Ministry offers support to parents grieving lost infants

West Texas Angelus

ST. LAWRENCE — A grassroots West Texas ministry is providing comfort for those facing the difficult loss of newborns. Angel Baby Creations (ABC) began with 5-10 women in July 2011 in the farming communities of St. Lawrence and Midkiff but in 18 short months has grown to 40 volunteers.

Two notable passings

By Linda Navarro

I believe that we are all a family united by God, and that we are all God’s children, we first have to understand how much God loves and cares for us. He showed us how much he loved us by sending his only son Jesus. In proclaiming the Kingdom of God, Jesus’ mission as teacher, revealed to us that our connection with God is eternal and as His children, we seek His Kingdom every day. At St. Mary’s School, our mission, “to teach as Jesus taught,” is based on these principles. (St. Mary’s School Handbook, 2009, p.1). In addition, our school creates an environment placing God at the center of our lives, emphasizing Christ teachings and following the example of Jesus’ life where we are led by the Holy Spirit to do God’s will. In this way St. Mary’s School may successfully uphold its vision of a strong curriculum through academic, social, spiritual and

All God’s children


Photos by Jimmy Patterson

Voices crying out for voices that cannot

Both Stan Musial, a devout Catholic and one of the greatest baseball players who ever played the game, and Monica Dodds, longtime family columnist and contributor to the West Texas Angelus via her “Your Family” died in January / Pg. 15

Coverage of local, national Marches for Life
The Sacrament of Penance is an experience of the gift of God’s boundless mercy. Not only does it free us from our sins, but it also challenges us to have the same kind of compassion and forgiveness for those who sin against us. We are liberated to be forgivers. We obtain new insight into the words of the Prayer of St. Francis: “It is in pardoning that we are pardoned.”

At the November 2012 Plenary Assembly, the full body of Catholic bishops approved the “Pastoral Exhortation on the Sacrament of Penance and Reconciliation”. This statement is an invitation to all the faithful in the Year of Faith to avail themselves of the Sacrament of Penance beginning in Lent 2013. It is hoped that this experience of God’s healing and forgiveness during Lent will continue throughout the lives of the faithful, helping us, thereby, to increase our faith, our loving relationship with our God.

Yes, we are in the Year of Faith, and one of the key elements of the Year of Faith is reconciliation, reconciling ourselves with our God by confessing our sins, and reconciling ourselves with one another, those whom we may have offended, or those who may have offended us. To live out this statement of the bishops on the Sacrament of the Penance and Reconciliation, I am asking our priests to provide for our parishes and our missions even more opportunities, for the celebration of the Sacrament of Penance, especially in the Lenten season.

Jesus entrusted the ministry of reconciliation to the church. The Sacrament of Penance is God’s gift to us so that any sin committed after Baptism can be forgiven. In confession we have the opportunity to repent and recover the grace of friendship with God. It is a holy moment in which we place ourselves in God’s presence and honestly acknowledge our sins, especially our mortal sins. With absolution we are reconciled to God and the church.

The beautiful Sacrament of Penance (confession) helps us to stay close to the truth that we cannot live without God. While all the Sacraments bring us an experience of the mercy that comes from Christ dying and rising, it is the Sacrament of Reconciliation that is the unique Sacrament of God’s mercy.

I strongly encourage all our Catholics in the Year of Faith to study more about this beautiful Sacrament of God’s mercy, for parents to teach their children about God’s forgiveness in this Sacrament, and especially to celebrate more frequently God’s boundless mercy by making a good confession.

**Sacrament of Penance: An experience of God’s boundless mercy**

**From the Bishop’s Desk**

By Bishop Michael Pfeifer, OMI

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**DIOCESAN BRIEFS**

**Marriage Encounter Feb. 15-17**

Strengthen, renew and rekindle your marriage sacrament so that it can flourish and reflect God’s love. Sign up today to attend the next Worldwide Marriage Encounter weekend. The next WWME weekend is on February 15-17, 2013 at the Grand Texan Hotel in Midland.

In 1 Corinthians Chapter 13, St Paul tells us that to love is the most important thing we can do. He even goes so far as to say that nothing we can do, no matter how great, means anything if we do not have love. How are you doing when it comes to loving others, especially your spouse?

The encounter weekend, a marriage enrichment program, teaches a communication technique which permits each couple to explore important areas of their relationship in a spirit of love and understanding. By continuing the newly acquired technique on this weekend, husbands and wives continually grow closer together to live more joyful and purposeful lives.

The weekend is oriented strictly to each individual couple. You concentrate on your spouse to such an extent that you are hardly aware of the other couples present. The presentations are given to the group as a whole. After each presentation, the husband and wife have time in the privacy of their room for their own personal discussion. There is no group sharing on the weekend.

To receive more information, call Tom & Susan Williams at 432-697-9904 or go to www.newesttexastexas.org

**Midland woman chosen to serve on Attorney General’s committee**

AUSTIN — Texas Attorney General Greg Abbott has announced appointments to the “Choose Life” Advisory Committee, a seven-member body established by the Texas Legislature to review applications for funding from the proceeds of “Choose Life” specialty license plate sales. In 2011, the Texas Legislature authorized the creation of “Choose Life” license plates to provide funding for organizations that promote adoption as an alternative to abortion. Under Senate Bill 257, lawmakers created the “Choose Life” license plate program and instructed the Office of the Attorney General (OAG) to appoint the “Choose Life” committee.

The seven “Choose Life” Advisory Committee appointments include Judy Canon, longtime parishioner at St. Ann’s. Judy has been involved in various aspects of the adoption process for more than a decade. She has served as an adoption counselor with birthmothers; taught and advocated for adoption awareness at the organizational level and through the media; worked with adoptive families, conducting home studies and superviso-

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**Chastity makes the personality harmonious**

By Bishop Michael Pfeifer

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**Sacred Heart-Coleman March for Life**

By the grace and will of our most holy and just GOD, Tuesday, January 22, the 40th anniversary of the unfortunate decision rendered by the Supreme Court in Roe vs. Wade, an ecumenical group numbering 40-50 men, women, and children, 90% Catholic and 10% non-Catholic, gathered in front of the Coleman County Courthouse in Coleman for the Coleman Rally for Life. Conceived by members of an ARISE prayer/study group, one of the societies within Sacred Heart Catholic Church in Coleman, the project quickly developed into a collaborative effort with spiritual and practical direction from the parish clergy as well as support in the form of the hands and feet of inspired laity. The hope was to provide a local reflection of the well-known March for Life held annually in Washington, D. C. The rally began with brief introductions by Rev. Romanus Akamike and Terry Dulin, fellowship, and prayer. The rosary was said using pro-life meditations on the sorrowful mysteries. Prayer was followed by a procession to Sacred Heart Catholic Church in Coleman, and the Holy Mass celebrated by the pastor, Rev. Akamike, in recognition of the Day of Prayer for the Legal Protection of Unborn Children designated in the General Instruction of the Roman Missal for the dioceses of the United States. The evening concluded in Father Cyr Parish Hall with a presentation of the pro-life documentary Blood Money. The film is a critical examination of the abortion industry in America. We thank the Most High for the abundance of grace He gifted all of us at each and every step of this endeavor. GOD is good!! All the time!!!
### From the Editor

**On Nellie Gray, and becoming Pro-Life**

**By Jimmy Patterson**

Not long ago, American author Grace Speare wrote, "For every force, there is a counter force. For every negative there is a positive. For every action there is a reaction. For every cause there is an effect."

Grace wasn’t talking about abortion, but she could have been.

On February 5, 1945, a baby was born in Abilene. The baby’s name was Sarah Ragle Weddington. Twenty-one years earlier and 100 miles west of Abilene, in Big Spring, another baby was born. Her name was Nellie Jane Gray.

Weddington would eventually move to Austin, become an attorney and successfully argue Roe v. Wade in front of the U.S. Supreme Court, making it legal for abortions to be performed in these United States. Fifty-five million babies, by the way, never had a chance to weigh in on the issue. Make that 55 million and one if you count the infant Weddington aborted before she became famous. And you must count that one, of course. But who needs 55 million opinions when we had nine uber-intelligent jurists, each of whom had been deemed wise beyond their years and qualified to make decisions for us all, right? Even the ones who would never have an opportunity to make a decision or breathe a breath. Among the 55 million who never had a chance, odds are there were a few future Supreme Court candidates. Ne’er to be as it turns out.

Weddington told the Dallas Morning News in January that she has never regretted the role she played in the abortion decision.

Gray, the founder of the March for Life who died suddenly last August, regretted Weddington’s role every day for 40 years. The regret was enough that Nellie would pull together the positive forces of hundreds of thousands of people every year to march on Washington in defense of unborns who will never have an opportunity to place one foot in front of the other.

The national secular media has been all over the 40th anniversary of the court’s decision and, as Time Magazine printed, abortion (Please See PATTERSON/20)

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### Del Escritorio del Obispo

**El sacramento de penitencia es una experiencia del donde la infinita misericordia de Dios**

**Por el Obispo Miguel Pfeifer**

El Sacramento de Penitencia es una experiencia del don de la infinita misericordia de Dios. No solamente nos libra de nuestros pecados, sino también nos reta a tener la misma clase de compasión y perdón para quienes pequeen contra nosotros. Somos liberados a ser perdonadores. Hemos obtenido un nuevo entendimiento en las palabras de la Oración de San Francisco: “Es en perdón que somos perdonados.”

En la Asamblea Plenaria de noviembre del 2012, todos los Obispos Católicos aprobaron la "Exhortación Pastoral en el Sacramento de Penitencia y Reconciliación". Esta declaración es una invitación a todos los fieles en el Año de Fe para frecuentar el Sacramento de Penitencia comenzando en la Cuaresma 2013. Se espera que esta experiencia de sanación y perdón de Dios durante la Cuaresma continúe en las vidas de los fieles, ayudándonos, así, a aumentar nuestra fe, nuestra relación amorosa con nuestro Dios.

Sí, estamos en el Año de Fe, y un elemento clave del Año de Fe es reconciliación, reconciliarnos con Dios y con nuestros semejantes. Es en esta declaración que el Obispo Miguel Pfeifer nos invita a celebrar el Sacramento de Penitencia y Reconciliación.

Por el Obispo Miguel Pfeifer

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**NECROLOGY**

**March**

11-Rev. Leopold J. Bujnowski (1976)
11-Deacon Albert Libertore (1977)
15-Deacon Cosme Ureta (2011)
21-Deacon Frank Trudo (1992)
26-Rev. Ferran Braun (1999)
26-Deacon Audon Saldívar (2000)

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**Bishop’s Calendar**

**FEBRUARY**

9 — **SAN ANGELO**, Convention Center – Diocesan Conference Day
10 — **BEAUMONT**, 25th Episcopal Anniversary of Bishop Curtis Guillory
12 — **SAN ANGELO**, Diocesan Pastoral Cl – Staff Mass at 8:30 a.m.; and Meeting at 11:00 a.m.
12 — **SAN ANGELO**, Holy Angels – RCA Presentation at 6:30 p.m.
14 — **SAN ANGELO**, Sacred Heart Cathedral – Holy Hour for Life, Marriage and Religious Liberty at 6:30 p.m.
16 — **SAN ANGELO**, NACCP Freedom Fund Banquet at 7:00 p.m.
17 — **SAN ANGELO**, Sacred Heart Cathedral – Rite of Election at 2:00 p.m.
20 — **SAN ANGELO**, Newman Center – Mass at Noon
24 — LENTORAH, Mass, St. Isidore at 11:00 a.m.

**MARCH**

2 — **MIDLAND**, St. Ann – Diocesan Schools Commission Meeting at 9:00 a.m.
5 — **SAN ANGELO**, Diocesan Pastoral Center – Legal Team Meeting at 11:00 a.m.
6 — **SAN ANGELO**, Diocesan Pastoral Center – Meet with Dr. Philip LeMasters and Students from McMurty University
7 — **SAN ANGELO**, Diocesan Pastoral Center – Personnel Board Meeting at 11:00 a.m.
8-10 — **SAN ANTONIO**, Texas Bishops Meeting
11-14 — **SAN ANTONIO**, Lenten Retreat
21 — **SAN ANGELO**, Sacred Heart Cathedral – Chrism Mass at 11:00 a.m.
21 — **SAN ANGELO**, Presbyteral Council Meeting, 1 p.m.
24 — **SAN ANGELO**, Sacred Heart Cathedral – Palm Sunday Mass at 9:45 a.m.
24 — **SAN ANGELO**, Holy Angels – Seder Meal at 5:30 p.m.
28 — **SAN ANGELO**, Sacred Heart Cathedral – Holy Thursday Mass at 7:00 p.m.
29 — **SAN ANGELO**, St. Margaret – Good Friday Procession at 1:00 p.m.
29 — **SAN ANGELO**, St. Joseph, Good Friday Service at 7:00 p.m.
30 — **SAN ANGELO**, Sacred Heart Cathedral, Easter Vigil, 8 p.m.
31 — **SAN ANGELO**, St. Margaret – Easter Sunday Mass at 10:00 a.m.
Big Spring native Nellie Gray honored in Washington during January Pro-Life March.

RECLAIM Sexual Health Catholic Healing program helps with addictions

By Bishop Michael Pfeifer, OMI

In this article, I am happy to share information with you about a wonderful program – RECLAIM Sexual Health Catholic Recovery Program, that has begun in the Diocese of Green Bay, Wisconsin. This program is designed to help people who struggle with sexual addiction and pornography. The information that I share with you here comes from a letter sent to me by Bishop David Ricken of the Diocese of Green Bay:

“Our current culture is highly sexualized and many people suffer from the sin of unhealthy sexual behaviors and are slaves of pornography. A survey conducted among U.S. Christians revealed that 50 percent of men and 20 percent of women struggled with pornography use. We know all too well that this lifestyle results in wounded souls, broken relationships, divorce, dysfunctional families and even criminal behavior. In 56 percent of divorces in the United States “an obsessive interest in Internet pornography” was a significant factor.

“I want to make you aware of a program that has begun in the Diocese of Green Bay. With my encouragement, Bruce and Jeannie Hannemann, of Elizabeth Ministry International (EMI) have been instrumental in creating RECLAIM Sexual Health Catholic Recovery Program, a private, completely anonymous, online recovery program for overcoming pornography and other unhealthy sexual behavior. I am very impressed with the way in which RECLAIM has combined research-based brain science and recovery methods with the theology of the body and other important Catholic doctrines and teachings. Science and spirituality work in harmony to help individuals break free.

In addition to helping those who are addicted, RECLAIM provides free resources, training and support for family members, as well as clergy and counselors.

“Bruce and Jeannie Hannemann provided training on this issue to the priests in my diocese at our last Clergy Congress. They shared a powerful personal testimony on their own marital struggles and healing related to Bruce’s addiction to pornography. As a scientist, Bruce was able to teach us about the cutting edge resources in RECLAIM that offer the brain science of change and hope to those caught in the grips of this pandemic. Together they gave witness to the blessings of the Church in their recovery journey.”

I thank Bishop Ricken for sending me this helpful information and while we don’t have this program in our Diocese, those who want more information on it can go online at www.reclaimsexualhealth.com or by contacting EMI at 920-766-9380.
Year of Faith focuses on Holy Spirit in our lives

By Bishop Michael Pfeifer, OMI

To truly live the Year of Faith focused on the New Evangelization there must be a new openness to the great power and love of the Holy Spirit. It is first and foremost by letting the Holy Spirit take over our hearts and way of life that we can then come to know better our loving God and Father, and how God has manifested God’s great love for us in the person of Jesus Christ, who showed us God’s love to the point of giving His life for us on the cross. The Holy Spirit then wants us to take part in the joy of the new life that has been given to us in Christ’s Resurrection, and to share that love with others by the way we live, by the way we show compassion, by the way we forgive one another, by the way we reach out in service to all, especially to the poor, the needy, the abandoned and people who hurt in any way, and those who feel rejected by the Church. When we do this, we are living the Year of Faith and we are truly New Evangelizers.

Vatican II: The council’s first period — 1962

By Fr. Joe Uecker

Last month we looked at the opening of the Council, some of the leaders of the minority and majority and saw that a struggle was brewing. But the struggle was not only between opposing opinions, but also some very practical organizational difficulties: How to manage the general sessions of the Council and the sheer quantity of printed material. The bishops had to read some 70 documents, digest them and vote on them.

It was quite natural that the document on the liturgy should be submitted for consideration by the Council at the beginning because the groundwork had already been done for this document. For about a century, the liturgy had been studied. Some changes had already been made in the liturgy of Holy Week. So the stage was set.

One of the guiding principles of the document was that the people in the pews were to abandon the role of spectator and become active participants in the sacred action of the liturgy.

When this document was first presented, no mention was even made of the issue that had caused so much furor in the preparation of the document: namely, the use of the vernacular (language of the people) in the liturgy.

Once the Council Fathers began to operate on the principle of full participation by the people, it became evident that the vernacular was a must. Perhaps out of fear of too much change too quickly, the switch from Latin to the vernacular was a gradual process.

Another contested issue was who exercised supervision over the liturgy: the Roman Curia or the Conference of Bishops. In the end, the Roman Curia won out and it seems like the Conference of Bishops has less say-so today than they did at the beginning of the Council. The new Roman Missal is a clear example of that.

To show how a very small minority tried to hijack the Council, the voting on the preliminary document was 2,162 to 46. And the final vote a year later was 2,147 to 4. But the small minority made a whole lot of noise. However, the Spirit of God was in charge and wanted the whole People of God to be engaged in community worship. The document was promulgated by Pope Paul VI in 1963 and implemented in 1964.

Even though the vote was nearly unanimous, it became clear that there were two groups among the bishops that seemed destined to clash. In November Cardinal Ottaviani presented

(Please See VATICAN II/21)

Natural Family Planning a holistic approach for couples

By Bishop Michael D. Pfeifer, OMI

I feature here a brief explanation on Natural Family Planning (NFP) that is taken from the February edition of Ethic and Medics, from an article written by Richard Fehring, D.N.Sc., R.N., Stella Kitchen, and Mary Shivanandan, S.T.D.:

Natural Family Planning (NFP) is an umbrella term for certain methods used to achieve and avoid pregnancies. These methods are based on observation of the naturally occurring signs and symptoms of the fertile and infertile phases of a woman's menstrual cycle. NFP is not "rhythm." The rhythm (or calendar) method was developed more than 50 years ago. It was based on the scientific theory that ovulation could be predicted by calculating from previous menstrual cycles. This method was inaccurate because it did not take account of the unique nature of a woman's menstrual cycle. Today's methods of NFP do take account of such variations. Based on observable signs and symptoms of the fertile and infertile phases of the menstrual cycle, NFP methods track the changes associated with ovulation and treat each cycle as unique. The accuracy of women's observations has been

(Please See NFP/23)
MIDLAND — Often times even the choir needs a reminder. That reminder can come in many forms. In this case it takes the shape of the continued incredible success of the biennial Youth 2000 Retreat at Midland’s St. Stephens — where over 800 attended the event in January -- as well as in the form of the greater Church’s New Evangelization.

Brother Max has been helping facilitate the Youth 2000 event since 2005. When he attended in January it was his fourth visit to the parish and judging by the response in the room and the turnout of the conference itself, he and his Franciscan brothers are loved by the young people in attendance.

Youth 2000 is not a Franciscan event, but the order based in Albuquerque provides the men needed as speakers, confessors and friends whenever organizers of the nationwide event call.

“We’ll do one or two events a month and still try to stay home and have a life in the friary and help the homeless and poor. It’s a balance we don’t always achieve well, but we try as best we can to approximate it.”

When Max and his brother friars are not in Midland in January helping the Youth 2000 Retreat, he is in San Angelo, helping with the Bread of Life program.

It is often hard to gauge the fruits of their efforts during such conferences, but Brother Max did note a couple of recent developments that led him to believe he and his Franciscan brothers are making a difference.

“It’s hard to make that call, but one year I remember a man who helped out but hadn’t gone to confession in 10 years, and he went at a Youth 2000 Retreat and it was a life changing experience for him,” Brother Max said. “Confession reconciles people with God. That in itself is a miracle.

“We’ve seen young people follow vocations. I remember having to discipline one young man in Midland. He was being too lively in the presence of Eucharist, where it should be sacred and controlled. I think he was talking too much. I went over to him and I didn’t plan to do anything I just wanted him to stop. And I said to him, ‘Everybody is looking to you, you are a leader among your peers, and you are not leading them to Jesus, you are leading them away. And I know you can do better and be a better leader.’”

Brother Max said he believed that later, the young man later entered the seminary for the diocese.

Former Midland GOP party leader now devotes time, talents to helping hermits

By Jimmy Patterson

CHRISTOVAL — For many years, the name Lou Brown was synonymous with Republican party politics in Midland. Brown held positions of esteem not just within the county but on the state level, at one point being selected President of the Texas Republican Women’s Organization.

Since 1946, the Browns have owned and operated a ranch south of Christoval and as such, for years Lou and Winfree Brown would commute from their home in Midland to Christoval. While at the ranch on the weekends, the Browns struck up a quick friendship with Father Fabian Maria Rossette, O-Carm., and the hermits at the Mount Carmel Hermitage southwest of Christoval.

That friendship would develop into helping the hermits on a regular basis both before and after the death of Mr. Brown in 2006.

Today, Mrs. Brown has traded in her powerful political position in Midland County for charitable work at the hermitage. That help includes being, as she likes to joke, the “Music Director” at the monastery. She is, in actuality, the organist at the chapel during Sunday Masses, and she is a caregiver to Father Fabian’s mother, Rosa Bernal, who lives near the monastery but will soon move to the building that house’s the monastery’s infirmary upon its completion.

In 1993, when Mrs. Brown first heard about the hermitage, just two years after its dedication, she began opting to attend Mass at the small chapel on the grounds every Sunday morning instead of driving into San Angelo to the Cathedral of the Sacred Heart.

A few years prior to 2000, Father Fabian told Mrs. Brown that someone had donated an organ to the monastery.

“Thing just come to the monastery that way,” she said. “Unfortunately, nobody at the time played the organ.”

In the years that ensued, a woman stepped up to play the organ before relocating in 2000 to Oregon. Enter Lou Brown.

“Some of the time we have singers, soloists now,” Brown said. “One time we had a young man who was a student at San Angelo Central High School. He had a voice that was developed far beyond his years and he went on to become a musician of some renown. Now we have evolved to where we have a full choir. If you show up and want to sing, you’re in the choir. But we also have a soloist, Kay Foley, who returned to her native San Angelo from Florida.”

Brown confines herself to Sunday Mass, admitting she is not a morning person; the hermits rise at 3:30 and begin daily prayer and chanting at 3:50 a.m.

In helping Fr. Fabian’s mother, Mrs. Brown drives her to a beauty shop appointment every Friday in San Angelo and the two have coffee every morning at Ms. Bernal’s home. Ms. Bernal has lived in the United States for 50 years and speaks Castillian Spanish. Though she understands English, she is not fluent in speaking it.

Years ago when Mr. Brown was alive, he would frequently volunteer his time to the monastery whenever needed.

“Father Fabian likes to tell a story about how the Nativity scene at the monastery is in my husband’s memory. We were here decorating one evening and a Christmas tree in one of the rooms fell over. Joseph’s head was badly damaged and the baby’s fingers were missing. Winfree was one of those meticulous people, he cut gem stones for a living. After that tree fell, he stayed up all night putting those pieces back together, making sure the Nativity scene was restored to its original state.”

Although the serenity can seem somewhat limited to the hermits at the monastery, it is precisely that which draws Mrs. Brown to the place on a regular basis.

“There is a peace here,” she said. “A peace and quiet and hope that everything is going to continue as it should. And I have developed great friendships.”
Mount Carmel Hermitage

Infirmary, saints chapel latest additions at hermitage

By Jimmy Patterson
West Texas Angelus

In the 21 years since it opened, the Mount Carmel Hermitage southwest of Christoval continues to become more and more self-sustaining. After completing and opening a hall three years ago, work is continuing on an infirmary and chapel that will highlight the artwork that has been on display in the hermitage’s front foyer.

“A monastery is like a small town,” said Father Fabian Maria Rosette, O. Carm., prior of the hermitage. “The monks should have everything here so they would not have any need to leave the monastery. An infirmary is an important element. These monks have given their lives and we are supposed to take care of our own.

There are two sure things about monastic life, Fr. Fabian said: “There is no retirement and monks die on the job. As a result of those realities, an infirmary is a wonderful act of charity to the monks who have given all their life to the monastery. When ill, the younger monks will be able to care for the elder brothers. Every monastery in the world needs to have an infirmary.”

The infirmary being built at Mount Carmel is a duplex and provides features that provide for more comfort during a time of illness. With monks living in cells, their home away from the community is a small room with few comforts other than a bed, table, chair and bathroom. In the infirmary, there will be more space, larger beds, and a handicapped accessible bathroom with a bathtub. The building will also provide living quarters for Fr. Fabian’s mother, Rosa Bernal, who has lived near the hermitage for several years. Her advancing years necessitates that the community keep a closer watch over her on site, for safety and health reasons. Canon law allows for a priest’s mother to reside near her son once he becomes a parish priest.

Although the community has never had to deal with a widespread outbreak of disease, an infirmary will allow for ill hermits to be sequestered as they convalesce.

In addition to the infirmary, the Carmelite Saints Chapel is being built and work has been completed on an improved access to the hermitage. The order’s crest is featured on a facade at the front gate and a considerable length of the access road has been widened and graded.

“When we first came here, our number one priority was the little church,” Fr. Fabian said. “Our second priority was to build cells so the brothers would have a place to stay. The dining room and kitchen came after that and then the library. All of these things are important to a monastery.”

Father Fabian did his homework in the months and years prior to the hermitage’s opening, but as

(Please See HERMITAGE/20)
God: Ineffable, unimaginable, beyond conception

By Rev. Ron Rolheiser, OMI

Nicholas Lash, in a deeply insightful essay on God and unbelief, suggests that the God that atheists reject is often simply an idol of their own imaginings: "We need do no more than notice that most of our contemporaries still find it 'obvious' that atheism is not only possible, but widespread and that, both intellectually and ethically, it has much to commend it. This might be plausible if being an atheist were a matter of not believing that there exists 'a person without a body' who is 'eternal, free, able to do anything, knows everything' and is 'the proper object of human worship and obedience, the creator and sustainer of the universe.' If, however, by 'God' we mean the mystery, announced in Christ, breathing all things out of nothing into peace, then all things have to do with God in every move and fragment of their being, whether they notice this and suppose it to be or not. Atheism, if it means deciding not to have anything to do with God, is thus self-contradictory and, if successful, self-destructive." Lash’s insight is, I believe, very important, not first and foremost for our dialogue with atheists, but for our understanding of our own faith. The first thing that Christianity defines dogmatically about God is that God is ineffable, that is, that it is impossible to conceptualize God and that all of our language about God is more inaccurate than accurate. That isn’t just an abstract dogma. Our failure to understand this, perhaps more than anything else, is the reason why we struggle with faith and struggle to not fudge its demands. What’s at issue here?

All of us, naturally, try to form some picture of God and try to imagine God’s existence. The problem when we try to do this is that we end up in one of two places, both not good.

On the one hand, we often end up with an image of God as some superman, a person like ourselves, except wonderfully superior to us in every way. We picture God as a superhero, divine, all knowing, and all-powerful, but still ultimately like us, capable of being imagined and pictured, someone whom we can circumscribe, put a face to, and count. While this is natural and unavoidable, it leaves us, no matter how sincere we are, always, with an idol, a God created in our own image and likeness, and consequently a God who can easily and rightly be rejected by atheism. On the other hand, sometimes when we try to form a picture of God and imagine God’s existence, something else happens: We come up dry and empty, unable to either picture God or imagine God’s existence. We then end up either in some form of atheism or afraid to examine our faith because we have unconsciously internalized atheism’s belief that faith is naïve and cannot stand up to the hard questions.

When this happens to us, when we try to imagine God’s existence and come up empty, that failure is not one of faith but of our imagination. We are living not so much inside of atheism as inside of God’s ineffability, inside a "cloud of unknowing", a "dark night of the soul". We aren’t atheists. We just feel like we are. It’s not that God doesn’t exist or has disappeared. It’s rather that God’s ineffability has put God outside of our imaginative capacities. Our minds are overmatched. God is still real, still there, but our finite imaginations are coming up empty trying to picture infinite reality, tantamount to what happens when we try to imagine the highest number to which it is possible to count. The infinite cannot be circumscribed by the imagination. It has no floor and it has no ceiling, no beginning and no end. The human imagination cannot deal with that.

God is infinite and, thus, by definition unimaginable and impossible to conceptualize. That’s also true for God’s existence.

So, what’s so great about a Catholic education?

By Effie Caldarola

Catholic News Service

There were no Catholic schools in the farm town where I grew up. So, at our mission parish, the priest would travel to another town to bring religious sisters to teach catechism on Saturday mornings.

Although I later attended a Catholic university, I wasn’t convinced about Catholic grade and high schools. Why? Perhaps they seemed a bit elitist, and maybe not diverse enough. I wanted my children to associate with people from a variety of religious backgrounds, as I had done. So when it was time to send my oldest to kindergarten in our Alaskan home, I visited the local public school to observe the teacher.

It was one of those pivotal experiences that changed everything. My luck was that the school had only one kindergarten teacher. She was nearing retirement and clearly wearing out. It was obvious that her attention was consumed by rambunctious little boys, not the quiet girls, like my firstborn. Plus, the room was windowless, not good news in an already dark Alaskan winter.

At a party, I met a public school teacher who told me the best kindergarten teacher in town taught at our Catholic school. Go there, she said, and I could always transfer out for first grade. So I paid a visit, and along with a wonderful teacher came a classroom surrounded on two sides with windows that framed the rising sun on frosty mornings.

I was sold, but my husband and daughter were off visiting relatives. How would I explain my sudden decision to send our daughter to St. Elizabeth Ann Seton Catholic School instead of the neighborhood school? When my 5-year-old rushed to me upon her return, the first thing she wanted to show me was something Grandma’s neighbor had given her: a beautiful medal of St. Elizabeth Ann Seton. Sometimes you just have to pay attention.

Fourteen years later, the last of our three children graduated from that little Catholic school, and I emerged a total advocate of Catholic education. I know there are still people whose motivations include a snobbish sense of elitism, as if "private" education carries a certain cachet. I also think it’s sad when people choose Catholic schools because they are fleeing from poor public schools. We should all support excellent public education, a bedrock of our civil society.

So why choose Catholic? I loved that my children were present before a crucifix each moment of the day, and that God could be mentioned and called on in each classroom. I loved that the liturgical seasons were observed, that during Advent the children would gather each morning to sing and light the Advent candle, that feast days were observed and explained, that my children learned the depth of their Catholic faith.

I loved that their friends came from families that shared our common values and a shared sacramental life. I loved that, while not always perfect or complete, the school complemented its deep commitment to charity with a determination to look at the broader questions of social justice from a Catholic perspective.

I loved that in a society growing increasingly more secular, my children were bathed in the sacred, and that when a school family was suffering, we not only showered them with support and food, but with prayer. I loved the growing diversity of the school, and the way kindness and respect toward others became a daily habit. I loved the immersion in faith.

National Catholic Schools Week runs Jan. 27 to Feb. 2 this year. We owe Catholic education for educating generations of leaders, and we should support their continuing vitality.
Some childhood memories are never forgotten.

I remember sitting in my second-grade classroom, talking with my friend, Lance, when we should have been paying attention to our teacher. Lance was showing me a toy, an action figure of some sort.

Needless to say, our teacher wasn't pleased with the distraction. She reprimanded us and took Lance's toy. She added it to her collection -- a box filled with items taken from other students throughout the year.

I probably remember that moment because of what happened a few days later. I was playing at home when my parents came into my room. They sat me down and told me that Lance had been in an accident. He fell into a lake when the ice broke. He had been rescued but was in the hospital.

My memories of Lance returned in an instant when recently I read about two teens from Show Low, Ariz. They were walking on top of a frozen lake, trying to see how far out they could walk before the ice started cracking.

As Show Low's fire captain said, "That was pretty foolish."

You can guess what happened to the teens. The ice began to crack. One called for help with his cellphone. They found and perched themselves on a dead tree for hours as they waited to be rescued.

A firefighter in a protective suit inched across the ice to their location. Once there, he pulled a boat across the lake with a rope, getting it close enough for rescue.

Fortunately, the teens were not seriously injured. They suffered mild hypothermia and will recover.

That's what I thought would happen with Lance. Because I was young, I didn't realize the severity of his accident. My friend was in the hospital, but he'd get better. That's what they do in hospitals; they make people better.

I returned to school. Days became weeks and weeks became months. Soon it was spring, and Lance hadn't returned. That's when my parents sat me down again. Lance had died.

That was probably the first time death affected me in such a way. I may have known others who died, but they had been older and their passing, though sad, wasn't a shock. Lance was someone I went to school with, someone I got in trouble with, he was a friend.

I don't recall Lance's death upsetting me when I learned of it. Days are like months for children. In the months between his accident and his death, I had continued living. I played with friends. I took tests. The empty seat where he sat had quickly been filled with another classmate.

I never thought about those who couldn't just continue living. It wasn't until I was older that I understood how the ties that bind us sometimes vary in thickness. During those months while I continued living, Lance had parents by his side, unable to do anything but wait, and pray, for positive news that would never come.

Today, whenever I hear about tragedy, I think of those closest to the ones who are suffering, those who can never let go and will never fill that void.

It wasn't until my last day of second grade that I truly understood that Lance was gone forever. That's the day my teacher took her collection box off the shelf and returned all the toys she had confiscated throughout the year.

When her distribution was complete, one toy remained: It was a solitary action figure. She didn't remember who she'd taken it from, but I did. It's a memory I'll never forget.

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A time to give some thought to national service

By Father William J. Byron, SJ
Catholic News Service

There was, as everyone knows, compulsory military service during World War II. In exchange for each month spent in the military, veterans were entitled to two months of higher education -- tuition, fees and books -- in independent or public institutions of their choice, paid for by the federal government.

For those taking advantage of this opportunity, there was also a monthly living allowance. This was the so-called G.I. Bill of Rights, enacted into law in 1944 largely because members of Congress feared that there would be widespread unemployment of Great Depression proportions when the veterans of World War II returned to civilian life.

It turned out to be the greatest investment in human capital ever made in this country. And the return to Treasury -- the higher taxes paid over the decades since 1945 in function of the higher incomes earned as a result of the higher education received -- has been enormous. In effect, the program benefits proved over the long run to be self-financing.

What if we had a national service program in the U.S. today that included not just military service but elder care, child care, resource conservation, rebuilding the decaying urban infrastructure and more? What if we made the national service law applicable to all American men and women, ages 18 to 20? Their length of service would be two years.

The areas of service would include the military, thus putting the affluent young into uniform and ending the disproportionately large representation of low-income and racial-minority personnel in the now "all-volunteer" military.

Service could put the young in direct one-on-one helping relationships with the disadvantaged poor. Some of these activities would require away-from-home barracks living, as was the case with the Civilian Conservation Corps of the Great Depression years, or the boot camps and basic training centers operated by the military during World War II.

I think justification for requiring national service of the young today lies in the evident drift and purposelessness so many of them display. Their parents see it. Those who counsel them in high school or advise them in college see it.

They show up in the data collected on drug abuse, crime and, to a small but frightening degree, in instances of youth suicide. Does this add up to a national emergency? I think it does.

The young are not needed today on farms or in factories. But they could be used in meeting unmet societal and environmental needs.

Many World War II vets took advantage of educational opportunities that prepared them for productive careers. They gained maturity and a sense of purpose during their service years. The nation benefitted not only from their service but as much or even more from their later lives, made all the more productive in subsequent decades thanks to education gained under the G.I. Bill.

Perhaps national service is worth considering as the Obama administration enters its second term. Policy wonks can apply their pencils to the budgetary arithmetic and speculate on whether it has to be compulsory in order to work.

Jesuit Father William J. Byron is university professor of business and society at St. Joseph's University, Philadelphia. He is an army veteran of World War II who received his college education on the G.I. Bill.
Marching for Lives

Clockwise from top, more than 300 Pro-life supporters, stretching an entire city block (above photo), marches from St. Ann’s in Midland to Planned Parenthood in observance of the 40th anniversary of the Roe v. Wade decision legalizing abortion, January 23. ... Faith Berry, left, watches brother William as the two recite the rosary at the prayer service in Midland ... Midland-Odessa Pro-Life Deanery president Charles Hodges, left, leads the procession ... Bishop Pfeifer speaks to the assembled marchers prior to the walk ... Nunzio Martorina, with the Knights of Columbus, prays the Rosary. Photos by Jimmy Patterson / West Texas Angelus
Gray paid high tribute, praise at Mass, March in Washington

By Bishop Michael D. Pfeifer, OMI

In his homily during the inspirational annual vigil Mass at the National Shrine of the Immaculate Conception in Washington, DC, and then in his reflections to begin the huge pro-life march on January 25, 2013, Cardinal Sean O’Malley, OFM, Chairman of the Bishops’ Pro-Life Committee, paid tribute and praise to Nellie Gray, born in Big Spring, baptized in Stanton, and the foundress of the annual Pro-Life March for Life. Cardinal O’Malley at Mass pointed out the sadness we all felt at not having Nellie Gray, who died in August, with us for the annual Pro-Life Vigil Mass and asking all to pray for her and for God’s blessings upon the march she started. And when we began the huge pro-life march attended by scores of thousands and thousands of people, Cardinal O’Malley again reflected on the tremendous courage of Nellie Gray as she founded the first Pro-Life March 39 years ago to the steps of the Supreme Court Building where the Roe v. Wade abortion decision was given.

The spirit of the courageous wonderful Texas girl, Nellie Gray, who started the March for Life Rally, was truly alive in the estimated hundreds of thousands who were present for this biggest pro-life march in the world. I had the joy of being present, along with Deacon Lorenzo Hatch, our seminarian from Assumption and four young people from Abilene, for the opening mass at the National Prayer Vigil for Life on January 24, 2013, at the impressive Basilica of the National Shrine of the Immaculate Conception in DC. Five Cardinals, some 80 bishops and more than 400 priests

(Please See GRAY/19)

Seminarian, Abilene Catholic Student Association attend March for Life

"When the days for his being taken up were fulfilled, he resolutely determined to journey to Jerusalem, and he sent messengers ahead of him." (Luke 9:51)

By Rev. Mr. Lorenzo Hatch

Each Gospel was written for a particular community under a particular context and throughout the Gospel of Luke, we encounter what scholars describe as the "journey motif." In Luke 9:51, the reader experiences a sharp contrast in what Jesus had been doing prior to that moment. The Gospel tells us that he resolutely determined to journey to Jerusalem. Another translation states that Jesus turned his face toward Jerusalem. In both translations, it is clear what Jesus intended to do, to journey to Jerusalem so that his mission may be fulfilled.

The Abilene Catholic Student Association was also on a journey where we turned our face toward our nation’s capital, resolutely determined to join around half-a-million pilgrims to be the voice and presence for the over 55 million aborted babies since the dreadful decision made by our Supreme Court, Roe v. Wade. This year marks its 40th anniversary since the legal onslaught began and it marks the 39th year since one of our very own, Nellie Gray, started the annual National March For Life held in Washington, DC. The number 40 is very significant for us; we see it used throughout scripture to connote a time of trial, persecution, purification, etc. During these past 40 years, it has indeed been a trial, not only for our nation, but especially our church which has been persecuted for its pro-life stance. The Israelites wondered 40 years in the desert before being brought to the Promised Land, but how long must we wonder in this desert of abortion before we are brought to the promised land where every single life is valued with the dignity with which our creator endowed it with? This is indeed a good question and by no means an easy one to answer, but what we do is that our efforts,

(Please See HATCH/18)

Deacon Lorenzo Hatch, right, with members of the Abilene Catholic Students Association during pro-life activities January 24-26 in Washington, DC. (Courtesy photo)
Marchers show devoted passion to never giving up the fight

By Carol Zimmermann
Catholic News Service
WASHINGTON — The tens of thousands of participants at the annual March for Life in Washington Jan. 25 demonstrated just how determined they are not only by showing up in such large numbers on a bitter cold day but by continuing a 40-year tradition of protesting the U.S. Supreme Court's decision legalizing abortion.

“Forty years ago, people thought opposition to the pro-life movement would eventually disappear,” Boston Cardinal Sean P. O’Malley told the crowd assembled on the National Mall for a rally prior to the march along Constitution Avenue to the front of the U.S. Supreme Court.

He noted that Nellie Gray, founder of the annual march who died last year, “was not going to allow that to happen” nor was the pro-life movement.

“The march grows stronger every year,” said the cardinal, chairman of the U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops Committee on Pro-Life Activities.

Many speakers praised the resilience of the crowd, braving a cloudy 20-degree day and standing on snow dusted ground, but they also spoke of the pro-life movement getting re-energized by young people who are becoming the movement’s new torchbearers.

Hundreds of high school and college groups were scattered in the rally crowd, their members texting, taking pictures and creatively protesting by wearing pro-life stickers on their faces and carrying placards in the backs of their jackets.

Their placards did not have jarring images or messages but predominantly took a gentler tone such as: “Abolish Abortion Courageously” or “I am the pro-life generation.”

Jeanne Monahan, new president of the March for Life Education & Defense Fund, is 40 -- just as old as the movement protesting the 1973 Supreme Court decision.

Monahan praised Gray for her long dedication to the cause and several speakers also credited her for getting the pro-life movement on its feet with the first march and leading each one until her death. During the rally, a video tribute to her was shown on the giant Jumbotron.

This year’s rally did not include speeches by dozens of politicians. Nine legislators were announced and only a handful spoke.

U.S. Rep. Chris Smith, R-N.J., co-chairman of the House Pro-Life Caucus, told the crowd: “Know this, the pro-life movement is comprised of noble, caring, smart and selfless people. It is an extraordinarily powerful, non-violent, faith-filled human rights struggle that is growing in public support, unanimity, commitment and hope.”

Another new aspect at this year’s rally was more use of social media technology, with speakers prior to the rally’s start urging participants to tweet about the rally and follow March for Life on Facebook.

One tweet read to the crowd, which drew a lot of cheers, was from Pope Benedict XVI, which said: “I join all those marching for life from afar, and pray that political leaders will protect the unborn and promote a culture of life.”

Rueben Verastigui, youth activist, had a message for the crowd’s youths.

“You can’t just sit around waiting for change to happen have to get up and make it happen.” He told them to be involved in pro-life work in their schools and that even if they feel they are alone they should remember this experience. “Look around, we are not alone. We are not the future of the pro-life movement; we are the pro-life movement.”

But that message could apply to any age. Mary Salmon, who has been coming to the march for the past 15 years, said she is energized by the march to continue her work in crisis pregnancy centers.

Salmon, a parishioner from St. Andrew’s Parish in Clifton, Va., said the pro-life movement cannot just keep responding to opposition they face but need to take the lead.

“We have to do something more,” she said.

Clockwise from top left, Bishop Michael Pfeifer, with Deacon Lorenzo Hatch and members of the Abilene Catholic Students Association at the National Shrine of the Basilica of the Immaculate Conception, where Nellie Gray is memorialized ... March for Life participants ... a veteran, march participant prays ... additional demonstrators ... Cardinal Sean O’Malley (far right) ... additional participants, far right, near right, bottom right, marchers carry the Our Lady of Guadalupe ... at left, Jeanne Monahan, left, new president of the March for Life, succeeding Nellie Gray.

All photos by Catholic News Service, except for Nellie Gray inscription photo, top left, submitted by Deacon Lorenzo Hatch.
Say a family rosary during Year of Faith

By Catholic News Service

EASTON, Mass. (CNS) -- The Family Rosary division of Holy Cross Family Ministries in Easton has gathered more than 80,000 pledges from people around the globe who said they would pray the rosary daily during the 2012-13 Year of Faith.

The pledges, which came in response to a program offering free rosaries, were gathered in a book and presented recently to Pope Benedict XVI by Holy Cross Father John Phalen, president of Holy Cross Family Ministries.

"There are even pledges in languages we can't understand, like some of those from India and Bangladesh," Father Phalen said in a statement. "It was an honor to present His Holiness with the book and ask his apostolic blessing on our ministry."

The pope received the book at the Vatican in December as part of the Year of Faith observation and to mark the 70th anniversary of Family Rosary, founded by Holy Cross Father Patrick Peyton, known as the "rosary priest."

He died in 1992 and the cause for his canonization was opened in 2001.

Father Peyton started the campaign to provide free rosaries and gather pledges in 1991. Back then, the plan was to send 1 million rosaries to Russia. It has since evolved into a worldwide effort to send the prayer beads to families, schools, parishes and individuals on every continent. To date, more than 20 million rosaries have been given away. About 5 million of those were provided by volunteer rosary-making groups in parishes.

Those promising to recite the rosary daily were asked to pray for peace and to post a pledge card in their homes as a reminder of their commitment, as Father Peyton used to ask people to do.

What makes humans happy?

By Bill and Monica Dodds
Catholic News Service

One of the joys of a service like Netflix is having so many choices at your fingertips. And one of the drawbacks of a service like Netflix is having so many choices at your fingertips.

We're not sure how, but a few days after Christmas we chose a documentary titled "Happy," directed by Koko Belic.

"Happy," from the description, we didn't know what to expect but with so many Netflix options, we knew if it didn't grab and hold our attention we could quickly -- with just a few clicks -- dump it.

But it grabbed our attention. We found it touching, especially since Monica has been in hospice care for cancer since last February. Her health has gradually declined. Throughout this past year, we've thought a lot about and prayed a lot about happiness and grief, particularly about eternal happiness.

There was nothing really surprising in the movie. Although not religious in nature, it offered a basic Christian message: Realize what really matters and focus on that. Focus on love, focus on others, on service, on gratitude, etc.

The film featured interviews with all sorts of people in all types of situations all over the world; each person was pleased to say he or she was happy.

The filmmakers pointed out that we all want to be happy and that even the U.S. Constitution speaks of the "pursuit of happiness," without saying how to reach that goal.

They also noted it wasn't a matter of money. Yes, it takes a certain amount to avoid being destitute, which brings all kinds of unhappiness with it, but they said research showed that there wasn't much difference in happiness between someone earning $50,000 a year and someone making $500,000 a year.

One interview that stood out for us was a fellow who makes much less than $50,000 a year and once earned much more. He spoke of his work at Blessed Teresa of Kolkata's Home for the Dying. It was obvious how much joy (and peace) it brought him.

As the new year moves forward and some standard resolutions fade away, this might be one you can keep: Consider how you can be happier, or can become happier, how you can have a happier marriage, a happier family, a happier work life.

Remember that the beatitudes are a wonderful guideline. "Blessed are the poor in spirit, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven" is sometimes translated "Happy are the poor in spirit, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven."

Editor's Note: Monica Dodds, long-time columnist for Catholic News Service and other Catholic press outlets, died Jan. 6 after a long cancer fight.

Coming of Age

Learning from a gold medalist what it takes to win

By Karen Osborne
Catholic News Service

I recently had the opportunity to see and hear gymnast Gabrielle Douglas as she spoke to a packed room of adoring fans. If you don't know Gabrielle, check the gold winners list from last year's London Olympics. She won the gold medal in the team and the individual women's all-around competitions, impressing people all over the world.

At 17, Gabrielle seems to have it together. Yes, she has gold medals, championships and awards under her belt. More important, she has a fantastic outlook on overcoming life's challenges.

Gabrielle isn't scared to ask for help. Since she's home-schooled, teachers aren't always there to hound her about her homework. Instead, she has to take the initiative to ask her tutors for assistance with tough concepts and problems.

Gabrielle keeps focused on her goals. Although she sometimes wishes she could goof off as much as her friends and classmates, she told the audience that part of the reason she feels she was able to get to the Olympics was that she kept her dreams foremost in her life.

As an elite athlete, she has to pay attention to good nutrition and health. While she likes to splurge, she told the crowd, she also has to eat and sleep well, and avoid destructive habits like drugs, junk food and alcohol.

Gabrielle has learned to deal with pressure. During the Olympics, she had to compete in front of millions. Instead of thinking about all those eyes on her vaults and turns, she ignored the cameras and imagined herself doing well. Focusing on the positive and eliminating the negative helped her win.

Gabrielle doesn't let feeling afraid keep her from learning new things. She wasn't born a gold medalist and wasn't always at the top of the heap. Ten years ago, she was just like any young gymnast, scared of falling off the high uneven bars. She found that the best way to get over paralyzing fear was to do the thing she was scared of doing and not being afraid to use the help of a spotter.

We tend to think that successful people are superhuman when they're just like the rest of us. We choose not to remember the hours upon hours they spend in the gym or the sacrifices they take on to get where they are. We don't feel we're equipped to make those sacrifices. We like to look at ourselves and say that
Beloved Catholic, Hall of Famer Stan Musial dies at 92

By Catholic News Service

ST. LOUIS -- A funeral Mass was scheduled for Jan. 26 at St. Louis Cathedral Basilica for Stan Musial, the Hall of Fame outfielder-first baseman for the St. Louis Cardinals.

Musial, a Catholic who played all 22 of his major-league seasons with the Cardinals, died Jan. 19 at age 92 at his home in nearby Ladue, surrounded by family.

Cardinal Timothy M. Dolan of New York, a former auxiliary bishop in St. Louis, will celebrate the funeral Mass. Bishop Richard F. Stika of Knoxville, Tenn., who as a priest of the St. Louis Archdiocese was Musial's pastor in Ladue, will preach the homily.

Musial, frequently called "Stan the Man" for his hitting prowess, won seven National League batting championships. At the time of his retirement following the 1963 season, he held 17 major league batting records.

He banged out 3,630 hits during his career -- split evenly, with 1,815 at home and 1,815 on the road. He belted 475 home runs, 725 doubles and 175 triples, an uncommon mix of power and speed. He won the National League's Most Valuable Player award three times, as well as three World Series championships with the Cardinals. The owner of a .331 lifetime batting average, he became President Lyndon Johnson's physical fitness adviser following his retirement.

Although he never led the National League in home runs or stolen bases, he topped the league in virtually every other important category, including games played, at-bats, hits, doubles, triples, runs batted in, total bases, walks, intentional

walks, batting average, on-base average and slugging percentage.

Originally a pitcher, Musial's hopes for a career on the mound vanished when he injured his shoulder fielding a ground ball in the minor leagues, but his bat helped him make the jump from Class C ball to the majors in just one year. A statue of Musial stands outside Busch Stadium in St. Louis.

In 2011, during ceremonies at the White House, Musial was awarded the Medal of Freedom, considered the nation's highest civilian honor.

He was boyhood friends with the late Archbishop Nicholas Elko, once head of the Pittsburgh Byzantine Diocese and later appointed by Pope Paul VI as auxiliary archbishop of Cincinnati. He and Musial both had grown up in Donora, Pa.

Musial, who was of Polish descent, was long involved in growing the sport of baseball in Poland. He was involved with a Little League project in Poland, helping to build a training and conference center for coaches, trainers and players all over Eastern Europe.

He also helped out in the St. Louis area as well, including at the St. Vincent Home for Children, a residential treatment center for children with educational, emotional and behavioral difficulties. Giving back and helping others "gives you a great feeling," he said.

Musial would remind youngsters that among his records was the record for making the most outs -- more than 7,000 -- yet he still was elected to the Baseball Hall of Fame. In his first game with the Cardinals, he said, he faced a knuckleball pitcher and popped out. "I thought, 'This is going to be tough,' but the next time up I hit a double and it started me on my way," he said.

The slugger met Blessed John Paul II, including twice before Blessed John Paul ascended to the papacy. Musial said they first met when he was archbishop of Krakow, Poland. In 1971, he dropped in on then-Cardinal Karol Wojtyla, who received him even though he was ill with a bad cold.

"I tried to tell him that I was a baseball player, and that my father was born in Poland," Musial recalled in 1988, after his first meeting with Blessed John Paul at the Vatican. The two had some trouble communicating, but when Musial returned to Poland two years later, the Blessed John Paul was already speaking fluent English, he said. "He probably doesn't remember it, but I do," Musial said.

Musial was co-chair of Blessed John Paul's 1999 pastoral visit to St. Louis.

"Alleluia! A great man! A superb athlete!" Cardinal Dolan said in a blog posting within hours of Musial's death.

"Married seven decades to his beloved Lil; proud father; committed Catholic -- he readily admits one of the highpoints of his life was getting to know his fellow Pole, Blessed John Paul II; never missed Sunday Mass; no steroids or drugs; no brawls, enemies, or DUI. Just a gentleman, day-in-day-out reliable, never complaining or demanding; no controversy or foul language."

Cardinal Dolan recalled when, at age 10, he and his brother met Musial at the St. Louis airport: "'Hi Stan,' we blurted out. 'The Man' looked at us. 'Whaddaya say, sluggers? Never forgotten it. I was 10-foot tall.'"

Bishop Sitka said in 2009 that, although he was moving to Tennessee for his Knoxville episcopal assignment, he would never be able to root for any baseball team other than the St. Louis Cardinals, especially because of former parishioner Musial, whom he called "a good friend and a true model of a baseball player."
Knights of Columbus beautify retreat center grounds

By Tom Burke
Director
Christ the King Retreat Center

On Saturday, January 12, nineteen men (mostly Knights of Columbus, Council #4316, from St. Ambrose Parish in Wall, Texas) gathered at Christ the King Retreat Center to beautify the river property on which Christ the King Retreat Center resides. They fell dead trees and trimmed living trees along the Concho River prayer path, all the while protecting the Stations of the Cross located along it.

They came from all walks of life. David Mikulik, owner of Scherz Landscape Company in San Angelo, came as well as a professor of journalism at Angelo State University. Many farmers joined in and provided much needed know-how and equipment. Thanks to Frank Chappa, head of maintenance at the Retreat Center, many dead limbs and trees had been marked months ago for removal.

The men began gathering at 7 a.m. and were fed a hearty breakfast. Work began at 8 a.m. and concluded at noon. Daryl Schniers donated the usage of his John Deere 310E front-end loader and backhoe as well as his Sky Trak, a machine that extends its armature outwards and upwards. Likewise, Gary Dickson brought his John Deere tractor that dragged dead limbs and tree trunks to waiting trailers.

Three years ago, many of these same men and their sons came to Christ the King Retreat Center and cleared trees. At that time, the focus was upon removing dead tree limbs in an effort to ensure that our guests would not be injured by falling branches. This time, trees and limbs were removed in order to expose the Concho River shoreline, creating sacred spaces for anyone taking a stroll or sitting on benches to pray.

When the dust cleared, six trailer loads of timber were taken from the property and dumped into a nearby pit . . . free of charge. This work would have cost thousands of dollars had a private company been contracted. At the conclusion of their work, these men were treated to a hamburger steak meal in the Retreat Center’s dining hall.

More work is needed, however. If there is another Council of the Knights of Columbus that would like to donate their time and talent to beautify our Concho River location, please contact Mr. Tom Burke, Director of Christ the King Retreat Center at (325) 651-7500.

The Cursillo movement and living ‘The Fourth Day’

By Cynthia Ramos
Cursillo Movement Lay Director
Diocese of San Angelo

History of Cursillo

The Spanish word Cursillo (pronounced Kur-SEE-yo) means a short course and is often associated with a three-day weekend. The proper name is Cursillo de Cristiandad (short course of Christianity). However, there is much more to the Cursillo Movement than just a three-day weekend.

This Movement originated in Spain in the 1940’s when the first Cursillo was given and the Cursillo Movement began. It was developed by men of prayer who were seeking to serve the Lord and was formed by the inspiration of the Holy Spirit working in men who had dedicated themselves to bringing others to knowing Christ.

Cursillo was brought to the United States in 1957 to Waco, and it was in Spanish. The first English language Cursillo was held in our Diocese of San Angelo in 1961 in San Angelo.

What is a Cursillo?

Cursillo is a worldwide movement of the Roman Catholic Church. Using the tools of piety, study and action, it provides for a encounter with self, Christ and each other to become Christian leaders in our environments. A Cursillo weekend begins on a Thursday evening and ends the following Sunday evening. During the weekend the participants listen to the Gospel message, broken into 15 short talks. The talks deal with

(Please See CURSILLO/22)
Our Faith

Changing godparents; Mass for an aborted child

By Father Kenneth Doyle
Catholic News Service

Q. I was wondering whether you're allowed to change your daughter's godparents and, if so, how to go about it and have it be acceptable to the church. The situation is this: When we chose our daughter's godparents, seven years ago, they were Catholic and went to church. But over the years, they stopped going to church, and I'm not even sure that they still consider themselves Catholic. My daughter will soon be receiving her first Communion, and she has begun to ask questions about her godparents. I would like to be able to tell her that they are faithful religious people who are strong Catholics, and my daughter wants to know why her own godparents are not like his. Any advice as to what I might do? (Gering, Neb.)

A. You are not allowed to change your daughter's godparents. They are the ones who served as official witnesses to her baptism and the ones who, at the time, along with the parents, asked to have the child baptized into the church. Their names are inscribed on your daughter's baptismal certificate and in the parish's baptismal registry, and history cannot be undone.

However, you understand correctly the proper role of godparents, which is to assure the religious and spiritual development of the child, particularly if anything should happen to the parents, and there are some options.

You could ask someone else to step into that role, perhaps a trusted friend or family member who might serve as an example of religious fidelity and help guide your daughter's growth as a Catholic.

Q. Many years ago, when I was in my 20s, a girl I was dating became pregnant by me. She then had an abortion. Not only did I not try to stop her, but I helped to pay for the abortion. I have confessed this and have received forgiveness. Just recently, I have begun praying for the soul of that aborted child. I was wondering whether I could schedule a Mass intention in my church for the child. (I could make up a generic name like "Jackie" since we didn't know the child's gender, and the Mass intention could be in that name.) I still feel guilty and would like to do as much as I can for that child's soul. (Columbia, S.C.)

A. What you describe is not uncommon: Parents of an aborted child years later feel regret and remorse. As to having a Mass for the child, I feel quite confident that the child is in heaven and needs no prayers.

The child, of course, bore no responsibility for his or her own death, and the Vatican announced in 2007 that there are reasonable grounds to believe that an infant who dies before being baptized will be brought by God to heaven.

What you might do instead is to have the Mass offered for "a special intention" and have that intention be for the mother, that she will have repented for the sin, and, if a Catholic, have sought forgiveness through confession; and next, for our nation, that the scourge of abortion will be lifted from us. (With respect to the hundreds of tiny children who are aborted each day, I believe that historians a century from now will say -- as they now say of the rise of Hitler in Nazi Germany -- "How could a civilized nation have let that happen?")

Love must triumph even in the worst of tragedies

By Father John Catoir
Catholic News Service

Recalling the tragic funerals at Newtown, Conn., at the end of last year brings back the memory of horrific pain and quiet dignity. The grief-stricken parents and their compassionate neighbors displayed the highest values of the human spirit. Love was in the air.

For me, the love of God trumped the evil of Satan.

As time begins to diminish the shock, I wonder how each family has managed to cope. I wonder what I would have said if I had been asked to offer words of comfort.

No words are adequate in such a situation. Maybe just holding a person is the best we can do, and it's worth more than words. Yet there is still a need to address the great mystery of the evil behind it all.

My mind turned to the words God gave us in the supreme law. They were not offered to comfort us. They constitute a divine command.

"You shall love the Lord, your God, with all your heart, with all your soul, and with all your mind." Jesus taught this truth both in word and example. God is unchanging love. How are we to respond to such a truth?

We have been created to love and honor God in good season and bad. The temptation to doubt God's love or to become wildly angry with him in the heat of a tragedy is understandable. The supreme law prevails nevertheless. This is our faith. It tells us to believe in God's love no matter what.

It's always better to turn to sacred Scripture when our own words fail. Faith alone gives clarity in times of darkness and confusion. We have to depend on God's words, not on our emotions. Feelings are not facts; they cannot be trusted. God is real, and he always loves us.

Living courageously because of the knowledge of God's love is a matter of faith, which carries us far beyond our doubts and fears. A person who becomes an emotional basket case in a time of stress needed to carry on. Copious tears are not signs of self-pity; they are a badge of honor, displaying genuine love.

Faith tells us that God's love never abandons us. Evil is always against God's will. When evil comes into this world, God recoils in outrage. He wants us to hold on to our faith in his love -- always.

Faith is essential to our happiness and joy. Just as water gives life to a plant, faith gives life to the soul. A plant without water withers and dies; when faith leaves the soul, happiness and hope disappear.

We cannot allow ourselves to hate, even to hate the perpetrator of the tragedy, Adam Lanza; otherwise evil will have triumphed.
Deciding how many children to responsibly bring into the world

By Bishop Michael D. Pfeifer, OMI

When deciding how many children to have and when to have them, responsible parenthood means that the parents take into consideration their physical, economic, psychological, and social situation in the context of faith and the true meaning of marriage as determined by God. To arrive at a prayerful answer guided by the Holy Spirit, the details of these conditions need to be taken into account to enable a couple to plan their family according to the Catholic Church’s approved method, Natural Family Planning—NFP.

NFP is morally acceptable to people of all religions and cultures. It does not separate the love-giving and life-giving dimensions of the marriage act. The unitive and procreative ends of marriage are kept whole. NFP works in harmony with our God-given nature and not against the true meaning of sexuality with no negative side effects which can cause harm to one’s health and well-being as do artificial contraceptives. The very name “contra” means “against” — against human nature as God intended it to function.

In deciding on having a child or how many children, I present for our married people two reflections on this life giving topic that hopefully will offer good moral, spiritual and social guidance for our responsible parents.

First, from the Second Vatican Council, in its document Gaudium et spes, gives the couple some helpful advice: “Let them thoughtfully take into account both their own welfare and that of their children, those already born and those which the future may bring. For this accounting they need to reckon with both the material and the spiritual conditions of the times as well as of their state of life. Finally, they should consult the interests of the family group, of temporal society, and of the Church herself. The parents themselves and no one else should ultimately make this judgment in the sight of God.”

Second, from Blessed John Paul II who also provided guidance to husbands and wives: “In deciding whether or not to have a child, (spouses) must not be motivated by selfishness or carelessness, but by a prudent, conscious generosity that weighs the possibilities and circumstances, and especially gives priority to the welfare of the unborn child. Therefore, when there is a reason not to procreate, this choice is permissible and may even be necessary. However, there remains the duty of carrying it out with criteria and methods that respect the total truth of the marital act in its unitive and procreative dimension, as wisely regulated by nature itself in its biological rhythms. One can comply with them and use them to advantage, but they cannot be “violated” by artificial interference.”

Couples who use NFP seldom or never resort to abortion. They manifest an innate respect for human life. They welcome every child as a gift from God—even in the eventuality of an unexpected pregnancy. Couples who use NFP seldom or never end up in separation or divorce. NFP enhances communication between spouses and promotes a wholesome family life.

The Year of Faith, which focuses on the New Evangelization, is a wonderful time for all married people, and those who plan to get married, to study carefully the church’s teaching on the evil and sinfulness of contraception which goes against human nature and on a credible and effective NFP program which is in total accord with the way God intends sexuality to function.

HATCH

(From 11)

like going to DC to March For Life, has a real impact on all of us.

We know that in our own diocese, our bishop has championed the right to life from conception to natural death. Through his ministry, the faithful in our diocese have been successful in closing down several planned parenthood facilities and we are indeed glad that these institutions can no longer be an instrument of death under the façade of healthcare. This is also true for many other dioceses throughout the United States... we are seeing a decline in Planned Parenthood facilities and others like them, something which Time Magazine detailed recently in when it said pro-abortionists won the case but have been losing ever since. As you can see, we are gaining huge momentum in this battle to save lives, but it is certainly not over yet. His Eminence, Sean Cardinal O’Malley, OFM Cap., stated in his homily at the vigil mass that “abortion is not a necessary evil, it is simply evil. Abortion, like slavery, is not just a religious issue, it is a human rights issue. We must never lose sight of the fact that we must work to overturn the law of Roe v Wade;” he said. “But we must work even harder to make Americans understand that abortion is evil and it is unnecessary.”

Mass at the Shrine of the Immaculate Conception in Washington. (Photo by Deacon Lorenzo Hatch)

Reflecting on these words, the students of Abilene Catholic Student Association urges all of us to be proactive in our local communities and parish pro-life activities, to write to our legislators, but more importantly to recognize that in all things, prayer is the paramount work that all of us should be doing to stop this evil.

About the trip....

Last year was our first time to represent the diocese as the Abilene Catholic Student Association and we made it our mission to do so every year. This year, we were incredibly blessed to have our bishop present with us. We gathered after the Vigil Mass held at the Basilica Shrine of the Immaculate Conception on Thursday night, took some pictures, and visited the memorial that was made in honor of Nellie Gray in the crypt of the basilica. Through the work of Bishop Pfeifer, that memorial was made possible. The procession took about 45 minutes and there was five cardinals, 43 bishops, 80 deacons, and 520 seminarians.... Quite the sight to behold!

On Friday, we were blessed to get tickets to attend the National Youth Rally and Mass held at the Verizon Center, and if you haven’t experienced the thrill and sheer awesomeness of almost 20,000 thousand youth and young adults who are ON FIRE for the Lord and for the mission of pro-life, you are certainly missing out on a beautiful sight.

Following the Mass which was celebrated by His Eminence, Donald Cardinal Wuerl, we walked to the National Mall where we listened to several speakers who spoke about our efforts and accomplishments in the pro-life movement. Afterwards, with resolute determination, we began our solemn procession down Congress toward the very courthouse which legalized abortion, the United States Supreme Court. We knew that like Jesus, there would be persecution along the way, many interruptions, many laughs, many sorrows... and there were...but in all things, a resolute determination that we will end abortion which has plagued our country for these past 40 years.

It is our sincerest hope that this March For Life 2013 would be the last. Either way, the Abilene Catholic Student Association will be back in DC next year to either march again for its end or in thanksgiving because it did end.

Deacon Lorenzo Hatch is a transitional deacon in his fourth year of graduate studies in Sacred Theology at the Oblate School of Theology. He has an anticipated ordination date to the sacred Priesthood on June 8th, 2013.
along with countless deacons, seminarians, members of consecrated life were among the some 14,000 present for the consecrated mass presided by Cardinal O’Malley. It was commented by so many about the large number of young people from all parts of the country who were present for the Prayer Vigil Mass and massive March for Life. After the mass there were two hours of confessions, and the National Rosary for Life followed by Adoration of the Blessed Sacrament throughout the night.

One of the joyous moments was to learn that at my insistence the Pro-Life Committee of the U.S. Catholic Bishops, with the approval of Msgr. Walter Rossi, Rector of the National Shrine, engraved on the wall of the large hall in the crypt of the National Shrine the name of Nellie Gray as Foundress of the Pro-Life March.

After the celebration of Masses, especially with the youth in various locations in Washington, D.C., on Friday morning, January 25, 2013, began the huge March for Life Rally. This March, as in past years, was at the National Mall and began with a welcome by the new leadership replacing Nellie and followed by several presentations of the dozen congress people who were present, including the Speaker of the House. At the beginning of his inspiring presentation for the March, Cardinal O’Malley again spent a considerable amount of time reflecting on the courageous and dedicated life of Nellie Gray and how she gave herself totally to this unique way of promoting the sanctity and dignity of human life, especially of the unborn. She served without pay as she offered everything for the unborn. It gave me great joy to hear these wonderful words of tribute and praise for Nelly Gray as she was from our diocese being born in Big Spring, Texas and baptized in Stanton, Texas. I told her story to many, many people who were present for the mass and the Life Rally giving them posters and CD’s that features a ballad in honor of Nellie written and sung by Cindy Jordan of San Angelo.

I share with you the reflections of a couple of Congress people who were present for this historical event.

In his inspiring message, U.S. Representative Chris Smith of New Jersey said, “Forty years ago this past Tuesday marks the U.S. Supreme Court’s infamous, reckless and inhumane abandonment of women and babies to abortionists…In his inaugural speech on Monday (January 21, 2013), President Obama said “together, we resolve that a great nation must care for the vulnerable…that all are created equal…and our journey is not complete until all of our children…are cared for and cherished and always safe from harm.” Smith continued, “We indeed, Mr. President, must care for the vulnerable—but that also includes unborn children and their mothers. No one gets left out or left behind. All people are created equal. And our journey is not complete until all our children—including the child in the womb—are cared for and cherished and always safe from harm. Yet, President Obama systematically and aggressively promotes abortion at home and overseas. Despite the fact that taxpayer-subsidized Planned Parenthood claims direct responsibility for killing over 6 million unborn babies, Planned Parenthood remains President Obama's favorite organization.”

In her comments, Congresswoman Diane Black from Tennessee inspired the hundreds of thousands with her factual and challenging words, “Despite the inroads we have made towards gender equality, abortion on demand continues to undermine the freedom and justice that generations of women have fought for. The reality is, 40 years after Roe v. Wade, one-third of my daughters and granddaughters’ peers are not here to benefit from the progress we have made and share in our hopes and dreams for the future. As Martin Luther King Jr. once said, ‘injustice anywhere is a threat to justice everywhere.’ For decades, pro-abortion activists have perpetuated many lies about abortion—particularly to women. We have been told the lie that abortion is a means of female liberation, justice and empowerment. But pitting mothers against their unborn children is not liberating; it is a horrible injustice that in the last 40 years has resulted in more than 55 million aborted babies—whose mothers have gone on to live in many cases with severe physical, emotional, mental and spiritually scars. We have been told the lie that abortion is about choice. But in reality—abortion is a false choice. Abortion leads to the death of a child…a choice to take what is not ours to take: the life of another person—is not a choice at all; it is a mistake!”

Despite a bitter arctic cold, the hundreds of thousands did not let the cold affect their enthusiasm, commitment, and their hearts’ determination to pray, to work and proclaim their belief in the sacredness and dignity of all human life, and especially their belief that every unborn child is a precious gift from God, made in the very image and likeness of God. That little one deserves the right to celebrate a birthday, to be baptized and to share in the redeeming love and mercy won for us by Christ in his suffering, death and resurrection. With singing, chanting, prayer, especially praying the rosary and reading Scripture verses, and waving many impressive banners the huge crowd marched on the National Mall to the steps of the Supreme Court where sadly 40 years ago was made the regrettable and unforgettable and immoral decision that it is okay legally to kill the unborn at any stage of development.

The Vigil prayer, especially the Mass, and the National Pro-Life Rally begun by the courageous and daring young woman, named Nellie Gray, is a reminder that our God is with us as we accept our responsibility to overcome the end of abortion and protect the most vulnerable and innocent ones, the unborn. What a joy it is to see so many young people picking up this responsibility, to pray, to work, to march, to speak, to protest the evil of abortion and proclaim our belief in the sacredness of the precious gift of each unborn.

Pope Benedict XVI tweeted an encouraging message to the huge crowd marching on the mall, “I join all those marching for life from afar, and pray that political leaders will protect the unborn and promote a culture of life.”
**ABC**

*(From 1)*

these tiny Churches to begin a ministry that provides comfort and grief support to bereaved couples.

“There are actually two parts to the ministry — service and prayer,” said Diane Eggemeyer, an ABC volunteer, said, “While the women are creating their items at home, they pray for the family who will be receiving it. Some of the nurses at local hospitals now even contact ABC for prayer when a couple is having a serious problem after experiencing a loss.”

The group’s most intimate gesture in families’ time of sorrow are “Angel Bears.” ABC provides small recorders to hospitals and doctor offices, which allows them to record a baby’s heartbeat in the event of an endangered pregnancy or critically ill baby. In the tragic case of death, ABC installs the recording into a special teddy bear, monograms the baby’s name on the front and returns the bear to the hospital for the couple to keep and treasure forever.

The work put forth by the volunteers in St. Lawrence and Midkiff is paying huge dividends of comfort, recently evidenced in a letter the women received.

“We have a dresser/hutch with bookshelves that Dalton would have used in his room set up with all the things that we have in memory of him,” Mrs. Lewis wrote. “His bear is in the middle and we get him down often to listen to his lively sound. Our 3-year-old, Colton, knows exactly whose heartbeat he is hearing and I feel that your kindness has given us the ability to let our son know and have a memory of his little brother.

“You guys are a complete gift from God and I think your ministry is the exact example of what God wants us to do. Thank you for your long hours of work and love. I would love to meet all of you in person and say ‘Thank you’ with a big hug!! God bless you all.

All items are free of charge, as the group operates entirely on donations. ABC is currently serving hospitals in Odessa, Midland, San Angelo and Lubbock. They have helped families as far away as Abilene, Waco, Dallas, Wichita Falls, and New Mexico.

**HERMITAGE**

*(From 7)*

for a time schedule or master plan when he envisioned each piece to become reality, he left that up to God’s clock.

The hermits have even raised livestock and chickens to help supplement in the income needed for the hermitage’s annual budget, however the recent drought has forced them to sell down their cattle. Now there are 22 goats on the land and 25 chickens — roughly half the needed amount — in order to sell eggs for additional income.

The hermits also sell baked goods with appearances in San Angelo, Abilene and Midland-Odessa every Christmas. Fr. Fabian said sales in Odessa were particularly healthy last Christmas.

Three years ago, the hermitage opened an assembly hall, where small concerts, receptions and other gatherings are held. The circumstances surrounding the facility’s completion are reminiscent of the story of the miraculous staircase at the Loretto Chapel in Santa Fe, NM.

Two men, father and son, who own and operate a heating and air conditioning business in Houston, donated everything for the construction of the hall. The men even stayed and built the hall in two weeks, providing the equipment and machinery themselves.

Father Fabian hopes that one day funds will allow for the building of guest houses, where retreatants can come and spend time in prayer and retreat. Such additions would easily and quickly pay for themselves. Fr. Fabian says he fields many calls from people wishing to use the facility as a retreat location.

Improvements to the hermitage come only because of donations. Money raised through bake sales and egg sales is used to cover operating expenses, and the hermitage remains debt free.

“Whatever money comes is always for the building,” he said. “We save it and save it and save it. My mother’s father came from Barcelona, he was a tough Spaniard. He taught us that if you don’t have the money you don’t buy. We never have asked for any money from any bank. Only if we have money do we do it.

Father Fabian says sometimes he has to “jump out in faith.” The infirmary required such a leap.

“We realized we needed it,” he said. “In 21 years God provides. Sooner or later it happens if it is supposed to. Not because of me but because God wants this place.’

**PATTERSON**

*(From 3)*

activists are losing their footing. Surveys continue to show that the ranks of Pro-life are growing, even if at the same time other surveys show people do not want Roe v. Wade overturned but instead favor harsher restrictions.

In the words of the *Dallas Morning News* writer behind the glowing Weddington profile, these restrictions amount to what she calls the Pro-life movement’s “guerrilla warfare,” an astounding example of biased reporting if ever there was one.

(If it is sneaky tactics you are looking for, try Planned Parenthood shielding itself under the umbrella of “providing quality women’s health care” as a ruse for its real financial bread and butter — the killing of the innocent.)

In the mind of that Dallas newspaper writer, would prayer, devotion to Mary and praying the Holy Rosary also be examples of the ambush and sabotage so routinely associated with guerrilla tactics, I wonder?

Fifteen years ago I was pro-choice. Not shout-it-from-the-rooftop, Sarah Weddington pro-choice. But I was all about reproductive rights in the name of the great law of the land which could not, should not and would never be overthrown, or so I foolishly and melodramatically felt. One day, I’m not sure why, I began to veer closer to the center. The next step was weakly proclaiming myself “Pro-Choice/Pro-Life,” a term I might have even invented myself, or so I surely thought. I tried to disarm people by piously proclaiming, “It’s a woman’s right and I pray she chooses life! But it’s none of my business.” Courageous stance, don’t you think?

As the years have drifted slowly by and true wisdom has edged out false wisdom, or whatever it was, a feeling that can only be described as having come from the Holy Spirit (there’s really no other viable explanation) has moved me firmly within the realm of those who support life from conception to its natural end.

Last month on the Sirius XM Catholic Channel, morning show host Gus Lloyd said something that makes a lot of sense: We have all the finest technology, improvements and innovations that all work together to make our lives as easy as we could ever possibly hope them to be. We have medicines and laboratories able to cure almost anything that ails us. Within arm’s reach is virtually everything we could want or need. Yet we still continue to kill our children. Surely ... surely history will not look kindly upon us.

What we practice by continuing to follow a law made by mere mortal man amounts to nothing more than base barbarism. It is nothing short of cruel and ruthless and we deserve to be looked upon with ultimate harshness in any history book.

William Devlin, a former friend of Nellie Gray and a member of the March for Life ad hoc committee, wrote recently on the New Advent Catholic Web site what anyone who remotely aligns himself or herself with the life movement can hopefully understand:

“Nellie may not have achieved her political goals, but she has performed another important function in the development of public policy.” Devlin wrote.

“Both kings and prophets influence culture and governance. Athens and Jerusalem are often in tension with one another. Historically, wielders of political power have often been confronted and challenged by prophetic witnesses. Nellie was a prophet for our day. Year after year, for almost 40 years, she continued to challenge the presumption that some humans can be denied the right to live. Her legacy is the ‘Life Principles’ which express the requirements for a human life amendment. Every human being, from conception to natural death, must be protected by law — without exception. In the words she used year after year at the March for Life, ‘not even a little bit of abortion’ is acceptable.

Certainly we are in the middle of a slow progression through this dark tunnel; a progression that will one day take us to a point where we will no longer have to look back on the times in which we live with shame.

Two West Texans have left lasting footprints on our national abortion debate. Nellie Gray may be gone and Sarah Weddington may still be proud of herself, but our prayer should be that Gray’s legacy will outlive not only Weddington, but all of us.
Padre Joseph Uecker

El mes pasado consideramos la apertura del Concilio, algunos líderes de la minoría y mayoría y vimos que una lucha estaba comenzando. Pero la lucha no fue solamente entre opiniones contrarias, sino también unas dificultades muy prácticas de organización: cómo manejar las juntas generales del Concilio y la mera cantidad de materias impresas. Los obispos tuvieron que leer unos 70 documentos, entenderlos y votar en ellos.

Era muy natural que el documento sobre la liturgia fuera sometido para consideración por el Concilio al principio porque el trabajo preparatorio para este documento ya había sido hecho. Por un siglo, la liturgia había sido estudiado. Algunos cambios ya habían sido hechos en la liturgia de la Semana Santa. Todo estaba listo.

Uno de los principios más importantes del documento era que la gente en las bancas tenían que abandonar el papel de espectador y ser participantes activos en la acción sagrada de la liturgia.

Cuando este documento fue presentado por primera vez, no se mencionó el asunto de la participación completa del pueblo. Era evidente que el verbum era necesario. Tal vez por miedo a demasiado cambio demasiado rápido, el cambio de Latín al vernáculo fue un proceso gradual.

Otro asunto que causó dificultades fue el papel que iba a supervisar la liturgia: la Curia Romana o la Conferencia de Obispos. Al final, la Curia Romana ganó y parece que la Conferencia de Obispos tiene menos control hoy que al principio. El nuevo Misal Romano en inglés es un ejemplo claro de esto.

Para mostrar cómo una pequeña minoría trataba de secuestrar el Concilio, el voto sobre la primera versión del documento fue 2,162 a 46. El voto final, el próximo año fue 2,147 a 4. La pequeña minoría hacía mucho ruido. Pero el Espíritu de Dios estaba en control y quería que el pueblo entero de Dios fuera parte de la alianza comunitaria. El documento fue promulgado por el Papa Pablo VI en 1963 e implementado en 1964.

Aunque el voto fue casi unánime, se volvió evidente que había dos grupos diferentes, la Constitución Sobre la Revelación Divina, en 1965 poco antes del fin del Concilio.

El 26 de noviembre de 1962, se presentó un esquema sobre la Unidad de la Iglesia, que trataba con relaciones entre Ortodoxia Oriental y Catolicismo Romano. Los obispos Melquites criticaron el documento severamente diciendo que no entendieron su realidad en la Iglesia y que sus metas tocante la reconciliación con los ortodoxos. Estas críticas fueron incorporadas en el documento final y pasó casi unánime.

El Patriarca Máximos había pedido un esquema sobre la Iglesia. El 30 de noviembre, el Cardenal Ottaviani presentó el esquema sobre la Iglesia que se había pedido. Era evidente que el Concilio mismo estaba polarizado. Ottaviani representaba uno de los polos. Esto es parte de lo que dijo él:

“Les voy a decir lo que en verdad pienso. Yo creo que yo ... estoy malgastando mis palabras porque la decisión ya se ha tomado. Los que siempre gritan: “¡Quítalo! ¡Quítalo! ¡Danos un nuevo esquema!” ya están preparados a abrir fuego. Yo les digo algo que tal vez no

(Mira VATICANO/22)

VATICAN II

(From 5)

the schema “On the Sources of Revelation.” An American Protestant observer put in his diary: “The dam broke.” One bishop after another rose to say: Non placet (It is unacceptable). Among the theologians who composed, with the blessing of the German bishops, an alternative text to the official one were Fr. Karl Rahner and Fr. Joseph Ratzinger, the future Benedict XVI. Why was opposition to the schema so fierce? It was because the leaders of the Council saw the fate of the Council hanging on the fate of this document. Would the Council ratify the status quo or would it be something other than that? The vote on this schema would tell.

It became obvious that there was no point in discussing various passages of the schema when it was very uncertain whether the schema itself was viable. A vote was taken and 1,368 rejected the document while 822 favored it. Pope John was consulted and he sent the schema to a mixed commission, the Secretariat for Christian Unity and the Doctrinal Commission, to work it out. The schema would have a troubled history for the next three years and was approved as a radically different document, the Constitution on Divine Revelation, in 1965 shortly before the Council ended.

On November 26, a schema was introduced on the Unity of the Church, which dealt with relations between Eastern Orthodoxy and Roman Catholicism. The Melkite bishops criticized the document severely saying that it failed to appreciate their reality in the Church and their goals regarding reconciliation with the Orthodox. These criticisms were incorporated into the final document and it passed virtually unanimously.

Patriarch Maximos had called for a schema on the Church. On November 30, Cardinal Ottaviani introduced the schema on the Church which had been called for. It was evident that the Council itself was polarized. Ottaviani represented one of the poles. Listen to what he told the Council:

“I'll tell you what I really think. I believe that I ... am wasting my words because the outcome has already been decided. Those whose constant cry is ‘Take it away! Take it away! Give us a new schema!’ are now ready to open fire. I'll tell you something you may not know: even before this schema was distributed – Listen to me! Listen to me! – even before it was distributed, an alternative schema had already been produced. Yes, even before the merits of this schema have been looked at, the jury has rendered its verdict. I have no choice now but to say no more because, as Scripture teaches, when nobody is listening, words are a waste of time.”

The schema was presented; there were speeches for and against. But when Bishop De Smedt rose, he did not mince words: He denounced the schema for its three isms – triumphalism, clericalism and juridicism. “We must beware of falling into ... some kind of bishop-worship or pope-worship. The Church is more our mother than a juridical institution.”

Another critical moment had come. Cardinal Suenens called for a look at the Church, the Light to the world. The theme has two parts: 1) looking at the inner reality of the Church 2) looking at the relationship of the Church to the world outside. He asked that the Council adopt that program for its future work. There was prolonged applause. This sowed the seeds for a document undreamed of up to that point: The Constitution on the Church in the Modern World.

On December 6, Pope John established a program for work to be done during the inter-session, stressing the need to respect the goals of the Council while at the same time indicating revision of the schema. And that saved the Council from taking a vote on the schema which had been presented which would surely be a slap in the face of the Doctrinal Commission. The schema was going into the repair shop, where it would be dismantled and from which, everybody expected, it would return looking very different.

The first period of the Council had ended on December 8, 1962. The bishops returned home knowing that they were part of history, but not knowing that for most of them, it was the last time they would see or hear Pope John XXIII. He died June of 1963.
CURSILLO

Christian study, action, leadership, living a life in relationship with God, the role of the layperson in the church and similar reflections on situations encountered in daily living. Each talk is followed by a period of small group discussions. The teachings of Christ are presented in an atmosphere of warmth, joy and fellowship.

Living Our “Fourth Day”
The “after” activity of the Cursillo method recognizes the continuing need for support and is known as the Cursillista’s “fourth day” – the rest of one’s life. A Cursillista is urged to join a “group reunion” or “friendship group”. This is a brief weekly meeting of four or five fellow Cursillistas. Friendship groups enrich our lives with piety, grow our understanding of faith in study, and take action to bring others to Christ. These individuals review their past week, sharing how Christ has touched them, their Christian achievements or disappointments, and their progress in the Cursillo method of piety, study and action. Ultreyas (Spanish for “onward”) are held monthly. They are reunions of the Cursillo community at-large and are open to anyone. Ultreyas are an opportunity for the smaller “friendship groups” to meet, pray and socialize with others who are dedicated to living a Christian life. They also provide support for a Cursillista’s efforts to bring Christ’s message to others in his or her environment. Cursillistas are living examples of what Christ has taught. By our words and actions we will hopefully convert those that are far away from God. We do not need to stand on the street corner and proclaim the Word; our actions should speak louder than words. This is how we can have a positive effect on those we meet every day, and as a consequence, transform our environments to be more Christian. In Cursillo we learn that the primary focus for all our evangelizing efforts must begin with ourselves; we must be thoroughly convinced of God’s love for us before we can reach out and share that love and friendship with others. Sometimes, in Cursillo terminology the word “evangelización” or “evangelizing” may sound somewhat strange for our vocabulary; however, Eduardo Bonnín, founder of the Cursillo movement, helps clarify its meaning: “When we speak of evangelization in the context of the Cursillo, we do not mean, or mostly mean it in the sense of simply passing on or spreading the Good News of the Gospel, but rather to succeed in making the person ‘become’ the Good News, that joyful Good News that Christ is alive in and amongst His people today, just as He was 2000 years ago.” It is by becoming a living witness of the Gospel message everywhere we go in our “movable square meter” that we can truly and effectively evangelize our respective environments. Our evangelical efforts in all phases of the Movement spring forth from a vibrant and living Christianity in Action. It is difficult to explain what the Cursillo does for a person, or what happens over a weekend. Since each person comes to the Cursillo from a different place in time and a different relationship with God, it is understandable that each will respond differently to the material presented and the experience of community living in a Christian atmosphere. For some, it is a total turnabout in their lives; for others, it is a grand awakening; for yet others, it is an enrichment of what they have already known and have been living. We do not promise anything or judge anyone – we simply offer the program and rely on the Grace of God and the openness of the individual to produce its benefits.

Are you being called to experience your Cursillo? Please contact any Cursillista in your parish.

Upcoming Cursillo dates for 2013
#360—Women's English for Abilene on 3/14 - 17, 2013
#362—Women's Spanish for Midland/Odessa on 5/16 - 19, 2013
#363—Women's English for San Angelo on 6/20 - 23, 2013
#364—Men's Spanish for San Angelo on 6/27 - 30, 2013
#365—Men's Spanish for San Angelo on 7/25 - 29, 2013
#366—Women’s English for Midland/Odessa in September (TBA)
#367—Men’s English for Midland/Odessa in October (TBA)
NFP
(From 5)

validated by scientific research.

NFP is a holistic approach to family planning. Both husband and wife understand their fertility, emotions, and family planning intention (whether to have a baby or not). Its successful use to avoid pregnancy relies on a couple’s following what they know about the method and one another.

Successful use of NFP requires a couple to communicate. In the daily charting of their fertility signs, couples quickly appreciate their shared responsibility for family planning. Husbands are encouraged to “tune into” their wives’ cycles, and both spouses are encouraged to speak openly to each other about their sexual desires and their ideas on family size.

Couples using NFP to avoid pregnancy abstain from intercourse and genital contact when the woman is fertile and can conceive. The total days of abstinence will vary from woman to woman and even from cycle to cycle. For example, if a woman experiences a twenty-eight-day cycle, she may have up to eight days of abstinence (not counting menses). Or, if a woman has a thirty-seven-day cycle, she may have up to ten days of abstinence. Whatever the length of the fertile phase, no barriers or chemicals are used at any time to avoid pregnancy. To achieve pregnancy, couples have intercourse during the fertile time of the cycle. NFP is not a contraceptive. It does nothing to suppress or block conception. Instead, couples adjust their behavior according to their family planning intention using the naturally occurring signs and symptoms of a woman’s cycle.

NFP promotes openness to the transmission of human life and recognizes the value of children.

Sexual relations are understood as love-giving as well as life-giving. It is true family planning. Because NFP respects the two-fold nature of sexual intercourse, it can enrich the bond between husband and wife.

For these reasons, it is an acceptable form of family planning for people of various religious and philosophical beliefs.

From An Introduction to Natural Family Planning, By Richard Fehring, D.N. Sc., R.N., Stella Kitchen, and Mary Shivanandan, S.T.D.

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SCHOOLS
(From 1)

physical needs of every student by working together with families, living God’s word, and serving Christ (p.1-2).

While we are all part of a family, including a church family, we look at the holy family as an example of our part in God’s family. Pope John Paul II referred to the family as the “domestic church”, the first place where children learn about God’s love, with Jesus, Mary, and Joseph as a model for all families (Tows, Claussen & vanBrandwijk, et al, 2004, p.247).

Likewise, St. Mary’s School helps families with this role by creating an environment of community, family, and friendship. Teachers, staff, and administrators along with parents work together to encourage academic excellence, and provide opportunities for students to increase their academic knowledge and experience in order to share their faith with others through service.

Jesus, as teacher, reached out to everyone and because of his life, death and resurrection, we have been blessed with His grace, love, and mercy. As you enter the front doors of St. Mary’s School, you will notice the statue of Jesus with the children. We are all like those children, being welcomed, and receiving God’s message to believe that, “Whoevers humbles himself like this child is the greatest in the kingdom of heaven” (Matthew 18:4). Through daily religion classes and weekly Liturgies, St. Mary’s School students are embraced by God’s love daily as well as encouraging them to become closer in their relationship with Christ, “Let the children come to me; do not stop them; for it is to such as these that the Kingdom of God belongs” (Mark 10:14).

Jesus exemplified how we are to treat others and be forgiving. By accepting and welcoming all people, “many people saw a sign of the Kingdom of God” in the way Jesus lived His life (Tows et al, 2004, p.69). As servants of Christ, St. Mary’s School is committed to exemplifying Jesus’ example by welcoming all, teaching as Jesus taught, spreading the Good News, and with the help of our blessed mother Mary remembering God’s mission, “Whoever welcomes one such child in my name welcomes me” (Matthew 18:5).

Through church, family and school, we look to others to help us understand Jesus’ teachings and God’s plan for our salvation. Catholic schools strive to enrich the lives of its students academically, spiritually, and physically and help spread the message that we are all children of God ready to receive His love. Thank you for supporting Catholic Education!

Linda Navarro is a former St. Mary’s Catholic School parent and served as school board president for many years.

OSBORNE
(From 14)

Dominique Dawes and told herself that she couldn’t possibly be like them. There’s no gold medal at the end of your story if you choose to tell yourself that you’re not good enough, or strong enough or driven enough to achieve your dreams.

Everyone has greatness in them. Take a page from Gabrielle and knock down all of the barriers you put up for yourself.

Find your dream, focus on achieving it and wear a positive attitude.

House, Senate
Contact information

-- U.S. Congressman K. Michael Conaway (District 11 -- San Angelo, Midland-Odessa, Andrews, Stanton, Crane, Rankin, Big Lake, Colorado City, Sterling City, Robert Lee, Bronte, Ballinger, Winters, Miles, Christoval, Eldorado, Junction, Menard, Eden, Melvin, Brady, Coleman, Brownwood, Sonora, McMeay, Mertzon, Sweetwater)

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-- U.S. Senator Ted Cruz
Cruz, Ted - (R - TX) Class I
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Mailing Address: B408 Dirksen Senate Office Building, Washington, DC 20510
“Even just to have someone consider entering the seminary because of what we do here is amazing,” he said.

Max said he applauds the Church’s efforts to reach and reinvigorate the faithful through its New Evangelization efforts. “Quite clearly, the pope has said the New Evangelization is not just a matter of going out and finding people who are not Catholic and bringing them into the faith, rather it is something that is unfortunately even closer to home: our own Catholics who need to be re-evangelized—maybe they have forgotten or let their faith life slip and in that sense we’re still calling them. Some would say we are preaching to the choir but the pope says even the choir needs to hear the word again.”

Brother Max, 37, is a native of Chicago and has been a Franciscan friar for 15 years.