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HOLY WEEK

Find reflections from local parishioners, Catholic writers on Holy Week and Easter
Pages 8-9



West Texas

ANGELUS

Serving the Diocese of San Angelo, Texas

Volume XXVII, No. 4

APRIL 2006



He is Risen!

He is Risen! This is the cry which reached the unbelieving ears of the disciples of Jesus on that first Easter and following days. For centuries this same proclamation of Christ's resur-

rection has startled the minds and imaginations of believers and unbelievers alike. **PAGE 3**

Clergy changes announced

San Angelo Bishop Michael Pfeifer has announced the following clergy changes in the diocese:

- **Fr. Frank Chavez** from Holy Redeemer, Odessa to Our Lady of San Juan, Midland, as pastor;
- **Fr. Joey Faylona** from St. Joseph/St. Agnes Ft. Stockton to Holy Redeemer, Odessa as Parochial Vicar;
- **Fr. Francis Njoku** from St. Mary's Odessa to St. Lawrence, Garden City and St. Thomas Midkiff as Parochial Vicar and Sacramental Minister at St. Paschal's, Sterling City;
- **Fr. Bernardito Getigan** from St. Lawrence, Garden City and St. Thomas, Midkiff to Holy Redeemer, Odessa as Pastor;
- **Fr. Laurent Mvondo** from Holy Redeemer, Odessa to St. Mary's Odessa and Our Lady of San Juan, Odessa as Parochial Vicar.

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Easter 2006

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address and phone number when sub-
mitting letters.



From the Editor

'Da Vinci Code' protests should be civil

By the time you open your Angelus next month, seemingly the entire free world will be wrapped up in the discussion, debate, argument over "The Da Vinci Code." It's likely to create some lively give and take if early signs are any indication. And those signs are a clear indication, mark my word. When this country argues, it does it up good.

We stand by our beliefs, and that's usu-



Patterson

ally a good thing, but sometimes we can get carried away.

I was in an interesting conversation with a Baptist Music Minister a couple of weeks ago about "The Da Vinci Code."

He stressed that those who perpetuate the popularity of the story are demeaning the lessons taught about Jesus.

For debate purposes, I asked him, as reporters often do, since it is only fiction shouldn't those who are strong in their faith be able to make a clear distinction about fact and fiction? And because of that shouldn't they really have no prob-

lem with it? But he civilly held firm, and I respected that -- and his opinion as well as his right to voice it.

William Donohoe, the outspoken mouthpiece of the Catholic League who often seems to have only one volume -- angry -- is on high about "The Da Vinci Code." Doing the usual morning talk show circuit, insisting all that he and the League wants is a disclaimer at the beginning of the movie that states it is a work of fiction. I agree that such a statement is needed. Sad as it is, people often need

Please See DaVINCI/15

DIOCESAN BRIEFS

APRIL: 'Donate Life Month'

April is Donate Life Month! I encourage all to speak with your families about organ donation. It is one of the most important conversations you may ever have. Today in the United States, there are more than 91,000 people on the transplant waiting list; more than 2,400 of them live in Central and South Texas. An average of 17 people die every day because there are not enough organ donors. Be an organ donor and save a life. For more information on organ donation, call the Texas Organ Sharing Alliance at 512.459.4848 or go to <http://www.txorgansharing.org/>.

Abortion Bumper Stickers

Bumper stickers that read "ABORTION = CHILD ABUSE ... PLANNED PARENTHOOD = ABORTION" are being offered by sending a Business #10 envelope and 39 cents postage to Goodfellow AFB parishioner Bill Chridino, LCSW, 4912 Greenbriar, No. 128, San Angelo, TX 76904. For more information about the bumper stickers, please call Bill at 325.942.8619.

Correction

In the March Angelus, the Spanish language column, "Cenizas y Ramos" was incorrectly attributed to Bishop Pfeifer as the writer. The piece was written by Pedro A. Moreno, OPI, Director del Instituto Luz de Cristo.

Spanish Radio Ministry to continue

EWTN's Spanish-language ministry continues at radio stations in Abilene, Odessa and San Angelo thanks to the generous sponsorships offered by a number of individuals in the diocese. EWTN's *La Hora Catolica* can be heard Sundays from **10-11 a.m. on KSJT (107.5 FM) in San Angelo; in Abilene, from Noon-1 p.m., on KJTZ (106.9 FM), and on KOZA-AM in Odessa from 6 a.m.-11 a.m. and KQLM-FM from 9-10 a.m.** The diocese thanks Fr. Maurice Voity and the Parish Council at Sacred Heart Cathedral in San Angelo for totally funding the San Angelo effort, and Msgr. Fred Nawarskas and the Holy Family Parish Council in Abilene for helping fund that effort. Additionally, a thank you to Trudo's Religious Store in San Angelo for its financial assistance in the program.

Separated, Divorced Seminar

The North American Conference for Separated & Divorced Catholics cordially invites all to its International Conference and Ministry Leadership Seminars to be held at Notre Dame University in South Bend, Indiana. The 2006

Theme is "Making Light" with many distinguished speakers and a variety of events including Leadership Training, Education, Healing, Social Events and more. For more information please visit our website at www.nacsdc.org or call 906-482-0494.

Monastery prioress elected

Sister Mary Grace Erl was elected to her fourth term as prioress of the Our Lady of Grace Carmelite Monastery in Schleicher County near Christoval. The prioress is entrusted with the immediate government of the community, and S. Mary Grace is called to be solicitous for the common good and together with the Sisters, build a loving community where each can grow in her union with Jesus and Mary and flourish in her life of prayer and sisterly charity. S. Mary Grace, a native of Westboro, Wisc., has been in service to the church since 1959.

NRRO Contribution

The National Religious Retirement Office has sent a letter of gratitude to the people of the Diocese of San Angelo for their generous contribution of \$68,474.33.

"Your generosity surely helps address the many challenges religious face as they age," wrote Sister Andree Fries, CPPS, executive director of NRRO in Washington. "Your support and the support of your Religious Fund for Religious coordinators, pastors, parish priests and deacons are essential to the fund's continued success."

The diocese's contribution was a \$15,000 increase over last year.

Cursillo Schedule

The Cursillo is a "short course" in Christianity. It is a three-day retreat filled with educational talks, morning prayers, night prayers, daily Mass and grace-filled sacraments. The Cursillo is a life-changing experience. Is Christ calling you to live your Cursillo? **April Cursillo dates are: Abilene Deanery - @ Holy Family Parish Men - April 20-23; Contact person - Joey Light jlight@wylie.esc14.net or 325-695-0503.**

Cover

Women visit the tomb of Christ and find it empty in this depiction of the Resurrection. The fresco was painted around 1440 by Fra Angelico on a wall of the Convent of San Marco in Florence, Italy. (CNS photo from Art Resource).

Three international priests incardinated in S. Angelo diocese

Three international priests were incardinated into the Diocese of San Angelo last weekend and at the same time excardinated by their former assignments in accordance with Church law.

An incardination is the legal term in the Church for the attachment of a deacon of priest to a diocese. A cleric who transfers from one jurisdiction to another must be simultaneously incardinated in the diocese he is transferring to and excardinated from the institution he is leaving.

Father Michael Udegbunam is serving as pastor at Sacred Heart in Menard and St. Theresa in Junction; Fr. Joseph Choutapalli is serving as pastor at St. Margaret's in San Angelo and Sacramental Minister at Carlsbad; Fr. Thomas Manimala is serving as pastor at St. Francis, in Abilene. All have been serving in the diocese for some time.

Udegbunam came to West Texas from the Archdiocese of Onitsha, Nigeria; Fr. Choutapalli and Fr. Manimala are both members of the Heralds of Good News in Eluru, India.

"I am very happy to be incardinated into this diocese because it is so big and we need priests so much," Manimala said. "My order where I came from, we had a lot of priests.

"Mainly I do pastor's work and go to hospitals to receive the sick and administer last rites. I am always on call and am at the hospital every day. Everything I do is related to pastoring, including visiting families, celebrating the Sacraments and preparing lay leaders."

From the Bishop's Desk

He is Risen! Easter the free, gracious breakthrough of God's love

by Bishop Michael Pfeifer

He is Risen! This is the cry which reached the unbelieving ears of the disciples of Jesus on that first Easter and fol-



Bishop Pfeifer

lowing days. For centuries this same proclamation of Christ's resurrection has startled the minds and imaginations of believers and unbelievers alike.

With the death of Jesus, all the hope and expectations of the Apostles were crushed beyond belief. They really thought it was the end; the end of all

they had dreamed and hoped for. But with the Risen Christ standing before

them on that first Easter eve, they realized that the great dream had only begun. The startling reality of the Resurrection of Jesus sent them in a totally new direction and they would spend the rest of their lives trying to understand the full meaning of what had happened.

After his Resurrection, many followers of Jesus would proclaim—We have seen the Lord! Jesus indeed gave many signs to his disciples that he had conquered death and sin and was alive in a new glorious and joyful way. He appeared to his disciples and shared signs of his risen life. He burst through the walls of fear and doubt. He broke down doors of disappointment and despair and He came to disillusioned followers in different places and circumstances.

Easter is the free and gracious breakthrough of God's love into the brokenness

of human life. Christ's resurrection transforms the irreversible darkness of sin and death into new life and hope, and enables us to experience the everlasting mercy of God.

We are almost two thousand years from the Resurrection of Jesus, yet we share fully in the shocking reality of that event even today. The signs of Easter will not disappear. They continue to be seen in the holy lives of believers and in the love and services of the Christian community. The outpouring of the Holy Spirit by the Risen Christ continues to transform lives and empowers the followers of Christ to be courageous witnesses in a world of relativism, materialism and individualism.

In the Year of Reconciliation for our diocese, the Resurrection of Christ is a life-giving reminder of the peace and joy we can experience when we humbly

admit our sins and failures; when we seek God's mercy in confession; when we forgive and ask for forgiveness. The Risen Christ empowers us to be agents of forgiveness, mercy and pardon.

Signs of Easter, of the presence of the Risen Christ, are all around us.

Resurrection happens when a prodigal son or daughter open their hearts to God's forgiving mercy and receives a joyful welcome back into the family.

Resurrection happens when volunteers at a shelter for the homeless, or at an AIDS hospital, experience peace and satisfaction in serving their poor sisters and brothers in whom they see the face of Christ. Resurrection happens when new understanding comes from listening to the pain of lesbian and gay persons and from sharing in the experience of all those who

(Please See BISHOP/11)

Water: Lifeblood of our Earth

By Bishop Michael Pfeifer, OMI

Modern science tells us that water is the stuff of life; water makes up 75 percent of our bodies and those of most living things. Water unites us in a system at a level perceptible to the senses. Our minds are streams, we say. We talk about "stream of consciousness" experiences, insights, understandings, judgments, feelings, and deliberations. Decisions flow through our bodies and our minds. Water is a religious symbol for the life of grace, of the effect in a person's life of the experience of being in love with God.

Water availability and water quality have become pressing social issues in our West Texas area, throughout the state and nation and world. Waste, drought, overconsumption, greed, pollution, privatization, unjust pricing, and politics all have contributed to convert available fresh water—a common good in creation—into a commodity, and even into a threat to human life, health and economic well-being.

The Catholic bishops state in *Renewing the Earth* (1991) that "The Christian vision of a sacramental universe is a world that discloses the Creator's presence by visible and tangible signs. Reverence for the Creator present and active in nature, moreover, may serve as ground for environmental responsibility." A major issue of environmental responsibility is how we care for water and use it as water is Earth's lifeblood. Water plays an essential role in the web of life and creation as all of life as we know it depends on water.

Water is indeed Earth's lifeblood. Without water, no life could exist on Earth. With water, life exists, thrives,

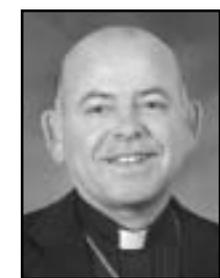
(Please See WATER/5)

por del escritorio de obispo

¡El ha resucitado! Signos de la vida resucitado

por el Obispo Miguel Pfeifer

¡El ha Resucitado! Este es el grito que les llegó a los oídos incredulos de los discípulos de Jesús el día de la primera Pascua y en los días siguientes.



Pfeifer

Por siglos esta misma proclamación de la Resurrección de Cristo ha asombrado las mentes y las imaginaciones de creyentes e incrédulos de la misma forma.

Con la muerte de Jesús, toda esperanza y expectativas de los Apóstoles fueron destruidas. Ellos verdaderamente creían que era el fin; el fin de todo lo que habían soñado y habían esperado. Pero cuando el Cristo Resucitado se presentó de pie antes de ellos ese primer día de Pascua, ellos se dieron cuenta que el gran sueño apenas había comenzado. La realidad asombrante de la Resurrección de Jesús los mandó totalmente en una nueva dirección y ellos pasarían el resto de sus vidas tratando de entender el significado de lo que había sucedido.

Después de su Resurrección, muchos seguidores de Jesús proclamarían— ¡Hemos visto al Señor! Jesús verdaderamente les dio muchos signos a sus discípulos que él había conquistado la muerte y el pecado y estaba vivo en

una manera nueva, gloriosa y gozosa.

El apareció a sus discípulos y compartió signos de su vida resucitada. El reventó las paredes de temor y duda. El rompió las puertas de desilusión y desesperación y El vino a seguidores desilusionados en lugares y circunstancias diferentes.

La Pascua es la ruptura libre y graciosa del amor de Dios dentro la desesperación de la vida humana. La Resurrección de Cristo transforma la obscuridad irreversible del pecado y la muerte a nueva vida y esperanza, y nos permite experimentar la eterna misericordia de Dios.

Hace casi dos mil años desde la Resurrección de Jesús, y aun todavía compartimos completamente en la realidad asombrante de ese evento. Los signos de la Pascua no se desaparecerán. Continuamente se ven en las vidas santas de creyentes y en el amor y servicios de la comunidad Cristiana. La efusión del Espíritu Santo por el Cristo Resucitado continúa transformar vidas y apodera a los seguidores de Cristo a ser testigos valientes en un mundo de relativismo, el materialismo y el individualismo.

En el Año de Reconciliación de nuestra diócesis, la Resurrección de Cristo es un recuerdo vivo de la paz y gozo que podemos experimentar cuando admitimos humildemente nuestros pecados y fracasos; cuando buscamos la misericordia de Dios en confesión; cuando perdonamos y cuando pedimos perdón. El Cristo Resucitado nos apodera a ser

agentes de perdón, misericordia y clemencia.

Los signos de la Pascua, de la presencia de Cristo Resucitado, están en todo nuestro alrededor. La Resurrección ocurre cuando un hijo o hija prodigo abren sus corazones a la misericordia de Dios y reciben de la familia una gozosa bienvenida. La Resurrección ocurre cuando voluntarios en un refugio para los sin hogar, o en hospital de AIDS, experimentan paz y satisfacción en servir a sus hermanas y hermanos pobres en quienes ven la cara de Cristo. La Resurrección ocurre cuando ha un nuevo entendimiento en escuchar sobre el dolor de las personas homosexuales y en compartir en la experiencia de todos los que han sido marginalizados o segregados por sus creencias, raza, color, sexo o estatus social. Signos de la Resurrección están presente cuando la gente abre sus corazones y dejan que el Salvador Resucitado convierte el dolor a consolación; odio a amor; duda y confusión a esperanza; temor a fe, inseguridad y otras emociones negativas a confianza.

La Pascua es vencer y sobrepasar la oscuridad, la opresión y desesperación. La Pascua señala un comienzo nuevo y una nueva oportunidad a causa del poder y presencia del Salvador Resucitado en nuestro mundo hoy.

¡El ha Resucitado! Que el Cristo Resucitado les conceda a todos nuevo gozo, esperanza y amor. Tengan una temporada de Pascua bendita y gozosa.

Year of Reconciliation

2006 focusing on God's mercy

By Bishop Michael Pfeifer, OMI

During this Year of Reconciliation, I have asked that we give primary focus to the beautiful Sacrament of God's mercy, the Sacrament of Reconciliation and Penance. To better understand this Sacrament of God's forgiveness, there is need for teaching in all of our communities about the terrible effects of sin, and how God is constantly calling us to be reconciled in His Son, Jesus Christ. In this article, I share some reflections on sin and reconciliation.

The Church is grounded in the great event of reconciliation between God and humanity which occurred in Jesus Christ. The continuation of that ministry of reconciliation is a constitutive element of the Catholic Church. The Sacrament of Baptism incorporates men and women into the Church as people called and graced for a continuing conversion to Christ.

Forgiveness and reconciliation are God's way of dealing with human sin and its effects for those who repent. It is in this sense that the Catholic tradition calls the Sacrament of Penance a "second baptism," for it is the sacrament of ongoing conversion of sinners. To the extent that our parish communities proclaim and embody the reality of reconciliation in preaching, catechesis, pastoral practices, and above all in daily life, they help to evoke the works of repentance and prepare the way

which leads to the celebration of sacramental reconciliation.

To fully understand the mystery of sin and its effects in our lives, there is need for a stronger and clearer teaching in all of our communities, giving special focus on how parents can help their children to deal with this evil that affects all of our lives. There is a special need to address the individualistic outlook that appears to predominate in the individual confession of sins. One's most personal sins wound the entire Body of Christ and detract from the holiness of the Church and make it weaker. The Church, the community, is called to help form the conscience of people through teaching and prayer, as a moral agent. This moral teaching on the part of the Church needs to be expressed in language which the people can understand.

The Church as the community which reconciles and mediates forgiveness in the sacramental forum must be seen in a more complete and holistic way. In the celebration of the Sacrament of Penance, the penitent has a personal encounter with Christ, "through the ministry of the Church." The priest as representative of the Church is also the representative of Christ, who is present in the moment of celebration of the Sacrament to make it objectively effective for each penitent as an individual the redemptive grace of the Paschal Mystery of Christ which reconciles and heals.

Preparing children (and adults) for the Sacrament

By Sister Hilda Marotta and Sister Adelina Garcia

Each year children are prepared to celebrate the Sacrament of Penance and Reconciliation. This time of preparation provides an excellent opportunity for the whole family to reflect on God's love, compassion and forgiveness.

Preparing children for the Sacrament of Penance and Reconciliation provides an opportunity not only for the family, but for the entire Christian community when all can acknowledge their sin and brokenness and know that God offers each of us the grace of forgiveness, compassion and healing.

As Christians, we are called to a life-long process of conversion. The story of Zacchaeus is an example of conversion, a turning away from sin. Zacchaeus' conversion is shown in his willingness to return what he has taken and more! Jesus rejoices with him by entering his home and declaring, "Today salvation has come to this house" (Lk. 19:9).

Stories of sin, brokenness, forgiveness and healing are abundant in Scripture. All of these stories reveal a compassionate and merciful God. It is good for us to reflect on these stories, to live out their message in our own lives and to teach them to our children in word and action.

The National Directory for Catechesis

reminds us that "Catechesis for the Sacrament of Penance and Reconciliation first depends on the person's acknowledgment of God's faithful love, of the existence of sin, of the capacity to commit sin, and of God's power to forgive sin and reconcile the sinner with himself and with the Church." —NDC #36. Without this understanding, children, youth and adults will fail to appreciate the richness of the Sacrament of Penance and Reconciliation.

We might take time to examine ourselves regarding these four elements. Do I believe in God's faithful love? Do I believe in the existence of sin? Do I have the capacity to commit sin? Do I believe in God's power to forgive sin?

Good catechesis for this sacrament is to be appropriate to the level, maturity, and circumstances of those being catechized. This implies that parents must be properly informed about the theology of the sacrament. Catechists are to be well trained so they can appropriately and correctly teach those entrusted to their care. Pastoral leaders are responsible to provide on-going catechetical opportunities for adults as well as children and youth. In fact, the entire Christian community is invited to continue deepening their understanding of this sacrament.

As we grow and mature, and experience God's loving presence in our lives, the Sacrament of Penance and Reconciliation take on new and deeper meaning.

A pastor's perspective on reconciliation

By Fr. Mark Woodruff
St. Elizabeth Ann Seton
Odessa

Here are a few thoughts from a pastor's perspective on the Sacrament of Reconciliation:

PROOF WE ARE SINNERS

Enter any Catholic Church in the Diocese of San Angelo and somewhere in that church you will find a door with a sign reading "Confessions" or perhaps "Reconciliation Room" over it. Larger churches may have several of these rooms.

There is no better proof that we Catholics firmly believe that beyond a shadow of a doubt that we are sinners. Pastors and congregations have gone to considerable trouble to construct permanent places where people confess their sins and receive God's

generous forgiveness (We also have frequent mention of our sinfulness throughout our Mass and in many of our devotions.

We know we are sinners. We do not try to hide that fact. The confessional contradicts any Catholic claiming to be without sin. Isn't it a curious fact that someone waiting in line outside a confessional suffers no stigma or embarrassment from his fellow parishioners? The rest of us sitting in church know we, too, have been in that line or at least we should be. We are a community of sinners trying in our faltering way to root out sin from our lives. Using this sacrament is one of the most effective ways to progress in our journey to heaven.

PENANCE AND INITIATION

During this Year of

Reconciliation it might help our understanding of the Sacrament of Reconciliation if we would connect it more effectively to the Sacraments of Initiation.

Reconciliation and Initiation are too often disconnected in our preaching and teaching. Initiation (baptism, confirmation and Eucharist) makes us Christians. In baptism we die with Christ, we are buried with Him and we rise with Him to new life. In confirmation, the gifts of the Holy Spirit make us more Christ-like. In the Eucharist Christ feeds us with his own Body and Blood so that we might be one body, one Spirit in Him and in his people.

Our Christian initiation, then, helps us to be "other Christs." It calls us to act and think and love

(Pleas See WOODRUFF/15)

Adalbert

956-997

feast - April 23

Born in a castle in Bohemia (Czech Republic), he was educated by Bishop Adalbert of Magdeburg, who gave him that name at confirmation. He was ordained in Prague and, despite his youth, became its second bishop in 983. Initially rather worldly, he grew austere. He tried to reform the clergy, eradicate paganism and raise moral standards, but clashed with temporal rulers. Forced twice to leave his diocese, he was released from his duties to take up missionary work in Poland, where he met great opposition and was martyred.



Saints for Today

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DIOCESAN DATES**Bishop's Calendar****APRIL**

6 -- ABILENE: Just People, Inc., Banquet, featuring Sister Helen Prejean, Keynote Speaker, 6:30 p.m., Abilene Civic Center.

9 -- SAN ANGELO: Sacred Heart Cathedral - Palm Sunday Mass, 9:45 a.m.; Seder Meal, Holy Angels, 5:30 p.m.

11 -- WALL: Confirmation Mass, St. Ambrose, 6:30 p.m.

13 -- SAN ANGELO: Holy Thursday Mass, Sacred Heart Cathedral, 7 p.m.

14 -- SAN ANGELO: Way of the Cross, St. Margaret, 1 p.m.

14 -- SAN ANGELO: Good Friday Service, St. Joseph, 7 p.m.

15 -- SAN ANGELO: Easter Vigil Mass, Sacred Heart Cathedral, 8 p.m.

16 -- SAN ANGELO: Easter Sunday Mass, St. Margaret, 9 a.m.

17 -- SAN ANGELO: Easter Dinner for Bishop's Staff, 6 p.m.

18-20 -- Rest and Prayer

21 -- BROWNWOOD: Confirmation, St. Mary, 6:30 p.m.

23-24 -- SAN ANTONIO: MACC Board Meeting

26 -- ROWENA: Confirmation, St. Joseph, 6:30 p.m.

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

28 -- OZONA: Confirmation, Our Lady of Perpetual Help, 6 p.m.

29 -- ODESSA: Confirmation, St. Joseph, 7 p.m.

30 -- MIDLAND: Confirmation, Our Lady of Guadalupe, 10 a.m.

MAY

1-5 -- SAN ANGELO: Priests' Retreat, Christ the King Retreat Center.

5 -- SAN ANGELO: Confirmation Mass, Holy Angels, 6:30 p.m.

6 -- MIDLAND: Confirmation Mass, St. Ann, 5:30 p.m.

7 -- ANDREWS: Confirmation Mass, Our Lady of Lourdes, 10:30 a.m.

8 -- SAN ANGELO: Confirmation Mass, St. Joseph, 6:30 p.m.

9 -- ST. LAWRENCE: Confirmation Mass, 6:30 p.m.

10 -- MIDLAND: Confirmation Mass, St. Stephen, 6:30 p.m.

11 -- BALLINGER: Confirmation Mass, St. Mary, 6:30 p.m.

12 -- FORT STOCKTON: Confirmation Mass, St. Joseph/St. Agnes, 6:30 pm

13 -- SAN ANGELO: Confirmation Mass, Sacred Heart, 5 p.m.

14 -- SAN ANGELO: Youth Mass, Holy Angels Hall, 10:45 a.m.

15 -- WINTERS: Confirmation Mass, Our Lady of Mt. Carmel, 6:30 p.m.

16 -- MIDLAND: Confirmation Mass, Our Lady of San Juan, 6:30 p.m.

17 -- ODESSA: Confirmation Mass, Holy Redeemer, 6:30 p.m.

18 -- SAN ANGELO: Rosary, Mary's Grotto, Christ the King Retreat Center, 6:30 p.m.

19 -- SAN ANGELO: Staff Mass/Staff Meeting, Diocesan Pastoral Center, 8:30 am.

20-21 -- LUBBOCK: Wedding

22 -- SONORA: Confirmation, St. Ann, 6:30 p.m.

23 -- BIG LAKE: Confirmation Mass, St. Margaret, 6:30 p.m.

24 -- ODESSA: Confirmation Mass, Holy Redeemer, 6:30 p.m.

25 -- STANTON: Confirmation Mass, St. Joseph, 6:30 p.m.

27 -- SAN ANGELO: -- High School Graduation

27-28 -- Rest and Prayer

29 -- SAN ANGELO: Memorial Day Mass, Sacred Heart Cathedral, 9 a.m.

31 -- BIG SPRING: Confirmation Mass, Sacred Heart, St. Thomas, Immaculate Heart and Coahoma, 6:30 p.m.

Chancellor's Calendar

(CKRC = Christ the King Retreat Center)

APRIL

8 -- Deacon Discernment, CKRC, 9 a.m.

14 -- Good Friday, DOSA Offices

14 -- Holy Land Collection

20 -- DRE, CRE, CYM Day of Reflection, 10 a.m.

22 -- Mustard Seed (tentative), CKRC

23 -- Confirmation Retreat, CKRC, 9:30 a.m.

24-27 -- Why Catholic? Launching Sessions

25-26 -- International Priests Gathering, CKRC

27 -- DOSA Budget Group 2, Pastoral Center, 10:30 a.m.

30 -- Catholic Home Missions Appeal.

MAY

1-5 -- Diocesan Priest Retreat, CKRC

6 -- Basic Formation Retreat, 8:45 a.m., St. Francis, Abilene

6 -- Deacon Discernment, 9 a.m., CKRC

18 -- Joint Finance, Presbyteral Council meetings, 11 a.m., Pastoral Center

19-21 -- Engaged Encounter, CKRC

21 -- Catholic Communications Campaign

29 -- Memorial Day, DOSA Offices closed

JUNE

3 -- Ruben Covos & Ariel Langunilla's Ordinations, Sacred Heart Cathedral

5-9 -- Lubbock Priests at CKRC, Retreat

7 -- Presbyteral Council, DOSA.

7 -- DOSA priests' dinner with Lubbock priests, CKRC.

8-11 -- Young Adult Encuentro, Notre Dame Indiana

9-11 -- Beginning Experience, CKRC.

9-11 -- Rachel's Vineyard, CKRC.

12-17 -- Love & Mysticism Seminar, with Msgr. Joe James, CKRC.

17 -- Deacon Discernment, CKRC.

26-30 -- "Make A Difference" Justice Service Experience, CKRC.

Necrology-April

3 -- Deacon Edward Martinez (1985)

16 -- Deacon Eliseo Carrillo (1989)

17 -- Rev. Lee Zimmerman, CM (2000)

19 -- Rev. John Lavin (1983)

19 -- Deacon Hubert Collins (1999)

21 -- Rev. Thomas Leahy (SAC) (1969)

29 -- Deacon Robert Daigle (1986)

Plenary indulgence granted for Divine Mercy Sunday

By Bishop Michael Pfeifer, OMI

With provident pastoral sensitivity and in order to impress deeply on the souls of all the faithful the need for God's mercy, Pope John Paul II named the First Sunday after Easter as DIVINE MERCY SUNDAY. Our Holy Father reminded all of us that our God is rich in mercy and is always willing to grant us forgiveness and pardon when we turn to our God with humble and contrite hearts. The Pope also reminded us of the need for seeking God's mercy in the Eucharist, and in the wonderful Sacrament of God's mercy, the Sacrament of Reconciliation and Penance.

To ensure that the faithful would observe this day with intense devotion, our Holy Father established that this Sunday be enriched by a plenary indulgence. By granting this indulgence, our Holy Father was encouraging all the faithful to foster a growing love for God and for their neighbors as all open their hearts to receive God's mercy and forgiveness.

The following conditions are to be fulfilled to obtain this special indulgence: A plenary indulgence, granted under the usual conditions (sacramental confession, Eucharistic communion, and prayer for the intentions of the Supreme Pontiff) to the faithful who, on the Second Sunday of Easter, Divine Mercy Sunday, in any church or chapel, in a spirit that is completely detached from the affection for a sin, even a venial sin, take part in prayers and devotions held in honor of Divine Mercy, or who, in the presence of the Blessed Sacrament exposed or reserved in the tabernacle, recite the Our Father and the Creed, adding a devout prayer to the merciful Lord Jesus—for example, "Merciful Jesus, I trust in you." The allotted time for confession in order to obtain the indulgence would be about three weeks or more, before or after Divine Mercy Sunday. Communion should be received as soon as possible.

Those who are not able to go to church because of sickness, or those who care for them, or because of the demands of work in service for others, may obtain

a plenary indulgence on Divine Mercy Sunday, if totally detesting any sin, and with the intention of fulfilling as soon as possible the three usual conditions—mentioned above in the parenthesis--will recite the Our Father and the Creed before a devout image of our merciful Lord Jesus, and in addition, pray devoutly a prayer to the merciful Lord Jesus, for example, "Merciful Jesus, I trust in you."

Here is a reminder of what the Catechism of the Catholic Church says about an indulgence: "An indulgence is a remission before God of the temporal punishment due to sins whose guilt has already been forgiven, which the faithful Christian, who is duly disposed gains under certain prescribed conditions through the action of the Church, which, as the minister of redemption, dispenses and applies with authority the treasury of the satisfaction of Christ and the Saints.

"An indulgence is partial or plenary according as it removes either part or all of the temporal punishment due to sin. The faithful can gain indulgences for themselves or apply them to the dead.

"To understand this doctrine and practice of the Church, it is necessary to understand that sin has a double consequence. Grave sin deprives us of communion with God and therefore makes us incapable of eternal life, the privation of which is called the 'eternal punishment' of sin. On the other hand every sin, even venial, entails an unhealthy attachment to creatures, which must be purified either here on earth, or after death in the state called Purgatory. This purification frees one from what is called the 'temporal punishment' of sin.

"The forgiveness of sin and restoration of communion with God entail the remission of the eternal punishment of sin, but temporal punishment of sin remains. While patiently bearing sufferings and trials of all kinds and, when the day comes, serenely facing death, the Christian must strive to accept this temporal punishment of sin as a grace."

(For further understanding on the Church's teaching on indulgences, seeing #1471-#1479 of the Catechism.)

WATER: Conservation long-term

(From 3)

diversifies and complexifies: Water provides life.

On October 18, 2002, the nation celebrated the 30th anniversary of the enactment of the Clean Water Act. The goals and objectives of the Clean Water Act call for a commitment to the stewardship of the nation's water and reflect numerous principles of community action and concern. Water is for the use of all and should be returned to the nation's streams, rivers, lakes, and coasts in a condition that supports life and allows others to use the water for activities that require high water-quality standards. What happens to the water of one community affects others and we are bound together by a common need to protect the waters.

Protecting and improving the nation's waters is not a short-term activity but a process that requires an ongoing national commitment to environmental stewardship and a water-ethic vision based on sharing and the common good.

God created the heavens and the earth and all living creatures

By Beck Knox
Deacon
Sacred Heart, Coleman

Are you REALLY Pro-Life? Are you willing to help us fight the death penalty in Texas?

God created the heavens and earth and all living creatures. Man was given dominion over all the earth. With this gift comes the responsibility to nourish and use wisely the fruits of Creation. Before John Paul II made his pronouncement reflecting the Church's position concerning the death penalty in St. Louis 2002, I was firmly on the side of putting convicted murderers, rapists, serial killers etc. to death, not for the deterrent value, but for the sake of Justice. Since that

proclamation, I have come to embrace what the Pope professed, that there are only rare cases when the death penalty could be used and that life without parole may be a more just sentence. I believe a life sentence gives the convicted felon an opportunity to repent and connect his life to Christ.

If we expect mercy and forgiveness for ourselves, should we not expect the same for others? We have been brainwashed through media coverage to think we should demand the life of one who commits crimes against our loved ones. There is certainly anger and pain when a family member or close friend is harmed by someone and the first thought is to hurt them back. However, from our Christian teaching we must realize that no

amount of pain inflicted on another would bring closure or comfort to those having someone close to them harmed by another and that only forgiveness toward the one who caused the pain can do that. Christ forgave those who crucified him even as He languished on the cross. We must follow His example of forgiveness.

The State of Texas has recently passed an alternative to the death penalty, life without parole. Wouldn't it be more Christian to allow someone to live even though he or she may deserve to die, in our opinion, in order to find conversion, repentance and forgiveness?

If you passionately agree with Pope John Paul II and our Church's teaching regarding the death penalty, I would like to ask your assistance in forming a net-

work for information and promotion of the idea of abolishing the death penalty. We are looking for representatives for each parish in our diocese to promote this platform. There are video presentations available for the promotion of abolishing the death penalty, as well as suggested activities for parish awareness and for the promotion of the pro-life position of abolishment of capital punishment. If you would consider being a liaison for information on promoting the abolishment of the death penalty in Texas and to lead the efforts in your parish, please contact Deacon Beck Knox, 7552 US Hwy 283, Coleman, Texas, 76834 or give me a call at 325-280-8708.

Unidad familiar

Hace tres semanas que mi esposo y yo fuimos al recibimiento de parejas que vivieron el Encuentro Matrimonial en Odessa. Después de felicitar a las parejas, nos fuimos caminando hacia el estacionamiento. Pasando por el Santísimo en la Iglesia de Sta. María, mi esposo dice que él sintió deseos de pasar al Santísimo por un momento. Pero ya nos desviamos al saludar y despedir a varias personas que llevaban el mismo rumbo nuestro. Esa misma noche mi esposo soñó que él estaba frente al Santísimo y le estaba pidiéndole un talento. En ese mismo momento recibió su contestación: "Une a tu familia."

Entre once hermanos (ocho hombres y tres mujeres), siempre hubo mucha unión. ¿Qué pasó entonces? La rapidez de nuestras vidas toma el control de lo que hacemos y nos ponemos a determinar y enfocar en qué es más importante. La prioridad no es nuestros parientes, sino el progresar para vivir una vida mejor y que nuestros parientes, y nuestros hijos, nuestros nietos sobrepasen a los demás. Aunque es difícil admitirlo, es cierto. A veces nuestros parientes sufren nuestros desplantes y nosotros no lo vemos porque estamos cerrados en nuestro mundo privado cumpliendo nuestras metas y destruyendo y lastimando quien se ponga en nuestro camino y se nos olvida lo que realmente es importante en esta vida. Nos preocupamos por cumplir y lucir bien en nuestro trabajo, y nos enfocamos solo en nuestro hogar, y con nuestros hijos. Ponemos atrás o despedimos con el después la relación con el resto de la familia.

Mi esposo sintió escalofríos cubriendo su cuerpo cuando pensaba en el trabajo que le esperaba. El confiaba sabiendo que Dios no le iba a dar más de lo que él podía desempeñar. Confiando en él se puso a conversar con un hermano y hermana y con esto puso manos a la obra. Se dirigió al Diácono Ignacio Villa de Midland comentándole su compromiso y él le sugirió que se formara un



retiro familiar. Mi esposo por dos semanas se contactó a sus demás hermanos y mientras se organizaban los detalles, empezaron las perturbaciones. Días antes del retiro, nuestro hijo tuvo un problema en el lugar donde él estaba trabajando que le podía haber costado su vida. Nuestra hija sufrió un accidente que también fue muy fuerte donde su única salida del carro volteado estaba marcada por un regalo (Sagrado Corazón de Jesús), y nosotros también pasamos por un disgusto que no supimos, porque llegó ni por donde.

En esos momentos sentíamos que éramos atacados por Satanás y mi esposo sentía que estaba a punto de perder lo que él más quería, que era su familia. Nos pusimos en oración y mi esposo contactó a los últimos que le faltaban para citarlos. Por fin llegó el 8 de marzo de 2006. Se presentó el Diácono Ignacio, su esposa, y dos parejas más que asistieron en el retiro. Llegó la familia de mi esposo acompañados de sus hijos y nietos. Mis suegros fueron sentados en medio de cuatro generaciones. Recibimos la proclamación de la

Palabra, cada hermano pasó al frente de la familia, pidió perdón por si acaso había ofensas y pasaron nietos a recordar las reuniones de años pasados y expresando alegría de estar nuevamente unidos.

Quizás la sanación entre familia no se logra inmediatamente, pero la semilla del perdón se siembre. Hay que recordar que el día de pedir perdón es hoy. El primer paso es difícil de dar, pero cuando se da y vemos lo que se logra, vale la pena. Hay que recordar que nuestros hijos aprenden e imitan lo que ellos ven de sus padres.

Mis suegros estaban felices de ver a sus hijos, nietos, y bisnietos compartiendo el amor, la unidad, la tranquilidad que ya hacía tiempo no se veía. Sobre las pruebas que pasamos con nuestros hijos y entre nosotros, todo salió bien. Nuestra confianza y nuestros ojos están en quien se puede confiar y que nos ama, Dios nuestro Señor. Que Dios les bendiga.

*Guadalupe y Emma Fabela
San José, Odessa, Texas*

Living the Year of Reconciliation in Ozona and Sheffield

(NOTE FROM THE BISHOP: By many means I have asked our parishes to implement the recommendations that I have made so that we can all enter into the true spirit of The Year of Reconciliation, as we open our hearts to receive God's gift of reconciliation, healing and mercy. In this regard, I share with you here a letter that I received from Father Serafin Avenido, pastor of Our Lady of Perpetual Help Church in Ozona with Good Shepherd Mission in Sheffield. — Bishop Michael Pfeifer, OMI)

By Father Serafin Avenido

I would like to share with you how Ozona is celebrating the Year of Reconciliation and Healing.

Besides the regular reflections that we give on the different themes: Forgiveness, Reconciliation, etc., a catechesis on the Sacrament of Reconciliation is given to our congregation every month. We continue to have our First Friday adoration of the Blessed Sacrament. On Dec. 8, 2005 we had the healing mass to begin the year-long activities.

Here are the activities lined up for 2006:

January 16 – Ecumenical day of prayer and healing to honor Martin Luther King, Jr.

January 19 -- Healing Mass with Fr. Edward de Leon

Feb. 11-12 -- A Maryknoll priest came to talk to our congregation about the Maryknoll Fathers. At my request, he contextualized his talk with our Reconciliation and Healing celebration, thus he talked on "Reconciliation and Mission."

March 31-April 1— Community Lenten Retreat given by Fr. Frank Montalbano, OMI.

(See OZONA/7)

Social Issues

In immigration law, distinctions of 'legal,' 'illegal' fairly recent

Pfeifer: Immigration reform must be comprehensive

By Bishop Michael D. Pfeifer, OMI

Soon the U.S. Senate will take up immigration reform proposals, and there is an urgent need of reforms that will comprehensively fix our broken immigration system. Through national leadership and moral courage, the Senate can chart a course for the future of our nation that maintains our ideals as a nation of immigrants, restores the rule of law, and protects the homeland.

As the Senate takes up immigration reform proposals, the following elements must be incorporated into the package for these efforts to be successful and to enjoy the support of the majority of Americans.

▶ **Reform Must Be Comprehensive.** True and effective immigration reform must deal with (1) the undocumented immigrants working and living in the U.S., (2) legal means to enter the country to work and to join family members, (3) enforcement strategies that are effectively targeted and that uphold human dignity.

▶ **Provide a Pathway to Residency and Citizenship.** The undocumented immigrants currently living in the U.S. must be given the opportunity to earn the right to remain in the U.S. if they satisfy certain criteria.

▶ **Provide Workers Visas and Protection.** There must be greater legal means by which needed workers can be admitted, both temporarily and permanently, to fill available jobs.

▶ **Keep Families Intact.** The debilitating and inhumane family visa backlogs that currently keep families separated for years must be eliminated. The cornerstone of a strong society is the strength of the family.

▶ **Strengthen Security and Restore the Rule of Law.** This can best be accomplished through comprehensive overhaul of our immigration system. Effective enforcement requires smart inspections and screening processes, efficient processing, and strategies for cracking down on smugglers.

▶ **U.S. multi-and bi-lateral international policies must encourage opportunities for people in their home countries** to achieve a dignified living and not be compelled to migrant out of necessity.

▶ **Neighbors don't build walls.** Neighbors build bridges, where people from both sides can meet and dialogue, and work together for humane solutions for common problems.

By Patricia Zapor
Catholic News Service

WASHINGTON — Here's a little-understood fact about immigration law: Until well into the 20th century, pretty much anyone who showed up at a port of entry or walked across a border got to stay in the United States.

In other words, one reason so many people today can say "my ancestors followed the law when they came here" is because until fairly recently there was no distinction made about whether someone arrived legally or not. With few exceptions, anyone who got here was admitted.

Doris Meissner, former commissioner of the Immigration and Naturalization Service and now a senior fellow at the Migration Policy Institute, said that during the mass migrations of the late 19th and early 20th centuries — the years of those photos of boatloads of European immigrants being processed at Ellis Island — only a small fraction of newcomers were rejected.

"The number who got sent back at Ellis Island was less than 2 percent," Meissner told Catholic News Service in an interview, "possibly less than 1 percent."

And those rejections were almost always because the people suffered from an illness that might make them financially dependent upon the community, she said. For instance, a then-common eye infection left victims blind and presumably unable to support themselves. People who had it were turned away.

There were some exceptions to the open-door policy, explains an immigration law history article provided by the U.S. Citizenship



and Immigration Services Bureau, as the agency Meissner headed in the 1990s is now called. An 1882 Chinese exclusion law that remained on the books until 1943 was originally aimed at limiting cheap labor.

Other laws of the era excluded polygamists, those with criminal records for "moral turpitude," people with contagious diseases or epilepsy, professional beggars, anarchists and those who were insane.

Outside such categories, everyone else was presumed to be admissible. It wasn't until 1924 that the U.S. government began requiring immigrants to obtain visas in their home countries in advance.

At that time quotas also were

created for how many people could be admitted from each country, with the exceptions of Mexico and Canada. Within a few years, the Border Patrol was reformed and its focus changed to keeping out and deporting those who didn't have permission to enter the country.

The 1924 law followed the country's most dramatic influx of immigrants in history, with more than 14.5 million new arrivals in 20 years, with 60 percent from Italy, Russia and Austria-Hungary, the history article explained.

Meissner said in the 1920s the public was especially wary of immigrants from countries such as Germany, and other European nations against whom Americans had fought during World War I. During the Depression, immigration was largely self-limiting. In fact many people left the country during the 1930s.

But by the 1940s, with hundreds of thousands of U.S. men in the military overseas, worker shortages were becoming a problem. Beginning in 1942, the government began importing temporary workers. Most came from Mexico to work in agricultural jobs.

Gradually since then restrictions on immigration have increased, in response to concerns ranging from terrorism to lowering wages.

Currently, the wait for a visa to legally enter the United States is as long as a decade for some categories of people. National quotas, fingerprinting and background checks, income and sponsorship requirements, even the cost of applying for visas all act as filters in limiting who comes in legally.

OZONA: Parishes plan year of Reconciliation events

(From 6)

June 10-11 — Couples Retreat to be facilitated by Deacon and Mrs. Victor Lopez of Midland.

September — (in planning stage) a day of healing for fallen away Catholics (one of our prayer groups, St. Peter's, is working on this)

October — Planning wedding Mass for those who are married civilly and wanting to have their marriages blessed by the Church. (we are registering couples now, as this will

demand much preparation.)

November — Closing 40-hour vigil, with confessions and culminating with healing Mass. We are still looking for the celebrant for this closing mass. Bishop, you might want to come and be our celebrant.

This is just to let you know how we are implementing the Year of Reconciliation and Healing.

*God bless,
Fr. Serafin Avenido
Pastor*



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Reflections on Holy Week and Easter from around the Diocese of San Angelo

"My grandparents and my parents were farmers, and they shut down all farming operations. Granma and Mom cooked enough food to carry us until Holy Saturday, and that included fasting to make the food last until Holy Saturday. It was a time of prayer and sacrifice for family and the workers. Giving of our cooked goods to those with little children and the elderly."

-- **Deacon Clemente Villa, Stanton**

"Holy Week is a time of reflection on all that Jesus did for me. Starting with the Last Supper with his apostles when he celebrated the First Mass, then Good Friday when Jesus died on the cross for my sins so that I wouldn't have to, and then on Easter Sunday when Jesus rose from the dead. This is the happiest day of the year for me. To think that Jesus trumpeted over evil and death, that he paid the price for our sins once and for all and the he rose from the dead and sits at the right hand of the Father, is just almost too much to comprehend."

-- **Rhonda Legg, St. Joseph's, Rowena**

"When I was a child I always considered Christmas the holiest because it also meant a time of getting together as family and friends. It wasn't until I was older that I discovered the intensity and focus of the holiness of Passion week. Each Holy Week has had its variations but last year was the hardest as we had just lost our beloved Fr. Tom

Kelley to cancer."

-- **Deacon Mike LaMonica, Midland**

"The Triduum is the most wonderful "secret" of the Church. This is truly key to our faith story. The suffering, death, and resurrection of Jesus (The Paschal Mystery) is what Christianity is about. We continue to experience the Paschal Mystery in our lives as individuals and as humanity. We too experience suffering, deaths, and resurrections in our daily lives, but do we recognize it? The Paschal Mystery is more than a historical event. The war in Iraq, poverty in our own country, the immigration issue, domestic violence... all of these are examples of the Paschal Mystery."

-- **Sister Adelina, San Angelo**

"As boy, I liked Christmas! I was fed well and given well. As a seminarian and grown-up person, I liked Holy Week and Easter. It was a long week. My mom was too strict in regarding lenten observances, going to church to pray Stations of the Cross on every Wednesday and Friday, extra prayers, fasting 40 days. I still remember one day I missed going to pray the Stations of the Cross and she made me to pray at home by myself. Even today in India good number of Christians do 40 days of fasting."

- **Fr. Bhaskar Morogudi, Rowena**

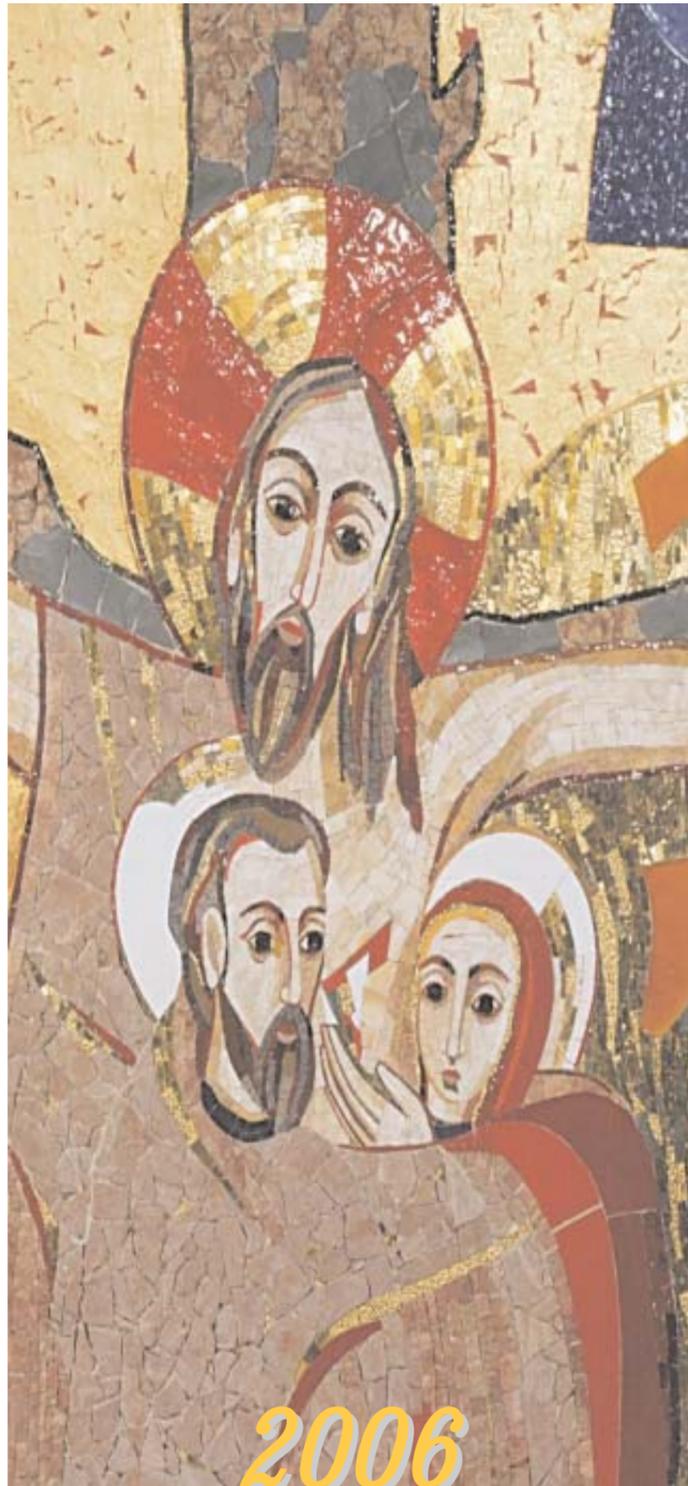
Lenten Dates

Sunday, April 9 -- Palm Sunday
 Thursday, April 13 -- Holy Thursday
Friday, April 14 -- Good Friday
 Saturday, April 15 -- Easter Vigil
Sunday, April 16 -- Easter Sunday
Sunday, April 23 -- Divine Mercy Sunday
Sunday, April 30 -- Third Sunday of Easter
Sunday, May 7 -- Fourth Sunday of Easter
Sunday, May 14 -- Fifth Sunday of Easter
Sunday, May 21 -- Sixth Sunday of Easter
Thursday, May 25 -- Ascension of the Lord
Sunday, May 28 -- Seventh Sunday of Easter
Sunday, June 4 -- Pentecost Sunday

'The signs of Easter will not disappear. They continue to be seen in the holy lives of believers and in the love and services of the Christian community. The outpouring of the Holy Spirit by the Risen Christ continues to transform lives and empowers the followers of Christ to be courageous witnesses in a world of relativism, materialism and individualism.'

Most Rev. Michael D. Pfeifer
Bishop of San Angelo

HOLY WEEK



The greatest feast of the year, Easter deserving of more than just one day

By Father John Catoir
 Catholic News Service

The greatest feast in the Christian calendar is Easter. But as you know, Easter is not celebrated in one day. It deserves and receives an entire season.

Lent is the period of preparation for this celebration of life and resurrection. The concluding Sunday of Lent is Palm Sunday, when we profess with vigor that Christ is the way, the truth and the life. We reconstruct in our minds a ritual recalling his triumphal entry into Jerusalem.

Americans are not so much into church rituals. They have strong faith, but they lack the group-mindedness of their European ancestors. Coming to terms with the individualism of our culture is a stretch for us. Yet, there is so much richness and joy in imagining you are part of the mystical body, welcoming the Lord into your parish.

Using your imagination is a very important part of the enjoyment of these holy days. The crowd cried out, "Hosanna!" which means

Lord save us. Can you not feel the joyful Spirit pulsating through you, knowing that Jesus came to redeem your soul? You are safe, you are free at last because of him.

Holy Thursday recounts the great mystery of Christ's humility. "Now that I, your Master and Lord, have washed your feet, you also ought to wash the feet of one another" (Jn 13:14).

Can you feel it, Jesus wiping your feet with a towel? Let go, and get into the mood of this scene. The one who died on a cross for you is literally cleansing you of your sins!

"God forbid that I should glory save in the cross of Our Lord Jesus Christ" (Gal 6:14). To glory in the cross is not to say that we should think of the cross as an end in itself. God forbid, though some Christians have made it seem that way. Jesus didn't say, I have told you these things that your cross might be heavy. He said, "I have told you all these things that your joy may be full" (Jn 15:10).

St. Augustine, for all his pessimism about

human nature, had it right in the essential point: "We are an Easter people, and alleluia is our song."

Next comes Holy Saturday. "Because of the Preparation Day of the Jews, they laid Jesus in a new tomb in which no one had yet been laid" (Jn 19:41). Pope Paul VI offered this teaching: "There life and death have contended, and there the victory of the risen Christ over death stands out as the source of our salvation." He appears to have lost, he appears to be defeated, but "God raised him to life" (Acts 2:32).

Easter Sunday. After the tragic events of the last days, Jesus appears in different places, and the absolutely amazing cry goes out to everyone who has ears to hear: He is risen! Jesus is risen from the dead!

To this very day the same rejoicing resounds throughout the earth: Holy, holy, holy, Lord God of hosts, heaven and earth are full of your glory. We rejoice in your resurrection. We are grateful for your love. Alleluia, alleluia!

Unusual mother, remarkable child -- An Easter Story

By Antoinette Bosco
 Catholic News Service

When I learned the inspiring account of an unusual mother, holding the hand of her AIDS-afflicted child, traveling a Lenten journey to the cross and beyond, I knew I was immersed once more in the Easter love story.

A few years ago I saw an article in Readers' Digest by a reporter I knew from my hometown, Paul Grondahl of the Times Union in Albany, N.Y. He told the story of Mercy Sister Mary Ann LoGuidice and her adoption of Barbara, a young child who was HIV-positive and whose mother was dying of AIDS. Sister Mary Ann was executive director of Community Maternity Services, an agency in Albany helping pregnant teens, children with AIDS and others.

With the blessing of Albany's Bishop Howard J. Hubbard and her religious community, Sister Mary Ann became Barbara's mother, caring for her nearly five years until her death from AIDS at age 8 in 1993.

The story was deeply moving, so honest about the excruciating pain and the faith struggle this nun-mother endured at the loss of her beloved child. I related.

Recently I sought out Paul Grondahl to talk to him about an astounding series he had written on high-tech prisons. I asked him about Sister Mary Ann. He told me they now had collaborated on a book and that the story was being considered for a television movie. I got their book, "That Place Called Home" (Servant Publications), and truly couldn't put it down.

At first I thought I was reading my own story. Her father, like mine, was an immigrant from southern Italy, a butcher who owned a grocery store in Albany and never sent anyone hungry away; she went to Blessed Sacrament School, the first Catholic school I attended, and to my college, the College of St. Rose.

Her big Italian family spanned 23 years, like mine, and was devoted to children. I related so strongly to her and really understood why, nurtured in love herself by family and Christ, she had become Barbara's mommy and given this beautiful child the home she yearned for.

Sister Mary Ann explained that Barbara "drifted into my world like an autumn leaf carried on the wind and transformed me, my family and a community of friends with her

extraordinary life force and amazing grace."

Easter means new life -- and that's what the child Barbara gave to the world in her legacy of having touched so many lives with joy. Even her physician, Dr. Kallana Manjunath, marveled at how this child accepted her diagnosis from a place of utter faith in God's will and with remarkable courage. Those who knew her affirmed she had an awe of life, was excited about God's gifts, from butterflies to dandelions to sunsets. She showed us "a glimpse of God."

While Sister Mary Ann is still "haunted" knowing that 8.2 million children worldwide are orphaned by AIDS-afflicted mothers, her work in human services for youth takes on a special sacredness because of Barbara.

Barbara's funeral was held in the Cathedral of the Immaculate Conception, my parish, the church I practically lived in until I was married and moved away. Bishop Hubbard presided, saying, "Barbara's is truly a fantastic love story -- a triumph of the human spirit and the conquest of goodness over the forces of ignorance, fear, sickness, suffering and even death."

Indeed, this is an Easter story that I pass on with joy!

Catholic, Muslim women find understanding, share commonalities

By Michelle Donaghey
Catholic News Service

SOUTH BEND, Ind. — They have learned that while there are differences between them, there are many common bonds, no matter if they are Muslim or Christian.

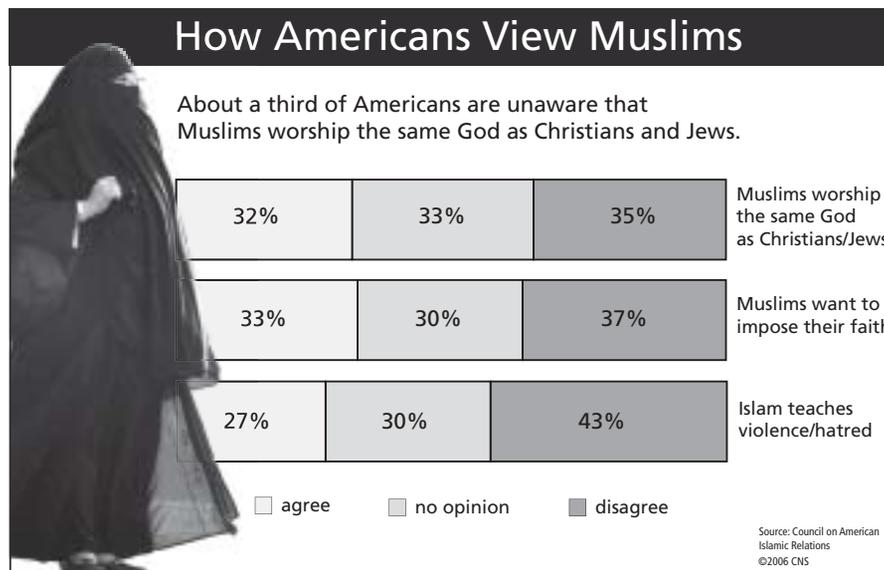
"We share a lot of values. Let's get together and find out how one another thinks, rather than let the media and current events ... define us," said Pat AbuGharbieh, 52, of the Masjud al-Noor mosque.

She belongs to the Muslim-Christian Dialogue Group founded in April 2004 at the urging of Regina Weissert, a member of Little Flower Parish in South Bend.

"Unless people talk, you never really know how to live well together," said Weissert. "I am firmly convinced that it is only through dialogue with other cultures and religions that we can develop understanding and knowledge. You can read all about other people, but until you get to know them and talk to them, there is only a superficial understanding of their lives."

According to Weissert, the endeavor came out of Little Flower's Social Action Commission through the Center for Women's Intercultural Leadership at St. Mary's College, where she connected with Rihad Quddoura, a member of the Islamic Society of Michiana.

Since its inception, the group has been well-received, Weissert told Today's Catholic, newspaper of the Fort Wayne-South Bend Diocese. She said monthly meetings alternate between Masjud al-Noor and Little Flower Church. Attendance varies from five to 35.



No one is asked to join the other's faith, nor do they debate issues. Rather, they pick a topic, sometimes discuss teachings and views of each other's faith perspective, or choose an activity. Coffee and snacks are served.

"We also follow rules of dialogue, which helps newcomers to listen and learn without judging," said Birdie Rossow McElroy, who has belonged to the group for about a year. She is a member of the Church of Loretto at St. Mary's College.

The group tries to have a balance between Christian and Muslim faith topics. They've discussed embryonic stem-cell research; the experience of making the hajji, or pilgrimage to Mecca; the significance of small sacrifices and the Christian faith, such as giving up things

for Lent; All Saints and All Souls Day; what it means to be a woman religious; beliefs of the Church of the Brethren; and the Muslim holy day Eid al-Adha.

One of the most enjoyable and enlightening topics for the women was Mary.

Deborah Mashour, a member of Masjud al-Noor, said that many Christians assume Muslims do not believe in Jesus "because we don't worship him." She noted that an entire chapter of the Quran is devoted to Mary; it is titled "Maryam."

AbuGharbieh agreed. "It was most surprising to me that the Catholic and Muslim beliefs regarding the reverence for the Virgin Mary were more alike than other Christian denominations' views of Mary," she noted.

The group's dialogue has moved from quiet carefulness to friendly openness.

"We truly have grown from a cautious wariness of each other to a true respect," said Mashour who said that happened through "the willingness of all participants to respect each other."

"I have enjoyed seeing our evolution, the unlearning of misinformation, our growing trust and activism. Initially, I treaded somewhat delicately. Now there is a different level of disclosure. We've also become involved in one another's projects," said AbuGharbieh.

The women held a food drive during Ramadan to benefit Little Flower's food pantry and then a blanket and clothing drive to help earthquake victims in Pakistan.

Members of the group only hope that similar groups are formed not only locally, but nationally as well for the good of people of all faiths.

"The world is getting smaller all the time. There is a verse in the Quran that says 'Oh mankind, we created you into tribes that you may know one another.' I think that sums up my feelings as well," said Mashour.

While the road to insight and appreciation may take effort, it is worth it and is necessary, particularly in the world now, added Weissert.

"Understanding does not happen overnight, and it takes a great deal of openness and patience and willingness to listen to establish any kind of group that seeks to build relationships. It is my hope that dialogue will develop and grow all over this land of ours, hungry for peace and justice," said Weissert.

The Human Side

Progress sometimes one step forward, two steps back

By Father Eugene Hemrick
Catholic News Service

Have you noticed how many times we take one step forward, only to then take two steps backward? It makes one wonder about the real meaning of progress in this life.

We have computers that cut our work in half, and yet I know many people who have been hospitalized with neck, back, eye and hand problems because of them.

Recently I purchased a Prius hybrid car that consumes less gas and emits fewer fumes. When a friend heard this, he berated me, saying its batteries are highly toxic and difficult to dispose of when they go dead.

In conversation with a physical therapist, I learned that the percentage of children with diabetes is growing.



Fr. Hemrick

When I asked why this is so, she replied: "There are many reasons, some of them congenital, but one cause is the corn syrup in many of our foods. This has a tendency to break down the pancreas and cause diabetes."

We have come a long way in enriching our foods and making them more flavorful, but when we compare a homegrown tomato to a hothouse tomato, we quickly realize we haven't made as much progress as we thought. Many of our foods have lost their natural flavors.

Recently, I read that NBC will offer a service in which breaking news will be flashed to people with video cell phones (for an additional fee, of course). We have come a long way from the days of Dick Tracy in the comics. He had a video wristwatch, and we fantasized about owning one.

But is this real progress?

The word "calm" in Greek means to come out of the torrid heat into a sheltered place. With minute-to-minute news coverage at our fingertips, isn't it a little like staying out in the hot sun too long and making our heads spin?

In the Book of Ecclesiastes we read: "For when I considered all the things that I had done and the energy I had expended in doing them, it was clear that the whole of it was futility and a grasping at the wind, and none of it was profitable under the sun."

If the author of the Book of Ecclesiastes were here today, he would tell us that all life is vanity. We talk a good game about progress, but in reality it's not true. We live in the most advanced civilization in history. It is also a civilization that has devised ways to annihilate itself.

The author of Ecclesiastes would remind us that nothing in this life is perfect. We must accept and live with our imperfections. But most of all, we must not allow momentary happiness to be overrun by a restless dissatisfaction that forever strains after what it cannot have.

"Cherish the happiness of the moment, especially if you are young," he would say, "and most important of all, see that it can always be improved; put your hearts into making this happen."

At right, Our Lady of Grace Monastery, Christoval, with Sr. Mary Grace Erl and Sisters, with Knights of Columbus and the Pilgrim Virgin Statue of Our Lady of Fatima.

Below, St. Stephen's Church received the Statue, its final church on the statue's journey through the diocese.



Fatima statue leaves visitors with precious and lasting memories

We began work on bringing the Statue and the message of Fatima in 2004 by contacting Rose Marie and Carl Malburg, custodians of the Pilgrim Virgin Statue, who live in Illinois. Two years later, through the assistance of the Malburgs and support from Bishop Michael Pfeifer we were able to schedule a 20 day tour for February, 2006. Two custodians, Carl Malburg and Charles Urban arrived with the Statue of Our Lady of Fatima on February 2nd at St. Ann's, Sonora, Tx. During the next 20 days, the Statue and the Fatima story and message were presented at 16 parishes, 2 Catholic elementary schools and the Carmelite monasteries in Christoval ending at St. Stephen's, Midland, Tx on February 21st.

Approximately 10,000-11,000 people from the various parishes of the Diocese as well as people from El Paso and New Mexico had the opportunity to see Our Lady of Fatima. Hearts were moved, lives were changed and many have experienced a deeper Love for Our Blessed Mother and her Son, Jesus Christ. The "people" expressed it best. "I was so overwhelmed to see Our Blessed Mother at Our Lady of San Juan. She has done so many miracles in my life already. I love her so much that when I see her I see Jesus." (Ester G.)

"This is beautiful, I have had the opportunity to make a spiritual pilgrimage with the Statue at our parish of St. Stephen's." (S.G.) "I was overwhelmed because she came



Communion Dress.....Can we get the statue back in the year 2017?"

The custodians expressed their sincere thanks at feeling so welcome at each location. A special thank you to all Pastors, Religious, coordinators at the various parishes, principals of the two schools and to all who came to show their Love for Our Lord and Savior Jesus and venerate this miraculous image of our Mother. A special thank you to our Shepherd of the Diocese, Bishop Michael Pfeifer. Mary was truly honored as the Queen of the world and Her Son Jesus as King of the Universe.

-- Submitted by Dennis Robson, St. Stephen Church, Midland

to the town where we were. My husband got to carry her, took her around the church. We feel so blessed by Our Lady of Fatima." (Juanita S.) Words cannot express how I felt in the presence of Our Lady of Fatima. I will never forget it. I was moved to tears." (parishioner in Ballinger). Finally, from Sr. Mary Grace Erl, Mother Superior, Our Lady of Grace Carmelite Monastery, Christoval: "The last time I saw the Statue was about 40 years ago. I remember I was wearing my First

Natural Family Planning method popular among Roman Catholics

Natural Family Planning is a method of birth regulation based on a woman's observations and charting of her own body's fertility patterns. The timing of marital relations to either the fertile or nonfertile phase of the woman's cycle allows a couple to either achieve or avoid pregnancy. Husband and wife share the responsibility equally each month.

Fran Brezina, a registered nurse and Certified Billings Ovulation Method Instructor in Midland says NFP does require periodic abstinence, or marital chastity, something necessary from time to time (during times of illness, travel, crisis, childbirth, etc.) in every marriage.

"No one has to possess superhuman virtue to practice this method of family planning," Brezina said. "Because no artificial, mechanical or chemical products are used, natural family planning is very cost effective, a great asset to a woman's gynecological health and can be used during all phases of her reproductive life."

The Catholic Church teaches that marriage is a sacrament (an outward sign instituted by Christ to give grace), or a sacred bond lasting until death and the purpose of the union is both unitive and procreative.

No trainings within the diocese are scheduled at this time, but the Diocese of Austin will host a training April 21-25. For more information on trainings or the Billings Method, email boma-usa@msn.com.

BISHOP: Easter about overcoming darkness, despair

(From 3)

have been marginalized or segregated because of their belief, race, color, sex or social status. Signs of the Resurrection are present when people open their hearts to let the Risen Savior turn pain into consolation; anger into love; doubt and confusion into hope; fear into faith, insecurity and other negative emotions into trust.

Easter is about overcoming and rising above darkness, oppression and despair. Easter signals a new beginning and a new chance because of the power and presence of the Risen Savior in our world today.

He is Risen! May the Risen Christ fill all with new joy, hope and love. Have a blessed and joyful Easter season.

FAMILY

From the Easy Chair

Spring's here and that can mean only one thing: dad pitch

I played Little League baseball for one season. I was stuck in right field, a position generally regarded as the most uneventful because 9-year-olds are mostly right-handed and not prone to hitting the ball to the opposite field. I was a frustrated Little Leaguer, bored with the sport and fully cognizant of the fact that I would never blossom into Carl



Patterson

Yastrzemski, the Boston player whose number I wore and who I greatly admired.

So I pocketed my dreams and moved onto something else, namely a family and a career where I could earn a living without having to depend on any athletic fantasies.

Since The Boy came along, I must say it's been a joy watching as he worked his way through t-ball then machine pitch.

My co-coach and I have spent a lot of time working with our sons and the other boys on our team in the six seasons we've

coached together. And I must admit that I've spent a little bit more time crossing the days off the calendar this season, waiting for the phenomenon known as Dad Pitch.

Dad Pitch is just what it sounds like. Dads are given the ball and the responsibility of throwing hittable pitches to 8-year-old ballplayers with hopes they'll slap a few through the infield and land up on base two or three times a game.

OK, that's not exactly the precise definition of Dad Pitch. Rather, it is this: Dad Pitch gives middle-aged, out-of-shape, washed-up, would-be ball players a chance to live their dream. Some guys pay \$5,000 to embarrass themselves at Nolan Ryan's Fantasy Camp and hob-knob with Hall of Famers. In Dad Pitch, it's 60 bucks to sign your kid up and whatever your co-pay is for some muscle relaxers.

Last week was my Dad Pitch debut. I sat reflective on the bench for a few minutes, made the Sign of the Cross and trotted to the mound. After 33-years, I had finally started in a baseball game at a position other than right field. Cue the

emotional string music.

As coach, I could put me in when I wanted me in, and yank me when I was toast. The authoritative control is overwhelming. My pitching control... another story.

Let me put it this way: The movie "The Rookie" could've very well been about me. It's set in West Texas, and it's about a middle-aged dad living out his dream. It's already one of my favorite all-time baseball movies. Two minor plot changes and it would have been a movie based on my life: First, Jim Morris threw a 98 mph fastball. My fastball is clocked using a calendar. In Jim's Major League debut, his fastball ate up Ranger batters at the Ballpark in Arlington. When I am at the Ballpark in Arlington, I eat up nachos.

Allow me to share with you a true story, and to make an admission of my shortcomings: I was less than dazzling in my Dad Pitch debut last week. Dads pitch to their own team in Dad Pitch. So, there I was, pitching to The Boy and the rest of his little Ranger teammates. In the field behind me, were the Yankees. In 25

words or less, here's how it went: had The Boy been two feet taller, one of my pitches would have incited a benches clearing brawl: I almost beamed my own son.

After some careful analysis, my co-coach, who prefers to remain anonymous so that he can escape shared total humility and the profound sense of guilt that comes with it, said he had figured out the problem with my "stuff."

"I think you're pitching too slow," he said. "Your pitches have too much of an arc on them," he offered.

I shook my head in disagreement.

"I prefer to think of it as having a really wicked sinkerball."

My co-coach's nickname is Doc. In this case, it's Doc Good 'Un, because when he pitched, he simply blazed in fastball after fastball after fastball and struck out the side not once but twice. Doc was so into this Dad Pitch thing that he chewed gum AND sunflower seeds AT THE SAME TIME.

"I think maybe you need to slow YOUR

(See PATTERSON/15)

Your Family

Going to extremes complicates life

By Bill and Monica Dodds
Catholic News Service

Odds are two monks of the early church would have a thing or two to say about some recent reality television.

Perhaps you've seen one of the programs that features two women -- moms and wives -- who "switch" households for a couple of weeks.



Bill & Monica Dodds

Needless to say, with a little prodding from the show's producers, tension and tears rein.

What gives the show its zip are the women chosen for a particular episode. Each is always a person who firmly believes in whatever it is she believes in. Whether it's keeping a spotless house or allowing dozens of pets to roam the household, sleeping in until noon or always rising long before dawn, working long hours to support a family business

or (apparently) having no concern other than herself, the chosen candidate is -- in a word -- extreme.

Each week it's oil and water mixing it up.

So what would two monks -- and theologians -- have to say about the show? Let's start with John Cassian (d. 433). He notes: "There is an old saying -- "akrothes isothtes," i.e., extremes meet." No matter which end of the spectrum the woman may be on, her choices make her life -- and the lives of those around her -- very hard.

Cassian has some advice for all of us, no matter where it is that we tend to go a little overboard. He uses, as an example, someone who eats very little (who goes without food as a form of penance) and someone who eats a lot (who never met an unlikable calorie):

"Excess of fasting and gluttony come to the same thing," he explains. Why? Because if we eat too little, we get too weak to accomplish anything. And if we eat too much, we become too ill to accomplish anything. In a sense, whether we head out clockwise or counter-

clockwise, we end up at the same place.

That's a good point to consider during Lent. A sacrifice, a penance, has to have some bite to it, but it can have such sharp teeth it quickly does us in. Moderation in eating and drinking, in computer time and TV time, in time alone and time with others, in work and play, lead not only to a happier life for us but for our family too.

What about the second monk? Anthony of Egypt (d. 356) advised his disciples that a wise person is a temperate person because "the more a man uses moderation in his life, the more he is at peace, for he is not full of care for many things -- servants, hired laborers and acquisition of cattle."

And "when we cling to such things," he added, "we become liable to vexations arising from them and are led to murmur against God."

Twenty-first-century translation: We complicate our lives and then get mad at God because our lives are complicated!



"How do you want your eggs? Pink, green or blue?"

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Answers

- | | |
|-------------|-------------|
| 1. Eden; | 6. Judas; |
| 2. Moses; | 7. Simon; |
| 3. Jericho; | 8. wedding. |
| 4. Saul; | |
| 5. John; | |



Jesus endures persecution, death

Jesus was sitting at a table with the apostles. He did not appear to be the happy man he usually was.

Jesus broke a loaf of bread after blessing it and said: "This is my body, which will be given for you; do this in memory of me." Then he held up a cup of wine and offered a prayer of thanksgiving and said: "Take this and share it among yourselves. This cup is the new covenant in my blood which will be shed for you." Jesus passed the cup around, and each of his friends sipped from it.

Jesus became very serious and looked around the table at his apostles. "Behold, the hand of one who is to betray me is with me on the table." The men immediately began to say that they wouldn't do such a thing to Jesus.

Peter said, "Lord, I am prepared to go to prison and die with you."

Jesus looked directly at him and said, "I tell you, Peter, before the cock crows this day you will deny three times that you know me."

When the meal was finished

Jesus went to the Mount of Olives to pray, as he often did at night; his apostles followed him. Before Jesus found a quiet place away from his friends where he could be alone, he said to them, "Pray that you may not undergo the test."

When Jesus was alone, he knelt down and prayed. "Father, if you are willing, take this cup away from me; still, not my will but yours be done."

The shouting of angry men broke the silence of the prayerful night.

Their torches flickered against their faces as the crowd came closer to Jesus. Judas, one of the Twelve Apostles of Jesus, was with them.

Judas greeted Jesus with a kiss. Jesus said to him, "Judas, you are betraying the Son of Man with a kiss?" Then the soldiers arrested Jesus.

Jesus was to be questioned, whipped and insulted. In the morning he was forced to carry a cross to Golgotha, where he was crucified. Before he died, Jesus cried out, "Father, forgive them, for they know not what they do."

JUST 4 KIDS

READ MORE ABOUT IT:

Luke 22

Q&A

1. What did Jesus say about the bread he broke?
2. What was Jesus doing when he was arrested?

BIBLE ACCENT

The hill on which Jesus was crucified was called Golgotha, which the Bible says means "place of the skull." In English we call it Calvary, from "calvaria," the Latin word for skull. Maybe it was named that because it was a place where many people were executed.

People disagree where exactly Calvary was. Some say it was a spot outside the old walls of Jerusalem. Others think it was near a main road or on a hill shaped like a skull. About 300 years after Jesus was crucified, Christians began to build a church in Jerusalem at the place they believed was Calvary. Today it is a huge church, called the Church of the Holy Sepulchre. Many people believe it covers Calvary, where Jesus was crucified, and the garden where he was laid in a tomb -- the tomb that was empty on Easter morning.

SPOTLIGHT ON SAINTS

St. Lucy Filippini

Lucy Filippini was born near Rome in 1672. She became an orphan when she was very young. The bishop decided to help Lucy get an education. Most girls did not go to school in those days. But he enrolled Lucy in a school he had founded for train-

ing teachers.

Lucy was a good student. She also had common sense and good will for everyone she met and worked with. When she finished her education, the bishop asked her to help him start schools for women and girls.

Lucy's students called her "maestra santa," which means holy teacher. Lucy died in 1732. We honor her on March 25.

BIBLE TRIVIA

What do we call the first day of Lent?

Answer: Ash Wednesday.

PUZZLE

Circle the word in parentheses that will make the following sentences true. Bible references have been given as hints:

1. Adam lived in a garden in (Jordan, Eden). Genesis 2
2. God called to (Abraham, Moses) from a burning bush. Exodus 3
3. Joshua conquered the city of (Jericho, Jerusalem). Joshua 6
4. (Saul, Solomon) was the first king of Israel. 1 Samuel 10
5. Jesus was baptized by (Philip, John) in the river. Matthew 3
6. (Jeremiah, Judas) betrayed Jesus to the chief priests. Mark 14
7. (Simon, Andrew) is better known by the name Peter. Luke 5
8. Jesus performed a miracle at a (wedding, funeral) in Cana. John 2.

Coming of Age

When change arrives in your life -- uninvited

By Kase Johnstun
Catholic News Service

Change can be scary. Change can be annoying. Change can be frightening. Change can be rough. Change can be hard. Change can be taxing, and change can be unwanted.

But ...

Change can be exciting. Change can be educational. Change can be phenomenal.

Change can take you places you never would have imagined, and change can bring you closer to God.

Sometimes we can see change coming to knock on our door and invite us out into the unknown, and sometimes we don't see change until it has let itself in and is sitting on the couch next to us, eating our "Doritos," saying: "I am here. Deal with me."

When we see change coming, we can

prepare for it. We can take all the necessary steps to make the change easier by making a transition from the life we know to the one we plan to get to know.

We can do research. We can practice. We can even imagine ourselves in a life that has changed.

A family member could die. Parents could split up or we could get dumped by a girlfriend or a boyfriend out of the blue.

Or ...

We could make a new friend. We could move to a fabulous new place or we could get accepted by a college we never thought would accept us.

No matter what, if a change arrives uninvited -- and whether the change is to the bad or the good -- God is the first person to turn to. Take a step back and ask God for peace of mind either to ease worries or to contain excitement. That long

(Please See YOUTH/15)

A year after pope's death, people worldwide continue to show devotion

By Cindy Wooden
Catholic News Service

VATICAN CITY — From starting prayer groups to cheering at the mention of his name, people around the world continue to show their devotion to Pope John Paul II.

A year after Pope John Paul's death, the Vatican still maintains a separate entrance to the grotto under St. Peter's Basilica where he is buried, and Pope Benedict XVI still cites his writings and example in his public speeches.

While the cause for Pope John Paul's canonization continues with interviews of people in Rome and Poland who were close to him, Pope John Paul prayer groups are springing up around the world.

Msr. Slawomir Oder, the official promoter of the pope's sainthood cause, said the groups — one in Argentina calls itself "Juan Pablo Magno" (John Paul the Great) — not only support the cause with their prayers, but they study Pope John Paul's writings.

Pope Benedict does not appear jealous of the attention; in fact, from the beginning of his pontificate he has urged the church to continue to study the teachings of his predecessor.

Speaking to the Roman Curia in December, he said: "No pope has left us a

2005	APRIL Elected pope on the 19th.	MAY Waives 5-year waiting period for John Paul II's sainthood cause. Appoints Archbishop Levada to head doctrinal congregation.	JUNE Denounces gay marriage, cohabitation, birth control. Meets with world Jewish leaders. Releases Compendium of the Catechism of the Catholic Church.
	JULY Urges G8 leaders to take measures to eradicate poverty.	AUGUST Visits Cologne, Germany for World Youth Day. Approves document barring ordination of men with "deep-seated" homosexual tendencies.	OCTOBER Presides over Synod of Bishops on the Eucharist.
2006	JANUARY At baptism service, calls on Christians to resist "culture of death." Publishes first encyclical, "God Is Love."	FEBRUARY Presides over discussion on reconciliation with Lefebvrites. Names 15 new cardinals. Condemns religious violence in Iraq and Nigeria.	NOVEMBER Says created world is "intelligent project" reflecting divine origin.
		MARCH Visits Vatican Radio and receives an iPod nano.	DECEMBER Says human rights must be respected even in war. Calls for proper application of Vatican II.

quantity of texts equal to what he left us; no pope before him could visit the entire world like he did and speak directly to men and women of every continent.

"The Holy Father, with his words and his works, has given us great things; but no less important is the lesson he gave us from the chair of suffering and silence," Pope Benedict said.

In addition to the television movies, documentaries and books on the life of Pope John Paul, an Italian work focused specifically on the suffering.

"Let Me Go: The Strength in Weakness of John Paul II" was released March 15 in Italy and featured reflections by the pope's longtime secretary, Cardinal Stanislaw Dziwisz of Krakow, Poland,

and by Dr. Renato Buzzonetti, the pope's personal physician.

Buzzonetti, who was the pope's physician for almost 27 years, wrote that the pope "was a person very attentive to noticing symptoms, which he described with great exactness, evidently with the aim of simply enlightening his doctor and accelerating his treatment so he could get back to work."

"He always demonstrated an attitude of profound interior serenity which — despite some moments of visible human disappointment and impatience — led him to accept sickness, physical pain and forced inactivity from the hands of God," the doctor said.

The title of the book comes from the pope's last words, murmured in Polish: "Let me go to the house of the Father."

In his contribution to the book, Cardinal Dziwisz said Pope John Paul's life "from the beginning was marked by suffering, which he transformed into an instrument for his apostolate."

The Krakow cardinal said Pope John Paul's obvious suffering in silence and his death were his "last catechesis," telling the world that "moments of suffering and death must be lived in the light of faith, with love and Christian hope, in complete abandonment to the will of God."

For pope, everything stops for Lenten retreat

By Cindy Wooden
Catholic News Service

VATICAN CITY — For 51 weeks each year, the pope preaches, teaches, meets and writes — even when supposedly on vacation.

But during the first full week of Lent, he clears his schedule and goes on retreat. Seriously.

While top officials of the Roman Curia keep their schedules light so they can participate in the pope's Lenten retreat, the pope is the only retreatant whose presence is guaranteed each morning and each evening.

For more than 30 years, the papal Lenten retreat has followed the same basic pattern: morning, midday and evening prayer, eucharistic adoration and Benediction. But the centerpiece of the weeklong retreat is the set of 22 half-hour talks given by a guest preacher between the set prayer times.

For his first Lenten retreat as pope, Pope Benedict XVI asked retired Cardinal Marco Ce of Venice to give the talks March 5-11.

The retreat is held in the Redemptoris Mater Chapel of the

Apostolic Palace, a small space whose walls and ceiling are decorated with huge, vivaciously colored Byzantine-style mosaics.

The pope sits in a small anteroom to the side, guaranteeing his privacy and helping the others focus on the preacher.

A Vatican official said 70 to 80 Vatican officials were at each session of the 2006 retreat.

During the pontificate of Pope John Paul II, the attendance was about the same, even though the top three or four officials in every Vatican office received a notification about the retreat dates and schedules.

Pope Benedict sent personal invitations.

All the cardinals in the Roman Curia, the prefects and presidents of congregations and pontifical councils, top officials from the Vatican Secretariat of State and priests of St. Peter's Basilica were invited.

The fluctuating attendance rate depended on the time of day and on the meetings and speaking engagements the officials were unable to skip or postpone.

While listening to 22 speeches may

not sound like some people's idea of the perfect retreat, it is a way for priests, bishops and cardinals to devote a concentrated period of time to their spiritual growth and to do so while listening to the same spiritual exhortations the pope is hearing.

Attendance is not taken, but officials miss the retreat only with the best excuses.

One official said a Vatican saying often used in reference to diplomatic receptions is even more true at retreat time: "Your presence is not noted, but your absence is."

While the Vatican does not distribute the day's meditations, Vatican Radio provides a daily summary and some direct quotes.

Cardinal Ce, whose archdiocese is proudly under the patronage of the St. Mark the Evangelist, used St. Mark's Gospel as the basis for his 22 talks.

The passages he chose were not strictly Lenten, at least not in the sense of focusing on fasting, penance and almsgiving, although they were mentioned.

Pope urges leaders to open dialogue to resolve conflict

VATICAN CITY (CNS) — Pope Benedict XVI called on Jews, Christians and Muslims to work together to promote peace and justice in the world, and he urged religious leaders to lead the way by reconciling conflicts and divisions through dialogue and active solidarity.

In a March 16 speech to members of the American Jewish Committee, the pope underlined the "rich common patrimony" that "distinguishes our relationship as unique among the religions of the world," he said.

Christianity acknowledges God's relationship with Israel as the beginning of salvation history, and the pope reminded his audience that the Catholic Church "can never forget that chosen people with whom God entered into a holy covenant."

But Judaism and Christianity also share a unique trait with Islam in that they all believe in one God as creator of heaven and earth, he said.

"It follows, therefore, that all three monotheistic religions are called to cooperate with one another for the common good of humanity, serving the cause of justice and peace in the world," said the pope.

He emphasized the importance of religious leaders spearheading such efforts since they "have a responsibility to work for reconciliation through genuine dialogue and acts of human solidarity."

The pope said such cooperation is especially urgent today because greater attention needs to be given to "teaching respect for God, for religions and their symbols, and for holy sites and places of worship."

WOODRUFF: Reconciliation cause for celebration like other sacraments

(From 4)

as Christ loves. If only we would live as fully initiated Christians should. If only we were really Christ-like all the time. The fact is, we are not. Again and again our sins make us less Christ-like.

That is where the Sacrament of Reconciliation comes into play. It restores us to the status -- the dignity -- we had when we were first initiated into Christ. In the early church, reconciliation was sometimes even called "second baptism." This name could be confusing because, after all, there is only one baptism (cf. Ephesians 4:5). Yes, regardless the name we use, the fact is reconciliation restores in us the graces that came to us in our baptism, confirmation and Eucharist.

If I were designing a church, I would try to locate the confessionals near the baptismal font just to show the connection.

THE LIFE-LONG BATTLE

As I indicated, reconciliation has a special relationship to baptism. In baptism, we "died" to sin, but the sad reality is that its death is not complete in us. Sin repeatedly rears its ugly head in our lives, usually in small sins and bad habits that are hard to overcome, but all too often in serious sin. The remnants of Adam and Eve linger in their descendants even after baptism, and so the battle to kill sin goes on throughout our lives.

While we cannot repeat baptism, at least we can repeat baptism's companion sacrament of reconciliation. Again and again in the course of our lives, God's help and the ministry of the church helps owe regularly winning minor skirmishes until sin is at last destroyed in us.

Regular confession for all of us -- priests included -- is a must. I cannot tell you what "regular" means. For some, it is weekly, for some monthly, for some quarterly, for still others annually. I cannot tell you what is best for you. However, haphazardly should not be an option because we are all procrastinators, and before we know it years have passed since our last confession.

Unfortunately we have fallen into the routine of confessing "before Christmas" and "before Easter." That places most people's confessions in December or March. What about the rest of the year?

Beginning in October, malls put out signs reading "Shop early and avoid the Christmas rush." When it comes to confession, wouldn't it be better if we came at other times of the year, when penitent and confessor do not feel the pressure of time so one can have a fuller more relaxed confession? In that regard, confessions by appointment, outside the regular Saturday schedule, are often more satisfying for pastors because there is more time to explore, examine, counsel and celebrate.

In other words, penitents should plan to make the most of their confessions avoiding the superficial and the rushed for a more meaningful experience.

CELEBRATION

For all of us who love this sacrament we have yet to meet significant liturgical challenge: How do we make it a "celebration"? All sacraments, after all, are celebrations. The baptism of a newborn baby, the first communion of an 8-year-old, the marriage of a young couple, the ordination of a priest are all celebrations. Well, confession is likewise a celebration. I am not sure how to make it so. Perhaps having to confess one's sins, humiliating oneself, as it were, before God and his priest, is such a downer that naturally one has a difficult time focusing on the joyous reality that GOD FORGIVES AND HE FORGIVES GENEROUSLY.

As we reflect on the Sacrament of Reconciliation perhaps we could spend time recalling some past confessions of ours where God's forgiveness marked a key turning point in our lives. Perhaps at that moment we did not feel much like celebrating, but now we do.

Jesus said there is more joy in heaven over one sinner who repents than over 99 who do not need to repent. As we look back and remember perhaps even now we can share some of the joy.

DaVINCI: Protest in respectable tones

(From 2)

help distinguishing what they are reading or watching, I've seen it enough times as a writer with secular publications; for whatever reason, people often read into things only what they want to (especially if it strengthens their argument). If there's not a disclaimer on "The DaVinci Code" movie, we could -- seriously -- have a lot of people thinking Jesus was married.

Yet, that's not the problem I see forthcoming. What I see is far too many ravenous defenders of our faith who are overly scared that a

secular media offering is going to bring down 2,000 years of what Christianity has taught us. Frankly, that's poppycock. Yet, if we rail too loudly, we stand a chance of making a mockery of ourselves. It is certainly appropriate to protest in proper tones, but keep it in perspective.

What will be around 50 years from now are great works of art, film and literature. Shakespeare, DaVinci's paintings, "The Wizard of Oz."

"The DaVinci Code" will be a movie that satisfies a movie fan's suspenseful sweet tooth, but it

should be nothing more. It does not, will not and should not stir any legitimate debate over the history of Christianity. It should not cast doubt on why we believe and what we believe. So, it's simple: don't let it.

If you must protest, do so in respectable tones, and not as though you're going to blow a gasket like Donohoe. A month from now, it may be all the rage. A year from now, we'll likely be asking, "Whatever happened to that movie about the painter?"

Jimmy Patterson is editor of The Angelus.

AGE: Change more easily accepted if you are at peace

(From 13)

breath filled with God's grace has been a little miracle so many times for me. I breathe the grace in. My mind clears of its worries because I know God will be there.

My reasoning in handing my worries to God is simple (or maybe not so simple at the same time).

I know that God knows what is going to happen. And I know that God knows I don't know what is going to happen. But I know that God knows that I don't know. Still, I know he knows, and that knowledge gives me the peace to know that it is OK not always to know, since he does know, and he wouldn't

lead me anywhere unknowingly or without purpose.

That is my little miracle. It calms me and helps me to live just in the moment, pushing all the worries aside because I can't take care of all of them at that moment.

So ...

Change comes at times we don't expect it. It steals our "Doritos" and changes the channel.

So ...

Breath in, and accept that not knowing what to make of a particular change is scary, exciting, frightening, educational, rough and phenomenal.

OK, breathe again, pray, and take in the peace of mind that God does know.

PATTERSON: Heckled by a bunch of 8 year olds

(From 12)

pitches down," I told him after one inning when he fanned the side, barely able to see his face through the sunflower seed bubble he was blowing.

As if he'd never heard me, he said, "My heat's really working today. I couldn't slow down now even if I wanted to."

"The boys are up there whiffin' at everything we're throwing them, in part because we're their coaches and they feel obligated to swing, to perform and to do well," I told him. "But the other reason they're stinkin' so bad is because one of us is givin' 'em gas down the middle, and I'm in there throwing chin music. Heck, for these guys, they're not even tall enough for chin music. It's mainly flat-top music."

As I said, we are the Rangers. And we are a true microcosm of the big league club: We're starting slow. We have no offense, no defense, and by far the worst pitching in the league.

How bad is our pitching? In the game against the Yankees, we were down 11-1 going into the home half of the last inning. I got up, took a few warm-up pitches, and signaled that I was ready for the first batter,

which just so happened to be The Boy. The first pitch was in the dirt. He was forced to do a little dance to get out of the way. The second pitch was the legendary brush down above his head. The Boy looked at me with a look I've never seen before: like he truly thought I may not have a clue what I was doing.

"Sorry, batter," I said to him, as he re-positioned his batting helmet.

As I stared at the catcher, waiting for him to put his glove up to indicate he was ready for the next pitch, it started. Behind me, the Yankees -- a bunch of 8-year-old second-graders -- started heckling me.

"Pitcher's got a rubber arm ... pitcher's got a rubber arm." It started low, but rose to an unrelenting chorus. I couldn't even turn around and confront my aggressors I was so humiliated. I believe it might have even been the single most humiliating moment of my life.

(Then it dawned on me: so THIS is how the New York Yankees beat the Texas Rangers with such regularity! Jeter and Posada and Giambi are all out there heckling Kenny Rogers or whatever loser is atop the hill that particular day.)

I regrouped, threw a heater and, after watching The Boy walk away

dejected (yet no doubt relieved to be out of the box), I couldn't take any more. I had a talk with me on the mound, gave me the ball, and walked off to a chorus of Little League Rangers screaming "YES!"

I stopped short of throwing my glove in the dugout -- I figured my pitching was the only bad example they'd need that day.

Another dad on the team came on in relief -- a guy who sells Hershey bars for a living. He lobbed in fat pitches one after another, and the Rangers knocked out 10 straight and scored six runs without an out.

I looked at our new pitcher and gave him a thumbs up. "YOU DA MAN!" I yelled. Doc stood close by spitting seeds and blowing bubbles, a big ol' grin on his face.

The Rangers had finally found their stride, and in the process put a middle aged, would-be, washed-up ball player out of his dream job for the second time in his life.

Whipped ... by 8-year-old hecklers and a chocolate bar salesman. Cue the emotional string music.

-- From May 2002.

Jimmy Patterson is editor of The Angelus.

The Back Page

Broadway's revival depends on stage revivals

By Harry Forbes
Catholic News Service

NEW YORK — In the 1930-31 theatrical season, approximately 190 productions opened on Broadway. Last year, there were a mere 39.

And these days it's revivals that outnumber new shows, much to the disparagement of those who fervently believe there should be more new material on the boards.

If you live in, or are planning to visit, New York, and you're not one to grouse about recycled vehicles, there are two recommended titles on the Great White Way, each a staple of regional productions and both familiar from their Hollywood incarnations: "The Pajama Game" and "Barefoot in the Park."

Critics were nearly unanimous in their praise of the former (playing at the American Airlines Theatre), which stars pop-jazz singer Harry Connick Jr. in his Broadway debut (though he wrote the score for 2001's interesting failure, "Thou Shalt Not.>").

He's inherited originator John Raitt's role of a 1950s pajama factory supervisor who falls in love with the pretty head of the employees grievance committee. As the workers are in the midst of a labor dispute, and are demanding a whopping seven-and-a-half-cent raise, you know the path to romance is bound to have some bumps.

Babe is played by the lovely Kelli O'Hara, who appeared as the fragile daughter in the still-running musical "Light in the Piazza," itself based on an old movie. She sounds wonderfully authoritative in her songs, even if she lacks a bit of needed warmth underneath the appropriately starchy demeanor.

As for Connick, he performs as if he's been on Broadway all his life, and though he's not the high baritone that Raitt was on stage (and in the film version with Doris Day), he makes such evergreens as "Hey, There" and "A New Town is A Blue Town"

sound freshly minted.

They've done some fiddling with the book. The famous "Steam Heat" number has been taken away from the character of Gladys, played by Megan Lawrence, who otherwise brings down the house with her hilarious "Hernando's Hideaway," and director-choreographer Kathleen Marshall (sister of Oscar-winning director Rob) puts her own stamp on a show that originally defined the great Bob Fosse.

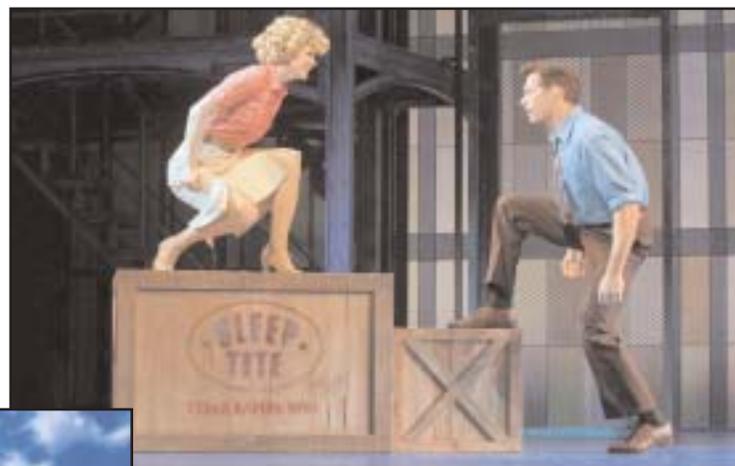
Neil Simon's "Barefoot in the Park" (Cort Theatre) gets a major revival the same season as his classic "The Odd Couple" with

the Nathan Lane and Matthew Broderick. "Park," as a play, is perhaps less outright funny, but the show has myriad pleasures, and under director Scott

Elliott's intelligent rethinking proves an engaging lightweight bauble about young marrieds setting up in their first New York apartment. Film stars Amanda Peet and Patrick Wilson take the roles played by Jane Fonda and Robert Redford on the screen, and they're charmingly supported by Jill Clayburgh, who is wonderful as the mother delivering tart zingers, and Tony Roberts as an eccentric neighbor who falls for her.

This kind of featherweight comedy is much harder to pull off than it looks, a fact unaccountably ignored by many critics who dismissed the show as dated and the cast as inferior. Not so. These four pros are in top form. Wilson, whose well-scrubbed good

Scenes from
Pajama Party
(with Harry
Connick, Jr.),
right, and
"Ring of
Fire," below.



looks have sometimes made him a pallid screen presence, is quite spectacular here proving a masterful comic foil to Peet's engaging

heroine.

In a completely different category is a curiosity called "Ring of Fire" (Ethel Barrymore Theatre), more amiable concert really than bona fide musical, built around the songs made famous by Johnny Cash. What's odd is that there's no overt attempt to tell Cash's life story — so the producers of "Walk the Line" can relax — nor, as is often the case in these so-called jukebox musicals (built around pop songs), to build a brand-new plot around existing songs.

No, creator Richard Maltby Jr.'s setup merely presents three couples (Jeb Brown and Lari White, Jarrod Emick and Beth Malone, and Jason Edwards and Cass

Morgan), along with several others who sing the Cash songs grouped in a roughly thematic way. The talent of the cast can't be denied, the projections used throughout are strikingly beautiful, and the songs — some of them faith-based (e.g., "Waiting on the Far Side Banks of Jordan") are fine, but unless you're die-hard fan of country music, you may wish for something more consequential.

On the other hand, one of the most delightful traditions in the city is a spring series called "Broadway Musicals of the Year," which presents the best of New York's stage and cabaret talent performing vintage numbers from a particular season. Which brings us back to the aforementioned 1930 season, the focus of this past month's offering.

After the rather disheartening win of "It's Hard Out Here for a Pimp" in the Best Song category at the Oscars, how nice to be reminded of a time when Broadway and Hollywood tunes were of a higher standard. Even when questionable subject matter was addressed, as in the case of Cole Porter's "Love for Sale," risqué subject matter was dealt with in a tasteful and classy manner.

Bishop authors novel on Florida missions

CHARLESTON, S.C. (CNS) -- Bishop Robert J. Baker of Charleston has co-written a novel that recounts the little-known history of the chain of Spanish missions in northern Florida.

The book, "Cacique: A Novel of Florida's Heroic Mission History," was released March 14 by St. Catherine of Siena Press, a Catholic publisher in Indianapolis. The book's co-author is Tony Sands.

"Cacique," a Spanish word for chieftain, is the tale of Florida's Potano Indian chieftains and their relationship with Spanish Franciscan missionaries, according to a press release from the publisher.

"Unlike the missions of California and Texas, Florida's mission artifacts have long lain buried beneath the ground," Bishop Baker said in the release. "Through persistent research, however, the site of one of the earliest and longest standing of the 17th-century Spanish missions in northern Florida, Mission Santa Fe de Toloca, has been discovered and verified."

The mission is the focal point of the book. Bishop Baker was ordained a priest of the Diocese of St. Augustine in 1970 and was a parish priest and high school teacher. After receiving a doctorate in sacred theology from the Pontifical Gregorian University in Rome, he returned to Florida in 1977, serving as a pas-

tor and member of the faculty at St. Vincent de Paul Seminary in Boynton Beach.

He was ordained the 12th bishop of Charleston in 1999.

Sands graduated from the School of Cinema-Television at the University of Southern California in Los Angeles. He spent the last 10 years working in the entertainment industry in Hollywood, most recently as a director for television at Family Theater Productions Inc., and as production coordinator for its radio component.

He met Bishop Baker while on pilgrimage with him to the Basilica of Our Lady of Guadalupe in Mexico City. Sands lives in Los Angeles.

