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Fr. Mark Woodruff works with his icons. Story/Pg. 4

West Texas

ANGELUS

Serving the Diocese of San Angelo, Texas

Volume XXVIII, No. 3

MARCH 2007

Liturgical Directions for Holy Week

PALM SUNDAY

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

HOLY THURSDAY

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

GOOD FRIDAY

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

HOLY SATURDAY

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

INSIDE ...

Diocesan Briefs	2
Menard prepares for mission's 250th ...	3
Odessa priest creates icons	4
Diocesan Dates	5
Dioce-Scenes	5
BioEthics with Fr. Thad Pacholczyk	6
Pope Benedict's Lenten message	8-9
Family	12
Just for Kids	13
Coming of Age	13
The Back Page	16



Holy Week &
Easter 2007

The West Texas Angelus

Official Newspaper of the
Diocese of San Angelo, Texas
POSTMASTER: Send all address
changes to:
WEST TEXAS ANGELUS
P.O. Box 1829
SAN ANGELO, TX 76902-1829

Bishop Michael D. Pfeifer, OMI
Publisher

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Production Manager

Member
Catholic News Service
Catholic Press Association
Texas Catholic News

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

Subscription rate for all others:
\$10 per year

THIRD CLASS POSTAGE PAID AT
SAN ANGELO, TEXAS

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

Submissions:

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

COPY, PHOTO DEADLINE:
Third Friday of every month.

Photos should be sent in jpeg format.

Letters to the editor are welcome, and
should be emailed to
JimmyLPatterson@grandecom.net.
Letters to the editor are printed at the
discretion of the editor and identities of
the writer are subject to
verification. Please include name,
address and phone number when sub-
mitting letters.



DIOCESAN BRIEFS

Chrism Mass March 29

Bishop Michael D. Pfeifer and the priests
of the Diocese of San Angelo will celebrate
the annual **Chrism Mass** on **Thursday,**
March 29, 11 a.m. at the Cathedral Church
of the Sacred Heart, San Angelo.

At the Chrism Mass, the bishop comes
together with the whole diocese to cele-
brate, worship and consecrate the holy oils
used in all our parishes this coming year.
The oils that will be blessed are the Oil of
Chrism, from which the Mass gets its
name; the Oil of Catechumens and the Oil
of the Sick. The Sacred Chrism is used to
anoint people in the sacraments of
Baptism, Confirmation, and Holy Orders. It
is also used in the dedication and conse-
cration of church buildings and altars. The
Oil of the Sick is used for the blessing,
strengthening, and healing of those who
are sick or advanced in age, and the Oil of
Catechumens is used to anoint
Catechumens and infants about to be bap-
tized.

The bishop is the only minister in the di-
ocese who may consecrate chrism. This
Mass highlights his ministry and our union
with him. Although he is not able to baptize
and confirm everyone in the parishes of the
diocese, he will be symbolically present in
the chrism which the priests and deacons
will use.

The Chrism Mass also celebrates the
unity between the bishop and the priests of
the diocese. The priests of the diocese, in
the presence of and in union with their
bishop, renew their commitment to priestly
service. It is highly significant and deeply
moving for the bishop and priests to recall
the promises made at their ordination as
they renew their dedication to prayer, serv-
ice, and celibate chastity.

Bishop Pfeifer has extended an invitation
to all Catholics to join him and the priests of
the Diocese of San Angelo for this Mass.

For more information, call Ashlee N. Bates
at (210) 828-9921 or (800) 292-2548

Midland Lenten fish fry

The Our Lady of San Juan Youth Group
in Midland is hosting its Lenten Fish Fry
each Friday from 6-8 p.m. during Lent
Plates are \$7 and include fish, fries, hush
puppies, cole slaw and a drink. Our Lady of
San Juan is located at 1008 W. New
Jersey.

Rwandan holocaust survivor, Catholic to speak March 8

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

Fore more information, call Becky Benes,
325-949-1450; hiyalitx@verizon.net or Melinda
Springer at ECGS council: 325-655-8962.
Books are available at Trudo's and Hastings.



A letter to all parishioners from Bishop Pfeifer

My Dear Sisters and Brothers in Christ:

In the story of the Last Judgment, Jesus reminds us to care for those in need. If we ignore those who are hungry, thirsty, ill, without clothes, strangers, or in prison, we turn away from Christ. When we act with compassion, generosity, and commitment to justice for the "least among us," we act as his true disciples.

THE CATHOLIC RELIEF SERVICES COLLECTION is an important opportunity to express Christian compassion and generosity. The Collection is scheduled for March 18, 2007 in our diocese. The Collection theme, *Jesus in disguise*, reminds us of the presence of Christ in every one of our brothers and sisters in need. The Collection helps build the Church's international social ministry by funding the work of five agencies:

Catholic Relief Services, the official international relief and development agency of the Catholic community in the United States, assists people in 99 countries on the basis of need—not race, creed, or nationality. Catholic Relief Services creates opportunities for Catholics in the United States to live their faith in solidarity with poor people overseas by providing financial support and addressing the root causes of poverty.

Catholic Legal Immigration Network, Inc., provides a full range of legal and support services to Catholic programs directly representing poor immigrants, and it advocates for comprehensive immigration reform. Its focus is on reunification of families and protection of those fleeing persecution or civil unrest.

Migration and Refugee Services of the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops annually resettles one quarter of the refugees admitted to the United States, serves victims of human trafficking, and provides advocacy for and pastoral care to many newcomers and persons on the move.

Social Development and World Peace of the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops advocates for poor and vulnerable people and for international peace and justice. It works to build the capacity of the Church to respond to global concerns such as religious freedom, poverty, and hunger.

The Holy Father's Relief Fund assists victims of natural disasters and other emergencies around the world.

By giving to **THE CATHOLIC RELIEF SERVICES COLLECTION**, you are responding to *Jesus in disguise*. Thank you for your generosity and please give generously to this year's Collections on March 18th. Please pray for the success of this Collection and for the millions and millions of poor who receive help from this Collection. Please visit www.usccb.org/crscollection for more information.

God's peace.

Your servant in Christ and Mary,
Bishop Michael D. Pfeifer

San Angelo life insurance agency receives top honor

SAN ANTONIO—The Pelzel Agency of
San Angelo was honored recently by
Catholic Life Insurance, the nation's 9th
largest fraternal benefit society. The agency
was named one of the top
"General Agencies of the
Year" during the 2007
Leaders Conference, Jan.
19-21 at the Lakeway Inn
Conference Ctr. in Austin.

The Pelzel Agency is
managed by Larry G.
Pelzel, FIC. Pelzel has
been with Catholic Life
Insurance since Nov.
1973.

Werner A. Halfmann, FIC
of Lowake and Wilbert Jost, FIC of Wall
both earned the prestigious Catholic Life
Insurance "Twelve Apostle" award.
Halfmann also received his twenty-year
service award designation. Tommy
Hoelscher, FIC, of St. Lawrence received
his 10-year service award designation.

As one of the top General Agencies of
the Year, agency associates lead the com-
pany in life and annuity sales production
and service. Other agency associates
include Al Simnacher, FIC, of Hereford;



Larry Pelzel

Edmund Klepac, FIC of San Angelo;
Dennis Schraeder, FIC of St. Lawrence;
Arnold Frerich, FIC of Rowena; Floyd
Frerich, FIC of San Angelo; Elvera
Hoelscher, FIC of Levelland; Gerald Jost,
FIC of Wall; Wade Hampton, FIC of
Millersview; James Mallow of Brady; Nancy
Demel of Levelland; Robert Baron of
Menard; and Olen Dreyer of Midland.

Deacon Evans named Rural Life director

Deacon Charlie Evans, of Voss, has
been named to succeed Deacon Beck
Knox as the Diocese of San Angelo's
Director of Rural Life. The appointment is
effective for five years beginning Feb. 1.

"As so many of our people depend on rural
life, ranching and farming, I am deeply grate-
ful Deacon Evans has accepted this ministry
to help spiritually support our people as they
deal with so many complicated issues in the
area of rural life today," said the Most Rev.
Michael Pfeifer, Bishop of San Angelo.

Two rural Masses will be celebrated this
calendar year: The Seed and Soil Mass, May
15, near Rowena, and a Mass of
Thanksgiving, June 12, at the Ivie Reservoir.

front page

Baracoa y Odessa: Missionaries return from trip to Honduras

By Rev. Joseph Uecker, C.P.P.S

On February 6 at 5:12 a.m. six people from the Catholic Churches of South Odessa took off from Midland for Houston and San Pedro Sula, Honduras for our first contact with our sister parish: La Exaltación de la Santa Cruz en Baracoa. We arrived around noon and when we cleared immigration and customs, there were some 10 people in two trucks to welcome us and take us to Baracoa, which is some 40 miles north of San Pedro Sula.

Luz and Alicia Gomez and Diana Madero stayed in the upper room of one home, while Robert Olivas, José Díaz and Fr. Joseph Uecker, C.P.P.S. stayed with another family. Immediately after arriving in Baracoa, we were treated to shish-kebob and rice at the parish center, a small, rented building next to the parish church. The hospitality was supreme. We could not have received a warmer welcome had we been in the entourage of the pope.

The parish is divided into four sectors. The day after our arrival we began to

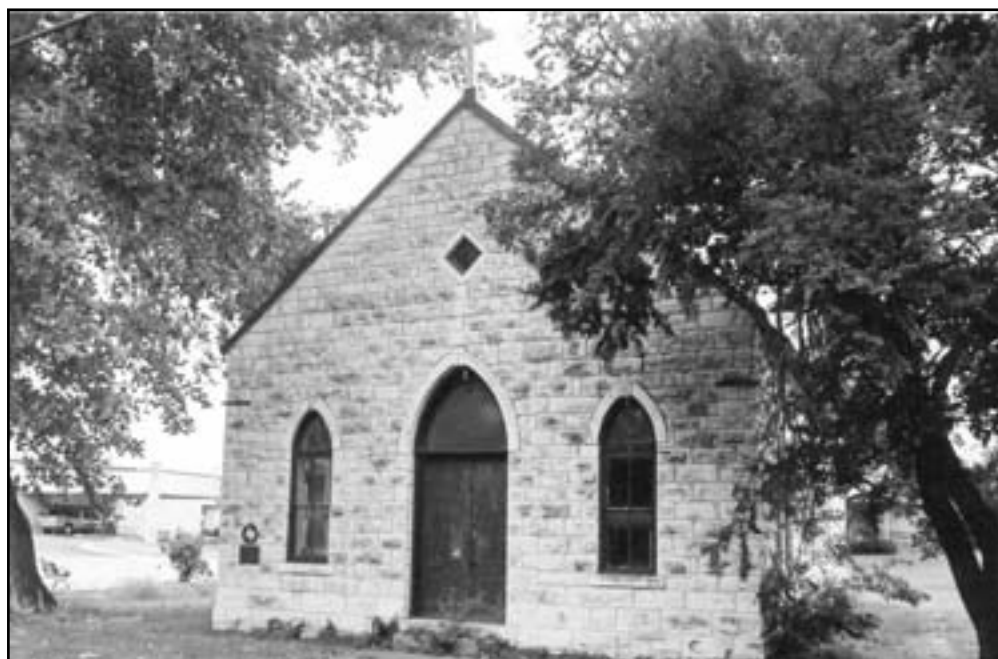
visit the sectors. Travel in that part of Honduras is an adventure. Usually there were 10-15 people in the truck. The roads are so bad that Fr. Melvin Cantarero said that he has to buy new tires for the truck every 3-6 months. When we arrived at an aldea, the people would be gathered and they would give us a warm welcome and tell us about their community. Then we would also speak so they could get to know us a little. After that we would celebrate the Eucharist on most occasions. For them, this was their monthly Eucharist because there were 53 small

communities and the priests could get to each community only once a month.

We had the opportunity to be with Bishop Angel Garanchana. On Saturday we went to San Pedro Sula for the ordination of four transitional deacons. It was a joyous diocesan celebration that filled the cathedral to overflowing. Then on Sunday morning, the Bishop came to Baracoa for the confirmation of 57 young people. That too was a joyous celebration. There were probably as many people outside as inside for that celebration.

(Please See HONDURAS/10)

250th Anniversary for Santa Cruz San Saba Mission



The restored church in Menard, originally built in 1899.

Menard prepares for huge celebration

By Jimmy Patterson
Angelus Editor

MENARD – Parishioners and community members will work hand in hand over the next three months to pull off a huge celebra-

tion commemorating the 250th anniversary of the Santa Cruz San Saba Mission in Menard.

Over 2,000 are expected to participate in the celebration, which will culminate with a full day of activities June 9.

The celebration will begin with a procession at 8:30 a.m. beginning at the original mission site and ending at the site of the restored church, which was built in 1899.

(Please See MENARD/6)

Happy are those called to his supper: Preparing worthily for the Eucharist

(Editor's Note: The following is Part 2 of a 2-part series on the Eucharist. Part 1 appeared in the February 2007 Angelus.)

By Bishop Michael Pfeifer, OMI

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

Last month I featured an article (Part 1) on this important statement. In this article, I present Part 2 on this timely statement on the Eucharist by the U.S. Catholic Bishops.

Lack of Sanctifying Grace

In order to receive holy communion we must be in communion with God and with the church. Mortal sin constitutes a rejection of communion with God and destroys the life of grace within us. Mortal sin is an act violating God's law that involves grave matter and that is performed with

(Please See EUCHARIST/14)

Former Midland pastoral associate returns as diocesan marriage tribunal judge

After successfully completing six semesters of studies in the field of Canon Law (the Law of the Catholic Church), Bishop Michael Pfeifer welcomed the return of Tom Burke to the Diocese of San Angelo.

Burke earned two degrees while in Canada: a Pontifical License degree in Canon Law – a.k.a. *Juris*

Canonica Licentiate or *J.C.L.* – from Saint Paul University and a Master's Degree in Canon Law from the University of Ottawa (Canada). After living in Ottawa for the past two-and-a-half years, Burke returns to once again serve the Diocese. His primary duties will be to assist Bishop Pfeifer as a Judge with the Marriage

Tribunal. Moreover, he will be sharing his knowledge of Canon Law with the priests of the Diocese and others who seek it.

Tom was born and reared in Las Vegas.

"In 1988, I visited my brother Steve and his wife, Monette, and their two boys, Hugh and Cornell.

What I recall is how friendly the people were towards each other." In that same year, he entered the American College Seminary in Louvain, Belgium. Although he discerned that the priesthood was not where God was calling him to serve, he earned two degrees at the Catholic Univ-
Please See BURKE/15)



Tom Burke



Priest makes icons part of his spiritual journey

By Alan Torre

St. Elizabeth Ann Seton Parish, Odessa

ODESSA – Two years ago, Fr. Mark Woodruff of St. Elizabeth Ann Seton Parish, ordered several icons for his church. When they arrived, he uttered some famous last words: “I bet I could paint icons like these.”

After researching icons on the Internet, and ordering a do-it-yourself icon kit from Catholic iconographer Peter Pearson, Fr. Woodruff discovered it was harder than he thought. By then, however, painting icons had become his passionate hobby.

Nearly two years later, Fr. Woodruff continues to paint icons. As with any craft, practice is always the key. Since

beginning, he has completed about 150 icons of various sizes. People around the parish say his icons are improving. He himself admits he has a long way to go! When necessary, he has taken paint remover to a unsatisfactory icon and starting all over.

Icons are better known in the Eastern Catholic and Orthodox Churches than in the Roman Catholic Church. They decorate the walls and ceiling of Eastern Rite churches. In addition, an icon screen containing many icons separates the sanctuary from the nave of the church. One need not go to Greece or Russia to see such churches. A num

(Please See **ICONS/10**)



The Rev. Mark Woodruff of St. Elizabeth Ann Seton in Odessa shows his iconography work to children of the parish.

Photos by Alan Torre

Reaffirming our commitment to Catholic schools

By Bishop Michael Pfeifer, OMI

At their meeting in June, the U.S. Catholic Bishops, in a statement entitled, “Renewing our Commitment to Catholic Elementary and Secondary Schools in the Third Millennium,” asked that we all revisit and reaffirm our commitment to Catholic Schools, which are an invaluable instrument in proclaiming the good news from one generation to the next. In this statement, the Bishops point out that making “Catholic Elementary and Secondary Schools available, accessible and affordable to all Catholic parents and their children, including those who are poor and middle class, is the entire Catholic community’s responsibility.”

In the Diocese of San Angelo, we are blessed to have three Catholic schools located in San Angelo, Midland, and Odessa. I am deeply grateful to the priests and parishes, school boards, our parents, principals, teachers and all school personnel who give their untiring support to these schools, making them of the highest quality for our students. In the cities where these schools are located, I ask our priests and the entire Catholic community to give their personal and financial support to these schools so that we can keep providing special Catholic education to our young people.

In the remainder of this article, I share with you some reflections from the recent bishops’ statement on why we value our Catholic schools.

“Young people of the third millennium must be a source of energy and leadership in our church and our nation. Therefore, we must provide young people with an academically rigorous and doctrinally sound program of education and faith formation designed to strengthen their union with Christ and his church. Catholic

(Please See **SCHOOLS/11**)

Day of the Unborn Child scheduled for March 25

By Bishop Michael Pfeifer, OMI

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

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

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

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

should also celebrate each newly conceived child, even of an “unplanned” child.

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

Historically, the Feast of the Annunciation has been regarded both as a feast of Christ and Mary. It would be

(Please See **CHILD/15**)

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

APRIL

1 -- SAN ANGELO, Sacred Heart Cathedral – Palm Sunday Mass at 9:45 a.m.

1 -- SAN ANGELO, 1:30 p.m. Prayer to bless the Webelos Scouts, Holy Angels, Seder Meal at 5:30 p.m.

3 -- SAN ANGELO, Sacred Heart Cathedral – Penance Service at 7 pm

4 -- SAN ANGELO, First United Methodist Church – Lenten Reflection, Noon

5 -- SAN ANGELO, Meeting of Big Brothers, Big

Sisters at Noon

5 -- SAN ANGELO, Sacred Heart Cathedral – Holy Thursday Mass at 7 p.m.

6 -- SAN ANGELO, St. Margaret – 1:00 p.m. Way of the Cross

6 -- St. Joseph – Good Friday Service at 7 p.m.

7 -- SAN ANGELO, Sacred Heart Cathedral – Easter Vigil Mass at 8 p.m.

8 -- SAN ANGELO, St. Mary - Easter Sunday Mass at 11 a.m.

9 -- SAN ANGELO, Easter Dinner for Priests, Women Religious and Diocesan Staff at 6 p.m.

10-13 -- Rest and Prayer
13 -- SAN ANGELO, Newman Center – Appreciation Dinner at 6:30 p.m.

14-15 -- SAN ANTONIO, MACC Meeting

16 -- SAN ANTONIO – Texas Bishops' Meeting

17 -- SAN ANTONIO – Celebrate Oblate Anniversaries at 7 p.m.

20 -- SAN ANGELO, Holy Angels – Earth Day Prayer Service at 11 a.m.

ODESSA, Holy Redeemer – Confirmation at 6:30 p.m.

21 -- ROWENA, St. Joseph - Confirmation at 5:00 p.m.

22 -- SAN ANGELO, St. Margaret – Confirmation at 9:00 a.m.

23 -- BALLINGER, St. Mary – Confirmation, 6:30 p.m.

24 -- SAN ANGELO, Diocesan Pastoral Center – Personnel Board Meeting at 10:30 a.m.

24 -- WALL, St. Ambrose – Confirmation at 6:30 p.m.

25 -- OZONA, Our Lady of Perpetual Help – Confirmation at 6:00 p.m.

26 -- MIDLAND, Our Lady of San Juan – Confirmation at 6:30 p.m.

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

28 -- MIDLAND, St. Ann – Confirmation at 5:30 p.m.

29 -- FT. STOCKTON, St. Joseph/ St. Agnes – Confirmation at 11:30 a.m.

30 -- Rest and Prayer

Necrology – April

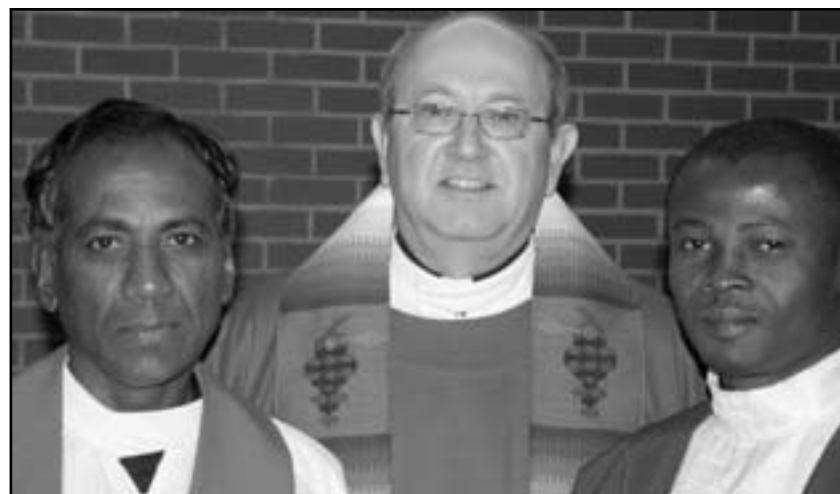
11 -- Rev. Leopold J. Bujnowski (1976)

11 -- Deacon Albert Libertore ('77)

21 -- Deacon Frank Trudo (1992)

26 -- Rev. Serran Braun (1999)

26 -- Deacon Audon Saldivar (2000)

DIOCE-SCENES

NEW PRIESTS Msgr. Larry Droll, Vicar General of the Diocese of San Angelo, center, welcomes Father Maria Singarayan Gabriel of India and Father Isidore Ochiabuto of Nigeria to work at Brownwood and Big Lake respectively.

**MACC launches anniversary with leadership breakfast**

SAN ANTONIO – The Mexican American Cultural Center (MACC), founded in 1972, held a 35th anniversary breakfast for business leaders and information session for local corporate leaders on Jan. 24.

Opening remarks at the event were given by Sister Maria Elena González, RSM, president, and a blessing was provided by **Bishop Michael Pfeifer**, OMI, of the Diocese of San Angelo and chairman of the MACC Board of Trustees.

Following a buffet meal, Archbishop José H. Gomez, MACC ex-officio Board member, discussed the national image of the institution.

"The dream of MACC is now a reality," said the archbishop. "Hispanic numbers are growing and society is becoming more multicultural."

According to the most recent Census data, there are 40 million Hispanics in the United States, and 76 percent of those of Catholic. Also, the median age for the group is 26 years old.

I was just released from prison, can you help?

By Deacon Bob Leibrecht
Diocesan Prison Ministry Director

Over 60,000 men and women are being released from Texas state prisons and jails each year. Assuming the diocese has about 3 percent of the total state population, there would be over 1,800 releasees per year returning to towns in our area. If a modest 20 percent were assumed to be Catholic, there would be 360 per year or 30 per month coming back to our churches.

The office of Criminal Justice Ministry for the diocese receives information regarding Catholic offenders being release from TDCJ at the state prisons in Huntsville (male inmates) and Gatesville (female inmates). The evening before release, all men and women,

are given the opportunity to fill out a form asking for contact information and religious affiliation. A large number choose not to complete the form, and hence no direct follow-up can be provided. For 2006, information was received for only 70 men and women, far less than the estimate of 360, so the decision of many not to participate helps explain the much lower numbers for which information is obtained. For those wanting help that are returning to the towns in our diocese and profess an affiliation to the Catholic Church, a welcome home letter is sent with details about the local parish nearest to the address provided. The pastor is sent a copy of this letter so that he or his designee can make contact and determine how the parish can help.

With this process in place, the parish **must** then be the welcoming community to help the ex-offender, and in many cases his or her family, in their transition back to life in society. The first few months for the prison releasee is a very critical time, as the degree of welcome and support will have a major influence as to whether the ex-offender will be able to adjust to the real world. At present, the recidivism rate for ex-offenders is over 50 percent, meaning that at least one out of every two will go back to prison because they don't receive the love and support from others. Support from family is not always there upon release so the church and others in the community must be willing to reach out to help. A parish support group is an excellent way

(Please See **PRISON/15**)

Making Sense of BioEthics

Does a Living Will allow me to better control my destiny?

By Fr. Thad Pacholczyk

Many people believe they can exercise better control over their own destiny by filling out a living will (also called an "advance directive.")



Fr. Pacholczyk

They may have concerns about becoming caught in a tangle of tubes, wires and technology as they are dying, unable to break free and extricate themselves. They hope that by signing on the dotted line, they may be able to breathe their last

"easily and peacefully." At first glance, an advance directive may appear to address many of our end-of-life concerns, and hence, can seem like a good idea, but it often tends to serve as a rather "blunt instrument" when it comes to handling complex and nuanced end-of-life situa-

tions. Moreover, living wills are sometimes used to buttress or justify some of the morally problematic decisions being made in health care settings today.

One of the major difficulties with some living wills is that they may be written using broad and imprecise language, giving rise to the idea that all treatment options are morally equivalent. One widely available living will called "5 Wishes" offers questionable options and morally dubious choices to the patient by including, as but one example, the following series of check-boxes:

Permanent And Severe Brain Damage And Not Expected To Recover: If my doctor and another health care professional both decide that I have permanent and severe brain damage, (for example, I can open my eyes, but I can not speak or understand) and I am not expected to get better, and life-support treatment would only delay the moment of my death (Choose one of the following):

— I want to have life-support treatment.

— I do not want life-support treatment. If it has been started, I want it stopped.

— I want to have life-support treatment if my doctor believes it could help. But I want my doctor to stop giving me life-support treatment if it is not helping my health condition or symptoms.

The various options presented above cannot be morally legitimate for every case of severe brain damage, even though they are offered as if they were. Severe brain damage affects different people differently, but even when likely to cause a permanent disability, or otherwise lower the individual's "quality of life," this does not imply that we always have a valid moral option to discontinue life-support. Many people live in compromised, less-than-ideal situations, yet are valuable members of our families and communities. Some have argued that the loose language of many living wills has the effect of setting up a "glide path" into euthanasia or physician-assisted suicide.

Too often, people imagine that the

choice to accept or decline a particular medical intervention can be made in a kind of vacuum, as if every decision were equally acceptable, since we are "free to choose." But the freedom to make our own health care decisions implies that we have moral obligations and duties, one of which is to be certain that we are using all the "ordinary" or "proportionate" interventions necessary to maintain our life and health. To put it simply, those medical treatments, medications, and procedures that offer reasonable hope to protect and preserve life without grave burden to oneself or another are ordinary care, and are required as part of our duty to care for ourselves.

An advance directives has another flaw that makes it a rather "blunt instrument" in end-of-life situations. When we sit down to draft a living will, we suppose that we can foresee, predict or somehow imagine what our particular medical situ-

(Please See **BIOETHICS/10**)

World Day for Consecrated Life celebrated

Those who dedicate their life to God honored for following Jesus

By Lydia Martinez
and Jessica Garcia
Newman Center, San Angelo

On February 2, 2007, a prayer service was held at the Newman Center in celebration of World Day for Consecrated Life. On this day we recognize those that have dedicated their lives to serving God. The theme of the service was becoming followers of Jesus.

In attendance were Bishop Michael Pfeifer, OMI, the four sisters from the San Angelo deanery, five from the Midland-Odessa deanery and the five

Carmelite nuns from Christoval who were with us in spirit through a letter they wrote to us and booklets they sent to be distributed.

It was a great honor for all the students, faculty, and staff from Angelo State to be a part of this celebration. After the reading of the appearance to Mary of Magdala, we had a moment of silence to ponder the scripture. We were then encouraged to reflect on what it has been like to become a follower of Jesus. It was an awesome experience for us, as lay people, to feel as one with the Bishop and the sisters during the sharing. After

each individual expressed what it has been like in his or her own life to become a follower of Jesus, he or she lit a candle as a sign of being the light of Christ.

After the prayer service, Bishop Pfeifer treated everyone to lunch catered by Fuentes Café Downtown. The students and faculty from the Newman Center sat amongst the Bishop and sisters during the meal and spent the time sharing. It was a wonderful conclusion to the celebration for those "...who have left all things to give [themselves] entirely to [God]."

MENARD: As many as 2,000 expected to participate in June 9 celebration

(From 3)

The memorial dedication ceremony is scheduled to take place at approximately 11 a.m. At 4 p.m., Bishop Michael Pfeifer will preside over a special memorial Mass.

The Santa Cruz San Saba Mission was the first mission in the region and was established in 1757 by three Franciscan priests. After just one year the mission was destroyed by the Comanches and other tribes, and two of the three Franciscan priests were killed.

"The historical marker at the site classifies the Franciscans as martyrs," noted

Pfeifer. "The establishment of the mission not only had great importance for the Catholic Church and for all of Christianity, but it was also the beginning of a new civilization in that part of Texas."

Arnold Saucedo, newly elected president of the Sacred Heart Parish Council in Menard, has been charged with overseeing much of the effort to make the June 9 celebration a big day.

"Now that we have a committee formed with different people in the community, we've had different ideas coming in, it's snowballed," Saucedo said.

One of the first steps, Saucedo said, will be arriving at a schedule of events

and publishing brochures.

Fr. Michael Udegbunam, parish priest at Sacred Heart, said the reconstructed church in Menard is being prepared, too.

"It is being renovated inside where the bishop intends to mount the picture of the Franciscan fathers who were killed in those years," Udegbunam said. "Many people have contributed to the foundation for the church. We're looking forward to many people, the bishop, priests, deacons and their wives, religious, color guards and members of the church and community to all be involved."

Udegbunam said he is hoping to have as many as 2,000 people involved in helping with the celebration.

PARISH FESTIVALS

COLEMAN

**Holy Angels Spring Festival
Sunday, May 6, 2007**

Dinner served from 10 a.m.-1:30 p.m. (featuring brisket, sausage, potatoes, cole slaw, sauerkraut, beans, dessert and bread)

Drive-through and plates to go available

Adult tickets \$7.00, Children tickets \$5.00

Auction starts at 1:00pm

Games, bingo, cake walk

Arts and crafts, homemade baked goodies

Raffle: \$2,000 gift card, \$1,000 gift card and four \$500 gift cards

ATTENTION PARISHES

If you have a parish festival scheduled this summer or fall, please email your dates to JimmyLPatterson@grandecom.net as soon as possible so we can begin working on a calendar. Additionally, please send all parish festival information at least TWO MONTHS PRIOR to your festival.

NATION/WORLD

Hall of Fame shortstop nominee Cal Ripken told a crowd of Catholic high school students in Maryland recently that his father's best advice to him was "If it's worth doing, it's worth doing right."

Ripken stresses teamwork, family in talk at Catholic high

By Mark Zimmermann
Catholic News Service

HYATTSVILLE, Md. (CNS) -- Instead of facing a pitcher throwing a 95 mph fastball, baseball ironman Cal Ripken Jr. faced 800 people Feb. 12 at DeMatha Catholic High School in the Washington suburb of Hyattsville.

The crowd of students and alumni, teachers and coaches cheered loudly as the Baltimore Orioles' former shortstop -- who is to be inducted into the National Baseball Hall of Fame this summer -- appeared in the Morgan Wootten Gymnasium, named for the legendary DeMatha basketball coach who is himself a member of the Basketball Hall of Fame.

"The last time somebody clapped that loud, I had to take a lap around the stadium," Ripken said, remembering the night in 1995 when he played his 2,131st consecutive game, breaking Lou Gehrig's record. That night, Ripken ran around the inside of

Oriole Park at Camden Yards, high-fiving the fans who cheered him.

The night sponsored by DeMatha's Alumni Association opened not with the national anthem but with a prayer, offered by the school's acting rector, Trinitarian Father Tom Burke. His order sponsors the all-boys' Catholic high school, which has gained national recognition for its academic, athletic and music programs.

"It's a thrill to be back home," said CBS Sports commentator James Brown, a 1969 DeMatha graduate who just hosted his fifth Super Bowl. Brown, the master of ceremonies for the night, introduced Ripken saying, "He is a true American sports hero who throughout his life has done it the right way."

When Brown asked him what the most important thing he learned from his father, Ripken said, "Dad would always say, if it's worth doing, it's worth doing right." He said his father believed the secret to happiness

involves finding work in life that you enjoy doing.

Asked what kept him on the right path and away from things like drugs and steroids, Ripken said, "I was scared of my dad!" The father of two stressed the importance of family several times that night, advising parents to know what their kids are doing and talk to them. A friend once told him, "Any time (you spend) with your kids is quality time."

A boy in the audience asked him, "Is it hard to play in front of a big crowd?" Ripken answered simply, "At first, it's kind of scary." Another boy, wearing a baseball cap, asked him about the importance of education and Ripken said, "I was 41 when I retired. You have your whole life ahead of you, and your education (is something) you fall back on. Academics is a life skill. If you want to better yourself in life, period, you

Please See **RIPKEN/15**

As with any gift, faith can be lost

The Catholic Transcript
Archdiocese of Hartford, Conn.

In response to editors' requests for a regular sampling of current commentary from around the Catholic press, here is an unsigned editorial titled "Faith, in France," from the February 2007 issue of The Catholic Transcript, newspaper of the Archdiocese of Hartford, Conn.

A recent survey of faith done in France and reported by the London Tablet (Jan. 13) indicates that only half the population now admits to being Catholic. In fact, half of those who admit their Catholic background ever enter a Catholic church. Also, only half the ones polled said they believe in God. Fifty-eight percent accept the Resurrection as a doctrine; 39 percent, the virginity of Mary, the mother of the Lord; and only 37 percent the blessed Trinity, one of the two key doctrines of Christianity.

The situation of faith in France is especially difficult to fathom in view of its Christian heritage, characterized by some of the most brilliant, talented and committed Catholics ever.

Within our times, French Catholicism has given the world philosophers Jacques and Raissa Maritain (died 1973, 1960), the painter George Rouault (d. 1958), the novelist Leon Bloy (d. 1917), the poet Charles Peguy (d. 1914), the poet and dramatist Paul Claudel (d. 1955), the existentialist and dramatist Gabriel Marcel (d. 1973), the novelist and Nobel laureate Francois Mauriac (d. 1970) and the historian Henri Daniel-Rops (d. 1965). And a list of the great saints which France has shared with the world over the centuries is awesome -- Therese of the Child Jesus, Vincent de Paul, Joan of Arc, Francis de Sales, Louis Marie de Montfort and so many more.

If, in addition to new saints, any of the above geniuses is especially needed in France today, it might be Bloy, who said, "I obey a higher command, as the man on the eve of the destruction of Jerusalem did, of whom Josephus speaks." Also: "Present events are horrifying. We are at the prologue of a drama of a sort that will not have been seen for 20 centuries. ... Today we need apostles, not conference-attenders; witnesses, not word-spinners."

Faith is a gift, which, like any gift, can be lost. Problems with faith are ultimately problems of faith.

The Mass Factor

How frequently Catholic young adults ages 18 to 30 attend Mass

28%
a few
times
a year

21%
every
week

15%
rarely or
never

35%
once or
a few
times
a month

Source: 2004 CARA poll

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St. Patrick's Day: March 17

St. Patrick is depicted in a stained-glass window at St. Patrick Church in Glen Cove, N.Y. The feast of St. Patrick, the patron of Ireland honored for his leadership in the evangelization of that country in the fifth century, is celebrated annually March 17.

Lent/Easter 2007 Calendar

FEBRUARY 21 Ash Wednesday
FEBRUARY 25 1st Sunday of Lent
MARCH 4 2nd Sunday of Lent

MARCH 11 3rd Sunday of Lent

MARCH 18 4th Sunday of Lent

MARCH 25 5th Sunday of Lent

MARCH 26 The Annunciation of the Lord

HOLY WEEK
APRIL 1 PALM SUNDAY

APRIL 5 HOLY THURSDAY
APRIL 6 GOOD FRIDAY

APRIL 7 HOLY SATURDAY
APRIL 8 EASTER SUNDAY

APRIL 8 EASTER SUNDAY

April 15 Divine Mercy Sunday

May 17 The Ascension of the Lord

May 27 Pentecost Sunday



Bishop Pfeifer

Pilgrimage focuses on the passion of Christ

By Bishop Michael Pfeifer, OMI

With Ash Wednesday, which was celebrated this year on Feb. 9, Christians began a special Lenten pilgrimage focusing on the Passion and suffering of Christ.

When we think of Lent, we think of spring. That is because Lent comes from a German word for "springtime." In many other languages, for example, in Spanish, Cuaresma, the name for the season before Easter, is derived from the Latin word for "40"—a clue that something very important is happening, or about to happen, something that our Scripture talks about.

days of Jesus being tempted in the wilderness. And then, the temptations of Jesus recall the 40 years of Israel's temptation in the wilderness on their journey to the Promised Land. The number 40 is a very familiar one in the Bible. In the story of Noah and the flood, it rains 40 days and 40 nights. After the sealing of the covenant of Mt. Sinai, Moses is with God on the mountain for 40 days and 40 nights. Numbers in the Bible are often not meant to be taken literally, but serve also a symbolic function. Symbolically, the 40 days of Lent represent a time for a need to struggle, to establish priorities, of testing, of preparing well for something special that is going to happen—the wonderful feast of Easter, the Resurrection of Christ. During the 40 days of Lent, we are called to make, as it were, a spiritual pil-

grimage in preparation for the greatest event in the life of Christ—His Resurrection. The reason we undertake the annual Lenten pilgrimage is to go somewhere guided by God's grace. Easter is that somewhere, but there is no Easter—no Resurrection—without Jesus' Passion and death. Neither is there an Easter or a Resurrection in our lives without our first sharing in the Passion, the sufferings of Christ. The Passion of Christ is not simply a record of Jesus' suffering and death. It is a process through which all of us must go, and indeed are privileged to go through. At the heart of Lent is God's invitation to enter fully into the Paschal mysteries of Christ, His suffering and death, leading to the new life of His Resurrection. But what sort of Passion are we sum-

moned to? Are we, like Christ, to be betrayed, abandoned by friends, condemned and put to physical death? For some few of us, the answer may be "yes." But for all of us, the Passion we are called to share mirrors Jesus' Passion in a way that, while not so concrete, is nonetheless very real. We share in the Passion of Christ by letting go of selfish desires, of grasping, of being pretentious, of wearing masks. The Passion of Christ calls us to become vulnerable, as Jesus was vulnerable, to wear our hearts on our sleeves, to forgive rather than to seek revenge, to call out and work for wholeness and peace and not division, and to give ourselves completely to life. As we walk the Lenten journey, we are invited to adopt the attitude, the mind and heart of Jesus in dealing with others. We learn the attitude of Christ by giving more

time to meditation, to prayer, to fasting from greed, gossip, hate and certain foods and drinks, practicing penance, to sharing our gifts with others, reflecting on God's words in Sacred Scripture and celebrating the Sacraments. To fully live the Passion of Christ means that we are willing to take on the spirit of compassion that Jesus showed for human weakness in His forgiveness. As we go through our Lenten spiritual pilgrimage, Christ gently but constantly invites and even commands us: "Follow me.!" Our following the example of Christ gives us vision, direction, and the strength to go through our Passion — our suffering—bearing our trials and difficulties, so that we can arrive at Easter, our own Resurrection, with the Risen Savior.

La peregrinacion cuaresmal se enfoca en la pasion de Cristo

Por el Obispo Miguel Pfeifer, OMI

Con Miércoles de Ceniza, que es [fue] celebrado este año el 21 de febrero, los Cristianos empiezan una peregrinación cuaresmal especial enfocando en la Pasión y sufrimiento de Cristo. Las cenizas que vienen de la palma del año pasado del Domingo de Ramos, nos recuerdan que todas cosas materiales, incluyendo nuestros cuerpos, se harán cenizas.

Quando pensamos en la Cuaresma, pensamos en la primavera. Eso es porque la Cuaresma viene de una palabra alemana para "primavera." En muchas otras lenguas, por ejemplo, en Español, Cuaresma, el nombre para la estación antes de la Pascua, es derivada de la palabra Latina para "40" — una clave que algo muy importante está pasando, o va pasar, algo de que nuestra Escritura habla.

Los 40 días de la Cuaresma nos recuerdan de los 40 días y noches que Jesús fue tentado en el desierto. Y luego, las tentaciones de Jesús nos recuerdan de los 40 años de tentaciones de Israel en el desierto en su viaje a la Tierra Prometida. El numero 40 es uno muy familiar en la Biblia. En el cuento de Noé y la inundación, llueve por 40 días y 40 noches. Después de sellar la alianza de Monte Sinaí, Moisés está con Dios en la montaña por 40 días y 40 noches. Los números en la Biblia muy seguido no deben ser tomados literalmente, pero sirven también como una función simbólica. Simbólicamente, los 40 días de la Cuaresma representan un tiempo para la necesidad de luchar, para establecer prioridades, tiempo de pruebas, de preparar bien para algo especial que va pasar — la maravillosa fiesta de la Pascua, la Resurrección de Cristo.

Durante los 40 días de la Cuaresma, somos llamados a hacer, como fuera, una peregrinación espiritual en preparación para el más grande evento en la vida de Cristo — Su Resurrección. La razón que nosotros tomamos la peregrinación anual de la Cuaresma es para llegar a algún lugar guiado por la gracia de Dios. La Pascua es ese lugar, pero no hay Pascua, ninguna resurrección, sin la Pasión de Jesús y su muerte. También no hay ninguna Pascua ni resurrección en nuestras vidas sin primero compartir en la Pasión, los sufrimientos de Cristo.

La Pasión de Cristo no es simplemente una anotación del sufrimiento y la muerte de Jesús. Es un proceso por el cual todos nosotros tenemos que pasar, y ciertamente tenemos el privilegio de pasarlo. Al corazón de la Cuaresma es la invitación de Dios a entrar completamente en los misterios Pascuales de Cristo, Su sufrimiento y muerte, llegando a la vida nueva de Su Resurrección. ¿Pero a que tipo de pasión somos llamados? ¿Somos nosotros, como Cristo, ser traicionados, abandonados por amigos, condenados y puestos a una muerte física? Para unos pocos de nosotros, la respuesta pueda ser que "sí." Pero para todos nosotros, la pasión a la cual somos llamados a compartir debe reflejar la Pasión de Jesús en una manera que, quizás no tan concreta, sin embargo es tan real.

Compartimos en la Pasión de Cristo por soltar los deseos egoístas, de agarrar, de ser pretencioso, de usar mascaras. La Pasión de Cristo nos llama a ser vulnerable como Jesús era vulnerable, de tener corazones abiertos y generosos, en lugar de buscar venganza, a llamar y trabajar por la armonía y la paz no la división, y a dar nosotros mismos totalmente a la vida.

Mientras caminamos el viaje de la Cuaresma, somos invitados a adoptar la actitud, la mente y el corazón de Jesús en tratar con los demás. Nosotros aprendemos la actitud de Cristo dando más tiempo a la meditación, la oración, abstener de la glotonería y chismes, odio y ciertas comidas y bebidas, practicando penitencia, compartiendo nuestros regalos con otros, reflejando en las palabras de Dios en la Sagrada Escritura y celebrando los Sacramentos. Para completamente vivir la Pasión de Cristo significa que nosotros seamos dispuestos a tomarnos el espíritu de compasión que Jesús enseñó por la debilidad humana y su perdón.

Como vamos por nuestra peregrinación Cuaresmal espiritual, Cristo nos invita suavemente y nos ordena: "¡Siganme!" Siguiendo el ejemplo de Cristo nos da visión, dirección, y fuerza para pasar por nuestra pasión — nuestro sufrimiento — nuestras tribulaciones y dificultades, para que lleguemos a la Pascua, nuestra resurrección con el Salvador resucitado.

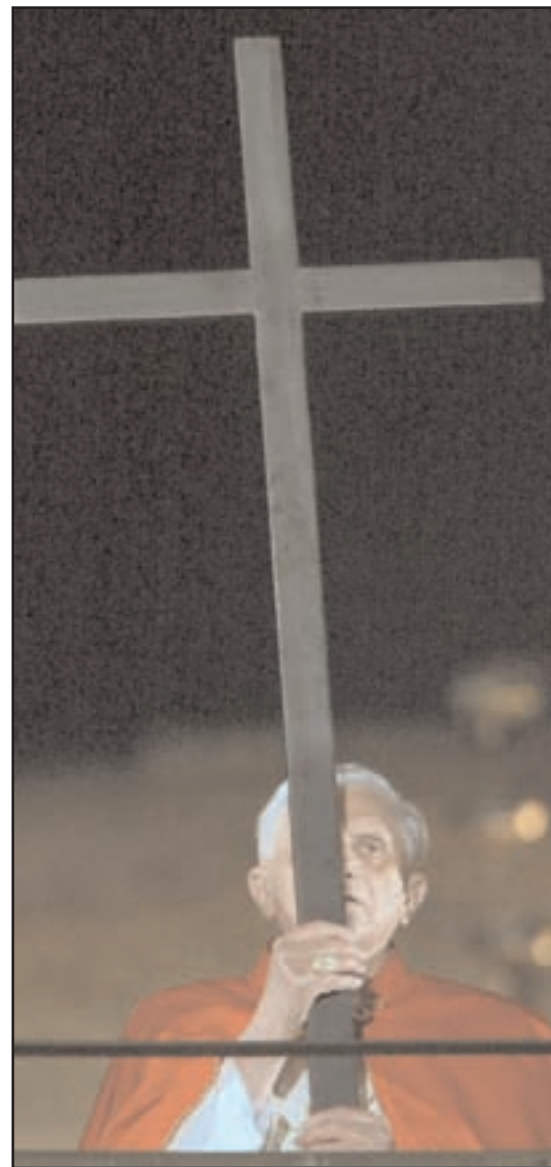
Text of Pope Benedict XVI's message for Lent

By Catholic News Service

VATICAN CITY — Here is the Vatican text of Pope Benedict XVI's message for Lent 2007. Dated Nov. 21, 2006, it was released Feb. 13 by Archbishop Paul Cordes, president of the Pontifical Council Cor Unum.

Dear Brothers and Sisters! "They shall look on him whom they have pierced" (Jn 19:37). This is the biblical theme that this year guides our Lenten reflection. Lent is a favorable time to learn to stay with Mary and John, the beloved disciple, close to him who on the cross consummated for all mankind the sacrifice of his life (cf. Jn 19:25). With a more fervent participation let us direct our gaze, therefore, in this time of penance and prayer, at Christ crucified who, dying on Calvary, revealed fully for us the love of God. In the encyclical "Deus Caritas Est," I dwelt upon this theme of love highlighting its two fundamental forms: agape and eros.

God's love: agape and eros The term agape, which appears many times in the New Testament, indicates the self-giving love of one who looks exclusively for the good of the other. The word eros, on the other hand, denotes the love of one who desires to possess what he or she lacks and yearns for union with the beloved. The love with which God surrounds us is undoubtedly agape. Indeed, can man give to God some good that he does not already possess? All that the human creature is and has is divine gift. It is the creature, then, who is in need of God in everything. But God's love is also eros. In the Old Testament, the Creator of the universe manifests toward the people whom he has chosen as his own a predilection that transcends every human motivation. The prophet Hosea expresses this divine passion with daring images such as the love of a man for an adulterous woman (cf. 3:1-3). For his part, Ezekiel, speaking of God's relationship with



Please See POPE/10



HONDURAS: San Pedro Sula needs W. Texans' help

(From 3)

It was during the Confirmation Mass that Bishop Angel announced to the people that the Parochial Vicar, Fr. Tadeo, was about to be moved to a different parish. He had been ordained in October and had spent his diaconate year in Baracoa. Evidently Fr. Melvin and the people trained him well because the Bishop had confidence in him to give him more responsibility.

The plan for the future is for a seminarian to reside in Baracoa and help in the pastoral ministry. This young man has finished his studies. He will then be ordained deacon in February of 2008 and a priest later that year.

On Monday we had some time off and went to the sea. Some friends had a home

there and we were able to take advantage of it for a few hours. The sea is a beautiful blue, salty and warm. That evening the people gave us a warm send-off, making us promise to return. We all hope we can keep that promise and return in the near future.

During our visit, we were always referred to as the missionaries from Texas. And that defines the reason for our visit. We were sent by the people of the Catholic churches of South Odessa to be the pioneers in the new relationship between our communities. Several times we said: "Thank God for Hurricane Mitch. Not that we want the Honduran people to suffer the ravages of the hurricane, but thank God for the good that has come of it. Had the hurricane not happened,

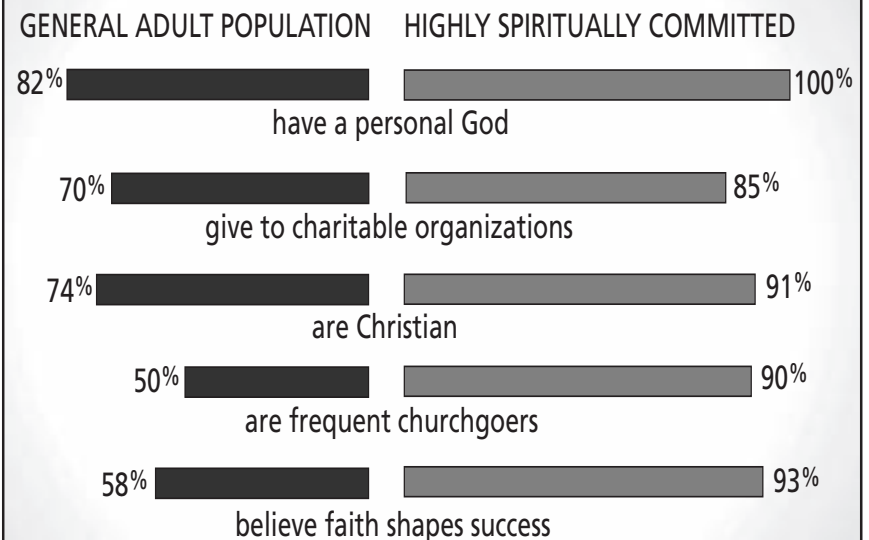
there would probably be no relationship between San Angelo and San Pedro Sula. But as it is, friendships have been formed and we are already thinking about when the next visit will be and who will go.

It is very evident that the Churches of San Angelo and San Pedro Sula are different and that is to be expected as we are different peoples. But our one faith and one worship unites us on the deepest possible level, whether in Baracoa or in Odessa. We hope to learn from each other and to help each other according to our means and according to our needs.

We encourage others to take the plunge and become associated with some parish in the Diocese of San Pedro Sula.

Faithfully Devoted

The general adult population differs from those self-identified as spiritually committed in these areas:



Source: The Gallup Organization

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ICONS: Iconographers pray, fast during their work

(From 4)

ber of Byzantine Catholic Churches (allied with Rome) flourish in Texas – one in Irving, another in San Antonio and a third in Houston. There are also a number of Orthodox Churches here, including one in San Angelo.

During liturgy, the priest incenses icons several times and candles blaze in front of them. It is common for the faithful to kiss icons of special importance to them.

Icons are more than religious pictures. They have been described as "windows into heaven" and "doors to the sacred." Praying before an icon brings one into the heavenly presence of the person depicted. Popular icons include Christ the All-Powerful, Mary the Theotokos (God-bearer), Michael the Archangel, scenes from the

Bible, and saints. All are rich in symbolism. The direction of the eyes and hands, for example, speak volumes to the person contemplating the icon.

During the painting of an icon, iconographers usually pray and fast. Fr. Woodruff tries to do this, though on a limited basis. "Sometimes I have to concentrate on what I am painting, which interrupts my attempt at prayer." He nonetheless finds spending the hours painting an icon a powerful encounter with the person depicted. According to Fr. Woodruff, "Painting 'Christ the Pantocrator,' for example, brings one into the presence of the Lord in a way difficult to describe."

Fr. Woodruff paints on wood using acrylic, water based paint. More traditional icons are painted with egg tempera, a method he has not yet learned. Iconographers

usually copy older icons, adding their own touches here and there. Fr. Woodruff has found numerous icons on the Internet and in books. Once finished, the icons are varnished, blessed and displayed in a sacred setting.

Those interested in painting icons should consult Peter Pearson's recent book, "A Brush with God." Pearson travels around the country giving workshops on the spirituality and technique of icons. One such workshop will be held at Pecos Benedictine Monastery in New Mexico September 17-23, which Fr. Mark hopes to attend. Anyone interested in attending should contact the Pecos Monastery. An interesting icon website is www.atelier-st-andre.net.

BIOETHICS: Better choices than living wills for Christians

(From 6)

ation will be like in the future, maybe 10 or 20 years down the road. This is clearly an exercise in speculation, and we might actually fare better in the stock market or in Las Vegas than in an exercise of this sort. I recall hearing about a man who asked his friend who worked as a Catholic ethicist to review his living will and see if there was anything in it that would be in conflict with good ethics or Catholic teaching. The document was a full 26 pages long, covering as many scenarios as the man could imagine or dream up. A few days later, he called the ethicist and asked whether he had looked over his living will yet. The ethicist replied that he had, and that he had only one comment: it was too short! The point of the story is

that even if we labor exhaustively in the preparation of a living will, we can't realistically cover every possibility, and we can easily miss the one condition or circumstance that may eventually befall us.

Another story involves a businessman who had diligently filled out his living will, indicating that if he were to suffer a serious injury or sickness, he wouldn't want any tubes or mechanical assistance with breathing. He just wanted to be let go. One day he had a heart attack, and was struggling to breathe. The ambulance rushed him to the local hospital. In the emergency room, they showed him his living will, which they had on file, and said, "You didn't want us to do anything, according to your advance directive." He blurted out, "Look, I don't care what I wrote there — I can't breathe, and I want

you to help me now!" We don't always know what a particular situation will really be like beforehand, or how we will approach urgent life and death decisions when they arise.

There is a better choice available to Christians than a living will. We can choose a *surrogate*, a living person, who will make health care decisions in real time on our behalf if we are rendered unable to do so. The proposed surrogate (also called a "health care proxy") is someone who cares deeply about us, who loves us, and is reasonably able to make decisions in accord with our known wishes and with our best medical and spiritual interests in mind. Filling out a form to designate our health care proxy is something that each of us should do as a sensible way to prepare for difficult end-of-life

situations that may arise. Preparing such a document can also prompt us to begin discussing these important topics more effectively with our families and loved ones.

Forms are available to assist with selecting a health care proxy: see the link to the "End-of-Life Guide" under the Publications section of The NCBC website — www.ncbcenter.org.

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

SCHOOLS: Young people provided with sound church teaching

(From 4)

schools collaborate with parents and guardians in raising and forming their children as families struggle with the changing and challenging cultural and moral contexts in which they find themselves.

Catholic schools provide young people with sound church teaching through a broad-based curriculum where faith and culture are intertwined in all areas of a school's life. By equipping our young people with a sound education rooted in the Gospel message, the person of Jesus

Christ, and rich in the cherished traditions and liturgical practices of our faith, we ensure that they have the foundation to live morally and uprightly in our complex modern world. This unique Catholic identity makes our Catholic elementary and secondary schools "schools for the human person" and allows them to fill a critical role in the future life of our church, our country, and our world ("Catholic Schools on the Threshold"9).

It is made abundantly clear in an unbroken list of statements from the documents of the Second Vatican Council to Pope John Paul II's 1999 exhortation "The

Church in America" (Ecclesia in America) that Catholic schools play a vital role in the evangelizing mission of the church. They are "the privileged environment in which Christian education is carried out... Catholic schools are at once places of evangelization, of complete formation, of inculturation, of apprenticeship in a lively dialogue between young people of different religions and social backgrounds" ("Catholic Schools on the Threshold of the Third Millennium,"11)."

I take this opportunity to express my deepest gratitude to all those individuals who staff the Catholic elementary schools

of our Diocese, dedicated priests, laity and religious, our dedicated principals, our School Boards, our teachers, our parents, our Superintendent, and all school personnel. I applaud their professionalism, personal sacrifices, daily witness to faith, and efforts to integrate learning and faith in the lives of our students in order to accomplish the very purpose of evangelization: the incarnation of the Christian message into the lives of our people. I take this opportunity to encourage all who are devoted to working in Catholic schools to persevere in this most important mission.

POPE: Christ's cross reveals the fullness of God's love

(From 8)

the people of Israel, is not afraid to use strong and passionate language (cf. 16:1-22). These biblical texts indicate that eros is part of God's very heart: The Almighty awaits the "yes" of his creatures as a young bridegroom that of his bride. Unfortunately, from its very origins, mankind, seduced by the lies of the evil one, rejected God's love in the illusion of a self-sufficiency that is impossible (cf. Gn 3:1-7). Turning in on himself, Adam withdrew from that source of life who is God himself, and became the first of "those who through fear of death were subject to lifelong bondage" (Heb 2:15). God, however, did not give up. On the contrary, man's "no" was the decisive impulse that moved him to manifest his love in all of its redeeming strength.

The cross reveals the fullness of God's love

It is in the mystery of the cross that the overwhelming power of the heavenly Father's mercy is revealed in all of its fullness. In order to win back the love of his creature, he accepted to pay a very high price: the blood of his only begotten son. Death, which for the first Adam was an extreme sign of loneliness and powerlessness, was thus transformed in the supreme act of love and freedom of the new Adam. One could very well assert, therefore, together with St. Maximus the Confessor, that Christ "died, if one could say so, divinely, because he died freely" (Ambigua, 91, 1956). On the cross, God's eros for us is made manifest. Eros is indeed — as Pseudo-Dionysius expresses it — that force "that does not allow the lover to remain in himself but moves him to become one with the beloved" (De divinis nominibus, IV, 13: PG 3, 712). Is there more "mad eros" (N. Cabasilas, Vita in Cristo, 648) than that which led the Son of God to make himself one with us even to the point of suffering as his

own the consequences of our offenses?

"Him whom they have pierced"

Dear brothers and sisters, let us look at Christ pierced in the cross! He is the unsurpassing revelation of God's love, a love in which eros and agape, far from being opposed, enlighten each other. On the cross, it is God himself who begs the love of his creature: He is thirsty for the love of every one of us. The apostle Thomas recognized Jesus as "Lord and God" when he put his hand into the wound of his side. Not surprisingly, many of the saints found in the heart of Jesus the deepest expression of this mystery of love. One could rightly say that the revelation of God's eros toward man is, in reality, the supreme expression of his agape. In all truth, only the love that unites the free gift of oneself with the impassioned desire for reciprocity instills a joy, which eases the heaviest of burdens. Jesus said: "When I am lifted up from the earth, I will draw all men to myself" (Jn 12:32). The response the Lord ardently desires of us is above all that we welcome his love and allow ourselves to be drawn to him. Accepting his love, however, is not enough. We need to respond to such love and devote ourselves to communicating it to others. Christ "draws me to himself" in order to unite himself to me, so that I learn to love the brothers with his own love.

Blood and water

"They shall look on him whom they have pierced." Let us look with trust at the pierced side of Jesus from which flow "blood and water" (Jn 19:34)! The Fathers of the Church considered these elements as symbols of the sacraments of baptism and the Eucharist. Through the water of baptism, thanks to the action of the Holy Spirit, we are given access to the intimacy of Trinitarian love. In the Lenten journey, memorial of our baptism, we are exhorted to come out of ourselves

in order to open ourselves, in trustful abandonment, to the merciful embrace of the Father (cf. St. John Chrysostom, Catecheses, 3,14ff). Blood, symbol of the love of the Good Shepherd, flows into us especially in the eucharistic mystery: "The Eucharist draws us into Jesus' act of self-oblation ... we enter into the very dynamic of his self-giving" ("Deus Caritas Est," 13). Let us live Lent then, as a "eucharistic" time in which, welcoming the love of Jesus, we learn to spread it around us with every word and deed. Contemplating "him whom they have pierced" moves us in this way to open our hearts to others, recognizing the wounds inflicted upon the dignity of the human person; it moves us, in particular, to fight every form of contempt for life

and human exploitation and to alleviate the tragedies of loneliness and abandonment of so many people. May Lent be for every Christian a renewed experience of God's love given to us in Christ, a love that each day we, in turn, must "regive" to our neighbor, especially to the one who suffers most and is in need. Only in this way will we be able to participate fully in the joy of Easter. May Mary, mother of beautiful love, guide us in this Lenten journey, a journey of authentic conversion to the love of Christ. I wish you, dear brothers and sisters, a fruitful Lenten journey, imparting with affection to all of you a special apostolic blessing.

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FAMILY

From the Easy Chair

Ballroom dance lessons: Sacrificing my integrity

By Jimmy Patterson

So, the most important thing to remember about the second week of ballroom dance instruction is this: when you walk in, if you are a guy, you will have forgotten everything you learned in Week 1. There really is no getting around this. This is fact.

Unfortunately, in our second lesson at the Bingham Dance Center in Midland, I stood next to some wise guy who said he actually practiced in his week between lessons.

I told him I unfortunately didn't have time for that.

"I was too busy forgetting everything and had no time left to practice," I said.

But apparently I didn't need to. For most of that second lesson I truly danced with the proverbially cliched two left feet, I will admit. But I should be honest here: It was when I danced with Karen, my wife, when I couldn't dance real gracefully. At all. When I danced alone, as we all have to do before trying it with our partners, I was, well, how do you say, fabulous.

But before you think I'm coming off as a little arro-



Patterson

gant ... those are not my words.

"Hey, this guy has GOT IT down."

"You go guy. You DO know what you are doing."

The voices were unfamiliar. I turned and saw that they came from two women who were standing behind me watching me, well, *get down*, I guess. Apparently I had been overcome by something like Fred Astaire's ghost. I don't know what came over me. But I was likin' it.

It was, I think, the mambo that I was doing that was so impressive. Mambo King, I guess you could call me.

I looked back at my lovely bride who was looking at the women who were propping my psyche up single-handedly and, well ... let's just say Karen wasn't ready to jump on the dance floor to get a piece of the action I was offering.

She looked at the women and said, "Thank you so much. His head will now be so big he won't be able to get through the bedroom door, which is really fine since he snores anyway."

The women continued to watch me and I shimmied a little more for their benefit. I was feelin' good.

Karen eventually joined me. We began to stumble back and forth.

"Elbow up!" she pleaded.

"Who needs to worry about the elbow. My feet carry

me, baby. I'm just goin' with what the feet tell me."

OK, I didn't actually SAY that, but I would have.

We stumbled and tripped over each other's toes until it was time to do the cha cha, which is frankly not a dance meant for regular clumsy white 40-year-old guys like me.

Give me the mambo any day -- eight steps up, eight back, eight to left and eight to the right, throw a little shakin' in... ooh, baby that's what I like. Or maybe that's the meringue? But whoever heard of a meringue King?

That's dancing my friend. But, truthfully, anything beyond doing the 8-8-8-8 pattern of the mambo or the meringue alone and I'm fairly hopeless.

We went home, and Karen hardly spoke. Thank God we live just around the corner.

"I was *on* tonight, wasn't I?" I said.

She smirked. It was dark and I couldn't see her smirk. But she did.

"Yeah you were a regular Patrick Swayze or Emmitt Smith or whoever it is you dream about at night."

"I got it. I think you're just lucky to have me."

I parked the car, got out and slipped on a patch of ice.

"Yeah. Lucky girl. That's what I'm talkin' about."

Bill & Monica Dodds

It's that time: clutter, clutter everywhereBy Bill and Monica Dodds
Catholic News Service

Let's start with five points defending those whose home and workplace tend to be a little cluttered. (We did have 10 points, but the other five were on a list that we seem to have misfiled. We're sure they're here somewhere.)

1. It's not really clutter until one of the stacks topples over.

2. You say "clutter," I say "looks lived in."

3. You say "uncluttered," I say "neat freak."

4. It's not clutter if every pile has a general theme.

5. I don't have too much stuff. It's just that I don't have enough room.

Few of us are really pack rats. Most of us might be "pack mice." We could do a better job of sorting and tossing, but ...

Yes, sometimes when we begin burrowing into the attic, basement or

garage it can become pretty obvious what to keep and what to throw out. A good example: Friends of ours are moving to a new house after living in the same place for more than 25 years. They came across a box of letters he had written to her while he was stationed in Vietnam. A treasure! And a box of her notes from a course she took in college at that same time. Not quite as valuable. ("Why in the world did I hang on to these!")

But other times it's harder to make the call. How many finger paintings from when your daughter was in preschool, kindergarten and first grade? How many "Team Member" trophies from your son's 12 years of soccer and baseball? (And, if not all, which ones?)

But let's be honest. Those aren't love letters covering up your coffee table, bookshelves, countertops, drier, dresser tops, workbench and desk. And those aren't sports trophies and finger paintings filling your closets, cabinets, attic, basement and garage.

No, they're opportunities for Lent 2007!

In the words of St. Augustine: "Find out how much God has given you and from it take what you need:

The remainder which you do not require is needed by others. The superfluties of the rich are the necessities of the poor. Those who retain what is superfluous possess the goods of others."

Five Ways to Help Clear Clutter

--Take a large trash bag and walk around the house collecting a dozen items the family no longer wants or uses. Donate them to St. Vincent de Paul's or another charity.

--Go through your file cabinet and pull half a dozen files that are no longer necessary. Toss 'em!

--Pull out the junk drawer, dump out its content and put back only what isn't junk.

--Go through the refrigerator and medicine cabinet, and throw away any item that is past its "use by" date.

--Grab the laundry basket. OK, first put away the laundry that's in the laundry basket, and walk around the house collecting a dozen items that are out of place, putting them back where they belong.

On the Web: Conquering Kids' Clutter Moms and dads can find some tips here: <http://loveathome.com/clutter.htm>.



Bill & Monica Dodds



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Answers

politician
surveyor
principal
artisan
cooper



READ MORE ABOUT IT:
Luke 6
Q&A

1. How many men did Jesus choose as his apostles?
2. What did Jesus say about enemies?

SPOTLIGHT ON SAINTS:
St. Meletius

Meletius (d. 381) came from a well-respected Armenian family. He was a kind, gentle man who was loved by Christians and non-Christians alike. He was appointed bishop of Sebastea, but he encountered so much political opposition that he retired and, after spending quiet time in the desert, moved to Syria.

Despite trying to lead a quiet life, Meletius found himself in the middle of a dispute between the Arians and Catholics. The emperor appointed him as bishop of Antioch.

When Meletius explained a passage from the Book of Proverbs according to the teachings of the Catholic Church, the other groups were angry and demanded he be removed from his post.

After the death of the emperor, some of the political turmoil ended, and in 381 Meletius was part of the second ecumenical council in Constantinople. He died before the council concluded its business. We honor him on Feb. 12.

KIDS' CLUB:

Share your thoughts on this week's Bible story with family and friends by writing an essay in response to this question:

What would you like to do to help make the world better this year?

PUZZLE:

Circle the people below who might not have a role during Mass.

priest
 deacon
 politician
 lector
 surveyor
 usher
 organist
 principal
 cantor
 artisan
 cooper

JUST 4 KIDS

Jesus preaches about the Beatitudes

Jesus chose 12 men who would go with him as he preached and performed miracles. He would share with them the secrets of the kingdom of God so they would be able to carry on his work after he had returned to heaven.

He called these men his apostles, and their names were Peter, Andrew, James, John, Philip, Bartholomew, Matthew, Thomas, James, Thaddeus, Simon the Zealot and Judas Iscariot.

Jesus was walking with his disciples one day when they reached a large plot of level, grassy land. A huge crowd of people who wanted to hear Jesus preach or wanted him to heal someone they loved had gathered there. They had come from Judea and Jerusalem, Tyre and Sidon. They wanted to be able to touch the robe Jesus was wearing because they knew even that would heal them. And Jesus healed everyone who was there.

Looking toward heaven, Jesus began to preach to the multitude: "Blessed are you who are poor, for the kingdom of God is yours. Blessed are you who are now hungry, for you will be satisfied. Blessed are you who are now weeping, for you will laugh."

Jesus looked around at the people

in the crowd. He knew many of them were poor, hungry or sad. How many of them would have the faith to understand what he was telling them? How many others would be able to see that God was with them, even when they faced difficulty?

Then he said to them: "Blessed are you when people hate you, and when they exclude and insult you, and denounce your name as evil on account of the Son of Man. Rejoice and leap for joy on that day! Behold, your reward will be great in heaven. For their ancestors treated the prophets in the same way."

Jesus stopped speaking again. Some people were laughing, others seemed confused. Children in the back were playing, and their parents were trying to keep them quiet so everyone could hear what Jesus was saying.

Jesus had a few more things to say. "Woe to you who are rich, for you have received your consolation. Woe to you who are filled now, for you will be hungry. Woe to you who laugh now, for you will grieve and weep."

Then Jesus said the most astounding thing of all: "But to you who hear, I say, love your enemies, do good to those who hate you, bless those who curse you, pray for those who mistreat you."

Coming of Age

Stuck on Valentine's Day -- and for good reason

By Karen Osborne
 Catholic News Service

Valentine's Day has come and gone. The candy hearts are disintegrating. The teddy bears are slumping in their dark closet corners.

So why is it still on my mind?

Honestly, the Valentine's Day tradition I most painted romance, a little winged cherub or his saccharine attacks on unsuspecting passersby. It can't be bought in a store or reserved in a restaurant. But it is guaranteed to build bridges, make friends and earn you enough smiles to fill the entire month.

I'm talking about compliments.

In elementary school, I was teased up, down and sideways. That always ceased for a bright moment on Valentine's Day when we were required by our teachers to write those small, folding cartoon valentines to all 24 children in

our class. A compliment had to be attached. That meant I had to write a nice thing about all of the people that called me names, and they had to write something nice about me.

The bully, Frank, said he "liked my red shirt." The teaser, David, said he "thought I was nice."

On Valentine's Day, we all smiled at each other. We weren't enemies at all. We were just ordinary kids who liked candy, jokes and holidays.

After the holiday, unfortunately, the bullies went back to their old habits.

Years later I couldn't help but wonder, What if they hadn't?

In high school my friends and I got a kick out of exchanging cartoon valentines with compliments in them, much like we did in elementary school. I carried them around for weeks on end in my backpack, and whenever I needed encouragement I'd take a peek.

Compliments are a force of nature. A single compliment can brighten someone's day, week or -- in some cases -- year. Compliments are a breath of fresh air when people are feeling stale or weighed down. They can help give an out-of-breath soul a second wind or assist some to look at themselves or a problem they are having in a different light.

Compliments shouldn't stop with friends and relatives, but also can be given to people like David and Frank to build bridges, knock down walls and create connections between people that didn't exist before. Compliments bridge the gap between jock and geek, skater and prep, teacher and student and parent and child.

It doesn't matter if you spent Valentine's Day alone or if you brought roses to your sweetie at school. Compliments can brighten anybody's day.

Perhaps there's someone in your class who deserves some extra kudos for doing a great job

on a paper or presentation. What about the girl who always feels a little self-conscious about her appearance? Complimenting clothing that looks good on her will go a long way. Did your teacher succeed in explaining a concept that was confusing you? That could merit a compliment too.

Valentine's Day is often an occasion that's all about reaching out to the ones we love to tell them how much they mean to us. What about reaching out to those who are hurting and those who need our attention? We can redefine our notion of "valentine" to something that extends much further than a schmaltzy, greeting-card, chocolate-goopy February custom as we've known it.

So that's why I'm still talking about Valentine's Day. If we keep this up all year round it could be a pretty wonderful world to live in.

EUCCHARIST

(From 3)

both full knowledge and complete consent of the will.

If we are no longer in the state of grace because of mortal sin, we are seriously obliged to refrain from receiving holy communion until we are reconciled with God and the church. While we remain members of the body of Christ and continue to be part of the Catholic Church, we have become lifeless or dead members. We no longer share in the common bond of the divine life of the Holy Spirit.

Because our sin has separated us from God and from our brothers and sisters in Christ, we have forfeited our right to receive holy communion, for the eucharist by its very nature expresses and nurtures this life-giving unity that the sinner has now lost. St. Paul warned the Corinthians that “whoever eats the bread or drinks the cup of the Lord unworthily will have to answer for the body and blood of the Lord” (1 Cor.11:27).

Manifesting the Father’s mercy, Jesus instituted the sacrament of penance precisely to allow us to confess our sins in repentance, receive absolution from the priests and so receive again the grace of the Holy Spirit, who once more makes us living members of Christ’s body, the church.

Objectively, certain thoughts, actions and omissions entail grave sinful matter. As Catholics, we are obliged to form our consciences regarding what constitutes grave matter in accordance with the church’s teaching. While it is not possible to make a complete list of thoughts and actions that involve grave matter, they would all be serious violations of the law of love of God and of neighbor.

If we follow the order of the Ten Commandments, some examples of such thoughts and actions would be

- Believing in or honoring as divine anyone or anything other than the God of the Holy Scriptures.
- Swearing a false oath while invoking God as a witness.
- Failing to worship God by missing Mass on Sundays and holy days of obligation without a serious reason such as sickness or the absence of a priest.
- Acting in serious disobedience against proper authority; dishonoring one’s parents by neglecting them in their need and infirmity.
- Committing murder, including abortion and euthanasia; harboring deliberate hatred of others; sexual abuse of another, especially of a minor or vulnerable adult; physical or verbal abuse of others that causes grave physical or psychological harm.
- Engaging in sexual activity outside the bonds of a valid marriage.
- Stealing in a gravely injurious way such as robbery, burglary, serious fraud or other immoral business practices.
- Speaking maliciously or slandering

people in a way that seriously undermines their good name.

- Producing, marketing or indulging in pornography.
- Engaging in envy that leads one to wish grave harm to someone else.

Catholics who are conscious of committing any mortal sin must receive the sacrament of penance before receiving holy communion. Assistance in examining one’s conscience is available from confessors and spiritual directors. Lack of Adherence to Church Teaching As Catholics we believe what the church authoritatively teaches on matters of faith and morals, for to hear the voice of the church on matters of faith and morals is to hear the voice of Christ himself. To give selective assent to the teachings of the church not only deprives us of her life-giving message, but also seriously endangers our communion with her.

If a Catholic in his or her personal or professional life were knowingly and obstinately to reject the defined doctrines of the church or knowingly and obstinately to repudiate her definitive teaching on moral issues, however, he or she would seriously diminish his or her communion with the church. Reception of holy communion in such a situation would not accord with the nature of the Eucharistic celebration, so that he or she would refrain.

GIVING PUBLIC SCANDAL

When a person is publicly known to have committed serious sin or to have rejected definitive church teaching and is not yet reconciled with the church, reception of holy communion by that person is likely to cause scandal for others. This is a further reason for refraining from receiving holy communion.

HOW CAN WE PREPARE TO RECEIVE HOLY COMMUNION WORTHILY?

The Mass is not simply a private encounter between an individual and Jesus Christ. In a mystical manner the whole church is present in every celebration of the Mass, including the angels and the martyrs and saints of all ages. While the celebration of the eucharist itself is a communal act, the benefit that each individual receives from the Eucharistic celebration depends on the way he or she approaches the sacrament. We would like to point out various ways in which each individual can better prepare himself or herself for Mass and can enter more deeply into the eucharistic celebration in order to receive the body and blood of Christ more worthily.

There are two interrelated ways in which we foster the worthy reception of holy communion. One is through remote preparation and the other is through proximate preparation. The first has to do with how we live our Christian lives every day. The

second has to do with how we come to and participate in the Eucharistic liturgy itself.

Remote preparation includes the following:

- Regular prayer and Scripture reading. Both allow the Holy Spirit to work within us and so engender a love for Jesus and a desire to do the will of the Father in our lives. Especially recommended is the Liturgy of the Hours, which is the prayer of the church with Christ and through Christ to the Father. All of these are particularly appropriate before the Blessed Sacrament.
- Faithful and loving fulfillment of the duties and responsibilities of our state in life.. It is by faithfully living out in our daily lives the call of the Gospel to love God and our neighbor—especially the poor and vulnerable—that we grow in charity and so draw closer to Jesus and to one another.
- Daily repentance of sin and regular participation in the sacrament of penance. Sin undermines and weakens our communion not only with the Blessed Trinity but also with one another. Therefore, in order to overcome the damage caused by sin, we are called to daily repentance and to regular participation in the sacrament of penance. Furthermore, if we are conscious of having committed a mortal sin, we are obliged to confess it in the sacrament of penance with true sorrow and a purpose of amendment before receiving holy communion.
- Prayer recollection. We should prayerfully recollect ourselves prior to coming to Mass. We should strive to arrive on time, allowing ourselves to prepare our minds and hearts for the liturgy. Upon entering the church, we should maintain reverent silence so that we and those around us are able to pray before Mass begins. This will ensure that we are at peace within ourselves and with others. Such recollection helps to eliminate distractions and allow us to focus more easily on the great mystery of the Eucharistic celebration.
- The Eucharistic fast. We are required to keep the Eucharistic fast, that is, refraining from food and drink (except for water and medicines) for at least one hour prior to receiving holy communion. This fast demonstrates reverence and respect for the body and blood of Christ that we are going to receive. It also teaches us to hunger for Jesus in holy communion.
- Appropriate attire. We should also come to the sacred liturgy appropriately dressed. As Christians we should dress in a modest manner, wearing clothes that reflect our reverence for God and that manifest our respect for the dignity of the liturgy and for one another.
- Active participation. Because the celebration of the eucharist is the source and summit of the entire Christian life, nothing is more important than participating in the Mass with our whole hearts and minds and bodies. One with the priest and with all the

church, we join ourselves to the perfect sacrifice of Christ through prayer, song, silence and action.

■ The penitential rite. During the opening penitential rite of the Mass, we recognize our sinfulness and confess the mystery of God’s love. This disposes us to participate more worthily in the Eucharistic mystery of Jesus’ death and resurrection.

■ Hearing the word. With active mind, we should listen attentively to the proclamation of the Scripture readings and to the homily.

■ The Eucharistic prayer. We are to unite ourselves in mindful and heartfelt worship, adoration, praise and petition with the priest as he prays the Eucharistic prayer, for he is praying in the person of Christ the head and on behalf of and in the name of the whole church.

■ The Our Father. “As proof that you are children, God sent the spirit of his Son into our hearts, crying out ‘Abba! Father!’” (Gal.4:6). Through Christ’s atoning death and life-giving resurrection, we have become adopted sons and daughters of the Father through the indwelling of the Holy Spirit, and so dare to pray to the Father in the words that Jesus taught us. In this prayer we ask God not only to help us in our need but also to purify us from sin, so that what is holy may be given to those who are holy.

■ The sign of peace. Jesus himself exhorted us, “Therefore, if you bring your gift to the altar, and there recall that your brother has anything against you, leave your gift there at the altar, go first and be reconciled with your brother, and then come and offer your gift.” (Mt.5:23-24).

■ Approaching the altar. We are to approach the altar for holy communion with reverence, love and awe as part of the Eucharistic procession of the faithful. This includes making a reverent bow of the head just before receiving holy communion, which expresses both our individual and communal adoration of Jesus in the eucharist as well as acknowledgment of our belief in the real presence of Christ in holy communion.

■ Love and thanksgiving. During the period of reflective silence following the reception of holy communion, we are called to express our love and thanks to Jesus for his mercy and kindness, asking him to fill us with the life and love of the Holy Spirit so that we may truly give glory to the Father in our lives.

CONCLUSION

In the eucharist Jesus brings us to his divine life, and we bring to him our lives of joy and suffering. In this communion with Christ we grow in faith that our salvation is indeed near at hand; we grow in hope that our heavenly risen life is already our possession; we grow in love that in the love of the Spirit we are here and now bound to our loving Father and to our brothers and sisters in Christ.

PRISON: Parishes can become involved in program

(From 5)

to help the ex-offender and family with basic needs including leads to find a job, as well as, a sponsor or companion to walk with them.

If your parish has a criminal justice support group, please get involved and help bolster this ministry effort. If one is not yet established, tell your pastor that you will help get one started. Besides reaching out to ex-offenders and families, the support group can assist families in the parish that have a loved one

incarcerated to help them during this difficult time. In addition, there are many in our parishes that are victims of crime, including domestic violence, and they need assistance. Also, men and women on probation and parole need mentors to offer both social and spiritual direction during their time of correctional supervision. A support group can be a wonderful outreach for all in the community impacted by the cycle of crime so please join or initiate this ministry in your parish. Jesus tells us in Matthew 25

to reach out to those in need: the hungry, thirsty, the stranger, the naked, the sick and those in prison. He then says that when we do this for one of the least of these; we are doing it for Him. God is calling each of us so **“WILL YOU HELP?”**

Please contact your pastor to get involved, or Deacon Bob Leibrich, director of Criminal Justice Ministry at 432-889-3858 or email him at deaconbob@st.wtxcoxmail.com.

CHILD: Feast of Annunciation, March 25, to also be recognized as ‘Day of the Unborn Child’

(From 4)

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

I am asking that the Feast of the Annunciation, March 25 (which this year falls on a Sunday but will be cele-

brated to Monday, March 26) also be known as the “Day of the Unborn Child” in our Diocese. On this beautiful day when we celebrate the beginning of the life of Jesus Christ and the beginning of each human life, I ask that all the priests of our Diocese celebrate Mass first to thank and honor Jesus and Mary, but also for all the unborn of our Diocese and the world. Also, I encourage all of our priests to especially invite all couples who are expecting a baby to be present to receive a special blessing for each little one waiting to be born. This should also be the occasion to stress the dignity and sacredness of all human life, from its first moment of conception, and to encourage all people to become more involved in the pro-life movement. I ask that this information be published in our bulletins.

BURKE: Experience in marriage annulment cases began at St. Ann’s

(From 3)

ersity of Louvain: a Pontifical Bachelor’s degree in Sacred Theology (*Sacrae Theologica Baccalaureum* or *S.T.B.*) and a Master’s Degree in Religious Studies.

In 1992, Tom relocated to Midland/Odessa from Las Vegas. Between the years of 1992 and 1994, Tom worked in Odessa and regularly volunteered at St. Ann Church (Midland) as a team leader with the R.C.I.A. as well as a leader in adult faith formation. In 1994, Burke became a hospice chaplain at Nurse’s Hospice (Odessa) and, in 1996, Tom became Pastoral Associate at St. Ann Church.

It was at St. Ann’s that Monsignor Timothy Murphy gave him the responsibility of being an Advocate for marriage annulment cases. “I learned an incredible amount of marriage law with the assistance Monsignor Murphy. He was the Judicial Vicar of our Diocese, and I kept asking him questions and learning.”

In 1999, Burke became Pastoral

Associate at St. Elizabeth Ann Seton Church (Odessa). That’s where Burke undertook the personal challenge to write.

“I read a book entitled “Annulment: The Wedding that Was,” (by Rev. Michael Smith Foster, Paulist Press, Mahwah, NJ, 1999) and I asked myself, ‘I wonder if I could write these same 192 pages in a much more concise manner and in an easy-to-read booklet?’ he recalled.

And, he did. In 28 pages, Tom wrote and published *Understanding a Valid Marriage Covenant* which he sells himself for \$9.95 at www.geodev.net/tcbpubco.

With encouragement from Monsignor Murphy and Father Bill Du Buisson, OMI, he sought the assistance of Bishop Pfeifer who appointed Fr. Warren Brown, OMI to evaluate his work and make recommendations. (Fr. Brown, who grew up in West Texas and attended St. Ann’s, earned his Doctorate in Canon Law and currently serves as Judicial Vicar at the Appellate Tribunal as well as professor of Canon Law at the Oblate School of Theology in San Antonio.) Fr. Brown helped him to

make his booklet become more precise. Moreover, Fr. Brown gave his booklet an official Church moniker of “*nihil obstat*” (“nothing stands in the way” [of publishing this work for theological or canonical reasons]) and Bishop Pfeifer elevated it to a higher standing when he gave it Church recognition by means of an “*approbatio*” (“approval”).

Upon the sudden death of Monsignor Murphy early in 2003, the Diocese found itself with a pressing need to have someone earn this Pontifical degree. It was the members of the Council of Priests (or Presbyteral Council) who suggested Burke as a candidate for studies in the field of Canon Law.

Burke was invited to study in Ottawa at Saint Paul University (one of six universities in the world that offers this particular Pontifical degree).

“I have been asked by many people, ‘Why Ottawa? Why Canada? Why not the Catholic University of America?’” Burke said.

I don’t know, really. But, something

RIPKEN: Values, right approach helped lead to record game streak

(From 6)

need to emphasize school and academics.”

Ripken emphasized the importance of teamwork and consistency, noting that as a ballplayer, he could not always make the game-winning hit or game-saving catch, but he tried to do the little things right to help his team win, like bunting so a teammate could advance to the next base.

“Figure out how to make contributions in daily life ... try to find all the things you can do to help your team out,” he said.

Ripken said his favorite current player, Derek Jeter of the New York Yankees, and his favorite past player, Brooks Robinson of the Orioles, both represent the game well on and off the field. He said Jeter once asked him about how he had played so many games in a row, and he answered, “I love to play. I just go out and do my job.”

But Ripken said he has since thought a lot about the traits, values and principles that enabled him to set the record of consecutive games, which now stands at 2,632. Those values, he said, include having the right approach, a strong will to succeed and passion for what you do. He noted that sometimes “in life we’re all going to have bumps in the road,” like the 21 straight games the Orioles lost to open the 1988 season.

He also encouraged people to work to achieve balance in their lives, putting family first. He joked about the time someone approached him for an autograph while he was changing his son’s diaper in a restroom near Cinderella’s Castle in Walt Disney World.

deep inside makes me want to think that Bishop Pfeifer asked himself the same question that my previous Bishop (Daniel Walsh) asked himself when alone and pondering what to do with me,” Tom quips. “Although it is most probably apocryphal, I think that both of those Bishops reflected on one question: ‘How far away, can we send him?’”

Tom joins few others in our Diocese with a *J.C.L.* degree: Monsignor Larry Droll, Vicar General; Father Bill Du Buisson, OMI, Judicial Vicar; and, Father Tom Barley, Adjutant Judicial Vicar. “I consider it to be a great privilege to serve the people of our Diocese in this capacity. I thank Bishop Pfeifer as well as the priests of our Diocese for their confidence in my abilities. Moreover, I thank the people of our Diocese. Your generosity afforded me this opportunity to serve our Lord in this capacity. Each day, I am mindful that I represent you in our common effort to welcome people back to full participation in our Church through the exercise of the Laws of our Church.”

The Back Page

Biblical scholars reject filmmakers' claim about tomb of Jesus

By Judith Sudilovsky
Catholic News Service

JERUSALEM — Catholic biblical scholars and an Israeli archaeologist rejected filmmakers' claim that a tomb uncovered nearly 30 years ago in Jerusalem is the burial site of Jesus and his family.

Dominican Father Jerome Murphy-O'Connor, a biblical archaeologist and expert in the New Testament at the French Biblical and Archaeological School of Jerusalem who was interviewed for the film two years ago, said he did not believe there was any truth to the claim.

"It is a commercial ploy that all the media is playing into," he told Catholic News Service Feb. 27.

Amos Kloner, an Israeli archaeologist who wrote the original excavation report on the site for the predecessor of the Israel Antiquities Authority, called the claim "nonsense."

"In their movie they are billing it as 'never before reported information,' but it is not new. I published all the details in the *Antiqot* journal in 1996, and I didn't say it was the tomb of Jesus' family," said Kloner, now a professor of archaeology at Israel's Bar-Ilan University.

"I think it is very unserious work. I do scholarly work ... based on other studies,"

he said.

Toronto filmmaker Simcha Jacobovici and Oscar-winning Canadian director James Cameron announced at a press conference in New York City Feb. 26 that by using new technology and DNA studies they have determined that among the 10 ossuaries — burial boxes used in biblical times to house the bones of the dead — found in the cave by Kloner in 1980 are those of Jesus, his brothers, Mary, another Mary whom they believe is Mary Magdalene, and "Judah, son of Jesus."



Israeli architect
Amos Kloner

The documentary film by Jacobovici and Cameron is to be aired on the Discovery Channel March 4 and in Canada March 6 on Vision TV. A book on the topic, written by Jacobovici and

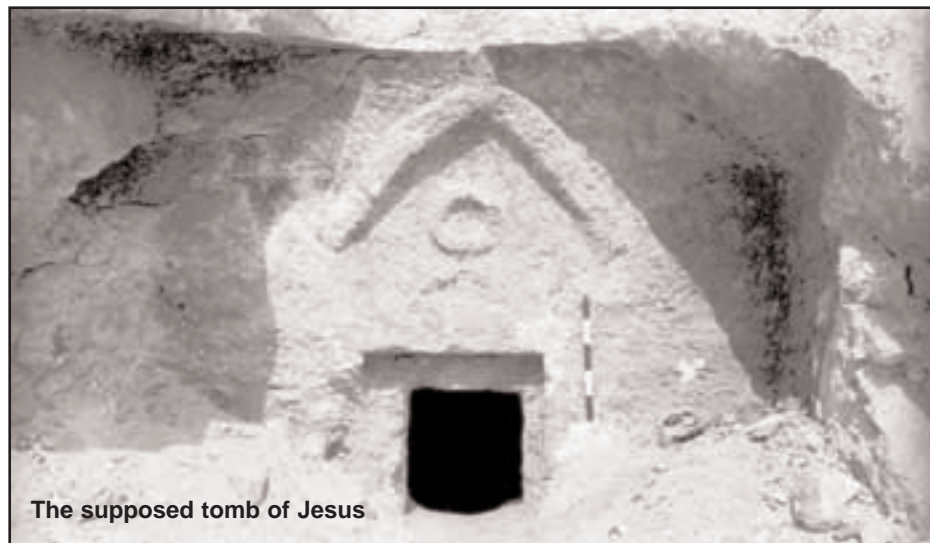
Charles Pellegrino and published by HarperCollins, is to go on sale Feb. 27.

Father Murphy-O'Connor said the names found on the ossuaries "are a combination of very common names."

"Fifty percent of all Jewish women in the first century were called either Mary or Salome. It doesn't mean much at all," he said. "You can prove anything with statistics."

The DNA tests could "only prove that they are human" but "certainly did not prove" any familial connection, he said.

Father Murphy-O'Connor noted that Kloner had written about the findings a



The supposed tomb of Jesus

decade ago, and though it was all out in the public domain nobody had been interested.

According to press reports, the filmmakers said they had worked on the project with world-renowned scientists, including DNA specialists, archaeologists and statisticians. They said the ossuaries were not identified as belonging to Jesus' family when they were first discovered because the archaeologists at the time did not have the knowledge and scientific tools that now exist.

But Kloner noted that Jesus' family was from Galilee and had no ties to Jerusalem, casting serious doubt that they would have

had a burial cave in Jerusalem. He added that the names on the ossuaries were common during that time and their discovery in the same cave is purely coincidental.

He said the tomb belonged to a middle- or upper-middle-class Jewish family during the first century and the cave was in use for 70-100 years by the family.

Other books, films and articles about the tomb, including a full-page feature in London's *The Sunday Times*, a British Broadcasting Corp. documentary film and a book called "The Jesus Dynasty" by James D. Tabor, have been published and produced on the topic in the years since the tomb's discovery.

'Zodiac' not the violent slasher flick you'd think

By Harry Forbes
Catholic News Service

NEW YORK — Have no fear. "Zodiac" (Paramount), which concerns the hunt for San Francisco's so-called Zodiac killer — who terrorized the region beginning in the late 1960s and whose victims numbered anywhere from seven to 37 (if you count the claims made by the anonymous killer over the years) — is not a violent exploitation film.

Rather, it's a solid, well-acted crime story focusing on investigative reporter Paul Avery (Robert Downey Jr.) and a political cartoonist, Robert Graysmith (Jake Gyllenhaal), with a knack for deciphering codes — both of the San Francisco Chronicle — and two police inspectors, David Toschi (Mark Ruffalo) and William Armstrong (Anthony Edwards), and how each of their obsessions with identifying and/or catching the elusive killer wreaked havoc on their personal lives.

It's the shy, awkward Graysmith whose



Robert Downey, Jr., left, and Jake Gyllenhaal star in 'Zodiac.'

lowed, as the killer taunted the press and the police with letters which contained distinctive ciphers and a zodiac symbol.

The filmmakers took pains to balance Graysmith's recollections with police reports which sometimes told another story. Ultimately, James Vanderbilt's literate screenplay does finger a certain suspect as the likely culprit, but the ending is still inconclusive.

Performances are excellent with Gyllenhaal, Downey and Ruffalo (conjuring Peter Falk's Columbo) particularly outstanding.

Director David Fincher has given his film a convincing period look, and handles the murders, horrific though they are, with admirable restraint and minimal on-screen gore. All in all, three fatal encounters with the killer are dramatized: a young couple ambushed in their car; a

pair of lovers picnicking at a lake; and a taxi driver who picks up the killer.

Though the buildups to the first two are extremely tense, and there is an additional harrowing sequence when the (unseen) killer picks up a mother and her baby, the violence is quickly dispatched.

The film has much the same tenor as a television procedural drama like "CSI," and as such is probably acceptable for older teens and up, if parents are not bothered by the flagged elements below.

The plot, which spans a couple of decades, is at times tricky for the viewer to navigate, but holds one's interest for nearly all its three-hour length.

The film contains rough and crude language and profanity, brutal — though brief and nongraphic — shootings and stabbings, a vulgar gesture, alcohol and drug use, reference to child molestation and fleeting images of porn magazines. The USCCB Office for Film & Broadcasting classification is A-III — adults. The Motion Picture Association of America rating is R — restricted.