationship with God.

To learn more about the religious emblems and how to achieve these contact Chano Sotelo 432-689-9411. Each deanery has a scouting representative: San Angelo deanery - Deacon Marc Mata (325-650-0019), Midland deanery - Deacon Leonard Hendon (432-664-7326), and Abilene deanery - Deacon Dan Vaughan (325-660-2794). Again, we invite all Boy and Girl Scouts and parents to enter into this exciting and fulfilling program.

‘Lack of form’ petition a first step in the Church after divorce

By Fr. Tom Barley
Judicial Vicar / Diocese of San Angelo

Q: I have a previous marriage and have questions:

If I was married in a civil or non-Catholic wedding that ended in divorce can I get married in the Church?

If either you or your ex-spouse were Catholic at the time of the wedding and neither of you had been married before that marriage and if your ex-spouse is still alive – then you may be able to petition for a “Lack of Form”. Contact your parish priest. If neither of you were Catholic at the time of the wedding, then you would have to apply for an annulment. If your ex-spouse had been married before in a valid marriage, you may be able to petition for a “Ligamen” due to the prior bond.

What if I was married in a civil marriage and my spouse dies?

Contact your parish priest. Death ends a marriage. You may be free to marry again.

If I, a Catholic, marry in a civil or non-Catholic marriage and am still married, can I have my marriage blessed by the Church?

If there are no other prior marriages by either party – contact your parish priest. The priest can review your situation. You may be able to begin preparation for a “Convalidation” of your civil marriage.

What if I want to marry, but have had multiple previous marriages?

Contact your parish priest. Each previous marriage would have to be looked into to determine the proper course of action. (Annulment, Lack of Form, Ligamen, etc.)

What if I was married in a Catholic wedding and no longer wish to be married?

Contact your parish priest to begin the annulment process.

If I am divorced, do I receive communion?

If you are not in another relationship, contact your priest. You may need the Sacrament of Reconciliation. While the Church does not recognize divorce as a means of dissolving the bond of marriage, it does not mean that one who is divorced is separated from the Church or the sacraments. We invite them to seek healing and to explore the potential of reengaging the full sacramental and ministerial life of the Catholic Church.

Why can’t I just get married again?

The Catholic Church holds that marriage is a vocation and a sacrament. It is calling by God and the presence of God in a sacred, covenant union between the husband and wife. No civil authority has the power to end the sacramentality of the union of marriage. While we understand the civil setting of a broken marriage, we hold marriage to be sacred. In Sacred Scripture marriage is modeled on the relationship of the Blessed Trinity in perfect harmony and love. The example of the relationship of Jesus Christ to his Church and our personal and communal relationship through Baptism show us the perpetual, life-giving, and exclusive nature of marriage. The sacraments of Eucharist and Reconciliation show us the ongoing need to nourish marriage and to seek healing of hurts. The vows of marriage commit the parties to their vocation, called by God. Marriage must never be taken lightly in preparation, commitment or in the daily living out of this beautiful and most difficult answer to Jesus’ call to discipleship. To this end God gives married couples and their children special graces to live out marriage in fidelity and love to get through the (Please See ANNUAL/22)
There is a connection, and, sadly, there are consequences

By Stephen Kent
Catholic News Service

Of all the comments -- thoughtful and absurd -- since the Jan. 8 Arizona shooting spree that left six dead and U.S. Rep. Gabrielle Giffords in critical condition with a head wound, two stand out for being the alpha and omega of bringing context to the events.

This from John Ellinwood:
"I don't see the connection," between fundraisers featuring weapons and the shootings. "I don't know this person; we cannot find any records that he was associated with the campaign in any way. I just don't see the connection.

"Arizona is a state where people are firearms owners -- this was just a deranged individual."

Ellinwood is a spokesperson for Gifford's opponent in last November's election.

During his campaign, Republican challenger Jesse Kelly held fundraisers where he urged supporters to help by joining him to shoot a fully loaded M-16 rifle. Kelly is a former Marine who served in Iraq and was pictured on his website in military gear holding his automatic weapon and promoting the event.

Again Ellinwood:
"I just don't see the connection."

The connection that Ellinwood is so remarkably unable to make is that of a deranged individual swimming in the cesspool of violence and finding firearms to be an acceptable solution to his problem.

"Deranged individual." That is always the title, the alibi given perpetrators so the rest of us can take comfort in the fact he's not like us.

"I've never been a fan of the "we are all guilty" mantra that follows outrages and tragedies, but I am more than willing to make an exception this time.

We are guilty of adding to the polluted atmosphere anytime we let a hateful, violence-inciting remark pass unchallenged.

Using the First Amendment to justify inciting to violence and the Second Amendment to justify possession of semi-automatic weapons with the primary purpose of killing -- lots of killing -- is specious.

The connection that Ellinwood and others -- for he certainly is not alone -- cannot make is creating an explosive climate that can set off someone such as the Arizona assassin.

The broadcast and web loudmouths who day after day extol violence and hate and encourage it are at fault. "We don't really mean it literally, it's just an expression" doesn't cut it.

It is not denigrating to say there are many people who cannot think as well as do others, who are unable to process and analyze information into sensate thought.

The talk of "take back government" and ".45 justice" and other remarks from talk radio are taken seriously by "deranged individuals." The rabble-rousers are parasites living on the credibility built carefully over decades by professional journalists and responsible media.

Inciting to riot is a crime. Shouting fire in a crowded theater is unprotected speech. A constant stream of hate against public officials is wrong.

Law enforcement officials say members of Congress reported 42 cases of threats or violence in the first three months of 2010, nearly three times the 15 cases reported during the same period a year earlier. And this does not include people who go to school board and civic hearings with guns in their pockets and murder in their hearts.

As with all national atrocities and outrages, the cycle will continue. The background of the perpetrator will be scrutinized, and then some years later a trial, then several appeals and if all goes well, we will then kill the killer to show our objection to killing.

So what can an individual do, an individual who abhors what happened and would never be a part of such a thing?

Take a strong position against such talk. Hearing a comment from a conversation partner, at a party, should bring the same vehemence reaction as an insult to spouse or parent.

Call the person out and say that kind of language -- whether inciting to violence or maternal ursine nonsense -- is unacceptable in your presence.

Ellinwood was at one end. At the other is Giffords referring in an earlier interview with MSNBC.

"When people do that, they have to realize that there are consequences to that action," Giffords said in an interview with MSNBC.

There is a connection. And, sadly, there are consequences.

(Kent, now retired, was editor of archdiocesan newspapers in Omaha and Seattle. He may be contacted at: consider-sk@gmail.com.)

Guarding against discouragement of traumatic events

By Father Eugene Hemrick
Catholic News Service

"Getting old isn't for sissies." Not only is this true for elders, but it applies to young and old alike.

The recent shootings in Tucson, Ariz., that left six dead, several others injured and Rep. Gabrielle Giffords, D-Ariz., fighting for her life, remind us that life is filled with endless traumas that require all of our strength to withstand the distress caused by them.

The word "trauma" traces its origins to the word "throe," meaning "being in the midst of struggles and pain."

A day doesn't pass by when we don't hear of someone murdered or killed in war or in a senseless accident. Nor does it pass by without corruption, deception, slander and the exercise of despotic power being added to the pains of life.

The result is disillusion, depression, hopelessness and, in some cases, suicide. Dreams of living together peacefully and possessing a zest for a happy future are quickly dashed.

I once met a lobbyist in the Senate barbershop on Capitol Hill. As he was leaving, he turned to me and said, "Here is something to ponder: Are your dreams strong enough to outweigh your fears?"

In the midst of daily turmoil, how do we keep our dreams strong enough to withstand fear, disillusion and the paralysis they create?

One suggestion is to ally ourselves with creative people who don't allow anything to impair their dreams. Almost all of the extraordinary events and the wholesomeness they create can be traced to a dream.

The dream of flying like a bird, for example, or of going to the moon, overcoming debilitating diseases, creating inspiring music and designing awesome architecture began with a dream.

When we look at the spellbinding progress we have made in our lifetime, we learn that it originated with an inspiration that wouldn't go away, a hard-fought idea, vision and determination.

It is no exaggeration to say that we are inundated with disillusionments that can kill our dreams. How to counter these disillusionments is not only necessary but imperative for our well-being.

One measure we need to take more than ever is to strike a balance between inspiring news and events and their opposites.

When the Arizona shootings were reported, we were inundated with details. In a case like this, the English writer G.K. Chesterton would tell us that surrounding ourselves with too much trauma is a good way to become a lunatic.

The word "lunatic" comes from the Latin word "luna" ("moonstruck" or "controlled by the moon"). A moon is a circle with no outlets. When we become circumcribed by bad news, it ends up consuming us, leaving no room for good news that keeps dreams alive.

Today, it goes without saying that keeping a balance between the harsh realities of life and our dreams for a better life is one of its most difficult challenges facing us.

(For more information, contact: Kent, now retired, was editor of archdiocesan newspapers in Omaha and Seattle. He may be contacted at: consider-sk@gmail.com.)
Haiti one year after world-changing earthquake

By Tony Magliano
Catholic News Service

One of the worst natural disasters in modern history struck the most impoverished nation in the Western Hemisphere one year ago.

On Jan. 12, 2010, Haiti suffered a massive earthquake that killed more than 230,000 people, injured 300,000, and left about 1.5 million homeless.

Immediately, nations around the globe expressed a sense of solidarity with the Haitian people and promised help.

The United States sent search-and-rescue teams, dispatched a hospital ship and made emergency repairs on Haiti's main airfield and port.

But the initial surge of interest in helping Haiti has greatly diminished; most of the money pledged by donor nations has still not been delivered and might never be.

In March 2010, the United States pledged $1.15 billion to Haiti in reconstruction aid. But while more than 1 million Haitians remain homeless, living in tents, and more than 96 percent of earthquake rubble has yet to be removed, the U.S. government waited more than seven months before releasing the first $120 million of promised reconstruction aid to the World Bank-run Haiti Reconstruction Fund.

Red tape, heartless politics and a fading interest are unnecessarily lengthening the suffering of desperately poor Haitians.

Reportedly, HRF International, a major U.S.-funded group assigned to remove rubble and build temporary housing, said contractors are ready to continue removing rubble and local and international suppliers are standing by to ship needed construction materials. It just comes down to providing the needed money.

As a matter of justice and restitution to Haiti, the United States has a moral duty to strenuously assist Haiti's climb out of the rubble -- and finally up to the level of a fully developed nation.

Why? Because the United States has a long history of bullying Haiti.

In 1806, two years after Haiti's French slaves declared independence from France, slave-holding America placed a trade embargo on Haiti, which greatly contributed to the devastation of its economy.

From 1915 to 1934, U.S. Marines occupied Haiti largely because of its refusal to allow foreigners to own Haitian land.

And even in the early 21st century, we see the U.S. government pressure the Inter-American Development Bank to place an embargo on loans to Haiti.

According to some analysts, the United States took this action because in the 2000 Haitian elections, Washington's favored candidates lost.

A fair and just American relationship with Haiti is long overdue!

Here's what you can do to help:

First, please e-mail/write and call your two U.S. senators and congressperson (Capitol switchboard: 202-224-3121)

That'll be the day ...

When angry, there are better options than violence

By Karen Osborne
Catholic News Service

Earlier in January, six teenage girls in Nevada put up Facebook invites. They didn't want to throw a party or go to the mall. One girl allegedly sent a Facebook invite to about 100 of her closest schoolmates to attend an "Attack a Teacher Day," and 18 others thought it would be fun, so they clicked "attend." The other five girls were accused of posting Facebook threats against specific teachers.

When they were arrested, the girls said it was just a joke. Nobody was laughing.

Horrifying news stories such as this one are proof that, as a society, we haven't really learned to deal properly with conflict: Little League dads punch referees. Airline travelers blow up at stewardsesses.

We hear very few stories of people who can process their angry emotions in a healthy way. But doing so is radically important for teens. It's only a matter of time before every teen has some sort of conflict with a teacher, coach or friend.

Maybe they will disagree with a grade given. Maybe it angers them that they can't use their cell phone in school. Maybe the coach makes them mad because he won't let them pitch.

All of those things can cause anger and frustration to surface, sparking the baser instincts to lash out.

But there's a better way to handle those feelings.

When someone makes you mad, annoyed or frustrated, don't respond right away. When you're ready to confront the teacher or your friend, keep that calm and use the method my favorite youth minister called an "I Feel" statement: "I feel ______ because ________.

For example, you might say, "I feel confused because I don't know why I got that grade" or "I feel angry because you called me an idiot in the hallway."

Anger management counselors often advise their clients to take a "timeout," which will help them to calm down and think rationally.

During a confrontation, marriage counselors tell their clients to avoid words such as "never" and "always."

You too may be tempted at times to blow up at your parents, saying, "You never let me go to parties" or "You never let me see my friends."

But "never" and "always" put people on the defensive and make it harder for them to see your point.

Besides, chances are your parents let you go to parties and to your friends' houses multiple times.

The golden rule applies in conflict situations. Ask yourself: Would my feelings be hurt or would I become frightened or mad if I were to hear the words I feel like yelling at my coach or friend?

If your answer is "yes," find a different way to make your point.

If you still can't resolve your conflict, ask for mediation. Adults turn to mediation services and lawyers; teens can turn

(Please See OSBORNE/23)
Clear ethical thinking and the ‘Tyranny of Relativism’

I once asked a young physician whether he had received any training in medical ethics during medical school. I wondered whether he had been taught how to handle some of the complex moral questions that can arise when practicing medicine. It turned out that he had taken only one ethics class during his four years of medical school, and it was a rather loose-knit affair.

For the first part of each class, he told me, students were presented with medical cases that raised ethical questions. For the second part, they were asked to discuss and share their feelings about what the ethical thing to do in each case might be. This course was largely an airing of different opinions, with students never receiving any definitive ethical guidance or principles.

His experience reminded me how ready we are today to discuss ethical problems, but how quickly we shy away from talking about ethical truths. We raise ethical questions but avoid ethical answers. We encourage the discussion of options and opinions, but leave students in the lurch to “make up their own minds” about what might or might not be ethical.

This relativism corrodes clear ethical thinking. Making up our own morality as we go along has a certain appeal, of course, because it allows us to circumnavigate some of the hard ethical answers that might require us to change our own behavior or outlook. As one bioethicist put it a few years ago: “People want to know what it would be wise and right to do; but they don’t want to grasp a truth so lucid that they might feel actually required to walk in its light.”

This “tyranny of relativism” influences many contemporary ethical debates. Those who advocate for abortion, for example, will often declare: “If you think abortion is wrong, then don’t have one!” The message behind the soundbite is that abortion can be fine for me even if it is a problem for you; it can be right for me and wrong for you; and we can all just get along.

This type of ethical schizophrenia is obviously inadequate, however. Imagine someone saying, “If you think slavery is wrong, then don’t own a slave!” Real human goods are at stake when we make moral judgments and ethical decisions — in slavery, a human life is oppressed; in abortion, a human life is ended.

Not only do such ethical (or unethical) decisions affect others profoundly (black men and women; unborn boys and girls) but they also affect us inwardly, making us into those who oppress, or those who kill. In other words, human choices have consequences that affect the world. But they also cause effects in the depths of the human soul, in the inner sanctuary of our own person. One early saint said that we parent ourselves through our actions. When we freely decide to do an action, we “create” ourselves, and show the direction in which our heart is willing to go. In this world of good and evil, nothing is more important for the good of all than the excellence of the actions that manifest the ethical core of our lives.

That core cannot be rooted in the shifting and uncertain sands of moral relativism; we require the immovable guideposts of moral absolutes. No one lives without absolutes of some kind to guide their decision making. Even those who promote relativism and “freedom of choice” regarding abortion will often react with great moral indignation if someone suggests there should be freedom of choice when it comes to torturing puppies or damaging the environment.

Their favorite “causes” end up being exempted from the claim that all morality is relative. Indeed, they really are not relativists at all, but absolutists: they will insist it is absolutely right to protect animals from cruelty, it is absolutely right to protect the environment, etc. Their absolutism can end up being as firm and unbending as the absolutism of those they disagree with, such as those who defend the rights of the unborn or the rights of the elderly and infirm.

At the end of the day, we all inwardly recognize the importance of moral absolutes: some kinds of human choices really are wrong, and ethics cannot simply mean what I want it to mean. Each of us must resist the temptation to yield to the tyranny of relativism, a tyranny which encourages us to pursue moral judgments that are convenient, instead of moral judgments that are true.

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.ncb-center.org

New research solves central ethical dilemma in stem cell debate

By Bishop Michael Pfeifer, OMI

In recent years there has been much discussion about the ethical dimension of using human embryos in stem cell research. Recent scientific research points out clearly that it is not necessary to destroy human embryos to acquire stem cells for medical purposes, as they can be acquired in other ethical ways.

Induced pluripotent stem (iPS) cells have become the hope of the scientific world in the last few years. Dr. Shinya Yamanaka was the first to generate iPS cells, publishing a seminal paper in August 2006 that showed that the addition of four genes could convert a normal mouse skin cell to an embryonic-like stem cell. Barely a year later, Yamanaka, as well as James Thomson, showed that the same “reprogramming” could be accomplished with human cells. Latest research shows this happens now with only one gene and using no DNA.

This rapidly advancing science clearly points out that there is no need to use embryonic stem cells in health medical research. IPS cells behave like embryonic stem cells but are created without the use of embryos, eggs, or cloning technology. Thus, the IPS cell technique allows scientists to access pluripotent stem cells while respecting human life. Additionally, IPS cells have several advantages over embryonic stem cells—IPS cells are easier and cheaper to make than embryonic stem cells, and they can be made directly from almost any tissue from any person.

The last three years of iPS cell science have been a flurry of technique refinement—obtaining iPS cells from any tissue, testing them in animals, and especially making “safer” IPS cells.

Scientists have found ways to create iPS cells using only three genes, then two genes, and now one gene; using multiple viruses and then no viruses, and eventually using no DNA at all.

Because of its ease and utility, iPS cell research has outpaced the antiquated embryonic stem cell research while adult stem cells continue to be used to treat actual patients. Ethical stem cell science flourishes without destroying human embryos.

March 25: Feast of Annunciation also The Day of the Unborn Child

By Bishop Michael Pfeifer, OMI

The Feast of the Annunciation, celebrated on March 25, is the traditional feast day of the incarnation honoring the conception of Jesus Christ. This beautiful feast is also coming to be known as the “Day of the Unborn Child.” This date to honor the unborn was chosen because it falls nine months before the most celebrated birth in history, known throughout the world as Christmas. This symbolic interval of a full-term pregnancy reminds us of the reality and dignity of each human life from conception, beginning with day one when the unborn child is conceived.

The Christian feast of the Annunciation which announces the conception of the Christ Child, is a wonderful way to promote the universal cause of all unborn children who more and more are being threatened by
Date with Death

Pfeifer travels to three deanery cities in diocese to mark 38th anniversary of Roe-Wade decision

Over 100 pro-life supporters braved cold temperatures to gather outside the gates of Midland’s Planned Parenthood Friday, January 21. Bishop Michael D. Pfeifer, of the Diocese of San Angelo, was joined by local priests and laity in leading a Rosary as a way of remembering the 38th anniversary of the deadly Roe v. Wade decision, a move that legalized abortions.

A similar Rosary was held the same day by Pfeifer in Abilene, and on Saturday, the 22nd, the actual anniversary of the signing of the bill, Pfeifer presided over a Mass for the unborn at the Sacred Heart Cathedral in San Angelo.

Almost 50 million abortions have been performed in the 38 years since the procedure was legalized, but today a majority of Americans now consider themselves pro-life. In Amarillo, Catholics working together with others brought closure to the Planned Parenthood location the the panhandle city.

Efforts have been stepped up within the Diocese of San Angelo and pro life committees have formed and are active in each of the three deaneries in the diocese. For more information or to become a part of the pro-life movement in your parish, please contact your pastor.

-- Jimmy Patterson, Editor
Pilgrims from the Diocese of San Angelo above, gather in the sanctuary at the Church at Cana in Galilee, above, after renewing their wedding vows, far left photos.

In photo at bottom far left, the altar in the home of the Virgin Mary, in the lower level of the Basilica of the Annunciation in Nazareth, Galilee.

The exterior of the Church at Cana in Galilee, at left, and San Angelo Bishop Michael Pfeifer, presides over Mass at the church, during a recent pilgrimage hosted by the Cathedral of the Sacred Cathedral, and rector Msgr. Maurice Voity, in San Angelo.

At far right, Bishop Pfeifer leads the Joyful Mystery of the Annunciation at the Basilica of the Annunciation in Nazareth, and at right, the ancient icon of the Annunciation in the Greek Orthodox Church of the Annunciation in Nazareth, Galilee.

Return to Cana, The Holy Land
Survey: Women entering religious life well-educated, active in parishes

WASHINGTON (CNS) -- Women entering religious orders today are highly educated and active in parish ministries, according to a new national survey.

The results of "The Profession Class of 2010: Survey of Women Religious Professing Perpetual Vows" were released in advance of World Day for Consecrated Life Feb. 2.

It was conducted by the Georgetown University-based Center for Applied Research in the Apostolate and commissioned by the U.S. bishops' Secretariat of Clergy, Consecrated Life and Vocations.

The survey was sent to sisters represented by the two conferences of religious women in the United States -- the Leadership Conference of Women Religious and the Council of Major Superiors of Women Religious -- and to contemplative communities.

Major superiors of women religious who participated in the survey reported a total of 79 women who professed perpetual vows in 2010. Of that number, 68 responded by Dec. 15, representing 52 religious congregations, provinces or monasteries, according to a news release from the U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops.

Eighty-four percent of the major superiors who responded to the survey reported they had no one professing perpetual vows last year.

The 2010 class of women religious was more diverse by race and ethnicity than the U.S. population of women religious in general. Six in 10 identified themselves as white; one in five as Asian and one in 10 as Hispanic. Six percent were African-American or African.

CARA said in a 2009 study that 94 percent of all U.S. women religious were white, 2 percent identified as Asian and 3 percent were Hispanic. Less than 1 percent identified themselves as African-American or African.

Among other findings:

- The average age for these new women religious is 43. Women religious making perpetual vows in 2010 ranged in age from 25 to 62.
- Eighty-seven percent of the sisters were born Catholic and eight in 10 came from families where both parents are Catholic.
- Although 71 percent of the new women religious were born in the United States, the new women religious came from 10 different countries of origin. The most popular non-U.S. countries of birth were Mexico (7 percent), Philippines (4 percent) and Nigeria (3 percent).
- Half of responding women religious attended a Catholic elementary school.
- More than 25 percent earned a graduate degree before entering their religious institute.
- Nearly six in 10 entered religious life with at least a bachelor's degree.
- Most women religious were active in parish life before entering their religious institute. Four in 10 participated in a youth group and three in 10 participated in a young adult group.
- Eighty-five percent had ministry experience before entering their religious institute, most commonly in liturgical ministry, faith formation or social service.
- Half said they were under age 18 when they first considered a religious vocation; the average age when a vocation was first considered was 20.
- Seventy-five percent of the sisters and nuns regularly participated in retreats before they entered their religious institute. Two-thirds regularly prayed the rosary or participated in eucharistic adoration.
- Six in 10 regularly participated in a faith sharing or Bible study group or regular spiritual direction.
- Nine in 10 women religious said they were encouraged to consider religious life by someone in their life. Of those who reported that they were encouraged to consider a vocation, more than half said they were encouraged by a religious sister. A third of the sisters said they were introduced to their institute by the recommendation of a priest or adviser.
- Even though these women were encouraged by other religious to pursue their vocation, two-thirds of respondents said they were discouraged from considering a vocation -- most often by parents or family members.
- Most women religious of the class of 2010 participated in some type of vocation program or experience prior to entering their religious institute. Most commonly this was a "come and see" experience or a vocation retreat.

"We are proud of the vocation, sacred commitment and service that women religious have made in the church," said Archbishop Robert J. Carlson of St. Louis, chairman of the U.S. bishops' Committee on Clergy, Consecrated Life and Vocations.

EW TNT acquires National Catholic Register, newspaper launched in 1927

IRONDALE, Ala. -- The Eternal Word Television Network, based in I rondeale, has signed a letter of intent to acquire the National Catholic Register, which describes itself as "the nation's leading Catholic newspaper."

Effective Feb. 1, EWTN will take full control and ownership of the Register, now based in I rondeale. Its editorial and business offices had been based in North Haven, Conn., since 1995, when the Legionaries of Christ bought the paper and moved it to New England from California.

"I am very pleased and excited that the Register and the role it has played throughout its history. It's a tremendous legacy that deserves to not only be preserved, but also to grow and to flourish."

"I believe that EWTN will be able to provide the stability that the Register needs at this time as well as to give it a platform for its growth in the years ahead. We're proud to be able to step in and carry on both the Register's name and its tradition of faithful Catholic reporting on the issues of the day," noted Warsaw in a Jan. 19 statement.

Under the terms of the transaction, no cash will be exchanged between the parties. EWTN, a global Catholic network, will take over the ongoing operational expenses of the Register and will assume the paper's future subscription liabilities.

The National Catholic Register grew out of the Denver Catholic Register, launched Aug. 11, 1905. Under the leadership of Msgr. Matthew Smith, the Register system of newspapers was developed, with the first national edition appearing Nov. 8, 1927.

In the inaugural issue, Msgr. Smith wrote: "If you like a Catholic paper with snap, vigor, courage, here it is. If you like one that is easy to read, here it is. If you like one that will always be loyal to the church and has no selfish axe to grind, here it is."

The Register system eventually produced 35 diocesan editions, reaching its high point in the 1950s with a combined national and diocesan circulation of more than 700,000.

In 1970, California businessman Patrick Frawley purchased the Register, which was on the decline at that point, and moved it to Los Angeles. In 1995, the Legionaries of Christ and other investors saved the newspaper from closing and moved it to New England.

According to a story in the National Catholic Register by senior writer Tim Drake, the need for EWTN's "providential intervention" was precipitated by what Father Owen Kearns, a Legionaries of Christ priest who is the Register's publisher and editor in chief, described as a "perfect storm," intensified by rising publishing and mailing costs, and the negative impact on Register donations from the downturn in the economy.
Our Faith

The role of governments in laws concerning marriage

By Father John Dietzen
Catholic News Service

Q. I am 70 years old, with 12 years of Catholic education and much self-education after that. One thing about Catholic practice confuses and infuriates me, however. Why and when did the church let government get control of the sacrament of maternity?

A priest is ordained to administer the sacraments. I don’t see anything that allows him to first require permission (marriage license) from the government. I must ask the government in order to receive the sacrament? Not in a million years.

I appreciate your answers to questions in our Catholic paper. I hope you can answer this one. (Virginia)

A. You have a real problem with "government," don't you? There is, in fact, nothing sinister or automatically anti-religious about the policies you describe.

Most countries, certainly all developed nations, have well-established regulations about who can get married (obviously a minimum age is one factor), under what conditions, and who is authorized legally to witness marriages.

This has always been the case. As far back as the famous Code of Hammurabi, king of Babylon 4,000 years ago, and even before that, advanced cultures instituted strict policies governing marriage and family life. They were considered necessary not only for obvious civic reasons such as taxation and inheritance, but because stable and publicly established families were considered essential for a stable society.

It will help to recall that for centuries, while the church considered marriage between two Christians to have a special sacramental character, it accepted legally valid marriages as valid in the church as well.

No particular "form" of marriage (how and before whom it should take place) was required for Catholics until a few hundred years ago. In 1563, the Council of Trent ruled that a marriage must take place before one's pastor or bishop to be valid. Even then, because of some technicalities in church law, Trent's regulations did not apply to much of the world, including large areas of the United States, until early in the 20th century.

Thus, historically the Catholic Church has had a rather close relationship with civil laws concerning marriage.

Today in some countries -- the United States and Canada, for example -- laws differ considerably between states and provinces. In other countries, such as Italy, regulations are fairly consistent everywhere.

The Christian church has never had a problem with that, as long as the laws are just and the faithful preserve the right to their own religious matrimonial celebrations and beliefs. It prefers, of course, that Catholic marriage rituals be recognized as official legal ceremonies, as in the United States, for example.

It has lived amicably, however, in some countries where only a civil marriage before a judge or other magistrate is recognized as legally valid. Normally this rite precedes any religious ceremony.

Finally, another fundamental reason the church doesn't share your concern is purely theological. In spite of our customary way of speaking, we believe a man and woman are not "married by" the clergyman officiating at the ceremony. They are married by each other.

In Catholic teaching, the priest or deacon is the church's official witness to the marriage, but the bride and groom minister the sacrament to each other by their vows and their commitment to a communal life together.

This theology is still reflected in Catholic law. When an authorized priest, deacon or bishop is unavailable for a wedding for an extended time "without grave inconvenience," couples can contract a lawful and valid Catholic marriage before witnesses only (Code of Canon Law, No. 1116).

(A free brochure on ecumenism, including questions on intercommunion and other ways of sharing worship, is available by sending a stamped, self-addressed envelope to Father John Dietzen, Box 3315, Peoria, IL 61612.)

Converting irritable chain e-mails to a parish bonanza

By Dan Morris
Catholic News Service

I have not talked to one, not even one, person who says he or she likes chain e-mails. So, like, from where do they keep coming?

From friends and relatives, that's where. The ones who succumb to blackmail and superstition or to the promise that they might be the recipient of "an unbelievable cash windfall on the fifth day after you forward this to your entire e-mail address book and Christmas list."

I mention this as I bravely delete a chain e-mail -- despite its hint that there will be a nuclear attack on my garage if I do not forward its contents to every person I know, plus four others for good measure.

I mention this also because it dawned on me that there might be a practical application for these things. (Note: For the chain e-mails, not for nuclear attacks on my garage.)

Don't get me wrong. I cherish a touching prayer, a poignant vignette, a patriotic poem or a quote from a saint as much as anyone. And receiving them via mass e-mail is OK.

But I cringe at the ones that promise something wonderful will happen if it is immediately forwarded to "at least seven others, including the one who sent it to you" -- or something dark will happen if I don't.

You know, like, "The last person who broke this chain e-mail slipped on the escalator and was sucked into the floor grate and shredded like pulled pork."

Why shouldn't parish fundraisers take the chain e-mail by the tail and convert it to good works?

For example, an e-mail could be sent to all registered parishioners along the lines of:

"I attend St. All Saints Parish and receive extraordinary spiritual nourishment. I tithe. I would like to invite you to tithe as well -- and send this to others who could benefit from the grace of St. All Saints Parish. There will NOT be a nuclear attack on your garage if you do not send this on to many, many others, or even if you do not tithe. But it would be cheap insurance."

There is little doubt this e-mail would be forwarded to not only unregistered parishioners (an oxymoron?) and fallen-away Catholics, but loads of folks who have never set foot inside St. All Saints Parish.

Yes, think of it: Wary Protestants and maybe even a handful of nervous agnostics might want to contribute to the operation of the parish.

(Please See DAN/23)
Jesus begins his ministry, chooses twelve apostles

By Joe Sarnicola

Jesus was exhausted. He had been baptized by John the Baptist, and then he spent 40 days and 40 nights in the desert. During this time, he was tempted by the devil. He defeated the devil by quoting the Scriptures and by having faith in God, his Father.

After he heard that John was arrested, Jesus went to Galilee. He found a place to live in Capernaum, which was near the sea in the region of Zebulun and Naphtali. At the same time, he began to preach a message everywhere he went. He would say, "Repent, for the kingdom of heaven is at hand."

By starting his ministry from this place, Jesus fulfilled a prophecy of Isaiah, which said, "Land of Zebulun and land of Naphtali, the way to the sea, beyond the Jordan, Galilee of the gentiles, the people who sit in darkness have seen a great light, on those dwelling in a land overshadowed by death light has arisen."

On a quiet afternoon, Jesus was walking by the Sea of Galilee. He saw two men casting their fishing net into the water. He found out that they were brothers, and their names were Simon, who was called Peter, and Andrew. Jesus said to them, "Come after me, and I will make you fishers of men." Although the two brothers supported their families by fishing, they both immediately left their nets and went with Jesus.

As Jesus continued walking, he saw two other men in a boat mending their nets. Their names were James and John. They were also brothers, the sons of a man named Zebedee. Jesus gave them the same invitation he gave to Simon and Andrew, and they too left their work to follow Jesus.

Jesus now had four friends he knew he could trust to help him, and he taught them what they would have to do in order to be his followers. Eventually he would choose other men, until there were 12.

Jesus traveled throughout Galilee, teaching in the synagogues, preaching and healing people who were sick from many different diseases and injuries. People would bring others to him to be healed. From Galilee to Judea and to Jerusalem they came to hear Jesus and to be healed by him.
Avoid regrets later .... get to know your loved ones now

By Jimmy Patterson

As I write this, it has been five years since my mom died in a hospital in Irving. I was not there for her death though I did have the opportunity to visit with her on a number of occasions as her health began to decline in the last two years she was alive.

Being a kid and then being a parent is a funny thing. You look at your kids and wonder and even hope that they will be better than you. And sometimes you hope that they may be there for you in the end a little more than you were there for your parents.

Now that it’s been five years, I guess it’s as good a time as any to admit my regrets. Most people will say there was nothing I could do about it, living in another city gets in the way of a son’s intentions of spending more time with a dying mother. But the bigger regret is that I didn’t get to know my mother better when she was alive. Before she was sick.

And that, no matter what is said, is my fault.

I frankly always envied my wife when she would tell me that when we would drive into Irving to visit my parents while they were both alive, how she and my mother would stay up late, after everyone else had gone to bed, and visit. Talk. Just talk, Karen would tell me, for hours on end.

And so now I can come clean. I never really did that. Not when my mom was sick. And not when she was well. It’s not like I never had the chance. I never really took the time. Or the time it seems like I should have taken.

My mom was unfailingly proud of me. She bragged about me always. I could have operated a hot asphalt machine for the highway department and my job could have been making roads smooth and my mom would have found a way to brag on me.

“Jimmy spread 30 miles of asphalt last week. He’s one of those paving professionals who runs those big machines on the highway. Won an award for it one year. He’s really good at what he does.”

That’s precisely what my mom would have told her hair dresser and all the ladies at the Evergreen Club at First Baptist Church in Irving had that been my calling. But no I was a writer. And mom spoilt on me probably much more than she ever should have.

I always loved my mother. Always. But now that it’s been five years, I can honestly say I don’t feel like I loved her enough. Or talked her up to friends enough.

I bragged on her, too. She made the best French Toast anywhere -- and she cut it up into little checkerboard squares so I could eat it in her organized way (too bad her French Toast cutting didn’t affect the rest of my organizational abilities). She made killer chocolate pies and fried chicken and she never once looked at me askance when I would come home for lunch and eat one of my mayonnaise sandwiches. Or when I would prop myself up on the couch in the den every afternoon after school with a glass bottle of coke and a container of saltines, watching Gilligan’s Island.

Most people knew one thing about my mother and I made sure of it: She looked like Aunt Bea. And she acted like Aunt Bea. I was totally proud of that. Because it gave my mom the characteristics that I couldn’t adequately convey to others.

I will always remember one day in my mom’s life: the day I made her cry, because I snipped at her when she asked me a question. I was in my late teens and was being a real jerk that day. I’ve never really gotten past that.

But in the bigger picture, I’ve never really gotten over getting to know her as well as I could have. Or should have.

And now that she is no longer here, I will never have that opportunity. They say regrets are good for nothing, but mine are good for something: they give me the opportunity to think of my mother’s memory every day since she died in January of 2006. And she has forgiven me for neglecting that relationship.

My memories are pleasant and I am getting to know my mother posthumously. It’s not recommended, doing it that way. Instead, take the time to get to know your loved ones while they’re still here. Share, express your love, and brag on them wildly to others. And when they’re gone, you can remember them and not have any regrets that get in the way.

So, how many resolutions are still workin’ for ya?

By now you may have forgotten all about those New Year's resolutions you made. We know you have, if you’re like us.

After many years of making resolutions at the beginning of the year -- or sometimes in late January if that pesky habit of procrastinating has reared its ugly head -- we’ve discovered the easiest way to deal with a resolution is:

1. Don’t tell anyone else what you plan to do.
2. Don’t make the resolution too specific.
3. Don’t make the resolution measurable.
4. Quickly forget about the whole thing.

Let’s say, for example, you really wanted to drink less coffee and avoid those caffeine jitters. You would mention this to no one; decide something vague, such as, "I’m going to cut back on the coffee." Next, happily determine that "cut back" could in fact mean not increase the amount you drink each day at the rate at which you had been increasing it, or you can get busy with work and home and forget about it!

See how easy that is?

But, let your family get involved, as is so often the case, and things get complicated.

Let’s say you want to make a family resolution. Worse still, you want to make a family resolution that will last. Let’s say you want to have dinner as a family more often. That would be nice. Yes, let’s say that.

You really are going to have to tell your fellow family members about it, because they’re going to have to get on board with it, too -- perhaps not happily on board, but on board.

They’ll want to know "exactly" what you mean by "have dinner as a family," and so, ironically, they will force you to make that resolution specific. And so you tell them you mean all family members eating food at the table at the same time with no TV or electronic devices on for a period of not less than 15 minutes. (That’s pretty specific! At least the menu can vary and, apparently, takeout or delivery is OK.)

Searching for a loophole, they demand to know "exactly" how much is "more often," and in doing so, they unwittingly make the resolution measurable.

Once a week, you declare, and the trap snaps shut. With so many people agreeing to this, there’ll be no forgetting. Even worse, it will take some planning!

Yes, at this point in the calendar year you could try to stall any resolutions until the beginning of Lent (Ash Wednesday is March 9) and call it "penance," but if you’re determined to tackle at least one before then, it can help to remember:

▷ It’s best to set the bar low enough to make success more likely. (Dinner once a week, yes. But five nights a week? Pretty tough.)
▷ An occasional slip doesn’t mean abandoning the whole endeavor.
▷ It takes practice to make a new activity a habit.
▷ There’s a certain justifiable pride that comes with keeping a family resolution. There’s a feeling that, together, "we did this!"

On the Web: Ten Healthy Family Resolutions

About.com has an article on healthy family resolutions for helping your children (and you) make some specific changes about diet and exercise. Go to: http://pediatrics.about.com/od/obesity/a/04_resolutions.htm.
Judging the best movies and family films of 2010

By John Mulderig
Catholic News Service

NEW YORK -- The year 2010 proved to be a lackluster one for Hollywood. So, although tradition -- or at least a custom dating back to 1965 -- calls on the Media Review Office of Catholic News Service to select its top 10 movie picks annually, readers should bear in mind that only a few of the films below are likely to stand the test of time as significant contributions to the medium.

Since a majority of the entries in the overall top 10 may be classified for adults only -- as is the case for the year just passed -- recently the office has also compiled a list of the 10 best family-friendly movies.

Here, in alphabetical order, are the office's general choices:

Director Rob Reiner's heartwarming coming-of-age story "Flipped" chronicles the relationship of two kids (Madeline Carroll and Callan McAuliffe) over a six-year period in the late 1950s. Amid the ups and downs of their friendship, the film examines family life in baby boom-era suburbia, challenging stereotypes and prejudices with a surprisingly strong pro-life message (A-III, PG).


Writer-director Christopher Nolan achieves a tour de force of spectacle and suspense with the ingenious sci-fi brain-teaser "Inception." Though rife with explosions and gunplay, his crafty action tale -- which stars Leonardo DiCaprio as a corporate spy -- makes for an intriguing cinematic Rubik's Cube (A-III, PG-13).

"The King's Speech," a stirring historical drama about the unlikely but fruitful relationship between the future King George VI (Colin Firth, pictured above) and the eccentric speech therapist (Geoffrey Rush) under whose care he reluctantly places himself to overcome his stammer. Director Tom Hooper creates a luminous tapestry reinforced by finely spun performances (A-III, R).

The surprisingly philosophical nature documentary "Oceans" offers stunning images of sea life from around the globe while conveying a positive message about the need for environmental conservation. Actor Pierce Brosnan intones pleasing narration for co-directors and writers Jacques Perrin and Jacques Cluzaud, whose film -- despite a few shortcomings -- constitutes a visual feast (A-I, G).

"Secretariat," the true story of the 1973 Triple Crown winner, is both a thrilling sports adventure and a moving family drama. Diane Lane plays a housewife who returns to her horse-farm roots and gambles everything on the big red equine. Director Randall Wallace's exuberant and inspirational cinematic champ can be cheered on by a wide audience (A-II, PG).

An engrossing but strictly adult drama, "The Social Network" recounts the circumstances surrounding the creation of the website Facebook as its socially inept yet technically gifted founder (Jesse Eisenberg) testifies in two separate but simultaneous lawsuits brought against him. Director David Fincher weaves a subtile narrative of shifting personal loyalties and ethical uncertainties (A-III, PG-13).

In "The Tourist," a fliratious encounter with an elegant, mysterious fellow passenger (Angelina Jolie) on a train to Venice leads a vacationing American math teacher (Johnny Depp) to be mistaken for a fugitive embezzler. Director and co-writer Florian Henckel von Donnersmarck constructs an enjoyably old-fashioned romantic thriller, with the leads showing amorous restraint and La Serenissima providing the colorful backdrop for a pleasant diversion (A-III, PG-13).

"True Grit," is an exceptionally fine narrative of the Old West in which a determined 14-year-old girl (Hailee Steinfeld) enlists the aid of a broken-down but resourceful U.S. marshal (Jeff Bridges) and a cocksure Texas Ranger (Matt Damon) in her relentless quest to bring her recently murdered father's killer (Josh Brolin) to account. Writer-directors Joel and Ethan Coen's captivating drama reflects seriously on the violent undertow of frontier life (A-III, PG-13).

The poignant yet challenging drama "The Waiting City" follows an Australian couple (Radha Mitchell and Joel Edgerton) to India, where they hope to finalize their adoption of a baby girl. Though it calls for discerning viewership, director Claire McCarthy's well-crafted exploration of emotional bonds and spiritual horizons pits transcendent values against secular ones (L, R).

And here, also in alphabetical order, the 10 best family films:

A swashbuckling sequel, "The Chronicles of Narnia: The Voyage of the Dawn Treader" (pictured below) sees a brother and sister (Skandar Keynes and Georgie Henley) from World War II-era Britain once again transported to the titular world, this time accompanied by their obnoxious, cynical cousin (Will Poulter). Director Michael Apted's screen version of C.S. Lewis' classic Christiant-themed allegorical novel keeps faith front and center (A-II, PG).

The enchanting 3-D animated comedy "Despicable Me" follows the rivalry of a slightly wicked but ultimately softhearted rogue (voice of Steve Carell) with a nerdy newcomer (voice of Jason Segel) for the title of world's most terrible villain. Co-directors Chris Renaud and Pierre Coffin serve up a delightfully humorous conversion tale spun around themes of loyalty and the transformative power of family love (A-I, PG).

"How to Train Your Dragon" is a robust animated fantasy about a teenaged Viking (voiced by Jay Baruchel) who goes against his own people by befriending the creatures his society has been battling for 300 years. Directors Chris Sanders and Dean DeBlois have fashioned an engaging boy's own action-adventure with a constructive pacifist message (A-II, PG).

A stirring, satisfying update of the 1984 hit, "The Karate Kid" shifts the action to modern China, where an unassuming kung fu master (Jackie Chan) teaches an undersized American boy (Jaden Smith) how to confront a bully while imparting other life lessons. Director Harald Zwart balances fealty for the crowd-pleasing (Please See BEST/21)
Catholic News Service capsule movie reviews of recently released films and some honored with multiple Academy Award nominations:

"The Rite" (Warner Bros.)
Religiously honorable, but aesthetically tentative drama, based on real events, about a skeptical seminarian (Colin O'Donoghue) who has pursued priestly studies mainly to get a free education and avoid following in the footsteps of his undertaker father (Rutger Hauer). To forestall his dropping out, a superior (Toby Jones) dispatches him to Rome to complete a Vatican-sponsored course in exorcism. There, he shares his ongoing doubts with a reporter (Alice Braga) who has enrolled in the class for research purposes. But inexplicable experiences during his apprenticeship with a veteran demon fighter (Anthony Hopkins) challenge the young cleric's secular certainties. Though shaky on a few details, director Mikael Hafstrom's conversion tale resoundingly affirms faith and the value of priestly ministry. Yet the effort to showcase the main character's spiritual journey as an old-fashioned chilifest weakens its ultimate impact. Possibly acceptable for mature teens. Incest and suicide themes, some gruesome imagery, incendiary irreverence, a couple of uses of profanity, a few crude and crude terms. The Catholic News Service classification is A-II -- adults. The Motion Picture Association of America rating is PG-13.

"The King's Speech" (Weinstein)
Stirring historical drama, set between the world wars, about the unlikely but fruitful relationship between the Duke of York (Colin Firth) -- second in line to the British crown -- and the eccentric speech therapist (Geoffrey Rush) under whose care he reluctantly places himself at the instigation of his loyal wife (Helena Bonham Carter) to overcome the stammer that hobbles his public speaking. This task becomes all the more urgent as the death of the duke's father (Michael Gambon) and the abdication of his brother (Guy Pearce) propel the unwilling heir toward the throne. Weaving together the story of one of the modern era's most successful royal marriages and the lesser-known tale of the friendship by which an unflappable commoner helped to heal the emotionally crippling childhood wounds underlying his princely client's impediment, director Tom Hooper creates a luminous tapestry reinforced by finely spun performances and marred only by the loose threads of some offensive language. Two brief and intense outbursts of vulgarity, a couple of uses of profanity, a few crude and crude terms. The Catholic News Service classification is A-III -- adults. The Motion Picture Association of America rating is PG-13 -- parents strongly cautioned.

"The Tourist" (Columbia)
A flirtatious encounter with an elegant, mysterious fellow passenger (Angelina Jolie) on a train to Venice leads a vacating American math teacher (Johnny Depp) to be mistaken for a fugitive embezzler known to have altered his appearance via plastic surgery. It makes the visitor the target of both a high-level British police investigation (led by Paul Bettany and Timothy Dalton) and the quartet of revenge of the brutal gangster (Steven Berkoff) the thief betrayed. Director and co-writer Florian Henckel von Donnersmarck constructs an enjoyably old-fashioned romantic thriller, with the leads showing amorous restraint and La Serenissima providing the colorful backdrop for a pleasant, though hardly memorable, diversion. Brief graphic violence, an implied pre-marital situation, at least one use of the F-word, a few crude and crass terms, occasional sexual references. The Catholic News Service classification is A-III -- adults. The Motion Picture Association of America rating is PG-13.

"The Fighter" (Paramount)
Director David O. Russell's gritty, fact-based drama follows two half-brothers from Lowell, Mass., who long for success -- and redemption -- via the boxing ring. One (Christian Bale, who effectively steals the movie) is a washed-up fighter on a skid and the other (Mark Wahlberg) in the sweet science. But recognizing that the lads are being exploited, a barmaid with a heart of gold (Amy Adams) persuades him to chart his own destiny. Ultimately, "Rocky"-like fame and fortune are within reach, but not without forgiveness and the love and support of the duo's raucously dysfunctional family. Excessive boxing and other violence, including familial strife, nongraphic premarital sexual activity, explicit drug use, a handful of profanities, frequent rough and crude language. The Catholic News Service classification is L -- limited adult audience, films whose problematic content many adults would find troubling. The Motion Picture Association of America rating is R -- restricted.

By Cardinal Donald Wuerl
Archbishop of Washington, DC

Some time ago at a hearing involving young people already in trouble with the law, an official asked one 14-year-old why he (the youngster) seemed to have so little respect for others and turned so easily to violence. The teenager looked straight at the official and said, "How come you get to draw the line?" All of those who were participating in this gathering drew silent. The official said, "What do you mean?" The young man replied, "It's alright to kill somebody up until they are nine months old. How come you get to draw the line there?"

The law is a teacher, a pedagogue. While there is a great distinction between what is legal and what is moral, many, many people simply look to what is legal as if it were necessarily acceptable. What has happened in our society is a gradual eroding of respect for life simply because the legislature, the courts, and much of the information and entertainment industry all assert that if the life is unborn and inconvenient it can be killed. It does not take much to move the line once it is established that legislatures and courts have the power to terminate life at will. The youngster was not far from the mark. "How come you get to draw the line?"

In an effort to present another vision of the dignity, worth and value of each human life, every year hundreds of thousands of people converge on Washington, D.C. for the March for Life. As a part of the overall effort to highlight the value of life and to challenge the current politically correct thinking that it is alright to draw the line and kill anyone on the other side of it, the Archdiocese of Washington has sponsored the annual Youth Rally and Mass for Life. Each time we do this, we sense all over again both the urgency of the moment, the commitment of our young people and the power of the Eucharist. The Mass and Rally that proceed the annual March for Life are always a sign of hope for the future and a witness to the vitality of the Church, especially her young members. This year, to accommodate so many young people, the archdiocese arranged not only for the Mass and Rally at the Verizon Center, but for an identical event at the D.C. Armory. I am privileged to celebrate the Mass at the Verizon Center together with a large number of bishops from around the country. His Eminence Cardinal Daniel DiNardo, Archbishop of Galveston-Houston and Chairman of Bishops' Committee on Pro-Life Activities, will celebrate the Mass at the Armory.

To facilitate the participation of the tens of thousands of young people who come to the Mass and Rally, this year tickets (free of cost) were distributed online. In less than a half hour of the opening of the website, 30,000 tickets were gone. Our young people will come in huge numbers to proclaim and support the Gospel of Life.

But they do much more. The pro-life youth, together with their bishops and priests, and joined by so many deacons and religious, renew our conviction that with God’s grace and our good works, we can change this world.

More Americans than ever before are pro-life. Many believe that abortion should not be legal in any circumstance. Almost three quarters of all Americans believe that killing the unborn child merely to give a woman a choice is wrong. What is particularly encouraging is that more and more, often young people, are speaking out for life without hesitation or apology. A national survey of college freshmen found that the generous love praised in the Gospel remains attractive, volunteerism is up, casual sex is down and the acceptance of legalized abortion is at its lowest point since the late 1970s. This renewal in faith and values, in part, we see reflected in the Rally and Mass for Life.

The vision of God's kingdom coming to be through the power of his Spirit at work in all of us is made visible and tangible this year at the Verizon Center and the Armory during the Rallies and Masses for Life. While the scourge of abortion is still a part of our land, the faith, love and witness of so many young people is a reminder that in the end, truth, goodness, life and love will win out.
on family and reinforcing family life. Access to a Catholic education for every child has been challenged especially in the area of finances. How do Catholic schools offer affordable educational programs within the confines of a balanced budget? A financial goal is to develop and plan ways to promote financial viability into the future. In Midland, the Catholic community has come to the aid of establishing opportunities for scholarship. Several scholarship funds have been set up for assisting with tuition for families in need. The Knights of Columbus sponsors a scholarship golf tournament. Through the generosity of others will be placed on the general calendar. The Church will continue to canonize new saints as models for the faithful. Some of these saints will be celebrated in those parts of the world where they served. Others will be placed on the general calendar, celebrated by the Universal Church to unite the liturgy of heaven with that of earth.

* Mary Elizabeth Sperry holds a master's degree in liturgical studies from the Catholic University of America and is a frequent speaker on Scripture and the liturgy.

** CATHOLIC SCHOOLS **

(From 5)

for the Most Holy Name of Jesus and the Most Holy Name of Mary. Still other saints and observances added to the Missal highlight important teachings of the Church such as the teaching on Mary (Our Lady of Fatima) and on the Eucharist as the Sacrament of Christ’s love (as promoted by Saint Peter Julian Eymard).

By canonizing these holy men and women, the Church presents them as models of Christian living. The added saints come from all eras and areas of the Church’s life – from the fourth century (Saint Catherine of Alexandria and Saint Apollinaris) to the twentieth century (Saint Josephine Bakhita, Saint Christopher Magallenés and Saint Pio of Pietrelcina) – and from Europe, Africa, Asia and the Americas. They include priests, religious women, martyrs, a married woman and missionaries.

Whether or not Catholics hear about these saints at their local parishes will depend on the priest. With the exception of the memorials of Saint Teresa Benedicta of the Cross (better known as Edith Stein) and Saint Pio of Pietrelcina (better known as Padre Pio), all of the new observances are optional memorials. That means the decision about whether or not to celebrate them at a particular Mass rests with the celebrating priest. While a priest may not add the observance of a saint or blessed on not on the approved calendar, he is free to decide which, if any, optional memorials he will celebrate. In choosing among the possible observances, priests might highlight saints who offer a particular example to their people.

These new additions are not the final word about saints on the calendar. The Church will continue to canonize new saints as models for the faithful. Some of these saints will be celebrated in those parts of the world where they served. Others will be placed on the general calendar, celebrated by the Universal Church to unite the liturgy of heaven with that of earth.

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** MISSAL **

(From 1)

“Angels”, students receive full or partial tuition. The school continues to find opportunities to provide for the financial needs of families. An objective in the strategic plan is to partner with local business and seek grant opportunities to develop scholarship funds. Another summit goal is to create an endowment fund for each diocesan school. St. Ann’s School established an endowment fund in 1985 and because of this vision, interest from the fund help to pay teacher salaries and operating expenses. A current objective is to develop fundraising events to grow our endowment. The Mardi Gras Celebration is one event where all proceeds go towards St. Ann’s Educational Endowment Fund. Board members will research and pursue other events and activities to promote and grow the endowment fund. The school continues its responsibility of financial stewardship to fulfill our mission to provide Catholic education to the community.

In the bishops’ letter, the bishops recognize Catholic education as an important ministry with a valuable contribution to the church’s future. Research shows laity and leadership positions being filled with alumni of Catholic schools. Catholic schools around the country are undergoing careful examination and creative planning to ensure the future of Catholic education. St. Ann’s School is one of the schools participating in this strategic planning. Through the leadership of St. Ann’s School Board, the strategic long range plan works on solutions for today and strengthens our school for the future.

** New saints, observances in 3rd edition of the Roman Missal **

January 3 – Most Holy Name of Jesus -- This is part of the Church’s celebration of Christmas, recognizing that God “bestowed on [Jesus] the name that is above every name” (Phil 2:9).

February 8 – St. Josephine Bakhita, virgin – Born in Darfur, Josephine survived kidnapping and slavery to become a nun who embraced and lived hope as a redeemed child of God.

April 23 – St. Adalbert, bishop and martyr – Martyred near the end of the first millennium, Adalbert was a missionary in the countries of central Europe, striving to bring unity to God’s people.

April 28 – St. Louis Mary de Montfort, priest – This French priest is best known for his devotion to Mary, encouraging the faithful to approach Jesus through his mother.

May 13 – Our Lady of Fatima – The Virgin Mary appeared to three children in the Portuguese town of Fatima in 1917. During these apparitions, she encouraged penance and praying the rosary.

May 21 – Sts. Christopher Magallenés, priest and martyr, & Companions, martyrs – Martyred in 1927, this Mexican priest was noted for his care of the native peoples of Mexico and for his work to support vocations to the priesthood.

May 22 – St. Rita of Cascia, religious – A wife, mother, widow, and nun, Saint Rita was known for her patience and humility in spite on many hardships. Conforming herself to the crucified Christ, she bore a wound on her forehead similar to one inflicted by a crown of thorns.

July 9 – Sts. Augustine Zhao Rong, priest and martyr, & Companions, martyrs – Canonized with 119 other Chinese martyrs, Augustine began his career as a soldier. Inspired by the martyrs, he was baptized and eventually became a priest and martyr himself.

July 20 – St. Apollinaris, bishop and martyr – Martyred in the second century, Apollinaris was the Bishop of Ravenna in Italy. He was known as a great preacher and miracle worker.

July 24 – St. Sharbel Makhluf, priest – A Maronite priest in Lebanon, Saint Sharbel spent much of his life as a hermit in the desert, living of life of extreme penance.

August 2 – St. Peter Julian Eymard, priest – Founder of the Congregation of the Blessed Sacrament, Saint Peter devoted his life to promoting First Communions and devotion to the Eucharist as the sacrament of Christ’s love.

August 9 – St. Teresa Benedicta of the Cross, virgin and martyr – Born of Jewish parents as Edith Stein, she received academic renown as a philosopher. After her conversion to Catholicism, she became a Carmelite nun. She died in Auschwitz in 1942.

September 12 – Most Holy Name of Mary – After beginning in Spain in 1513, this celebration became a universal feast in the seventeenth century. A companion to the Memorial of The Most Holy Name of Jesus, it follows the Feast of the Nativity of Mary.

September 23 – St. Pio of Pietrelcina, priest – Padre Pio was known throughout Italy and the world for his patient hearing of confessions and for his spiritual guidance. In poor health for much of his life, he comforted his sufferings to those of Christ.

September 28 – Sts. Lawrence Ruiz & Companions, martyrs – Saint Lawrence and his companions spread the Gospel in the Philippines, Taiwan, and Japan. Saint Lawrence was born in Manila and was a husband and father.

November 24 – Sts. Andrew Dũng-Lạc, priest and martyr, & Companions, martyrs – Saint Andrew and his 107 companions, both priests and laity, were martyred in Vietnam in the seventeenth through nineteenth centuries. Through their preaching, lives of faith, and witness unto death, they strengthened the Church in Vietnam.

November 25 – St. Catherine of Alexandria, virgin and martyr – Martyred in the early part of the fourth century,
In "Nanny McPhee Returns," the eerie but magically effective matron of the title (Emma Thompson) transports herself to wartime Britain, where she comes to the rescue of a frazzled rural mother (Maggie Gyllenhaal). As written by Thompson and directed by Susanna White, this sequel tells a sweetly nostalgic tale underpinned by lessons about cooperation, sharing, courage and the need to believe in happy endings (A-I, PG).

"Megamind," a generally endearing animated adventure, recounts how a good-hearted, perpetually inept alien villain (voice of Will Ferrell) finally defeats his longtime superhero rival (voice of Brad Pitt) -- also a visitor to Earth -- only to find that mastery of the city the good guy once protected is not all he had dreamed. Director Tom McGrath's diverting comedy features worthy lessons about making positive use of talents and abilities and about the dangers of allowing others to define who you are (A-II, PG).

"Ramona and Beezus" is a gentle, winning comedy about a good-hearted but accident-prone 9-year-old (Joey King) whose antics annoy her more conventional teen sister (Selena Gomez). Traditional values and close-knit family relationships reign in director Elizabeth Allen's squeaky-clean, nostalgia-tinted adaptation of Beverly Cleary's best-selling series of children's books (A-I, PG).

A heartwarming, decidedly less raucous animated riff on fairy tales, "Shrek Forever After" brings the blockbuster franchise full circle as the titular ogre (voiced by Mike Myers) experiences a midlife crisis and is tricked by an evil wizard (voice of Walt Dohrn) into living a different version of his past. Director Mike Mitchell and colleagues affirm the values of love and fidelity in a manner that should gladden parents (A-II, PG).

In "Tangled," a traditional animated offering based on the Rapunzel story, a golden-haired damsel (voice of Mandy Moore) imprisoned in a tower by an evil crone (voice of Donna Murphy) escapes with the help of a boastful thief (voice of Zachary Levi). An equally dynamic and wholesome vehicle for its "love conquers all" theme, directors Nathan Greno and Byron Howard's fantasy blends lighthearted romance and vigorous action sequences into an entertaining whole (A-I, PG).

Director Lee Unkrich's "Toy Story 3" makes for a satisfying, action-packed conclusion to the trilogy and offers valuable lessons on the importance of family, friendship, and destiny as Woody (Tom Hanks), Buzz Lightyear (Tim Allen), and the rest of the "Roundup Gang" consider their options when their owner, Andy (John Morris), heads to college and puts away his childish things (A-I, G).
ANNUL

(From 7)

hardest days and the most dangerous temptations. In the annulment process, the Tribunal seeks to find what essential element or property of capacity or intention was missing at the time of consent – the wedding.

What effect does an annulment have on my children of the marriage? None. We see every child as a gift from God and civil law does not take into account our Church view in civil matters concerning inheritance or legitimacy.

How do I get started? Call your parish office to talk with the parish priest and to get a parish annulment advocate. If there are questions that the parish cannot answer, please call the Tribunal at the Diocesan Pastoral Center 325.651.7500 to talk to one of the Tribunal personnel. Your call will be held in confidence. It is important to have your witnesses respond to questionnaires that will be sent to them. The sooner you begin the process, the sooner it can be completed.

VATICAN CITY (CNS) -- When one Christian community is suffering, other Christians must offer assistance, Pope Benedict XVI told Coptic Orthodox and other Oriental Orthodox church leaders.

The pope met Jan. 28 with members of the Catholic-Oriental Orthodox theological dialogue who were holding their annual meeting in Rome; the 2011 meeting came less than a month after a bomb attack on a Coptic Orthodox church in Alexandria, Egypt, left 23 people dead.

"Many of you come from regions where Christian individuals and communities face trials and difficulties that are a cause of deep concern for us all," the pope told representatives of the Catholic, Armenian Apostolic, Coptic Orthodox, Ethiopian Orthodox, Syrian Orthodox, Malankara Orthodox Syrian and Eritrean Orthodox churches.

"All Christians need to work together in mutual acceptance and trust in order to serve the cause of peace and justice," he said, adding a prayer that the example of the martyrs of both churches would give Christians strength and courage in the face of adversity.

Coptic Orthodox Metropolitan Bishop of Damiette, Egypt, the co-chairman of the dialogue, thanked Pope Benedict for his prayers for the dead and the injured. The Coptic leader also praised Egyptian President Hosni Mubarak’s commitment to protecting Egyptian Christians and he told the pope that hundreds of Muslims came out Jan. 7 -- when Copts celebrated Christmas -- to show their support for their Christian neighbors.

The Egyptian government and a leading group of Muslim scholars objected to some of Pope Benedict's comments on the Coptic church bombing, saying they gave the impression that the government does not guarantee the freedom and safety of Egyptian Christians.

Paulist Father Ron Roberson, an official at the U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops and member of the dialogue commission, said everyone involved in the dialogue was anxious to know how Egyptian Christians were faring, but the situation was not a primary focus on the meeting.

ARCHIVES

(From 6)

with construction to be completed in the Spring of 1985.

Mr. Luther is also involved in another Abilene church project -- the renovation of Sacred Heart Church. The renovation is proceeding on schedule.

The pews are being refinished, the walls retextured, and the entire sanctuary area is being redesigned to conform to the new liturgy. One interesting feature of the renovation is the addition of a large Moorish-style arch over the sanctuary, continuing the Moorish design of the church.

Father Alvin Wilde, pastor of Sacred Heart, expects the renovation to be completed at the beginning of the summer. In the meantime, the congregation is using the parish hall as a temporary church.

A substantial portion of the renovation is being financed by proceeds from the sale of the old Central Catholic building.

GUIDELINES

(From 1)

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 fasting 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 Church asks that we not eat meat on Fridays during Lent.

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 are clearly and positively encouraged to receive the Sacrament of Penance during Lent. There are weekly times scheduled for Confessions in each parish as well as special Lenten communal Penitential services throughout the diocese. 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 receiving Communion at least once a year, ordinarily, during the Easter Season. Of course, Catholics are encouraged to receive communion at every Mass, provided they are properly disposed.

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.

On February 17, 1966, Pope Paul VI completely revised the Penitential Discipline of the Church with apostolic constitution Paenitemini, explaining Catholic tradition regarding the practice of penance. At the heart of the apostolic constitution is the integration of the concept of penance with that of metanoia "change of heart, that is to say …the intimate and total change and renewal of the entire man – and of all his opinions, judgments and decisions. “ The Holy Father speaks extensively about the relationship between the external acts of penance and inner conversion, prayer, and works of charity.”

Listing specific legal prescriptions, Paul VI interprets these as gravely binding as to substance only, and not to particular acts. He then regards differences between people and circumstances and authorizes episcopal conferences to establish particular norms.

On November 18, 1966, the NCCB established the binding norms of fast and abstinence still current in the United States. The norms quote Paenitemini extensively. The bishops state, “…we preserve for our dioceses the tradition of abstinence from meat on each of the Fridays of Lent, confident that no Catholic will lightly hold himself excused from this penitential practice. The bishops state explicitly “… we hereby terminate the traditional law of abstinence as binding under pain of sin...”

(Please See HOLY WEEK/23)
**HOLY WEEK**

(From 22)

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.

**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 para-liturgical celebrations are suggested and recommended at the discretion of the pastor (Viacrucis, 7 Palabras, Pesame a maria, etc.)

**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.

**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.

**UNBORN**

(From 10)

The terrible evil of abortion. The “Day of the Unborn” reminds us to affirm the protection of unborn children as a religious and also as a secular cause. The first human right of a human being is the right to life, and based on many passages of sacred scripture, we believe that in the case of the Word of God who took flesh in the womb of Mary, every child from its first moment of conception is made in the image and likeness of God and demands respect and protection.

The Annunciation, which marks the first day of life of Jesus Christ in Mary’s womb, is an invitation to celebrate the first day of life of every child conceived in a mother’s womb. Hence, the Annunciation is a splendid day to mark the first day of conception of every human being under the title of the “Day of the Unborn.” As the Christian community recognizes and honors the conception and prenatal life of Christ who is God, then we should also celebrate each newly conceived child, even of an “unplanned” child.

The most important event of our life is our conception, for this is what makes all the rest of life possible, including our salvation. Likewise, if it were not for the Incarnation of Christ at His conception, there would be no atonement on the cross and no resurrection from the dead. Christ began His salvific mission of redeeming us from the very first moment that He was conceived in the womb of His mother, Mary. The reflection on the reality that Christ’s Incarnation began at His conception in Nazareth, is a reminder of the sacredness of every conception which is the beginning of every human life.

Historically, the Feast of the Annunciation has been regarded both as a feast of Christ and Mary. It would be difficult to speak of the Unborn Christ without mentioning Mary. The day that Christ was conceived, the day that Christ became Incarnate, reminds us of Mary’s faith reply of total surrender to God with her “yes” – “Behold the handmaid of the Lord; be it done to me according to your word.” All Christians can readily agree that both for Jesus and Mary, and the whole human race, the moment when God became man in the womb of the Virgin at Nazareth is the most inspiring event of history and should also be commemorated, under the title of the “Day of the Unborn Child” especially today when prenatal life is under such grave attack.

- I am asking that on the Feast of the Annunciation, March 25 that we also celebrate in our Diocese the day known as the “Day of the Unborn Child.” On this beautiful day when we celebrate the beginning of the life of Jesus Christ and the beginning of each human life, I ask that all the priests of our Diocese celebrate Mass first to thank and honor Jesus and Mary, but also for all the unborn of our Diocese and the world. Also, I encourage all of our priests to especially invite all couples who are expecting a baby to be present to receive a special blessing for each little one waiting to be born. This should also be the occasion to stress the dignity and sacredness of all human life, from its first moment of conception, and to encourage all people to become more involved in the pro-life movement. I ask that this information be published in our bulletins.

Here follows a Prayer to Christ Unborn in English and Spanish. I encourage us to pray each day, especially in the month of March, as we prepare for the Feast of the Annunciation:

**PRAYER TO CHRIST UNBOR**

Dear Lord Jesus in the womb of Blessed Virgin Mary, before your birth You filled the unborn Baptist with the joy of the Holy Spirit. Inspire us to see You in every unborn child. Grant us the perseverance to defend vulnerable human life from abortion, abandonment, experimentation, and all violations. Fill us with reverence for the moment of your Incarnation in Nazareth when the Word became flesh.

**Oración a nuestro Señor Jesucristo por Nacer**

Querido Senor Jesús en el vientre de nuestra bendita Virgen Maria, antes de tu nacimiento lléname a Juan el Bautista por nacer con el gozo del Espíritu Santo. Inspiranos para que te veamos en cada niño sin nacer. Regalamos la perseverancia para defender la vulnerable vida humana del aborto, abandono, experimentación, y todas las transgresiones. Llénanos de reverencia por el momento de tu Encarnacion en Nazaret, cuando el verbo se hizo carne. Amen.

**OSBORNE**

(From 9)

As a matter of fact, St. All Saints Parish might be buried under an Internet viral financial landslide. WikiLeaks could become involved. "Good Morning America" might call the pastor. And the bishop might call him, too.

Come to think of it, we Catholics might want to get on this chain e-mail fundraising bandwagon while we can, and beat the other religions to it.

Think it will not work? Have you ever stood and watched The Salvation Army jingle help from all kinds of people? Hmmm?

Think of the chain e-mail as a potential red bucket with a nice person ringing a friendly -- if threatening -- bell.

(Comments are welcome. E-mail Uncle Dan at cnscnuckle01@yahoo.com.)

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To other teachers, youth ministers, trusted adults and principals to serve as objective third parties. Sometimes the opinion of someone uninvolved is all the light a situation needs.

If just one student had taken "Attack a Teacher Day" in the spirit of the invitation, it would have been tragic. In fact, on the day the girls were arrested, tragedy did happen: A 17-year-old shot his assistant princi-
Dioce-Scenes

The Ordination of Patrick Akpanobong

Patrick Akpanobong, at left in above photo, receives the laying of hands from the Most Rev. Michael D. Pfeifer, Bishop of San Angelo, during his diaconate ordination, January 14 in Big Spring. Akpanobong's priestly ordination will be in June.

Photos courtesy Holy Trinity Church in Big Spring.

LIFE

(From 1)

location near the University of Texas of the Permian Basin and the Music City Mall, noting that while abortions are high among college students, the highest age range for the deadly procedure is between 18 and 24.

Although not the reason for the expansion, Rouse said last year’s successful fundraiser worked as a catalyst for beginning the Odessa center work in earnest.

Bruce Wilkinson, author of “The Prayer of Jabez” and a nationally-known and gifted motivational speaker, addressed Life Center supporters last October. When the program was over, pledge cards were distributed and those in attendance were asked to complete the cards that night at the table. When all the cards were collected and counted, over $790,000 had been raised, a phenomenal amount for a single night’s efforts. Rouse said another person in the audience pledged $1 million, although the money has not yet been given to the center.

“Instead of looking at it ($790,000) as a third of our budget next year, we took it as an assignment to get busy,” Rouse said. “So that money has been assigned to cover an expansion of our services, with a new location in Odessa and for our center in Andrews.

“We feel like we were given much in order to do much.”

Although what could be considered the Life Center’s West Texas home is located in Midland, prevention, intervention and restoration services are currently offered in Andrews, where there is already a facility, and Odessa. Additionally, Life Center workers presently make presentations in Odessa schools.

The center also offers free pregnancy tests, STI consults, ultrasounds and referrals.

To learn more, the Life Center web site is at www.midlandlifecenter.org.