

West Texas ANGELUS

Serving the Diocese of San Angelo, Texas
Volume XXIX, No. 5 MAY 2009

Bishop responds to swine flu

Bishops from around the world responded in various ways to the global outbreak of swine flu, each according to how the disease affected their area.

At press time in early May, San Angelo Bishop Michael D. Pfeifer, said he did not feel it necessary to take extraordinary measures such as suspending Communion from the cup and placing the host on the tongue, or advising against shaking hands during the Sign of Peace.

"First and foremost, I ask prayers for those who have been afflicted

with this illness," Pfeifer said. "Let us also pray that with the guidance of the Holy Spirit, our health experts, with the cooperation of all of us, will be able to prevent this illness from spreading."

Bishop Pfeifer also encouraged people to take the necessary precautions to avoid contracting the flu. The bishop added that if conditions warranted, he would issue additional statements. We will post any updates on our web site.

-- Jimmy Patterson



SanAngeloDiocese.org

Updated Monday, Wednesday and Friday
and as needed.

Fr. Tad Pacholczyk:
"The darkness of
Obama's stem cell
policy." / Page 6



'Do not store up for yourselves treasures on earth but store up treasures in heaven.' -- Mt. 6:19-21

Economic crisis fueled by greed

By Bishop Michael Pfeifer, OMI

Every day in the news there are stories illustrating the challenging economic times we face. The list of those suffering from the economic crisis is long. More people are losing jobs or having their hours or incomes reduced. Many are not able to provide for their family's basic needs, and many more are accessing community resources seeking help. People have lost their homes or are in fear of losing them in the future, companies have declared bankruptcy or are closing down. Churches and Religious Communities have also suffered losses.

(Please See **CRISIS/17**)



A foreclosure sale sign sits in front of a house in Miami Beach Feb. 27. The states of Florida, Nevada, California and Arizona have about half the nation's foreclosures. (CNS photo/Carlos Barria, Reuters).

Stem cell research, treatment and the (ethical) future

By Arthur Rivas
Texas Catholic Conference

If you were a budding researcher and you were given the opportunity to work in a field that has produced cures, treatments, and has saved thousands of lives, or a field that has, since its inception over twenty years ago, been unable to produce a single cure, which field would you choose? If you were footing the bill, which field would you fund?

The answer is simple: support research that has proven to be successful.

The research we're talking about here is stem cell research. There are two types of

(Please See **STEM/3**)

THIS MONTH IN THE ANGELUS

Diocese puts emphasis on family, married life initiative

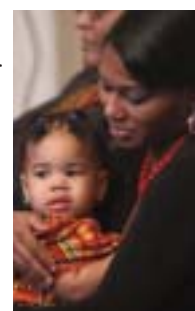
Family life and marriage. The primary place where the Catholic faith is put into practice. Or should be.

Family life and marriage is where our Catholic parishes encounter our people. Therefore, the Diocese of San Angelo and its parishes are committed to support and encourage the practice of the faith among families. Read the diocesan Marriage and Family Life committee's finding and recommendations/**Pages 9-12**



May: A month for moms

Traditionally, May is known as the month to honor and celebrate our mothers, especially the wonderful spiritual mother of all of us, Mary, the Mother of Jesus. The special day to honor mothers is the second Sunday of May, which this year falls on May 10, 2009/**Pg. 4**



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Letter From the Bishop

Prayerfully consider giving generously to communications campaign

**Bishop
Michael D.
Pfeifer, OMI**

My dear Sisters and Brothers in Christ:

In today's hectic world, we all need to hear the Good News. It's a powerful reminder of God's love for us. It enriches us and nourishes our faith. The Catholic Communication Campaign (CCC) is committed to funding programs that uplift the Catholic community and that evangelize the world. The Collection for CCC will be taken up in our diocese on Sunday,

May 17, 2009.

You can truly make a difference right here in our diocese through your donation to the CCC Collection. Half of all funds collected here are used for local communications projects such as our diocesan newspaper and Office of Communication. The other half is used nationally in traditional and new media. Because of parishioners like you all over the United States, the Church is able to minister and evangelize through its local and national communications efforts. To learn

more about how CCC is making a difference and how you can help, please visit www.CatholicCommunicationsCampaign.org.

Your participation is essential to the success of the Collection. I am grateful for your past generous support and let us ask the Holy Spirit to guide all of our communication efforts.

*Your servant in Christ and Mary,
Most Reverend Michael Pfeifer, OMI
Bishop of San Angelo*

DIOCESAN BRIEFS**Marriage Encounter Weekend**

A Marriage Encounter Weekend is scheduled for **May 29-31** at the Circle 6 Ranch in Stanton. Please See **Pg. 4** for complete information

Marriage Jubilee 2009

All couples who are celebrating their 25, 30, 35, 40, 50, and above wedding anniversaries in the calendar year of 2009 are invited to the **Diocesan Marriage Jubilee celebration on June 7, 2009, 2 p.m.** at the Sacred Heart Cathedral, San Angelo. Families and friends are invited to accompany our jubilarians to this celebration. Renewal of vows will take place within the Mass. This celebration will conclude with a reception in the Cathedral gymnasium. All are invited. For registration information, please contact your pastor.

Msgr. Halfmann Jubilee

Msgr. Curtis T. Halfmann, retired Priest of the Diocese of Lubbock and native son of St. Boniface at Olfen, will be celebrating the 50th anniversary of his ordination to the Priesthood on **Sun., June 14, at the 11 a.m. Mass** at St. Boniface Parish in Olfen. A celebration meal will follow Mass at the Parish Hall. Everyone is invited to come and celebrate with his family and friends. In order to properly plan we ask you to RSVP no later than May 15 to one of the following addresses:

Lee Ann Pollock: pol.lea@hotmail.com
Helen Lange: halange@verizon.net
Msgr. Curtis Halfmann: cthalfmann@sbcglobal.net

Rural Life Mass in Midland Co.

The annual diocesan Rural Life Mass, entitled, "**Seed, Soil and Oil**" is scheduled for **6:30 p.m., Tuesday, June 23**. The Mass **location is off of Hwy 80 and County Rd. 1297**, just west of Midland International Airport. This year's Mass will focus on the importance oil is to us every day. The Mass celebration will be located at an oil field near 80 and 1297 (signs will direct attendees to the site; parishes will have Google maps available). Bishop Michael D. Pfeifer, OMI, will be the celebrant of the Mass, which is hosted by Midland's Our Lady of Guadalupe. A light meal will be served immediately following the Mass.

Ballinger Knights assist with Pregnancy Help Center

The Ballinger Knights of Columbus Council #10985 annually raises money for the Pregnancy Help Center of the Concho Valley. Once a year, the Knights distribute baby bottles to parishioners at the weekend Masses at St. Mary's. The parishioners are asked to place their loose change in the bottles for a month or until they are full, and then return the bottles to church. This recent collection brought in \$1,243 for the Pregnancy Help Center. The picture shows council members (L-R) Jim Studer, David Workman, and Edwin Zly presenting the check to Jan Roberts representing the Pregnancy Help Center. The Pregnancy Help Center of the Concho Valley provides assistance to expectant mothers experiencing an unexpected or crisis pregnancy and alternatives to abortion.

May 22: Day of Prayer for Mariners

May 22 is the National Day of Prayer and Remembrance for Mariners and People of the Sea a day to encourage Catholics in the U.S. to support and participate in prayer services and remembrances of maritime workers such as mariners/seafarers, fish workers, port personnel and their families.

Maritime workers play a vital role in the transport of goods by the waterways and the faithful are also asked to remember seafarers who have been lost at sea.

The pastoral outreach and practical assistance to mariners and people of the sea are carried out by the Apostleship of the Sea chaplains, their pastoral team and volunteers in 49 dioceses and at 61 American maritime ports.

For additional info, please contact Sr. Myrna Tordillo at mtor-dillo@usccb.org, 202 541 3035.

2009 Cursillo Dates

June 25-28 -- Women's English, Christ the King Retreat Center, San Angelo

July 16-19 -- Men's Spanish, St. Mary's, Odessa

July 30-Aug. 2 -- Men's English, Christ the King Retreat Center, San Angelo

September 24-27 -- Women's English, St. Thomas, Big Spring

October 15-18 -- Women's Spanish Cursillo, St. Mary's, San Angelo

October 22-25 -- Men's English Cursillo, St.

Thomas, Big Spring

Anyone needing more information may e-mail cursillo.sanangelodiocese@gmail.com or call (432) 413-6136.

Fall Festival Calendar

Sunday, October 25 -- St. Ann's Parish Festival in Sonora, celebrating 80 years.

2010 Lenten Pilgrimage to Italy

Holy Angels Catholic Church in San Angelo is preparing a Lenten Pilgrimage to Italy, March 9-18, 2010. Stops on the pilgrimage include Milan, Venice, Florence, Assisi, Orvieto and Rome, and will include a Papal audience in St. Peter's Square, daily Mass and a special Mass in the catacombs of St. Callisto, Rome.

The cost is \$3,747 roundtrip. Pilgrimage organizers are also offering an optional 5-day Southern Italy extension on the trip, from March 18-23, 2010, for \$1,599 additional. Deposits are due June 1, 2009. Contact Lori Hines at Holy Angels, 325.942.8192 for more information.

Seminarian Scholarships Offered

SAN ANTONIO -- Catholic Life Insurance is currently offering two scholarship opportunities to Roman Catholic seminarians who have earned

an undergraduate degree, and are now seeking financial support for graduate seminarian studies.

The application deadline for the Msgr. Albert G. Henkes and the Msgr. Lawrence J. Stuebben Seminarian Scholarships is **June 15, 2009**. The Msgr. Stuebben Seminarian Scholarship is available only to seminarians attending Assumption Seminary in San Antonio. The Msgr. Henkes Scholarship is offered to those enrolled in any Roman Catholic seminary throughout the world. Applicants who meet the criteria of each scholarship may apply to both.

Since 1987, Catholic Life has awarded more than \$250,000 in seminarian scholarships through the Msgr. Henkes and Msgr. Stuebben Funds. Fifty-nine recipients have been ordained, and 14 remain in the seminary.

Applications may be obtained by visiting the company website at: www.cliu.com or by contacting the Communications Department at 1-800-292-2548. Applications may also be available through Diocesan Vocation Directors.

Natural Family Planning

Helping couples to deepen conjugal love and achieve responsible parenthood is part of the Church's total pastoral ministry to Catholic spouses. Fulfillment of this ministry includes both education and pastoral care. This means "instilling conviction and offering practical help to those who wish to live out their parenthood in a truly responsible way" (Pope John Paul II, Familiaris consortio, #35). Below are scheduled seminars (San Angelo) and contact numbers for people who can help you with more information:

SAN ANGELO, Christ the King Retreat Center, (325) 651-5352, 2-4 p.m. **2009 Dates:** May 17, Sep. 13, Dec. 6. Contact Amy at amd@wcc.net.

MIDLAND-ODESSA, Our Lady of Guadalupe, call Christina Nevarez, (432) 682-2581;

ABILENE, Holy Family Church, call Mrs. Herman Blahak, (325) 692-1820.

Scheduled Executions

The Angelus publishes the execution dates of Texas offenders on death row each month so that the faithful in the Diocese of San Angelo can pray for them. The following offenders face upcoming execution dates. Please pray for them:

Offender/Scheduled Execution Date:

Michael Lynn Riley/May 19

Terry Hankins/June 2

Kenneth Mosley/July 16

Roderick Newton/July 23

Guest Columnist

Sister Malachy celebrates 25 years at Newman

S. Marie Malachy Griffin is director of the Newman Center at Angelo State Univ.

By Sister Marie Malachy Griffin

Twenty-five years ago two Sinsinawa Dominican Sisters visited bishops in the southwest looking for dioceses where the work was "great and difficult," the criteria specified by our founder.

Where have the years gone? Wasn't it only yesterday that Bishop Joseph Fiorenza offered me this campus position? Ministry with and to the Catholic community at the ASU Newman Center has been an incredible privilege. How blessed to share faith journeys with so many marvelous young

adults and faculty members.

Has life here been an unmixed blessing? Of course not. This place of ministry is, after all, a university campus. "I deserve the best!" is heard with some frequency. Sexual dysfunction, abuse and disease occur even in our setting. Maxed out credit cards are fairly common as is exorbitant spending to make the body "perfect." Additionally, wasted lives, talents, and resources; injustices, lies, gossip and negativity have the potential to do great harm.

Conversely, the good, the true and the beautiful by far out-weigh the above which are the antithesis of what Jesus lived and taught and, on a regular basis, influence my lesson plans for discussions at noon over a meal.

Through the years I have treasured each group with whom I have been privileged to serve. God's people are truly a gift! Doing a small part of God's work brings immeasurable joy. I have received more than I have given. Therefore, living thankfully is a must.

Some of those who brought me to where I am today and for whom I give God thanks are my parents who gave me life, faith, family and a desire to live in harmony. My younger sister, Sister Mary James Griffin, O.P., is an example of someone one who is free to question everything. This gift has also been affirmed by reading John Henry Cardinal Newman. My youngest sister, Jean and her husband, (Please See **MALACHY/16**)

STEM: Embryonic cells have never treated human patient**(From 1)**

stem cell research, adult and embryonic. Adult stem cells can be obtained from adults, children, and even the placenta and umbilical cord without any damage to the donor. Embryonic stem cells, on the other hand, are derived from the human embryo. In the process of obtaining these embryonic stem cells, the young human life is killed. Embryonic stem cell research

does not simply involve the destruction of "some cells"; rather, it involves the destruction of a unique human life.

Years ago it was said that stem cells from embryos would be the most useful because they are so fast-growing and versatile, able to make virtually any kind of cell. But those advantages become disadvantages when these cells make tumors, creating a condition worse than the disease.

Embryonic stem cells have never

treated a human patient, and animal trials suggest that they are too genetically unstable and too likely to form lethal tumors to be used for treatment any time soon.

Supporters disappointed at failures using embryonic stem cells sometimes try to defend the lack of treatment or cures from embryonic stem cell research by claiming that there is a federal ban on this type of research.

(Please See **STEM/13**)

Del Escritorio del Obispo

'No junten tesoros y reservas aqui en la tierra'

Obispo Miguel Pfeifer OMI

Por Obispo Miguel Pfeifer

Cada día, en las noticias, hay historias ilustrando los tiempos de desafíos económicos que nos enfrentamos. La lista de los que sufren por la crisis económica es larga. Más gente está perdiendo sus empleos o han tenido sus horas o ingresos reducidos.

Muchos no pueden proveer las necesidades básicas de sus familias, y muchos más están accediendo a recursos comunitarios buscando ayuda. Gente ha perdido sus hogares o temen de perderlos en el futuro cercano, compañías han declarado bancarota o están cerrando sus puertas. Iglesias y comunidades religiosas también han sufrido pérdidas.

Al nivel nacional, 3.6 millones de trabajos han sido perdidos desde el comienzo de la recesión. El 7.6% de desempleo es lo más alto desde 1992 y podría llegar a 9.6% para el año que entra. Recientemente fue anunciado que se ha perdido \$2 trillones en ahorros de pensión, y los ahorros de muchos más están en riesgo. Millones y millones de ancianos—familiares y parientes—han visto su pensión reducida por un tercero o hasta por medio o más. ¿Quién está "financiando" a estos ancianos dedicados en esta situación rígida?

Causas Fundamentales de esta Crisis

¿Cuales son las causas funda-

mentales y las razones de esta crisis económica mundial? Economistas están humildemente identificando las razones, individuales y de corporaciones, del quebrantamiento del sistema económico actual. El Papa Benedicto XVI recientemente insistió que debajo de la crisis económica mundial actual está acechando la avaricia, enraizada en el pecado original, y la reforma de la arquitectura de la economía global será de poco uso sin la conversión de corazones individuales. El Papa Benedicto dijo, "Donde no hay gente justa, no hay justicia. Por eso, la educación en justicia debe de ser la

(Mira **ECONOMIA/18**)

From the Editor

Filling our buckets: God's way of keeping us coming back for more**By Jimmy Patterson**

The question was posed at a recent small gathering among friends. "Why?" it was wondered, "did God leave so many loose ends?"

If you think about it, there are unanswered questions in the Gospels, and with Jesus' life, death and Resurrection.

I thought maybe two of the wiser members of the group might have been hearing a question they'd not heard before. I thought I had stumped the jury.

But it was all too quickly that one of them pitched up his hands and offered this:

"It's because of the bucket," he said. "We are left with questions in this journey of faith because it forces us to refill our buckets."

Collectively, we all sat on our hands not quite sure what our buckets were or how we filled them. Yet.

Soon enough, though, the bucket metaphor made itself clearer. Our buckets, our friend explained, represent the state of our spiritual renewal. Were we to go through this life without questions because we have all the answers, what need would we have to refill our buckets? Why would we return to Mass, to fellowship with others at Church, attend retreats or 'Why Catholic?' groups? Why would we have a need to refill if we know all the answers 24/7?

The bucket talk brought to mind the old Star Trek episode called "The Apple." Blindly and without question, day in and day out, the people of planet Gamma Trianguli go to the altar of their computerized stone god, Vaal, and make sacrifices. They believe in their god without any doubts whatsoever, and they do as their forefathers have done through time: they keep feeding Vaal every day, lest they die. The people of the planet seem happy enough, in a zombie-like, unfulfilled manner, because they don't know any better. They've never really felt a need to refill their buckets and they just think they're happy.

Our God is kind and loving enough to leave us not only a loving Son who died for us, but a Son who provided us with untold lessons on how to live, and just enough unanswered questions to give us one of two choices: we can deny that he is the Savior and walk away, or we can continue to feed our spiritual needs through the different ways that we require to fill our bucket. God encourages us to ask questions. To think. He knows that's how we fill our buckets. Vaal would have never permitted such behavior from the Gamma Triangulans.

The wise man in our group reminded us that some of our buckets may be small, others mid size and still others big. But it matters not how big or small they are, as long as when they spring a leak or some of what's in them splashes out or dries up, we respond by heading to our nearest fountain of replenishment.

How full is your bucket? And what is the best way you can fill it up, and keep it filled up, so that your spiritual life is maximized every day?



Patterson

DIOCESAN DATES

Bishop's Calendar

MAY

11-12 -- CORPUS CHRISTI – Kenedy Foundation Board Meeting
13 -- ST. LAWRENCE, St. Lawrence – Confirmation at 6:30 p.m.
14 -- SAN ANGELO, Diocesan Pastoral Center – Staff Mass at 8:30 and Staff Meeting at 11 a.m.
14 -- BALLINGER, St. Mary – Confirmation at 6:30 p.m.
15 -- BROWNWOOD, St. Mary – Confirmation at 6:30 p.m.
16 -- ABILENE, St. Vincent – Confirmation at 5:30 p.m.
17 -- CLYDE, Sts. Joachim and Ann – Confirmation at 8:00 a.m.
19 -- ELDORADO, Our Lady of Guadalupe – Confirmation at 6:30 p.m.
20 -- MIDLAND, Our Lady of San Juan – Confirmation at 6:30 p.m.
21 -- ANDREWS, Our Lady of Lourdes – Confirmation at 6:30 p.m.
22 -- COLEMAN, Sacred Heart – Confirmation at 6:30 p.m.
23 -- ODESSA, St. Joseph – Confirmation at 7:00p.m.
24 -- SONORA, St. Ann – Confirmation at 10:30 a.m.
25 -- AUSTIN, Prayer for Texas Legislature
26 -- MIDLAND, St. Ann School – Graduation at 7:00 p.m.
28 -- SAN ANGELO, St. Margaret – Confirmation at 6:30 p.m.
29-30 -- SAN ANTONIO – 50th Priestly Anniversary of Father Ted Pfeifer, OMI

JUNE

1 -- SAN ANGELO, Diocesan Pastoral Center – Presbyter Council Meeting at 2 p.m.; Christ the King Retreat Center – Dinner with Lubbock and San Angelo Priests at 5:00 p.m.
2 -- STANTON, St. Joseph – Confirmation at 6:30 p.m.
3 -- MENARD, Sacred Heart – Confirmation at 6:30 p.m.
4-6 -- ST PAUL, MINN. – Rural Life Conference.
7 -- SAN ANGELO, Sacred Heart Cathedral – Marriage Jubilee Day at 2 p.m.
7 -- SAN ANGELO, Christ the King Retreat Center – Make A Difference – 4 p.m.
8-9 -- BROWNSVILLE – Sesquicentennial Celebration of Immaculate Conception Cathedral
10 -- BRADY, St. Patrick – Confirmation at 6:30 p.m.
11 -- SWEETWATER, Immac. Heart – Confirmation at 6:30 p.m.

12 -- EDEN, St. Charles – Confirmation at 6:30 p.m.
13 -- SAN ANGELO, St. Mary – Confirmation at 5 p.m.
14 -- SANDERSON, St. James- Confirmation at 11:30 a.m.
15-19 -- SAN ANTONIO, USCCB Spring Meeting
20 -- SAN ANGELO, San Angelo Museum of Fine Arts – Program of The Lady in Blue
21 -- BIG LAKE, St. Margaret – 50th Anniversary of parish – Mass at 11:30 a.m.
23 -- MIDLAND – Rural Life Mass at 6:30 p.m.
25-25 -- ST. PAUL, MINN. – National Association of Catholic Family Life Ministers
28 -- ABILENE – St. Francis – 25th Priestly Anniversary of Bishop Joe Vasquez – Mass at 9:00 a.m. and 11 a.m.
28 -- ABILENE – St. Vincent – 25th Priestly Anniversary of Bishop Joe Vasquez – Prayer Service and Dinner at 6:00 p.m.

CHRIST THE KING Retreat Center JUNE

1-5 -- Lubbock Diocese Priests Retreat
5-6 -- Prayer Group Leadership Training
7-12 -- Make a Difference Program
8 -- Heart of Mercy Prayer Group
9 -- Adoration of the Blessed Sacrament 5-6 pm
13 -- Deacon Training Program
15 -- Heart of Mercy Prayer Group
16 -- Adoration of the Blessed Sacrament 5-6 pm
18-21 -- Girls' Chrysalis
22 -- Heart of Mercy Prayer Group
23 -- Adoration of the Blessed Sacrament 5-6 pm
25-28 -- Women's Catholic Cursillo
29 -- Heart of Mercy Prayer Group
30 -- Adoration of the Blessed Sacrament 5-6 pm

NECROLOGY JUNE

7 -- Rev. Ray Corr, O.P., (2005)
8 -- Rev. Felix Cubelo (2007)
13 -- Rev. David Espitia (2003)
18 -- Rev. John Lucassen (1993)
20 -- Deacon William Smith (2003)
22 -- Rev. Msgr. Alvin Wilde (1996)
28 -- Bishop Stephen Leven (1983)

What is marriage encounter?

By Bishop Michael Pfeifer, OMI

Marriage Encounter has returned to the Diocese of San Angelo, and it pleases me very much as bishop that Christ the King Retreat Center is sponsoring once again some of these this powerfully enriching marriage experience.

What is Marriage Encounter? Marriage Encounter is a weekend away from the responsibilities and practicalities of everyday life, in order to expand and deepen a couple's married life. An Encounter weekend is not a retreat as such, nor a marriage clinic, or a sensitivity group. It aims to help participants develop very special communication skills in a prayerful setting. The Encounter helps married couples to

come in contact with their feelings. This enables feelings and thoughts to flow more freely, resulting in greater love, renewed dedication, and more joy in living out the Sacrament of Matrimony.

Marriage Encounter began as a way of improving communication between husbands and wives. However as insights grew, it became apparent that the techniques used in the sessions could benefit anyone whose vocation involves close, caring communication with others. For this reason priests and religious can participate fully in an Encounter.

At a Marriage Encounter, a series of presentations are given by a team of Catholic couples and a priest. Each presentation allows couples to look at themselves as indi-

viduals, and then to look at their relationship to those with whom they live, work, and to whom they minister. Most importantly, Marriage Encounter leads couples to look at their relationship with God, the Church as a whole, and the world.

Marriage Encounter fosters dialogue between the marriage partners, enabling them to examine and test the new principles of loving communication learned in the course of the weekend. I strongly encourage married couples of our Diocese to think about making a Marriage Encounter. The Encounter is a special way of enabling couples to deepen their marriage commitment, to strengthen the bond of love for one another and for family.

Midland to host next Marriage Encounter Weekend, May 29-31

A Marriage Encounter Weekend is scheduled for May 29-31 at the Circle 6 Ranch in Stanton.

Marriage Encounter is designed to give married couples the opportunity to examine their lives together, a time to share their feelings, their hopes, disappointments, joys and frustrations and to do so openly and honestly in a face-to-face, heart-to-heart encounter with the one person they have chosen to live with for the rest of their life. The emphasis on Marriage Encounter is on communications between husband and wife, who spend a weekend together away from the distractions and the tensions of everyday life to concentrate on each other.

Registration fee is \$50. For more information on the upcoming Marriage Encounter weekend at Circle 6, please contact Tom and Susan Williams, Midland, 432-697-9904 or email padani-mal@sbcglobal.net.

Other Marriage Encounter weekends upcoming in the diocese include Oct. 30-Nov. 1 at Circle 6, and June 4-6, 2010 in San Angelo.

Encuentro de Novios: San José en Odessa

Padre José Uecker, C.P.P.S.

El primer Encuentro de Novios en español tuvo lugar en la Parroquia de San José en Odessa el 20-22 de marzo. Después de estar en Odessa por varios años, el Padre José Uecker, C.P.P.S. conocía la necesidad de más preparación para el matrimonio en español, especialmente en esta parte de la Diócesis de San Angelo.

Buscó a dos parejas de la parroquia, Ricardo y Lidia Ruvalcaba y Homero y Linda Samaniego y con la ayuda del Encuentro de Novios en California, este equipo hizo lo necesario para presentar el primer encuentro en la diócesis.

Hubo 2 parejas como novios, una pareja ya casada por el civil y otra pareja ya casada por la Iglesia que va a ayudar en el futuro. Grupo pequeño, sí; pero cosas buenas comienzan pequeñas. ¡Ojalá que en el futuro haya más parejas!

¿Cómo fue el encuentro? "Everything about this encounter was beautiful. The talks allowed us to bond and share more things with one another. We learned so much about ourselves and future spouse. We learned that if we place God in the center of our relationship, all in



Seated: Sergio Aranda, Myra Arzate, Elva Covos Hernandez, Ricardo Hernandez, Griselda Benavides, Jonathan Arias.

Standing: Porfirio Barajas, Genoveva Barajas, Ricardo Ruvalcaba, Lidia Ruvalcaba, Fr. Joseph Uecker, C.P.P.S., Linda Samaniego, Homero Samaniego.

life is possible."

"Invitamos a las parejas a que vivan una nueva experiencia, en el sacramento que van a compartir. Fue hermoso y educativa para nosotros después de 31 años de matrimonio."

"This retreat gave us a better understanding of each other and what married life will be. The discussions allowed us to go more in depth with the ideas that as individuals, we possessed and therefore bringing us closer together."

"We recommend the encounter for every couple that is planning to get married. It was very rewarding and a beautiful experience."

Una parte muy necesaria fue el apoyo que recibimos del Movimiento Familiar Cristiano de Odessa. Estas familias cocinaron y hospedaron a las parejas en sus casas. Recibieron a las parejas el viernes en la noche y rezaron todo el fin de semana por nosotros. Estamos agradecidos por todo, hermanos.

The Church's teachings on indulgences

By Bishop Michael Pfeifer, OMI

In the March edition of the West Texas Angelus, I featured an article on the question: What are Indulgences? There is much misunderstanding about the true teaching of the Church on indulgences, and in this article I hope to bring clarity to a further question about indulgences — How can indulgences remove some or all of the temporal punishment for sin? As I stated in the last article on indulgences, the information that I share in this article is taken from United States Catholic Bishop's document on Popular Devotion Practices: Basic questions and answers. As I did in the previous article, let me put the present question in the context of what Pope John Paul II stated about the Church's teaching on indulgences. Our Holy Father pointed out that the truth about the Communion of Saints, which unites believers to Christ and to one another, reveals how much each of us can help others — living or deceased — to become even more intimately united with our Father in Heaven. The Pope stated clearly that all of us in the Communion of Saints need to recognize that whatever help we can give each other ultimately comes not from ourselves but from Christ. John Paul II stated, "For when the faithful gain indulgences, they realize that by their own powers, they cannot atone for the evil that they have afflicted upon themselves and the entire community by sinning; they, therefore, are moved to healthy humility." (Apostolic Constitution on Indulgences)

How can indulgences remove some or all of the temporal punishment for sin?

It is because of the Communion of Saints that some or all of the temporal

punishment for sin is removed. Although we always have to face the consequences of our sins in the form of the temporal punishment for sin — that is, the painful process of restoration and reparation — as members of the Body of Christ we are never simply on our own. We are linked with Christ and with the martyrs and saints and can benefit from their holiness in such a way as to be freed from at least a portion of the temporal punishment for sin. "In this wonderful exchange, the holiness of one profits others, well beyond the harm that the sin of one could cause others." (61)

As a result of the communion that exists between Christ and all the members of the Church, the Church has a treasury of spiritual goods that is inexhaustible. The source of these spiritual goods is Christ. Pope Paul VI taught that this treasury of the Church is not to be likened to a centuries-old accumulation of material wealth. It means rather the limitless and inexhaustible value that the expiations and merits offered by Christ have in the eyes of God for the liberation of all humanity from sin and for the creation of communion with the Father. The treasury of the Church is Christ the Redeemer himself: in him the atonement and merit of his redemption exist and are at work. Since the martyrs and saints have accomplished all that they have in union with Christ, this treasury also includes the value of all their prayers and good works. "As they followed Christ through the power of his grace, they became holy and they have accomplished a work pleasing to the Father. As a result, in working out their own salvation they have also contributed to the salvation of their co-members in Christ's Mystical Body."(63)

Through her union with Christ, the Church has the authority to dispense this treasury. When the church does this, in order to spur people to acts of piety and charity, the Church requires those who seek an indulgence to perform some good work or act of devotion. (64) Furthermore, for reception of a plenary indulgence, which grants the remission of all temporal punishment due to sin, in addition to this good work or act of devotion, the Church specifies four conditions: (1) sacramental confession, (2) reception of Holy Communion, (3) prayer for the intentions of the Holy Father, and (4) complete detachment from all sin, even venial sin. (65) It must not be thought, however, that such acts of ours are somehow of themselves sufficient to earn the remission of the temporal punishment for sins. Our efforts, themselves the work of God's grace, express our openness to receive God's mercy. In the work of our salvation, it is always God's grace that is primary, with a power that far exceeds all our efforts.

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May is the month to honor our mothers

By Bishop Michael Pfeifer, OMI

Traditionally, May is known as the month to honor and celebrate our mothers, especially the wonderful spiritual mother of all of us, Mary, the Mother of Jesus. The special day to honor mothers is the second Sunday of May, which this year falls on May 10, 2009. First and foremost, we pay loving tribute to Mary, our Mother, who is always watching over us, and always wanting to draw us closer to her Son and our Savior, Jesus Christ. This is a special month to thank our Blessed Mother for all the many wonderful things she does for us throughout the year.

In May, we also honor our dear earthly mothers, and thank God we have at least one day of the year set aside to honor these special people who have given us life, and who have helped us to be what we are. The first Mother's Day observance was held at a church service on May 10, 1908 in the Andrews Methodist Church, Grafton, West Virginia. That service was requested by Miss Anna Jarvis to honor her dear mother. Miss Jarvis was a prime mover to establish Mother's Day in the United States, and she was gratified to see President Woodrow Wilson issue the first Mother's Day proclamation in 1914. While we have one special day to honor and thank our dear mothers, every day of the year we should recognize and express our love



to our dear mothers for everything they do for us.

I congratulate all the mothers of our Diocese on their special day, asking Christ to bless them, and asking Mary our Mother to grant them her maternal care and protection. Many of us have lost our dear mothers, and we pray in a special way that God grant them eternal peace. Dear mothers, have a wonderful, joyful and relaxing day with your husbands and families on your special day.



Parishioner celebrates 101st birthday

Bishop Michael D. Pfeifer helped Maria Esquivel Sanchez celebrate her 101st birthday March 30, 2009.

Ms. Sanchez is a parishioner at St. Joseph's Mission in Loraine.

Happy Birthday, Ms. Sanchez!

Making Sense of Bioethics

The darkness of Obama's stem cell policy

By Fr. Tad Pacholczyk

President Obama, on March 9, 2009, signed an important executive order that vastly expanded federal funding for human embryonic stem cell research and crossed a significant and troubling ethical line.

This decision, and the rhetoric during the signing, encouraged scientists and researchers to enter the moral quagmire of taking some human lives in order to benefit others. During his signing speech, in order to support his decision, the president invoked the name of Christopher Reeve and other patients desperate to find cures for their ailments.

Desperation, however, rarely makes for good ethics.

I once heard a true story that brought this point home for me in a dramatic way. The story involved a father and his two young sons. They had a favorite swimming hole out in the countryside which they would visit on hot summer days. The father, however, had never learned to swim, while the boys had learned when they were younger and could swim moderately well.

Their father would sit on the shore while the boys would swim inside a line of bright red buoys that marked where the shelf on the floor of the swimming hole would drop off steeply. Each year, the father would tell his sons not to cross that line, because if they did, he would not be able to swim out and rescue them. Each year they would faithfully obey. This particular year, however, they decided to challenge their dad's authority and venture

beyond the buoys.

As they swam beyond the line, their father saw them and called out to them to return, but they feigned they couldn't hear him and continued to swim out even further. Their dad got nervous, and began to walk out into the water, as it got deeper and deeper, and suddenly he moved into the drop-off section and began sinking.

From a distance, the boys spotted him flailing around in the water, gasping for breath, trying to keep his head above water, and slapping the water with his hands. They suddenly realized he was drowning, and swam towards him. As they got near him, he yelled at them not to come any closer. He cried out, "Get away! Don't touch me!" In fear, they kept their distance until he stopped struggling in the water, and began to sink beneath the surface, with gurgling and bubbling.

As he slipped into unconsciousness, the boys approached him and grabbed him as best they could and dragged him back to shore, where he sputtered and revived and finally coughed out the water he had taken in. Later, the boys asked him why he shouted at them to stay away. He said he was afraid if he put his hand on them, he would drag them under the water with him. He knew that a desperate person would reach for almost anything nearby in order to save himself, maybe even his own children, and he didn't want to do that.

We must be similarly concerned in our society when scientists and desperate patients are tempted to put their hand onto our embryonic children in a bid to alleviate suffering or even to save themselves. Sadly, the President's stem cell decision encourages this kind of unethical behavior by an emotional appeal to patient desperation. The President's ethical mistake is further compounded by the fact that remarkable and powerful scientific

alternatives exist, such as cellular reprogramming on the one hand, or the use of adult/umbilical cord stem cells on the other, neither of which requires ever laying a hand on a human embryo.

His stem cell decision also manifests a troubling shift towards a more widespread and systemic form of oppression within our society. The President is offering Americans the prospect of using the powers of science to oppress, or more accurately, to suppress the youngest members of the human family to serve the interests of older and more wealthy members. He is offering Americans the prospect of reducing fellow human beings to cogs and commodities in the assembly line of the medico-business industrial complex.

Many Americans, however, seem only vaguely aware of what has transpired in the President's decision. Supreme Court Justice William O. Douglas once commented on the way that oppression can subtly arise in our midst: "As nightfall does not come at once, neither does oppression. In both instances, there's a twilight where everything remains seemingly unchanged, and it is in such twilight that we must be aware of change in the air, however slight, lest we become unwitting victims of the darkness."

Some would suggest that perhaps the darkness is already upon us. But a few moments of twilight may still remain, in which Americans can turn back the moral darkness that threatens our society and our future.

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

Atrapado en el fuego cruzado del deseo de ser padres

Padre Tad Pacholczyk

Marzo, 2009

(De la serie "Making Sense out of Bioethics")

Siempre que doy una plática sobre la fertilización in vitro, trato de explicar cómo es que la vida humana debe ser procreada en la calidez de la unión marital y en el seno protector del vientre materno, y no en el ámbito frío e impersonal del laboratorio o en un contexto de manipulación en una caja de Petri.

En una ocasión, al final de una plática, se me acercó una pareja casada. Mediante el procedimiento de la fertilización in vitro habían tenido varios hijos. Al parecer, su conciencia se había intranquilizado con mi plática y me dirigieron una crítica pero honesta pregunta: "Si la fertilización in vitro está mal, ¿quiere usted decir que hubiera sido mejor no haber tenido nuestros preciosos hijos? No imaginamos la vida sin ellos".

Es difícil imaginar un mundo diferente al que nos hemos construido en base a elecciones personales. Esto se debe a la tendencia innata a justificar nuestras decisiones aun y cuando estén equivocadas, enfocándonos en los "resultados deseables" y en las "buenas intenciones". Sin embargo, cuando nos atrevemos a ver más allá de nuestras intenciones, empezamos a discernir otras verdades importantes de considerar al momento de tomar una decisión, y que nos retan a ver, más allá de lo que queremos y deseamos, la imagen completa del plan para nuestras vidas.

Recuerdo una conversación que tuve con una señora que había tenido un hijo fuera del matrimonio y que estaba criando como madre soltera. Su niño era una fuente inagotable de alegría y bendiciones para ella y para toda su familia. En un momento de la conversación, con candor admitió, "Aunque amo a mi hijo con toda mi alma y no puedo imaginar mi vida sin él, me he dado cuenta de que hubiera sido mejor elegir no tener relaciones sexuales antes de casarme, aunque eso significara no haber tenido mi hijo precioso. Pude y debí haber seguido otro camino".

Esta señora me comentó que había supuesto que al entregarse al hombre que esperaba un día fuera su esposo, se encaminaba hacia la realización personal. Pronto se dio cuenta, sin embargo, de que su hijo había sido privado

(Mira TAD/16)

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Pope declares year of the priest to inspire spiritual perfection

By Carol Glatz
Catholic News Service

VATICAN CITY — Pope Benedict XVI declared a year of the priest in an effort to encourage “spiritual perfection” in priests.

The pope will open the special year with a vespers service at the Vatican June 19 — the feast of the Sacred Heart of Jesus and the day for the sanctification of priests. He will close the celebrations during a World Meeting of Priests in St. Peter’s Square June 19, 2010.

The pope made the announcement during an audience March 16 with members of the Vatican Congregation for Clergy.

He met with some 70 participants of the congregation’s March 16-18 plenary assembly, which focused on the missionary identity of the priest and his mission to sanctify, teach and govern.

During this jubilee year, the pope will also proclaim St. John Vianney to be patron saint of all the world’s priests. At present he is considered the patron saint of parish priests.

This year marks the 150th anniversary of the death of this 19th-century saint who represents a “true example of a priest at the service of the flock of Christ,” the pope said.

St. John Vianney is widely known to Catholics as the Cure (parish priest) of Ars who won over the hearts of his villagers in France by visiting with them, teaching them about God and reconciling people to the Lord in the confessional.



Pope Benedict XVI meets priests from the Diocese of Rome during an audience at the Vatican Feb. 26. At the meeting with more than 400 priests, the pope said his social encyclical has been delayed in order for it to address the current global economic crisis.

(CNS/L'Osservatore Romano via Reuters) (Feb. 26, 2009)

In his address, Pope Benedict said the priestly ministry consists of total adherence to the ecclesial tradition of participating “in a spiritually intense new life and a new lifestyle which was inaugurated by the Lord Jesus and which the apostles made their own.”

Priestly ordination creates new men who are bestowed with the gift and office of sanctifying, teaching and governing, he

said.

The pope underlined the necessary and “indispensable struggle for moral perfection which must dwell in every authentical-priestly heart.”

The pope said he was calling for the special year for priests in an effort to foster the priest’s yearning “for spiritual perfection, upon which the effectiveness of their ministry principally depends.”

“The awareness of the radical social changes over the past decades must stir the best ecclesial energies to look after the formation of priestly candidates,” the pope said.

This means great care must be taken to ensure permanent and consistent doctrinal and spiritual formation for seminarians and priests, he said, specifying the importance of passing down, especially to younger generations, “a correct reading of the texts of the Second Vatican Council, interpreted in the light of all the church’s doctrinal heritage.”

Priests must also be “present, identifiable and recognizable — for their judgment of faith, their personal virtues and their attire — in the fields of culture and charity which have always been at the heart of the church’s mission,” he said.

“The centrality of Christ leads to a correct valuation of ordained ministry,” he said, adding that, without priestly ministry, there would be no Eucharist, no mission and even no church.

Therefore, he said, it is crucial to make sure that new bodies or pastoral organizations are not set up “for a time in which one might have to ‘dispense with’ ordained ministry based on an erroneous interpretation of the rightful promotion of the laity.”

“This would lay the foundations for further diluting the priestly ministry, and any supposed ‘solutions’ would dramatically coincide with the real causes of the problems currently connected with the ministry,” he said.

Community at Holy Family in Mereta celebrate blessing of new parish hall



The Angelus

Bishop Michael Pfeifer and Fr. Mario Ortiz, administrator of Holy Family Church in Mereta, joined parishioners March 15 for the blessing and opening of the new parish hall in the small community near San Angelo.

“It was a joyous occasion for the faithful of Holy Family to see their bishop at such an event,” Fr. Ortiz said. “The church was packed with people and everyone was excited to see and hear Bishop Pfeifer.”

Members of the parish council and Fr. Ortiz were thanked for their leadership in the effort to get the new hall built. Former pastor Fr. Tom Barley, instrumental in the earlier efforts to build the hall, also attended the celebration, which included a pot luck dinner that also served as a fundraiser for future projects.

“It was a blessed day,” Fr. Ortiz said. “It was a wonderful feeling being there. God was with his people that day.”

Photos: Bishop Pfeifer, left, with Fr. Mario Ortiz, Parish Administrator at Holy Family in Mereta (at left), and Eucharist is celebrated, right.



Catholic Voices

Spirituality for adults: What is it exactly?

By **Antoinette Bosco**
Catholic News Service

As winter was coming to an end, I felt it was time for my days to have an infusion of what I simply call "something sunny." Then I saw an ad in America magazine for a program at Wisdom House, a retreat center not far from where I live. Elizabeth A. Dryer, a professor at Jesuit-run Fairfield University in Connecticut, was scheduled to give a program on "Spirituality for Catholic Women." I signed up. But first I bought her book, "Making Sense of God: A Woman's Perspective" (St. Anthony Messenger Press).

I immediately knew I was in the right place when I read that "spirituality is the joy of falling in love with God and living out that



Bosco

love in everyday life." That sentence was something worth meditating on!

At the program, I sat down next to two lovely women, Felicia and Barb, surprised to learn that they lived in my own town and are members of a former parish of mine. We were actually neighbors!

Felicia and Barb were sponsoring a "ministry of mothers" meeting on Friday mornings. They invited me to join them when I could, which I did a week later. It was a joyful encounter.

Felicia, a mother of teen triplets, spoke of their mothers ministry as having evolved into a meeting of "companions who share a grounding in faith and a commitment to see all of our life experiences through ministry." She added, "Now we have re-fallen in love with God."

Barb said, "Our moms ministry has given us the strength to survive what life throws at you all the time."

I cannot justly describe the joy that was in

that room, but I knew the source of it. Often I've been reminded by my Catholic teachers that, where two or three are gathered in his name, God -- the source of all joy -- is in their midst!

Another book I was reading that week also gave me a spiritual boost. In "Listening to God's Word," award-winning Catholic author Alice Camille explains in her introduction that her book is "to facilitate that holy crossing from the world of the Bible to the world in which we live and move and have our being." And she adds a truth as only someone deeply immersed in the study of our religious history could: "If our citizenship in the reign of God does not influence our citizenship in this world, we may well be holding a false passport."

Camille begins her book by telling of a time when she suffered from a depression she said she couldn't shake. She asked God "testily": "So what do you want from me?"

and told him, "Forget happiness. ... I'd settle for meaning. I long for a reason to do something, anything," to get away from the future that "yawned so emptily."

What she learned is that "God works in mysterious ways." She picked up a dust-covered red Bible and read it "from cover to cover."

Her life was changed, and she has ever since affirmed: "We need the Bible. We need it not just as a record of salvation history, but for the sake of what we might call salvation present."

Nothing is better "for the God seeker to read" than this book, she affirms, for it is the story of God's journey and ours.

Camille's book is in a series called "Catholic Spirituality for Adults," published by Orbis Books.

These experiences I've just shared have told me that it truly is about time that spirituality for adults continues to make good headway in our church!

Let the music begin

By **Fr. Eugene Hemrick**
Catholic News Service

The neighborhood dogs and the disposition of my neighbors toward me haven't

been the same since I took up the violin again.

When played well, it is heavenly.

When played poorly, it grinds on people and sends dogs howling.

Why did I go back to it? William Shakespeare gives us our first reason "why music was ordained! Was it not to refresh the mind of man after his studies, or his usual pain?"

It is one thing to come home after a hard day's work and listen to soothing music, yet another to create it.

As a listener, we sit on the sidelines and imbibe another's creativity. As a musician, however, we are the

creator! Creating music is a combination of manual dexterity and pouring one's soul into it. Through this process we learn of the refreshing powers Shakespeare speaks of.

Plato reminds us: "Music is to the mind as air is to the body." How often have our thoughts and spirit been moved and elevated by powerful and beautiful music!

Sir J. Denham would concur: "Call in sweet music. I have heard soft airs can charm our senses and expel our cares."

Beethoven reminds us of the connection between the virtue of temperance and music: "That mind alone whose every thought is rhythm can embody music, can comprehend its mysteries, its divine inspirations, and can alone speak to the senses of its intellectual revelations."

When we first think of temperance, it often connotes limiting our appetites: Don't overeat or misuse sex. This is true, but it is truer that temperance is about

order. When we eat too much, we become out of order and out of rhythm with life.

In the Bible, we read that God made order out of chaos. The rest of Scripture is about God's continuing to restore order in the wake of disorder.

Beautiful music reminds us of God's order and desire for rhythm, prompting us to become artists seeking and promoting the beauty of order.

In our ailing economy, one of the first programs to be cut from budgets is the arts, especially school musical programs. In these cases, music is considered a luxury. To this William E. Gladstone would reply: "Those who think that music ranks among the trifles of existence are in gross error."

Picking up the violin again has connected me to God in a new way.

Is it not true that heaven is pictured filled with the music of angels?

The Church's position on tithing

By **Father John Dietzen**
Catholic News Service

Q. What is the church's rule about tithing? I know tithing was required in the Old Testament, but parishes in our area seem to have different regulations and expectations. The church I attend asks us to contribute 5 percent of earnings to support of the parish and 5 percent to our favorite charity. Is there anything official that applies everywhere? (Wisconsin)

A. The Catholic Church today (in fact, the majority of Christians since the beginning) does not prescribe any set amount that should be given to church-related causes.

A tax or a tithe (from an Old English word meaning "a tenth") was common in several ancient cultures, including among the Jewish people. A tenth of all produce, livestock and other income was to be offered to God for the

care of the temple, support of priests and Levites, and the needs of the poor (Dt 14 and 26). Tithing was held to be a serious obligation even into and after the time of Jesus.

Pharisees of Jesus' time boasted of their tithing, causing our Lord to tell them (for example in the parable of the Pharisee and the tax collector in Luke 18) that, if they tithed, they should not neglect the more essential spiritual virtues of humility and mercy. But Jesus himself never commanded it.

Many practice some form of tithing on their own initiative. Bishops and pastors often suggest tithing, to include not only offerings directly to the parish but also gifts to the missions or other apostolic works, as well as costs of Catholic education, something similar to the practice in your parish.

In the end, however, Catholic communities leave the decision to each person's generosity and good will.

Prayer Sharing

My husband is a stock farmer and works with heavy machinery much of the time.

With my concern for him as he went out the door every morning, I began saying, "God bless you," in place of the other meaningless phrases.

At first, he didn't say anything, but he soon became more attentive and began repeating it to me. It's no big thing, but it makes me feel that God will take care of him when no one else can.

Another habit I've formed is in saying the Rosary. It's so repetitive that I often became distracted. So I devised a method that keeps me on track. I

change or add some words to the Ave, Pater and Gloria to ensure my thoughts will remain on my prayers. Once these changes are rote, I change them again, and so on.

An example is: I give Glory to the Father, I praise and worship and thank the Father; I give Glory to the Son, I praise and worship and thank the Son; I give glory to the Spirit, I praise and worship and thank the Holy Spirit, etc., for the Gloria.

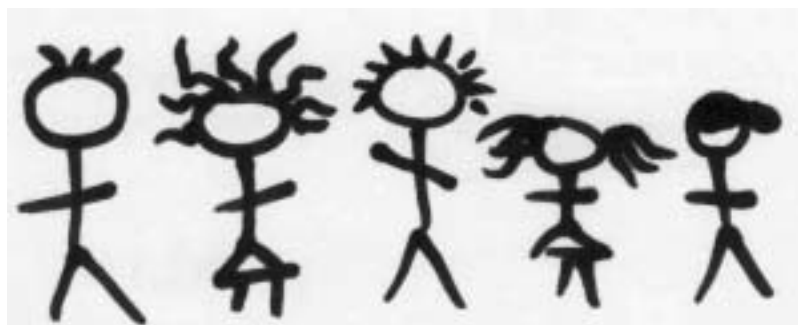
-- **Trudi, Sacred Heart, Coleman**

If you have a submission for our monthly Prayer Sharing Segment, please email them to Jimmy@mrt.com

FAMILY LIFE AND MARRIAGE



The Priority for Ministry



On April 2, 2009, the Presbyteral Council of the Diocese of San Angelo recommended, and Bishop Michael D. Pfeifer adopted, a document prepared by the 2011 Committee called "Family Life and Marriage: The Priority for Ministry." The document and its adoption establishes the main priority for ministry in the diocese as we approach our 50th anniversary.

The bishop also asked the presbyteral council to begin

implementation of this ministry, therefore the council passed a motion recommending and funding the Office of Family Life And Marriage in the diocese. The bishop has also asked that priests continue the discussion and implementation of the ministry as presented in a recent convocation.

Deserving of much appreciation and gratitude are members of the 2011 Committee who have worked during the past three years on the topic of

priorities in ministry as well as the hosts and facilitators of the focus groups for their generous assistance in listening to our families throughout the diocese. You have shared with us matters of concern and suggestions for ministry which will provide guidance for the diocese and parishes in Family Life and Marriage programs for a long time.

May God pour out his blessings upon all who participated in this work and may God

grant guidance and grace to his ministry in our diocese.

What follows in the next three pages are highlights, summaries and strategies discussed by the committee concerning the Family Life and Marriage initiative in the diocese.

**-- Monsignor Larry Droll
Vicar General
Diocese of San Angelo**

FAMILY LIFE AND MARRIAGE: THE PRIORITY FOR MINISTRY

2011—the Diocese of San Angelo at 50 years

Recommended by the Presbyteral Council and adopted by Most Rev. Michael D. Pfeifer, OMI, Bishop of San Angelo, on April 2, 2009

Family life and marriage. The primary place where the Catholic faith is put into practice. Or should be.

Family life and marriage is where our Catholic parishes encounter our people. Therefore, the Diocese of San Angelo and its parishes are committed to support and encourage the practice of the faith among families.

Background

Pope Benedict XVI, during his visit to the United States in April 2008, told the United States bishops in Washington: “A matter of deep concern to us all is the state of the family within society ... devote to it personal interest, care, time, personnel and resources.”

Hearing the pope’s urgent appeal, the Bishop of the Diocese of San Angelo, Most Rev. Michael D. Pfeifer, OMI, called for family life and marriage to become the priority for ministry, as the diocese celebrates its 50th anniversary in October 2011.

Bishop Pfeifer asked the 2011 Committee to help shape this priority. As a result, the committee turned to eight focus groups of families around the diocese for their input. We wanted to 1) see the situation; 2) compare it to the call of the gospel and church teaching, and, 3) suggest actions for ministry to those in family life and marriage.

Summary of the Eight Focus Groups

Question 1: What concerns do you have about families in our parish faith community?

Financial Concerns

► Families are concerned about the economic situation and employment. There is also a concern about young people graduating high school/college, and the lack of job opportunities.

Church/Parish Activity Concerns

- General concern for faith formation in our lives in the parish
- Lack of belonging/participation/ownership
- Lack of parish life, vibrant faith-filled community
- The voice of the community not being heard

Social/Cultural Concerns

- Multi-cultural concern
- Lack of involvement in education system
- Drugs and outside negative influences (materialism, media, etc.)
- Non awareness of resources available to assist families.

Marriage/Marriage Preparation Concerns

- Lack of understanding of Church teaching on marriage
- Cohabitation, Marriage outside the Church
- Divorce, Annulment, Re-marriage

Parenting Concerns

- Lack of parenting skills, children not being parented
- Changing reality in family
- Increase of grandparents raising children
- Teenage pregnancy
- Sexuality – premarital sex and other sexual behaviors

General Family Concerns

- Broad spectrum of family life—communication
- Assisting families significant life changing experiences/events
- Lack of deepening one’s faith life
- Self-esteem
- Acknowledge various types of families
- Lack of hospitality to single parents and divorced parents

Technology Concerns

- Better understanding to embrace the positive of technology

Question 2: What does Christ call us to be as family through Scripture and the Church?

Scripture Passage

- Wedding Feast at Cana shows Jesus’ care for marriage
- Concern: Jesus lost and found in the Temple; life at home afterwards
- Faithfulness: Story of Ruth and Naomi
- Love of spouse: Ephesians 5.23-33

Forgiveness

- Our God is a God of mercy. We too are called to forgive

Discipleship

- We are invited to live the Gospel through justice, service, outreach
- Involvement in the Sacramental Life of the Church
- Joseph and Mary as role models
- Involvement of families in religious education programs

Relationship

- Our relationship with God is expressed in our relationship with others: family, spouse, children, relatives, others
- Offer a call to service as families

Community

- The community is an extension of our family.
- We need to reach out to others in compassion, concern, service
- We participate as families in Mass

Faith Life

- Catholics should marry “in the Church”
- We should follow the commandments: Honor your father and mother; Do not commit adultery
- Be a holy family following the model of the Holy Family
- Our daily lives need to be a reflection of our faith, our relationship with God through love, respect, faithfulness, commitment & prayer.

Sacramental Life

- Sacramental aspects of family life (reconciliation, Holy Eucharist)
- Beauty of Baptism and First Communion ceremonies
- Celebration of the Sacrament of Marriage

Question 3: What are the ways we Catholics can enhance family life in the Parish? What can our Parish and Diocese offer?

Liturgy/Sacrament

- Homilies attentive to concerns of families
- Marriage instruction at various times of formation (high school, before marriage, after marriage)

Catechesis/Formation/Education

- Substantial, intentional catechesis at all levels; formation is needed for all catechists
- Use of radio, TV, and other technologies

Retreats

- Encourage participation, emphasis on retreats such as ACTS, Cursillo, SEARCH, Beginnings Experience, Christ Renews His Parish, family retreats, family activities, youth retreats, parish missions
- Engaged Encounter, Marriage Encounter, couples retreats
- Parish family activities, including fun events

Clergy

- Promote vocations of marriage, priesthood, consecrated life
- Greater clergy presence, visit families

Prayer

- Opportunities for a variety of prayer experience at the parish level
- Family prayer

Social Services

- Resources for families in need
- Tap into the resources/gifts of parish community
- Opportunities for people to gather for support
- Parent and mentoring programs
- Collaboration regarding needs of the community

Church/Parish

- Direct community to specific organizations to address needs;

Family, parents, marriage, etc

- Substantial, intentional faith formation in parish

- Affirm gifts of people
- Address needs of all age groups in parish, including elderly.
- Community building in the parish inclusive of all groups
- Internal focus on family life

Communication

- Positive use of technology that will stimulate positive growth
- Need for communication between community/parish/diocese

Definition of “Family”

As the Focus Groups pointed out, it is vital to be inclusive of all types of families when we discuss family life and plan activities for the parishioners.

We have many “traditional families,” consisting of husband, wife and children. We also have single-parent families, the divorced, the widowed, blended families, adopting parents and inter-generational families. Even unmarried “singles” belong to families.

How can the Parish serve Family Life and Marriage?

In a workshop presented to priests of the diocese in March 2009, John Roberto proposed that the **first strategy** necessary is for each parish to “make family faith formation a goal of congregational life and ministry.” This requires a decision by parish leaders, in consultation with the parish pastoral council.

The “content” of family faith formation does not have to be new programs, but rather finding ways to encourage family faith practices within existing programs, liturgies, and service opportunities. This actually has been encouraged by many church documents over the years; it is important to be “intentional” about including the family focus in the various activities. Of course, some new programs might follow.

In conjunction with this decision, a team of a few interested, skilled and creative parishioners needs to

be drafted to offer this ministry on behalf of the parish. We are always encouraged to invite the laity into roles of ministry on behalf of the church.

After this first strategy of deciding to make family faith formation a goal, Roberto goes on to list the following:

Strategy 2. Utilize church ministries and programming to teach, model, and demonstrate family faith practices and then provide the resources for families to live the practice at home.

Strategy 3. Build on practices families are already engaged in.

Strategy 4. Involve the whole family in congregational life, programs, and leadership roles.

Strategy 5. Offer family inter-generational learning programs.

Strategy 6. Develop family faith formation around life-cycle milestones.

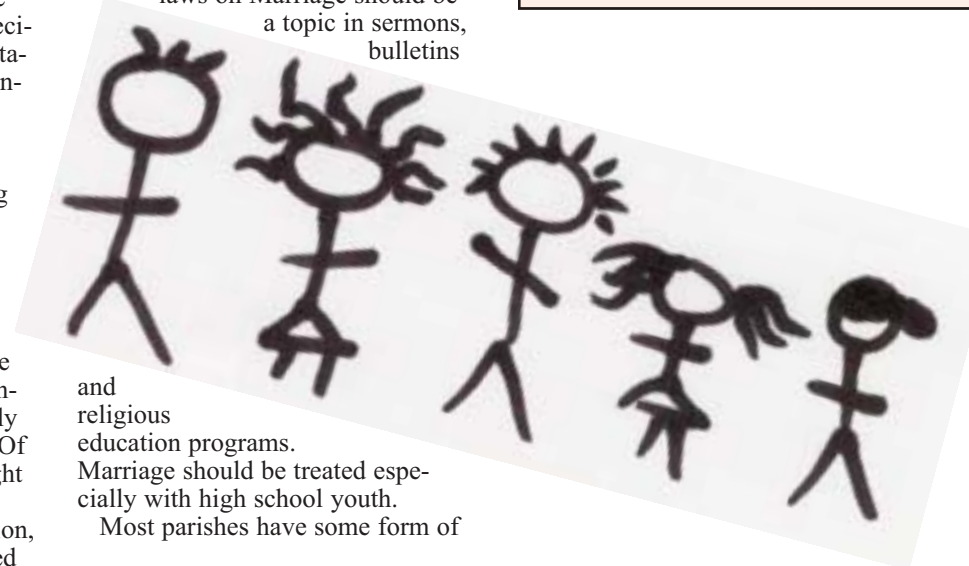
Strategy 7. Offer a variety of developmentally-appropriate family service projects.

Strategy 8. Provide at-home resources for the core family practices.

Strategy 9. Use the Internet to resource and connect families.

How can parishes serve Marriage?

Biblical and church teaching and laws on Marriage should be a topic in sermons, bulletins



and religious education programs. Marriage should be treated especially with high school youth.

Most parishes have some form of

(Please See **PRIORITIES/12**)



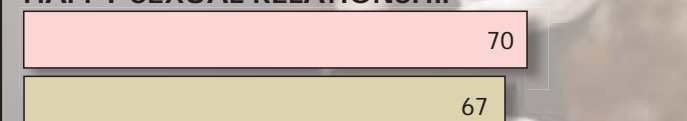
Happy Marriage

Percent of U.S. adults who say these things are very important for a successful marriage.

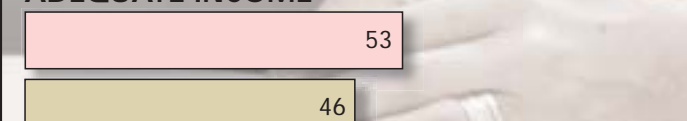
FAITHFULNESS



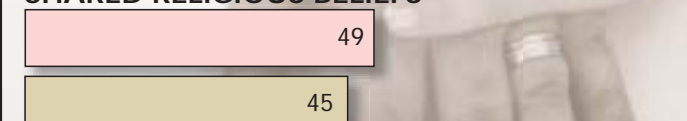
HAPPY SEXUAL RELATIONSHIP



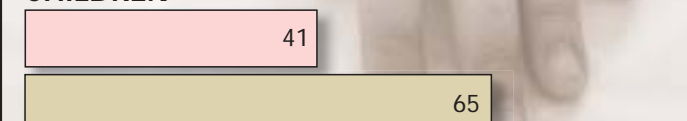
ADEQUATE INCOME



SHARED RELIGIOUS BELIEFS



CHILDREN



Practice Ideas: *Planning for Family Faith Formation*

Use the following strategies and planning questions, in conjunction with the article, "Best Practices in Family Faith Formation," to assess your current efforts and plan for strengthening and expanding family faith formation in your congregation. (The article was part of the handout packet and presentation at Marriage and Family Life the workshop.)

Strategy 1. Make family faith formation a goal of congregational life and ministry.

▶ How does your congregation currently equip families at every stage of life as centers of faith formation through church ministries—worship, education, service, stewardship, evangelism—and community life.

▶ Identify ways that your congregation can make family faith formation more central to the ministries and life of your church?

▶ What are one or two new initiatives that your church can undertake that would dramatically improve your efforts in family faith formation?

Strategy 2. Utilize church ministries and programming to teach, model, and demonstrate family faith practices, and then provide the resources for families to live the practice at home.

▶ How does your church currently equip families to live their faith at home? What types of resources does your church currently provide families to live their faith at home?

▶ What opportunities do you have in your congregation to add a "teaching and demonstration" activity to an existing ministry or program? Identify settings where the whole family is present or where you can gather parents while their children are engaged in other activities.

▶ How can your congregation utilize week-

ly worship to teach and resource families?

▶ What are one or two new initiatives that your church can undertake that would dramatically improve your efforts in teaching faith practices and providing resources for living the practices?

Strategy 3. Build on practices families are already engaged in.

▶ What faith practices are families already engaged in, such as praying, celebrating rituals, and serving?

▶ How can your congregation support families in their efforts and provide additional resources and opportunities to grow in their practice?

Strategy 4. Involve the whole family in congregational life, programs, and leadership roles.

▶ How are families already participating together in the ministries and programs of your church? Identify examples of where the whole family is engaged in a church ministry or program.

▶ How can your congregation expand the opportunities for the whole family to participate together in worship, education, service, outreach, stewardship, leadership, and other church activities?

▶ How can you redesign existing programs and activities so they involve the whole family?

▶ What are one or two new initiatives that your church can undertake that would dramatically improve your efforts at involving the family in congregational life, programs, and leadership?

Strategy 5. Offer family and intergenerational learning programs.

▶ What types of family and/or intergenera-

tional learning programs does your congregation offer? When are they offered? What are the topics or themes addressed?

▶ How can your congregation expand the opportunities for the whole family to learn together? Consider the following program ideas:

- ✓ monthly large group family or intergenerational learning programs
- ✓ family workshops through the year focused on family faith practices, church year seasons, and/or family-focused topics
- ✓ family cluster or small group learning programs
- ✓ family-centered (small group or large group) lectionary-based Scripture reflection
- ✓ family-centered or intergenerational vacation Bible school
- ✓ family retreats and camps
- ✓ family Bible study
- ✓ family-centered sacramental/ritual preparation programs

Strategy 6. Develop family faith formation around life-cycle milestones.

▶ How does your congregation currently provide faith formation around milestone events in the lives of individuals and families? For example:
 † Faith Community Milestones: baptism, receiving a first Bible, learning to pray, first communion, confirmation, mission trip, wedding, funeral
 † Life-cycle Milestones: birth/becoming a parent, start of school, driver's license, graduations, leaving home, career/first job, becoming a grandparent, retirement, death
 † Rhythm of Life Milestones: birthdays, anniversaries, first day of school, family gatherings and reunions, holidays and vacations, new home, separation and loss

▶ How does your congregation currently 1) prepare people for a milestone, 2) celebrate or remember the milestone, and 3) provide follow-up after the milestone? How does your church provide congregational activities and home resources for each mile-

stone?

▶ What does your congregation need to do to strengthen its current approach to milestones faith formation?

▶ What are one or two new milestones around which your church can develop faith formation?

Strategy 7. Offer a variety of developmentally-appropriate family service projects.

▶ What types of family service projects does your church currently offer?

▶ How can your congregation expand the opportunities for the whole family to be involved in service to those in need and in justice projects—locally and globally?
 ▶ How will you prepare families for service, guide them in reflecting upon the service, and support them in continuing their service involvements?

Strategy 8. Provide at-home resources for the core family faith practices.

▶ What types of resources does your congregation provide families throughout the year, such as resources connected to educational programming or Sunday worship or liturgical seasons?

▶ What opportunities already exist in your church to provide resources to families around the five core family faith practices?

Strategy 9. Use the Internet to resource and connect families.

▶ Does your church have a web site? What kinds of information is provided online? Does your church web site serve and reach families?

▶ How can you better utilize your church's web site to deliver timely faith formation resources to the home, provide social network among families to share faith stories and practices, and provide support, sources, and networking for parents?

PRIORITIES: Diocese to make marriage, family life top issue for 50th jubilee year

(From 11)

marriage preparation in place for couples approaching the sacrament of marriage. The Diocese of San Angelo approves the Engaged Encounter and the Sponsor Couple Program of Fr. Robert Ruhnke, For Better and Forever.

Weddings will be celebrated prayerfully and joyfully. Some form of following up with newly weds is encouraged.

Parishes would do well to call parishioners' attention to existing retreats and professional counseling services for marriage enrichment or to deal with marriage

problems. They might develop opportunities for parish level retreats or times of reflection for couples.

Parishes will offer assistance to parishioners who may need certain canonical procedures to be addressed before couples can celebrate the Sacrament of Marriage.

How can the Diocese of San Angelo support the parishes in this work?

The Diocese of San Angelo will develop an Office of Family Life and Marriage, with a person(s) professionally trained in this area. This office should be on an equal level with the Office of Education and

Formation or the Vocation Office.

The first duty of this office should be to train those in parishes involved in Family Life and Marriage ministries.

The second duty of the diocesan office is to offer programs at the retreat center or in parishes.

Each diocesan department can intensify its focus on family life and marriage, too. For example, the Office of Education and Formation, pro-life, rural life, criminal justice ministry and others can keep the family focus in mind and make this an intentional part of their ministry and programming.

Conclusion

Family Life and Marriage is to be the prime priority for ministry in the Diocese of San Angelo, as we celebrate our 50th anniversary in 2011. If this priority is to take hold, it must be given time and resources to grow.

We dedicate ourselves to fulfilling Moses' command to the People of God: "Take care and be earnestly on your guard not to forget the things which your own eyes have seen, nor let them slip from your memory as long as you live, but teach them to your children and to your children's children." -- Deuteronomy 4.9

Culture

USCCB Motion Picture Ratings

NEW YORK (CNS) -- Here is a list of recent films that the Office for Film & Broadcasting of the U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops has rated on the basis of moral suitability.

The first symbol after each title is the USCCB Office for Film & Broadcasting classification. The second symbol is the rating of the Motion Picture Association of America.

Office for Film & Broadcasting classifications: **A-I** -- general patronage; **A-II** -- adults and adolescents; **A-III** -- adults; **L** -- limited adult audience, films whose problematic content many adults would find troubling; **O** -- morally offensive.

MPAA ratings: **G** -- general audiences. All ages admitted; **PG** -- parental guidance suggested. Some material may not be suitable for children; **PG-13** -- parents strongly cautioned. Some material may be inappropriate for children under 13; **R** -- restricted. Under 17 requires accompanying parent or adult guardian; **NC-17** -- no one 17 and under admitted.

A
Appaloosa, A-III (R)
Australia, A-III (PG-13)

B
Babylon A.D., L (PG-13)
Bangkok Dangerous, L (R)
Battle in Seattle, A-III (R)
Bedtime Stories, A-I (PG)
Beverly Hills Chihuahua, A-I (PG)
Blindness, L (R)
Body of Lies, L (R)



Bolt, A-I (PG)
Brideshead Revisited, A-III (PG-13)

C
Cadillac Records, L (R)
Changeling, A-III (R)
Choke, O (R)
A Christmas Tale (Un Conte de Noel), L (no rating)
City of Ember, A-I (PG)
College, O (R)
The Curious Case of Benjamin Button, A-III (PG-13)

D
Days and Clouds (Giorni e Nuvole), A-III (no rating)
The Day the Earth Stood Still, A-II (PG-13)
Delgo, A-I (PG)
Disaster Movie, O (PG-13)
Doubt, A-III (PG-13)

The Dukes, A-III (PG-13)

E
Elsa & Fred (Elsa y Fred), A-III (PG)
The Express, A-III (PG)

F
Fireproof, A-II (PG)
Flash of Genius, A-II (PG 13)
Forever Strong, A-II (PG 13)
Four Christmases, A-III (PG-13)
Frost/Nixon, A-III (R)
Frozen River, A-III (R)
Fugitive Pieces, A-III (R)

G
Gran Torino, L (R)

H
High School Musical 3: Senior Year, A-I (G)
Hounddog, O (R)



House, A-III (R)
How About You, A-III (no rating)

I
Igor, A-I (PG)

L
Lake City, A-III (R)
Last Chance Harvey, A-III (PG-13)
The Lucky Ones, L (R)

M
Madagascar: Escape 2 Africa, A-II (PG)
Marley & Me, A-II (PG)
The Matador, L (no rating)
Max Payne, L (PG-13)
Milk, L (R)
Miracle at St. Anna, A-III (R)
Mirrors, L (R)
My Best Friend's Girl, O (R)

N
Nick & Norah's Infinite Playlist, L (PG-13)
Nights in Rodanthe, A-III (PG-13)
Nobel Son, L (R)
Nothing Like the Holidays, A-III (PG-13)

P
Passengers, A-III (PG-13)
Pineapple Express, O (R)
A Plumm Summer, A-II (PG)
A Previous Engagement, O (no rating)
Pride and Glory, L (R)

Q
Quantum of Solace, A-III (PG-13)
Quarantine, L (R)

R
Rachel Getting Married, L (R)

The Reader, L (R)
Religulous, O (R)
Revolutionary Road, L (R)
Righteous Kill, L (R)
The Rocker, A-III (PG-13)
Role Models, O (R)
Roman de Gare, A-III (R)

S
Saw V, O (R)
The Secret Life of Bees, A-III (PG-13)
Seven Pounds, L (PG-13)
Sex Drive, O (R)
Slumdog Millionaire, A-III (R)
Soul Men, L (R)
Stranded: I've Come From a Plane That Crashed on the Mountains, A-II (no rating)
Swing Vote, A-III (PG-13)
Synecdoche, New York, L (R)

T
The Tale of Despereaux, A-I(G)
Tell No One (Ne Le Dis a Personne), L (no rating)
Transporter 3, O (PG-13)
Twilight, A-II (PG-13)
Tyler Perry's The Family That Preys, A-III (PG-13)

V
Valkyrie, A-II (PG-13)
Vicky Cristina Barcelona, L (PG-13)

W
W. A-III (PG-13)
The Wackness, O (R)
What Just Happened, L (R)
The Wrestler, L (R)

Y
Yes Man, A-III (PG-13)

Z
Zack and Miri Make a Porno, O (R)

STEM: Adult cells can be obtained without harm to donor, ethical issues

(From 3)

This is a false claim because embryonic stem cell research is fully allowed in the United States—there is no federal law (and almost no state law) against it. The government had in the past set some limits on the number of embryonic stem cell lines eligible for federal funding, limits which have been removed recently by President Obama.

Adult stem cells, on the other hand, can be obtained without harm to the donor and without any ethical problem, and these have already demonstrated great medical promise. Thousands of lives have been saved by adult stem cells—most often in the form of "bone

marrow transplants" for leukemia and other conditions. Today, adult stem cells are being used to help people with Parkinson's disease, many kinds of cancer, spinal cord injury, sickle-cell anemia, heart damage, corneal damage, and dozens of other conditions.

State funding for the Texas Cord Blood Bank is an excellent example of how state dollars for adult stem cell research are curing people now. The Texas Cord Blood Bank is a division of the South Texas Blood & Tissue Center in San Antonio. The Texas Legislature created the nonprofit program in 2001 to establish a statewide cord blood bank. Cord blood donations from this bank have saved lives.

Common sense dictates that our limited taxpayer dollars fund research that is producing results. But what about the moral argument? As I mentioned earlier, embryonic stem cell research involves the destruction of a human life. Any form of embryonic stem cell research, regardless of the source of the embryo, is both unethical and immoral as it denies a young human his or her most basic right—the right to life. Choosing to kill an embryo because it will simply be discarded is morally wrong and ethically indefensible; we cannot attempt to procure good by committing evil.

The Texas Legislature has several bills that would restrict state funding and univer-

sity research to adult stem cell research. Budget provisions requiring that state funding support this ethically and morally responsible research is simply another way of ensuring that Texas continues to fund ethically and morally responsible adult stem cell research—research that is producing cures and treatments.

More information at www.TXcatholic.org.

Andrew Rivas is the Executive Director of the Texas Catholic Conference, the public policy voice of Texas Roman Catholic Bishops.

Family

God doesn't abandon the grieving at time of death (he's just a little busy)

By Jimmy Patterson

It's been over three years since mom passed away and I still remember many of the events leading up to her death like they were yesterday, or last week at least. I was recently reminded of one of the most miraculous occurrences surrounding the death process when some close friends lost an immediate family member and experienced a similar situation that had happened to Mama on January 13, 2006, the afternoon she would take her last breath.

Hospice had informed our family that my mother would die when no one was around.

"She will likely spare everyone the pain of having to watch her die," I remember the hospice worker telling my sister. "When you step down the hall, or all go to have a bite to eat, or someone slips into the restroom for a minute, that's when she'll go."

It's like they know. Yeah, it's like they know. But how? How can the dying be so sure they are alone?

So often those close to death lie in a semi-comatose state. How they even know anyone is standing next to them is a miracle and that they know someone has stepped away



Patterson

is beyond any simple, of-this-world explanation.

But it happens. Three-and-a-half years ago as mom lie in a hospital bed in Irving, my sister and father stood next to her. Claudia stayed by her bedside as my dad turned around and began "puttering" as he has called it all his 85 years. Picking up scattered unread newspapers, sweaters, half empty soft drink cups and used straws. Whatever was out of place my Dad always has had to pick up. Mom called it straightening. Dad puttering. And so that's what he was doing when my sister suddenly said, "She's gone." Mom and dad were married 59 years and 10 days when she passed away. She spared him the pain of watching her go. Simple as that, as hard as it is to explain.

And it happened again in April, when some close friends gathered and watched as their uncle lie in a hospital bed. It was only when the family had stepped into the hall that he died. While no one was looking and no one was there. So there would be no pain.

It is not uncommon for people to question the existence of God, to be mad at him and to even abandon him temporarily after a loved one passes. The grieving often accuse God of "taking someone for no reason." Such feelings of abandonment any counselor will tell you are natural. Even Christ himself implored God why he was abandoning him

at his greatest hour of need.

But God does not leave people. People leave God, many times as a means of dealing with their grief. And it is only when the grieving realize that dealing with their grief without God isn't working very well either that they come back to God. God, they will find, has gone nowhere. He's still where he always was. Right there.

Even though people often turn from God when a loved one dies, that is when God is most present. Witness the showing of friends and the outpouring of love during a funeral, the time of a family's greatest grief.

And witness God's presence -- surely that's what it must be -- when a person, so often semi-conscious, draws his or her last breath when others have slipped out of the room. How else can you explain that?

There really is no other way.

When you are faced with the loss of a loved one, try not to be too hard on God. If it seems like he's abandoned you, maybe it's just because God's just a little busy taking such good care of the one who's saying goodbye to us, and hello to him.

Jimmy Patterson is Director of Communications for the Diocese of San Angelo and editor of the West Texas Angelus.

Bill & Monica Dodds

Taking care of your kids as you care for your aging parent

By Bill and Monica Dodds
Catholic News Service

If you're a member of the "sandwich generation," if you're taking care of your aging parent as well as your children, it's hard to shake the feeling that if you focus on one generation you're losing sight of the needs of the other.

It can help to remember -- to realize -- that taking care of your parent is good for your children too. How so?

You're right that your kids also make a sacrifice, because you can't be around as much as they would like you to be and, most likely, they have to do more -- become more responsible -- because you can't be there. (Maybe they have to make their own lunch to take to school. Or you can't be a chaperone at some school event even though you were able to do that a year or so ago.)

Yes, in some ways a child is being deprived of what a parent might be able to give if he or she didn't have caregiving obligations to an older family member (or

to a spouse who is ill or to a child with special needs). From another perspective, however, those parents are giving something to that child that he or she otherwise couldn't give: a front-row view of love in action without any possibility of mistaking the unchangeable fact that true love demands service and sacrifice.

Still, it can be a lot to put on little shoulders.

All they may see at first glance is that parents aren't there (or there but exhausted from caregiving and holding down a job). And they miss not just what that parent does for them (nice meals, rides to practice and so on) but also that person himself or herself. They miss time spent together.

With that in mind, here are a few suggestions if you're taking care of an aging parent and your children:

- ▶ Talk about this at a time when neither you nor your child are tired and emotions are not running high.
- ▶ Do something special with each child, one on one.
- ▶ Explain what it's like to be a care-receiver, how it can be hard to accept help. Talk about why you're taking care of Grandpa or Grandma and explain in an age-appropriate way what his or her condition is.

▶ Work at establishing a link between your children and your parent. Let them have some time together.

▶ Remember that children can, in small ways, help with caregiving too.

▶ Teach what respectful care means and explain the difference between "dignity" and "dignified." Yes, at times a situation may be less than dignified, but that doesn't mean a person can't be treated with dignity.

▶ Remember to thank the child for making sacrifices and for helping you help your mother or father.

On the Web: Help for Parishes

<http://catholiccaregivers.com> has material to help parishes help family caregivers. And for a free copy of "The Stations of the Cross for Caregivers" send a self-addressed stamped envelope to Friends of St. John the Caregiver, P.O. Box 320, Mountlake Terrace, WA 98043.

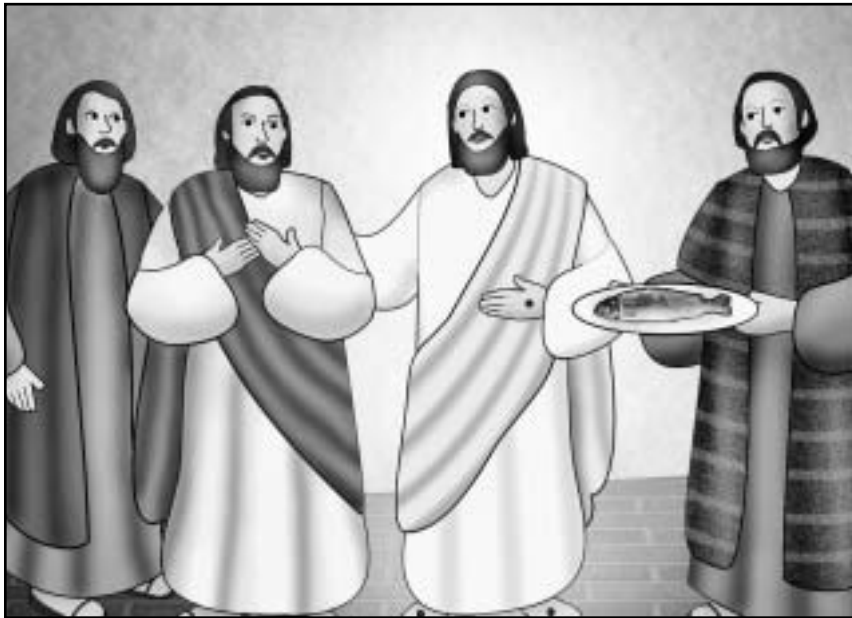
Bill and Monica Dodds are the founders of the Friends of St. John the Caregiver and editors of My Daily Visitor magazine. Their Web site is www.FSJC.org. They can be contacted at MonicaDodds@YourAgingParent.com.



ANSWERS

Answers to Puzzle Page 15:

Ezekiel
Ezra
Isaiah
Thomas

**READ MORE ABOUT IT:****Luke 24****Q&A**

1. How did the disciples react when they first saw Jesus?
2. What did Jesus tell his disciples to wait for?

BIBLE ACCENT

Luke wrote one of the four Gospels. He used eyewitness accounts and several written sources for his work, one being the Gospel of Mark.

In the first chapter of Luke, the author tells a man named Theophilus that he wanted to write a narrative of the life of Jesus "in an orderly sequence." Throughout his writings, Luke frequently uses the Greek instead of Hebrew or Aramaic for the names of some of the people and places he talks about. This indicates he was probably trying to reach gentiles as well as Jews.

Luke also is said to be the author of the Acts of the Apostles.

As a result of Luke's writings, we have his perspective on the life of Jesus and a history of the early Christians and the foundation of the church.

BIBLE TRIVIA

At the end of the last chapter of Luke, where is it that Jesus ascends to?

Answer: Heaven.

PUZZLE

Write the names below that are not books of the New Testament:

1. Matthew
2. Ezekiel
3. James
4. Jude
5. Ezra
6. Romans
7. Isaiah
8. Thomas
9. John
10. Ephesians

(Answer at bottom of Pg. 14)

JUST 4 KIDS

Jesus appears to his disciples

Jesus had been crucified, and he was dead. But that was not the end. When Mary had gone to visit the tomb, she found it empty, and Jesus was gone. Then he appeared to her. Later he also appeared to Peter.

Jesus also walked along with two of the disciples on the road to Emmaus, but as he talked to them, he prevented them from recognizing him. He pretended not to know about the events that had just happened, so they told him about them. Then he also told them about the Scriptures, and later he revealed to them who he was.

When all of the disciples were talking about what had happened, Jesus suddenly was with them and said, "Peace be with you." They reacted as if they had seen a ghost.

Then Jesus asked them, "Why are you troubled? And why do questions arise in your hearts?" He moved closer to his friends and stretched out his hands, palms up. "Look at my hands and my feet, that it is I myself."

Jesus could see that his disciples were still unable to believe that it really was him. "Touch me and see," he told them,

"because a ghost does not have flesh and bones as you can see I have."

Then the disciples believed and knew that it was Jesus and he was alive again. They rejoiced to have him back with them.

"Have you anything here to eat?" Jesus asked. The disciples had some baked fish, and they shared that with Jesus.

After he had eaten, Jesus said, "These are my words that I spoke to you while I was still with you, that everything written about me in the law of Moses and in the prophets and psalms must be fulfilled."

Jesus wanted his disciples to understand as much as possible before he left them. "Thus it is written that the Messiah would suffer and rise from the dead on the third day and that repentance, for the forgiveness of sins, would be preached in his name to all the nations, beginning from Jerusalem. You are witnesses of these things."

When he was sure that his disciples were paying close attention to what he was telling them, Jesus said, "And (behold) I am sending the promise of my Father upon you; but stay in the city until you are clothed with power from on high."

Multitasking and achieving multiple goals two different things

By Therese J. Borchard

I want you to help me solve a time riddle. Let's say you are a mom who works 50 hours a week. You also devote a considerable amount of time to your two children, ages 5 and 7, and try to participate in their school events as much as possible.

Your daughter pleads with you to come to her preschool's special science presentation, and your son begs you to chaperone his field trip later that same day. What do you do?

- a) Go to both of those functions, and try to make up the extra work by staying up really late, possibly giving you a case of the grumpies the next day?
- b) Skip both of them so you can focus on your work and get to bed early?
- c) Attend both of them, but take your Blackberry with you, so



Borchard

that you can squeeze in an e-mail here or there, between say, the reptile exhibit and anteater showcase?

Russell Bishop of the Huffington Post would vote for the option in which you can do one thing at a time, but multiple things together. In a post for the Living section, he talks about the difference between "multiple goals" and "multitasking." Russell explains, "When you take on a goal, figure out what you have to deliver in order to succeed, and then determine the steps necessary. You must manage the process one step at a time. That doesn't mean you can't have multiple goals; however, it does mean that when you are working on one area, you better have your focus there if you want to do well."

That advice has been extremely helpful to me as a working mom who is required to do her fair share of juggling and multitasking in order for Kid 1 to show up at soccer, not ballet; Kid 2 to make it to her eye exam on time; and a blog post about Abraham Lincoln to publish on Presidents Day, not April Fools. So let's go back to our example of the mom struggling with

what to do about the science presentation and field trip. I suspect that Russell would come up with a fourth option: Choose one of these events (going with your favorite kid). That way you don't have to pull out the Blackberry in front of the snakes or stay up late to meet your deadline. Promise the other child (I was just kidding about the favorite) that you will attend her or his event next time.

Why this option? Because if you attempt to show up at both gigs, with your Blackberry of course, chances are great that you will be "half-tasking." That's Russell's term, and I like it.

He writes, "I call it half-tasking. Half their attention is on one goal, and half their attention is on another. When someone is busy half-tasking, often both tasks wind up being underperformed. In fact, sometimes the most important reasons for being there get missed."

Well said. Amen!

Theresa Borchard writes a column for young adults for the *Catholic News Service*.

MALACHY: Newman Center director grateful on 25th jubilee

(From 3)

George provided a witness of loving fidelity in marriage and the willingness to accept children from God (eight). Paul James (maternal grandfather) passed on a love for study and of reading for enjoyment.

The next group of gift-givers is composed of women religious. The Sisters of Mercy showed a concern for the poor, oppressed and marginalized. The Sinsinawa Dominican Sisters exemplify living in a counter-cultural mode, reserving a space at the core of my being for God alone, making decisions communally and assiduously searching for TRUTH. Sister Thomasine, O.P. (a cousin) encouraged me to "hang on" to my Irish sense of humor because that is essen-

tial to living a balanced life. The School Sisters of Notre Dame lit a fire under me academically. Sister Gail Marie Fitzpatrick, O.C.S.O. urged me to trust myself and my judgments and fostered my contemplative bent. God gave me an enthusiasm for life, a determination to grow spiritually and emotionally and gifted me with all of the people just mentioned and those to follow.

At this Newman Center manifold blessings are showered upon me daily. Currently, most students, faculty, administrators and staff who come regularly are enthusiastic, intelligent, energetic, creative, giving, prayerful, joyous and truly Spirit-filled. We work, play and pray together well. Lectionary Study, Praise and Worship Services, Guided

Meditations, and the informal chats after Sunday Liturgy are all holy encounters. On most Wednesdays we celebrate the Eucharist or a Word Service with Communion. Those who pray with us come out of choice, partly because our Presiders are superior! They come prepared and in addition to feeding us with the Body of Christ, they provide nourishing homilies and reflections. Our culinary artist is second to none. She will probably be here long after the students graduate if she keeps making fresh salsa and homemade cobbler. The yard "crew" is really two "Master Gardeners," one of whom is also the best of volunteers. Many graduates keep in touch. All who support this vital university ministry can be proud of our graduates. Most are active

lay ministers and are raising faith-filled children. Then there are the generous benefactors; FACULTY, alumni, parents, clergy, friends, and students.

So, when all is said and done, yes, this ministry is definitely "great and difficult." However, years ago I thanked Bishop Fiorenza for taking a chance on me and I have expressed my great gratitude to Bishop Michael D. Pfeifer, O.M.I. for providing a stipend for a ministry that usually brings joy in abundance. Each of us chooses whether to be happy. The old saying, "Happiness is an inside job" rings true and usually flows from being grateful. For me, at least on most days, this is the only way life makes sense.

TAD

(Para 6)

de la presencia de una figura paterna y que enfrentaba otras dificultades en su desarrollo debido a las decisiones que ella había tomado.

Cuando elegimos seguir una senda que implica decisiones intrínsecamente inmorales, necesariamente nos estamos engañando respecto a cuál sería, a nivel total, nuestro mejor estado de cosas. Generalmente también hacemos daño a otros con estas decisiones.

En lo que se refiere a la elección intrínsecamente desordenada de la fertilización in vitro, como la atención está intensamente dirigida al bebé que anhelamos, puede resultar aún más difícil ver la naturaleza perjudicial de esta decisión. Las parejas que se someten a este procedimiento están convencidas de que el mejor estado de

cosas para ellos es tener un hijo, sin importar los pasos que se requieran.

Volviendo a mi conversación con la pareja de casados, ellos admitían darse cuenta cómo sus fuertes deseos de ser padres inclinaron la balanza en el proceso de tomar la decisión. También aceptaban que estaban empezando a percibir otras realidades involucradas en su decisión de someterse a la fertilización in vitro, por ejemplo: cómo en realidad fue un tercero, un técnico de laboratorio en el cuarto de atrás, quien manufacturó los niños; cómo ellos mismos, los padres, habían hecho mal uso de sus cuerpos y su sexualidad, convirtiéndose en poco más que donantes de células sexuales; cómo la pornografía y la masturbación intervinieron desde el origen mismo de sus propios hijos; cómo habían producido una cantidad sobrante de hijos, congelaron algunos y

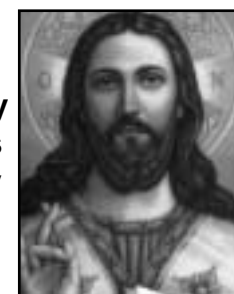
desecharon otros durante el proceso.

Probablemente la verdad más difícil de discernir es que aun los fines más deseables, como tener nuestros propios hijos, no justifican el uso de medios inherentemente inmorales para conseguir dichos fines. Pensamos que nuestros deseos son dignos de realizarse por cualquier medio al suponer que somos nosotros mismos quienes determinamos lo que es mejor para nuestras vidas. Sin embargo, cuando nuestros deseos son el árbitro final de lo correcto e incorrecto o cuando estos deseos están en primer plano, sólo un paso nos separa del desastre.

Una pareja infértil puede suponer que tiene derecho a tener hijos pero la verdad es que no es así pues la realidad más profunda es que los hijos son siempre un don. Cuando el don se exige (mediante la fertilización in vitro) entonces el hijo ya no es un don

sino una posesión, un medio u objeto en la búsqueda de la satisfacción de los padres, atrapado en el fuego cruzado de los deseos de paternidad. Frecuentemente las parejas infértiles no han hecho una pausa para reflexionar en otros posibles caminos, o no han considerado ampliamente otras formas importantes de lograr la plenitud humana y de expresar su fecundidad marital, como son la enseñanza, ser guías o tutores de niños necesitados en su comunidad, o la adopción.

El anhelo por los niños puede ser tan fuerte que nos impida percibir con honestidad los aspectos malos que quizá estén entretejidos en nuestras decisiones. Querer tener hijos por vías desordenadas puede conducirnos a lastimar las bendiciones mismas que estamos anhelando para nuestra vida y la de quienes nos rodean.



Our Holy Father's Monthly

Intentions 2009

MAY

Lay Vocation Promoters. That the laity and Christian communities may embrace their responsibility for promoting vocations to the priesthood and religious life.

A Missionary Church. In response to the Lord for the gift of faith, may the younger Catholic communities generously participate in the universal mission of the Church to proclaim the Gospel to the ends of the earth.

JUNE

Foreign Debt Relief. That international efforts to help poorer nations bring prompt, concrete results to relieve the crushing burden of foreign debt.

The Church in Areas of Violence. That local Church communities serving areas torn by violence may be supported through the love and help offered by Catholics around the world.

Daily Offering Prayer

O Jesus, through the Immaculate Heart of Mary I offer you my prayers, works, joys and sufferings of this day in union with the Holy Sacrifice of the Mass throughout the world. I offer them for all the intentions of Your Sacred Heart: the salvation of souls, reparation for sin and the reunion of all Christians. I offer them for the intentions of our bishops and of all Apostles of Prayer, and in particular for those recommended by our Holy Father this month.

Loved One In Jail / Prison? "Let us help you"

Criminal Justice Ministry
Diocesan Office
325-651-7500

www.san-angelo-diocese.org/cjm.html



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CRISIS: Experts continue to analyze why we're where we are

(From 1)

Nation-wide, 3.6 million jobs have been lost since the recession began. The 7.6% unemployment rate is the highest since 1992 and could hit 9.6% next year. It was recently announced that \$2 trillion of retirement savings have been lost, and the savings of many more are at risk. Millions and millions of elderly – relatives and family members – have seen their pensions reduced by one third or half, or more. Who is “bailing-out” these dedicated senior citizens from their harsh situation?

Underlying Causes of Crisis

What are the underlying causes and reasons for this worldwide economic crisis? Economists are humbly identifying the corporate and individual reasons for the breakdown in the present economic system. Pope Benedict XVI recently insisted that underneath the current global economic crisis lurks greed, rooted in original sin, and that reform of global economic architecture will be of little use without the conversion of individual hearts. Pope Benedict said, “Where there are no just people, there is no justice. For that reason education in justice must be a priority.” The Pope added that the economy is built on sand. The current crisis has revealed that the unbridled pursuit of profit ultimately demolishes everything in its path. Left to itself, the financial market loses its external frame of reference, revealing the need for tighter regulations of financial institutions. The economic model that we have seen has been based on continued and unlimited consumption of limited resources, and this can only end in tears and in fears.

We are coming to realize that the root causes of the financial crisis are ethical and the present financial system is lacking clear ethical foundations. The financial crisis has also exposed a spiritual crisis and a distorted hierarchy of values. The inner sense and value of human work has been pushed to the background in the general struggle for profits.

As we observe the present crisis in our economy and the breakdown of financial systems that lacked ethical values and principles to guide responsible behavior, the words of Christ ring out loud and clear in our present day reality: “Do not store up for yourselves treasures on earth, where moth and decay destroys, and thieves break in and steal. But store up treasures in Heaven, where neither moth nor decay destroy, nor thieves break in and steal. For where your treasure is, there will your heart be.” (Mt.6:19-21) Where is our heart in this economic crisis? Have God’s people and the goods of our planet been regarded

mainly in a functional utilitarian way?

Have we placed too much trust in the unscrupulous behavior and unjust practices and misjudgment of some corporate and public service leaders, and have we brought much of this on ourselves by reaching out far too much with too little and always wanting more? Has greed taken over our lives? It is not only our present economic system that is being questioned, but our societal model that lacks clear ethical foundations. It is not just the bank balances that are in the red; it is not just the global economic system that has been rocked; our religious equilibrium and moral direction have also slipped out of control. The consumer culture is not morally neutral; as Christians who have a sacramental view of the world, we have the responsibility to be aware of the ties behind the things we buy, restoring the human relationship between producers and consumers. From the Christian perspective, the deep personalization of the economy demands a new course be taken that brings the human person back to the center of the whole economic system. Ethical and Moral Principles are needed. While it is not my intent to give an in depth analysis of the financial and economic complexities of this present crisis, nor to offer specific financial policies and legislation that will pull us out of the present financial crisis, I, along with other religious leaders, can offer some Gospel, ecclesial directives and ethical and moral principles on which a new economic order must be placed. To begin with, we need to remember that our ultimate hope lies in our relationship with the Lord, and our principal virtues are faith, hope, and love. This is a message that needs to be preached loudly and clearly for all of our people, especially for those caught in fear and despair because of the present economic situation. This is an opportunity to rediscover a life of trust in God and of simpler choices.

As we deal with the financial situation that has made unbridled profit the ultimate guide, we proclaim that human dignity is the cornerstone of our social teaching. This dignity involves the human being in all his or her facets. People are more than just consumers or producers; people are social and relational, moral and spiritual beings. We constantly must remember that all are made in the very image and likeness of God and are not to be exploited. The present crisis makes us realize that we are powerless to save ourselves with our own ingenuity and strength and we must put our total trust in our Risen Savior, Jesus Christ, who is our Good Shepherd and who will lead us through this dark valley.

Economic Justice for All

As we discern the causes of the present economic crisis, and work for a new economic order that will provide justice for all, that will place people ahead of profits, I recall some of the very wise and applicable teachings for all of us — individuals and families, business people and economists, government leaders and public servants--from the U.S. Catholic Bishops in their pastoral message, *Economic Justice for All: Catholic Social Teaching and the U.S. Economy*: The Bishops stated that in an age absorbed in materialism, always seeking more pleasure and possessions, that as followers of Christ, we must base our lives on the beatitudes given to us by Jesus in the Sermon on the Mount: “Blessed are the poor in spirit...blessed are the lowly ... blessed are those who hunger and thirst for justice.” The Bishops pointed out: “Our faith calls us to measure this economy not only by what it produces, but also by how it touches human life and whether it protects or undermines the dignity of the human person.” In that message, the Bishops also remind us: “Every perspective on economic life, is human, moral and Christian, and must be shaped by three questions: What does the economy do for people? What does it do to people? And, how do people participate in it? ...People shape the economy and in turn are shaped by it. Economic arrangements can be sources of fulfillment, of hope.... Strengthening moral vision is essential if the economy is to serve all.”

The quality of the national discussion about how to overcome the present economic crisis and to establish a just economic system for all, both in this country and throughout the world, must take into account how all of this will affect the poor. The Bishops state: “Decisions must be judged in light of what they do for the poor, what they do to the poor, and what they enable the poor to do for themselves. The fundamental moral criteria for all economic decisions, policies, and institutions is this: They must be at the service of all people, especially the poor.” The Bishops reminded us, “It is the dignity of the human person, realized in community with others, that is the criteria against which all aspects of economic life must be measured.”

A Foundation built on Cardinal Virtues

To restore an economic model based on trust, that puts people over profit, that guards and respects the dignity of each human person, calls us to lay a new ethical foundation that stresses dedication, sacrifice, utilizing all skills, and built on the four traditional cardinal virtues of prudence, courage, justice, and temperance. These virtues, not only produce good fruits for

ourselves and society, but also give us a new power for progress and perfection. Archbishop Nichols of Birmingham, England recently pointed out that these traditional cardinal virtues must be the ethical foundation for a new economic order. He points out that the virtue of prudence, helps us to discern the true good and the right way to achieve it. It is the opposite of rashness and carelessness. It is very much needed in an age of advanced technology when the presumption is that if something can be done, then it should be done. Courage gives us firmness and strength in difficulties, and helps us to strive for the highest ideals, enabling us to conquer fear and hardships and calls us to go beyond ourselves. It is the opposite of opportunism. Justice, which is the basis for true peace, calls us first and foremost to give to God what is due to God, and then to give to our neighbor what is due to our neighbor. Justice promotes equality and the common good. It is the opposite of self-centeredness and unrestricted profiteering. Temperance is that great virtue that moderates our use of all created goods, especially our desire for pleasure and possessions. This virtue is the one that helps us to check greed and self-indulgence. It is much needed in an age of consumerism and excess.

Good Stewards and Good Samaritans

The exercise of these virtues founded on the greater theological virtues of faith, hope and love will help us to establish a model of stewardship for all the goods of this earth, realizing that they are gifts from God, that they are to be used and not abused, and that they are meant for all. These virtues especially call us to be Good Samaritans in these difficult times and to reach out to the poor and vulnerable of our society. These virtues also guide us to use material things in a responsible manner, reminding us to place our heart on the true treasures of life, storing up treasures in Heaven.

Pastoral Recommendations to deal with crisis

As we deal with the economic crisis, I offer some pastoral insights about how we can use our faith to support us in these harsh times as we strive to be both good stewards and good Samaritans. A strong emotion that surfaces from the crisis is fear--for our families, our homes, our jobs, and for the future of our children. To deal with this fear and uncertainty, our priests and pastoral leaders need to preach and teach about Gospel ways to deal with this crisis. In our parishes and in our homes, we need

(Please See **ECONOMY/19**)

ECONOMIA

(Para 3)

prioridad.” El Papa agregó que la economía está construida en arena. La crisis actual ha puesto de manifiesto que la búsqueda desenfadada de ganancias últimamente destruye todo en su paso. Dejado a sí mismo, el mercado financiero pierde su marco externo de referencia revelando la necesidad para apretar las regulaciones de las instituciones financieras. El modelo económico que hemos visto ha sido basado en consunción continua y sin límite de recursos limitados, y esto solo puede acabar en lágrimas y temor.

Estamos llegando a la realización de que la causa original de la crisis financiera es ética y el presente sistema financiero le hace falta fundaciones claras y éticas. La crisis financiera también ha expuesto una crisis espiritual y una jerarquía distorsionada de valores. El sentido interno y el valor del trabajo humano se han llevado al fondo en la lucha general de beneficios.

Al observar la crisis actual en nuestra economía y el fracaso del sistema financiero que carecen de valores éticos y principios para guiar a un comportamiento responsable, las palabras de Cristo resuenan claramente y fuertemente en la realidad de nuestro día: “No junten tesoros y reservas aquí en la Tierra, donde la polilla y la descomposición destruye, y los ladrones rompen el muro y roban. Más bien junten tesoros y reservas en el Cielo, donde no hay polilla ni descomposición que destruye, ni hay ladrones y roban. Pues donde está tu tesoro, allí estará tu corazón.” (Mt. 6:19-21)

¿Dónde está nuestro corazón en esta crisis económica? ¿Han sido el pueblo de Dios y los bienes de nuestro planeta considerados principalmente de una manera funcional y utilitaria? ¿Hemos puesto demasiada confianza en el comportamiento de algunos líderes de corporaciones y de servicios públicos de pocos escrúpulos y prácticas injustas y determinaciones injustos? ¿Nos hemos causado esto en nosotros mismos por alcanzar muy lejos con muy poco y siempre queriendo más? ¿Se ha controlado nuestras vidas la codicia? No es solamente el presente sistema económico que está en cuestión sino también nuestro modelo social que carece de fundaciones claras y éticas. No solamente son los balances de bancos que están en el rojo; no es solamente el sistema económico global que ha sido sacudido; nuestro equilibrio religioso y dirección moral también se ha deslizado fuera de control. La cultura del consumidor no es moralmente neutral; como cristianos que tenemos una vista sacramental al mundo, tenemos la responsabilidad de estar al tanto de los vín-

culos que están detrás las cosas que compramos, restaurando la relación humana entre los productores y los consumidores. Desde la perspectiva cristiana, la personalización profunda de la economía exige una nueva dirección que se ha de tomar para regresar a la persona humana al centro de todo el sistema económico.

Principios Morales y Éticos son Necesarios

Mientras no es mi intención de dar un análisis profundo de las complejidades financieras y económicas de la crisis actual, ni de ofrecer pólizas y legislaciones financieros que nos sacara del presente crisis financiero, yo, junto con otros líderes religiosos, sí puedo ofrecer algunas directivas evangélicas y eclesiológicas y principios morales y éticas donde un nuevo orden económico debe ser puesta. Para comenzar, necesitamos recordar que nuestra esperanza primaria cae en nuestra relación con nuestro Señor, y nuestras virtudes principales son fe, esperanza y amor. Este es un mensaje que se debe de predicar en voz alta y clara para toda nuestra gente, especialmente para los que se encuentran en temor y desesperación por la situación económica actual. Esta es una oportunidad para descubrir de nuevo una vida de confianza en Dios y de opciones más simples.

Al tratar con la situación financiera que ha hecho la desatada ganancia la guía primaria, proclamamos que la dignidad humana es el fundamento principal de nuestra enseñanza social. Esta dignidad envuelve el ser humano en todas sus facetas. Las personas son más que solamente consumidores o productores; la persona es social y relacional, moral y un ser espiritual. Constantemente debemos de recordar que todos hemos sido hechos en la misma imagen y semejanza de Dios y nunca debe de ser explotada. La crisis actual nos hace realizar que no somos capaces de salvarnos, nosotros mismos, con nuestro propio ingenio y fuerza y debemos de poner nuestra confianza total en nuestro Salvador Resucitado, Cristo Jesús, quien es nuestro Buen Pastor y que nos guiará por el valle oscuro.

Justicia Económica para todos

Al discernir las causas de la crisis económica actual, y trabajar por un nuevo orden económico que proveerá justicia para todos, que pondrá a gente antes de ganancias, les recuerdo de unas enseñanzas muy sabias y aplicables para todos—individuales y familias, personas de negocios y economistas, líderes gubernamentales y de servicios públicos—de los Obispos Católicos de los EE.UU. en su mensaje pastoral,

Economic Justice for All: Catholic Social Teaching and the U.S. Economy. Los Obispos indicaron que en una época absorta en materialismo, siempre buscando más placeres y posesiones, que como seguidores de Cristo debemos basar nuestras vidas en las bienaventuranzas dadas a nosotros por Jesús en el Sermón del Monte: “Dichosos los pobres de espíritu...dichosos los que de corazón humilde...dichosos los que tienen hambre y sed por justicia.” Los Obispos indicaron: “Nuestra fe nos llama a medir la economía no solamente por lo que produce sino también como afecta la vida humana o si protege o socava la dignidad de la persona humana.” En ese mensaje los Obispos nos recordaron: “Cada perspectiva sobre la vida económica es humana, moral y Cristiana y ha de ser formada por tres preguntas: ¿Qué hace la economía para la gente? ¿Cómo afecta a la gente? Y, ¿Cómo participa la gente en ella? La gente forma la economía y en cambio son formados por ella. Arreglos económicos pueden ser fuentes de satisfacción, de esperanza. Fortaleciendo la visión moral es esencial si la economía va a servir a todos.”

La calidad de la discusión nacional acerca de cómo superar la crisis económica actual y establecer un sistema económica justa para todos, ambos en este país y mundialmente, debe tomar en cuenta como todo esto afectará al pobre. Los Obispos mencionaron: “Decisiones han de ser discernidas en vista de qué es lo que hacen por el pobre, como afecta al pobre y como habilita al pobre hacer por sí mismos. El criterio moral fundamental para toda decisión económica, política e institución es esto: Deben de estar al servicio de toda la gente, especialmente al pobre.” Los Obispos nos recordaron que, “Es la dignidad de la persona humana, realizado en comunión con otros, que es el criterio en que todo aspecto de la vida económica ha de ser medida.”

Una Base Creada en las Virtudes Cardenales

Para restaurar el modelo basado en confianza, que pone a la gente antes de ganancias, que resguarda y respeta la dignidad de cada persona humana, nos exige de poner una fundación nueva y ética que enfatiza dedicación, sacrificio, utilizar todos nuestros dones, y que es construida en las cuatro virtudes tradicionales cardenales de prudencia, fortaleza, justicia y templanza. Estas virtudes, no solo producen buenos frutos para nosotros mismos y la sociedad, sino también nos da un poder nuevo para progreso y perfección. El Arzobispo Nichols de Birmingham, Inglaterra recientemente señaló que estas virtudes tradicionales cardenales deben ser la base ética para un nuevo orden económi-

co. Señala que la virtud de prudencia, nos ayuda a discernir el verdadero bien y la manera correcta de adquirirlo. Es lo contrario de ser desconsiderado y descuidado. Es muy necesario en una era de tecnología avanzada cuando la presunción es que si se puede hacer, se debería hacer. La fortaleza nos da firmeza y fuerza en dificultades, y nos ayuda a esforzarnos a ideales más altas, permitiéndonos conquistar el temor y sufrimientos y nos exige que lleguemos en el más allá de nosotros mismos. Es lo contrario de oportunismo. Justicia, que es la base de la paz, nos llama primero y principalmente a dar a Dios lo que se debe a Dios, y luego dar a nuestro prójimo lo que se debe al prójimo. La justicia promueve igualdad y el bien común. Es lo contrario del egoísmo y la explotación sin restricción. Templanza es la gran virtud que modera nuestro uso de todos los bienes creados especialmente nuestro deseo para el placer y las posesiones. Esta virtud es la que nos ayuda controlar la avaricia y la autocomplacencia. Es necesaria en una era de consumismo y exceso.

Buenos Administradores y Buenos Samaritanos

El ejercer estas virtudes, se basan en las más grandes virtudes teológicas de fe, esperanza y amor, nos ayudará a establecer un modelo de administración para todos los bienes de esta tierra, realizando que son regalos de Dios, que han de ser usados y no abusados, y que son para todos. Estas virtudes especialmente nos llaman a ser buenos samaritanos en estos tiempos difíciles y a extender la mano al pobre y vulnerable de nuestra sociedad. Estas virtudes también nos guían en una manera responsable recordándonos de poner nuestro corazón en los verdaderos tesoros de la vida, juntando tesoros en el cielo.

Recomendaciones Pastorales para Enfrentar esta Crisis

Al tratar con la crisis económica, ofrezco recomendaciones pastorales de cómo podemos usar nuestra fe para apoyarnos en estos tiempos rígidos al esforzarnos para ser ambos, buenos administradores y buenos samaritanos. Una emoción fuerte que aparece por esta crisis es el temor—temor por nuestras familias, nuestros hogares, nuestros trabajos, y por el futuro de nuestros hijos. Para poder tratar con estos temores e incertidumbres, nuestros sacerdotes y líderes pastorales necesitan predicar y enseñar acerca de maneras Evangélicas de como poder tratar con esta crisis. En nuestras parroquias y en nuestros hogares necesitamos pasar tiempo en oración la cual nos ayudará enfrentarnos a nuestro temor. Les

(Mira OBISPO/19)

OBISPO

(Para 18)

pido a nuestros sacerdotes y otros líderes pastorales que visiten a familias que han sido afectadas por esta crisis y reunir, para compartir y rezar, a gente que se está enfrentando a una realidad similar. Hay fortaleza en esta manera de reunirse como comunidad y la gente, al compartir sus historias, puede encontrar consuelo, nueva fortaleza, y esperanza de poder encontrar una solución para esta realidad rígida. Especialmente acudimos a la Palabra de Dios por fuerza y ayuda. Necesitamos recordar que Jesús siempre está presente guiándonos como un Pastor amoroso y amable y Nuestra Señora de Perpetuo Socorro siempre nos conforta. Los papás y mamás especialmente necesitan hablar con sus hijos e hijas acerca de estos tiempos tan inciertos y asegurarles que juntos podemos superar este momento difícil. En nuestras parroquias, necesitamos incorporar la crisis económica actual en nuestra liturgia. La liturgia, especialmente la Eucaristía, se junta nuestra realidad humana con lo Divino, y nos ayuda establecer nuestras prioridades de la vida mientras unimos nuestras vidas a ambos, al Cristo Crucificado y al Cristo Resucitado, como nuestra fuente de esperanza y fuerza. La Eucaristía, que une nuestro culto y ado-

ración con la vida diaria, especialmente en el mercado, es nuestro gran medio para reorientar nuestra actitud hacia justicia y caridad para con otros. La Eucaristía, por cierto, es la abundancia de vida, aún es inseparable del amor de entrega total de Cristo en quien nuestras vidas son incorporadas por medio de recibir la Sangre y el Cuerpo de Cristo Jesús. Por la Eucaristía, compartimos en el dolor y sufrimiento de otros, subrayando nuestra responsabilidad de alimentar al hambriento y cuidar por todas las necesidades de nuestros hermanos y hermanas. Como hermanos y hermanas de nuestro Señor Eucarístico, entonces realizamos como compartimos en la encarnación de Cristo usando el don maravilloso de libertad humana para transformar y mejorar el mercado libre y remediar sus deficiencias materiales. En los ministerios, especialmente en la educación religiosa, necesitamos demostrar nuestro interés pastoral por la presente realidad y especialmente enfocando nuestra atención en como podemos llegar a esas personas que han perdido su empleo y otras cosas básicas. La mayoría de agencias de caridad han visto un aumento significativo de personas buscando ayuda debido a esta crisis. Animo a estas agencias que continúen apoyando a los necesitados y animo a toda la gente que hagan donaciones a estas agencias para que puedan ayudar a proveer y cuidar por nue-

stros hermanos y hermanas que están luchando por satisfacer sus necesidades básicas. Al ofrecer una mano de ayuda, también debemos ofrecer un oído oyente y demostrar compasión a todos los necesitados. Consideren darse de voluntario a ayudar a proveer comida para una familia necesitada, y entréñense para asistir a personas a inscribirse en Medicaid, CHIP, y otros beneficios públicos. Den de su tiempo en un centro de emergencia o comedor popular. Hoy es el tiempo de tener más campañas de donaciones de comida y otras cosas básicas en la comunidad, para coleccionar comida y otras cosas al nivel parroquial, en nuestro lugar de empleo o con nuestras familias o amistades. También necesitamos hacer contribuciones financieros a las agencias que asisten y ayudan al pobre. Básicamente, este es el tiempo que nos exige demostrar más caridad, de ser mejores Buenos Samaritanos. Siendo más caritativo significa más de solo ser generoso ocasionalmente o porque sentimos un sentimiento alentador de apatía por otra persona en necesidad. Caridad también se trata de nuestra necesidad de dar. Caridad es una llamada de toda la vida que viene por ser discípulos de Jesús y miembros de Su Cuerpo.

Para asistir a todas las comunidades de nuestra Diócesis durante este tiempo de lucha financiera, de acuerdo con el apoyo del Concilio Presbiteral, estoy reduciendo el

impuesto diocesano de nuestras parroquias por el nuevo año fiscal por 1%, que resulta en aproximadamente \$157,000 en ahorros para nuestras parroquias. Dios ha bendecido a nuestra Diócesis recientemente con un regalo financiero que nos permitirá reducir el impuesto de esta manera, y proveer por nuestros gastos operacionales.

En Dios Confiamos

La crisis financiera actual es un recordatorio de no poner nuestra confianza en el dólar, pero en las palabras en el dólar: En Dios Confiamos. Es un tiempo de recordar de poner nuestra confianza en la Divina Providencia que se encarga de la hierba del campo y los pájaros del aire, y quien se encargará aun más de nosotros. Este es el tiempo, que a pesar de nuestras pérdidas, de desarrollar un actitud de gratitud, por medio de agradecer por lo que tenemos, no importa lo mucho o lo poco que tengamos, y afirmarnos a si mismos y a otros que Dios está proveyendo por nosotros. Necesitamos hacer caso a las palabras de Jesús cuando Él nos dice: "No se preocupen...ustedes tienen un Padre celestial que ya sabe que necesitan...busquen, pues, primero el reino de Dios y su justicia, y todo lo demás se les será dado." [Mt. 6:31-33]

ECONOMY: Volunteer efforts such as food drives should be on rise in local areas

(From 17)

to spend time in prayer, which will help us to face our fear. I ask our priests and other pastoral leaders to visit families affected by this crisis, and to bring together for sharing and prayer people who are facing a similar reality. There is strength in this community approach and people, by sharing their stories, can find comfort, new strength, and hopefully some solutions for this harsh reality. We especially turn to the Word of God for strength and help. We need to remember that Jesus is always there guiding us as a loving and kind Shepherd and Our Lady of Perpetual Help wants to comfort us. Parents especially need to talk to their children about these uncertain times and assure them that together we can overcome this difficult period.

In our parishes, we need to incorporate the present economic crisis into our liturgy. The liturgy, especially the Eucharist, brings together our human reality with the Divine, and helps us to establish our priorities of life as we join our lives to both the Suffering and Risen Christ our source of hope and strength. The Eucharist which

brings together worship and our entire life, especially in the market place, is our great means for reorienting our attitude toward justice and charity toward others. The Eucharist, of course, is the abundance of life, yet it is inseparable from the self-emptying love of Christ in whom our own lives are incorporated through the receiving of the Body and Blood of Jesus Christ.

Through the Eucharist, we share in the pain and suffering of others, underscoring our responsibility to feed the hungry and to care for all the needs of our sisters and brothers. As brothers and sisters of our Eucharistic Lord, we then realize how we share in the incarnation of Christ using the wonderful gift of human freedom to transform and improve the free market and to remedy its material deficiencies. In our ministries, especially religious education, we need to show a pastoral concern for the present reality and especially help to focus our attention on how we can reach out to those who have lost jobs and other basic items of life.

Most of the charitable Catholic agencies have seen significant increase of people seeking help due to this crisis. I encourage these agencies to continue to support those

in need and encourage all people to donate to these agencies so that we can help provide and care for our brothers and sisters who are struggling to meet their basic needs. As we offer a helping hand, we also need to offer a listening ear and show compassion to all those in need. Consider volunteering to help provide food for a needy family, and to get trained to assist people to enroll in Medicaid, CHIP, and other public benefits. Volunteer time at an emergency center or soup kitchen.

Now is the time to have more community food drives, to collect food and other basic items on a parish level, at the workplace or among friends and families.

Basically, this is a time when we are called to show more charity, to be better Good Samaritans. Being more charitable means more than just being generous on an occasional basis or feeling some stirring empathy for another person in need. Charity is also about our need to give. Charity is a lifelong calling that comes from being disciples of Jesus and members of His Body.

To assist all the communities of our Diocese during this time of financial struggle, in accord with the support of the

Presbyteral Council, I am reducing the diocesan assessment for this coming year on our parishes by 1%, which translates into about \$157,000 savings for our parishes. God has blessed our Diocese recently with a financial gift that will enable us to reduce the assessment in this manner, and to provide for our operational expenses.

In God We Trust

The present financial crisis is a reminder not to put our trust not in the dollar, but rather in the words on the dollar: In God We Trust. It is a time to remember to place our trust in Divine Providence who takes care of the grass of the field and the birds of the air, and who will take even greater care of us. This is a time, in spite of our losses, to develop an attitude of gratitude, by being thankful for what we have, no matter how much or how little we have, and affirm to ourselves and others that God is providing for us. We need to heed the words of Jesus, "So do not worry...Your heavenly Father knows what you need...but seek first the kingdom of God and his righteousness, and all these things will be given to you." (Mt.6:31-33)

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Midland



Bishop Michael D. Pfeifer, with Kathy Reeves, left and Fr. Frank Chavez, pastor at Our Lady of San Juan, break ground on the parish's new church building April 17. The new church, located on Midland's south side, is scheduled to be completed and opened by September 2010.

In above photo, Fr. Chavez, sprinkles holy water during the groundbreaking ceremony.

Stanton



The members of St. Joseph's Catholic Church and the community of Stanton partake in the live stations of the cross during Holy Week. Station directors Senaida Garza & Mauro Sotelo would like to thank the youth group and the community of Stanton for participating in the live stations this year.

Ballinger



Fr. Hubert Wade Jr., pastor of St. Mary, Star of the Sea, Ballinger, began the celebration of Holy Week by riding on a 2,200 pound longhorn steer named Rooster. Fr. Wade, stated that though the longhorn is not biblical and that Jesus rode into Jerusalem on a colt or ass, if he had been in West Texas, he would have certainly ridden a longhorn. The procession went around the church and the faithful were encouraged to stand back about 10 feet.

Rowena



Parishioners of St. Joseph, Rowena, helped their pastor, Father Magnus Chilaka, celebrate his birthday following the Easter morning Mass on April 12, 2009. Surrounded by young children with their Easter baskets which he had blessed and CCD students with buckets of coins as their gift to him, Father was presented a birthday cake and a resounding "Happy Birthday" sung by the entire congregation. Later, as the younger children enjoyed the traditional Easter egg hunt, parishioners joined Father Magnus for coffee, donuts and a piece of the cake.



Confirmation was held at St. Joseph's, Rowena, on Saturday, April 4, 2009. Sixteen young people from St. Joseph's and two from St. Boniface in Olfen, were confirmed by Bishop Michael Pfeifer. Following the ceremony and Mass, a reception was held in St. Joseph Parish Hall for the confirmed, their families and sponsors.