

Eucharist Must Lead Believers to Mission, p. 5

Diocesan Jubilee Mass, p. 6-7

Finding Hope After Abortion, p. 8

Commercializing Childhood, p. 9

Consequences of Human Genome Project, p. 11

Cowboys Linebacker Dat Nguyen, p. 12



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CHANGE SERVICE REQUESTED

Church To Press New Mexican Government For Religious Freedom

By Jim Hodgson
Catholic News Service

MEXICO CITY (CNS) — After the defeat of the party that tried for decades to suppress Mexico's Catholic Church, a bishops' official said the church would expect no privileges from the new government but would continue to press for full religious freedom.

Auxiliary Bishop Abelardo Alvarado Alcantara of Mexico City, general secretary of the Mexican bishops' conference, told a post-election news conference that church leaders congratulated the victor, Vicente Fox Quesada, but that the church "did not expect privileges or need them, nor was it asking for them."

Fox, 58, defeated Francisco Labastida, candidate of the Institutional Revolutionary Party, which had ruled Mexico since 1929. Fox, frequently described as a conservative populist, was the candidate of

the National Action Party.

Bishop Alvarado said Mexican bishops did not expect "drastic changes" in the government soon because "the evolution of a people takes a long time."

"We do desire that there be religious teaching, not precisely in the schools, but rather that there be an awareness of the necessity to educate in religious and moral values. We are not asking for this at this time, but it is up to the society, parents and the executive and legislative branches to decide in their time," added Bishop Alvarado.

The bishops' conference president, Archbishop Luis Morales of San Luis Potosi, thanked God "that the elections were carried out in peace, order and tranquility, and that this is one of the advances achieved by the people of Mexico in recent years, the construction of a more participatory democracy."

Nongovernmental election ob-

servers from Canada and the United States said July 4 that the election was well-conducted in most urban areas, but that there were still severe problems in rural areas, including



Photo by CNS.

the southern states of Chiapas, Tabasco, Oaxaca and Guerrero.

A Canadian group that included

two priests, Franciscan Father Martin Bettin of Castlegar, British Columbia, and Jesuit Father Michel Corbeil of Montreal, witnessed vote-buying in Guerrero and threats and intimidation by supporters of the ruling party directed against election officials and observers at polling sites in the highlands of Chiapas.

Global Exchange, a U.S. nongovernmental organization based in San Francisco, said it was concerned that the abuses its observers witnessed in southern Mexico would be repeated in state elections in Chiapas in August and in Tabasco in October.

Throughout the campaign, Fox called for respect for freedom of religion and equality of treatment of Christian churches in Mexico. He promised to ease restrictions on Catholic schools and on religious activity in public schools.

"Freedom of religion, conviction, practice and education must be truly and fully guaranteed in Mexico, and laws on the activity of the state (in terms of religion) must disappear," he said in Monterrey in

mid-January.

Mexican churches are described in law as "religious associations" and must be registered with the Interior Secretariat. Restrictions have been set on what churches and their clergy can say or do in with regards to politics. The fact that the overwhelming majority of Mexicans are Catholics has led to complaints from Protestant leaders that they are ignored or misunderstood.

Government figures report 97 percent of 85 million Mexicans over the age of 5 are Catholic. The country's total population is about 100 million.

The role of churches in Mexico's political life has been controversial throughout the country's history. Constitutional reforms in 1857 saw church property expropriated by the government.

In the wake of the Mexican Revolution, which began in 1910 and was still being fought nearly 20 years later in some parts of the country, the new national government imposed more restrictions on clergy and on the activity of the church.

see "FREEDOM", page three

Thank You! Thank You! Thank You! Gracias! Gracias! Gracias!

by Most Rev. Michael D. Pfeifer,
OMI, Bishop of San Angelo

My dear Sisters and Brothers of the Body of Christ of the Diocese of San Angelo!

Our wonderful Diocesan Jubilee Celebration, honoring Christ on His 2000th birthday in the great Jubilee Year, on Sunday, June 25, 2000 was indeed a magnificent celebration, one that exceeded our expectations.

It gave me great joy as bishop to see some 6,500 faithful from every community of our diocese come together at the San Angelo Coliseum for this inspiring celebration. We

came together around the theme that we are the Body of Christ, El Cuerpo de Cristo, and our beautiful celebration took place on the great Solemnity of the Body and Blood of Christ. What a wonderful way to celebrate this great Feast. In and through our Eucharistic celebration with Christ on that special day, we were indeed built up in a new way into the Body of Christ, El Cuerpo de Cristo.

Our jubilee celebration of some 6,200 people was the largest gathering of Catholics in the his-



Photo by Scherz Studio.

tory of our diocese. It was one of the largest, if not the largest, gathering

of people in the history of the San Angelo Coliseum. So many people had spent long hours preparing for this great celebration over the past year and a half as we approached the new millennium, and we owe them much gratitude.

I am deeply grateful to all of you who were present for this unique celebration to honor Christ during the great Jubilee Year 2000, and to begin with Him a new century and millennium of human history. Thank you, my sisters and brothers, gracias mis hermanas y

hermanos for being present for this beautiful celebration with Christ.

Along with the people of our diocese, I express my deepest gratitude and appreciation to the Diocesan Jubilee 2000 Committee that gave so many hours of time and devotion to make this such an inspirational and memorable celebration. Thank you, to: Co-Chairs – Sister Hilda Marotta, OSF and Sister Carol Markus, SSND, also Carlos Alvarado, Rev. Quirino Cornejo, Thomas DeHoyos, Sister Denise Duplessis, DC, Sue Gillette, Sherry Sefcik, Deacon Ray Smith, Pete

see "THANKS", page seven



The Power of God's Love Lies Within You

By Bishop Michael D. Pfeifer, OMI

With the beginning of the year 2000, our Church embarks on a great Jubilee Year journey. To guide us on our Jubilee Year journey, the U.S. Catholic Bishops have published various statements pointing out practical and everyday ways that we can live the message and spirit of the Jubilee Year in the context of the great commandment of Christ: "to love one another." To love one another as Christ commands us, we need God's love, and God's love is poured out upon us each day.

I share with you a message of love of the U.S. Catholic Bishops that was approved at our November, 1999 meeting. I ask that all reflect on this message, and that families take time now and then to read it over together.

Because God Loves You –

You never stand alone.

There is someone with you in anxious moments who knows your deepest desires and wants what's best for you. Think of the person who has loved you most. Multiply that love a million times over and you still haven't reached the extent of God's personal love for you.

You can go beyond yourself.

You can forgive those who have hurt you, however deeply. Even when you feel intense pain, the possibility of forgiveness lies within you. You can forgive others because God is always ready to forgive your sins. You can overlook wrongs because God empowers you to go beyond your own heartache.

You can ask forgiveness of those you have hurt.

You can admit wrongs and ask forgiveness to make relationships right. His grace can heal you.

see "POWER" page eleven



El Poder del Amor de Dios Habita en Vosotros

Por Obispo Miguel D. Pfeifer, OMI

Con el inicio del año 2000, nuestra iglesia inicia una peregrinación en este gran Año Jubilar. Para guiarnos en nuestra peregrinación del Año Jubilar, los Obispos Católicos de los E.U. han publicado varias declaraciones indicando maneras practicas y de cada día como podemos vivir el mensaje y el espíritu del Año Jubilar en el contexto del gran mandamiento de Cristo: "amar uno al otro." Amar uno al otro como Dios nos mande, necesitamos el amor de Dios, y el amor de Dios es derramado sobre nosotros cada día.

Comparto con ustedes un mensaje de amor de los Obispos Católicos de los E.U. que fue aprobado en la junta de Noviembre 1999. Yo pido que todos reflejen en este mensaje, y que las familias tomen tiempo de vez en cuando para leerlo juntos.

Porque Dios Te Ama –

Nunca habrás de sentirte sobrecogido por la soledad.

Hay alguien que siempre está contigo en los momentos de ansiedad, alguien que conoce tus más íntimos deseos y que quiere lo mejor para ti. Piensa en aquella persona que más te haya querido. Multiplica este amor un millón de veces y todavía te darás cuenta de que no ha llegado a alcanzar la extensión del amor personal que Dios tiene por ti.

Eres capaz de ir mas allá de ti mismo.

Y puedes perdonar a aquellos que te han herido, aun profundamente. Aunque te sientas embargado por sentimientos de gran dolor, la posibilidad de perdonar late en tu corazón. Puedes perdonar a otros porque Dios está siempre listo a perdonar tus pecados. Puedes olvidar las injurias, porque Dios te ha dado el poder para poder sobrepasar los limites de tu dolor.

see "PODER" page eleven

The Bishop's Schedule



July, 2000

July 2: Big Spring, Prison Facility, Confirmation at 6:00 p.m.

July 4: San Angelo, Cathedral Church of the Sacred Heart, Mass for Independence Day at 9:00 a.m.

July 5: San Angelo, Diocesan Pastoral Center, 8:30 a.m. Staff Mass and 11:00 a.m. Staff Meeting

July 6-8: Los Angeles, Encuentro 2000

July 10: San Angelo, Diocesan Pastoral Center, Luncheon for Fr. Andy Wueste, OMI at 11:30 AM

July 14-30: Rest and prayer

August, 2000

Aug 3: Austin, Installation of Bishop Gregory Aymond as Co-

Adjutor Bishop of Austin at 2:00 p.m.

Aug 5-6: Belleville, Illinois, Our Lady of the Snows, Jubilee Mass

Aug 8: San Angelo, Diocesan Pastoral Center, Mass for Staff at 8:30 a.m.

Aug 9: Midland, St. Ann, Meet with Pastor and Pastoral Council and Youth at 7:00 p.m.

Aug 10: San Angelo, Diocesan Pastoral Center, Presbyteral Council, 10:30 a.m. to 2:00 p.m.

Aug 11: San Angelo, Meeting with Youth 2000 Committee at 10:30 a.m.

Aug 12: Robert Lee, Our Lady of Guadalupe, Mass at 6:00 p.m.

Aug 13: Bronte, St. James, Mass at 5:00 p.m.

Aug 15: Midland, Our Lady of Guadalupe, Mass at Shrine at

6:30 p.m., Feast of the Assumption

Aug 16: San Angelo, Diocesan Pastoral Center, 10:00 a.m. Liturgy Commission Meeting, 11:00 a.m. Staff Meeting, 7:00 p.m. Meet with Cathedral Church of the Sacred Heart Endowment

Aug 17-24: Rome, World Youth Day and Visit Lourdes

Aug 26: San Angelo, Meet with Catholic Schools Commission at Cathedral Church of the Sacred Heart at 9:00 a.m.

Aug 27: Big Spring, St. Thomas, and Sacred Heart, Confirmation at 3:00 p.m.

Aug 28: San Angelo, Meeting of the San Angelo Ministerial Association at 11:30 a.m., 7:00 p.m. Meet with Healthy Families of San Angelo

Aug 29: San Angelo, Personnel Board Meeting at 10:30 a.m., Carlsbad, St. Therese, Confirmation and First Communion at 6:30 p.m.

Reflections on the Jubilee Indulgence

By Bishop Michael Pfeifer, OMI

In conjunction with the Jubilee Year 2000, Pope John Paul II has announced the availability of the Jubilee indulgence to the faithful who are spiritually disposed to receive it. To understand what it is, and is not, we need to review some of the important truths about our Roman Catholic belief in indulgences. The thoughts I share with you about indulgences have been taken from the U. S. Bishops' bulletin, *Jubilee 2000*.

To understand briefly what is an indulgence, we go to the *Catechism of the Catholic Church*.

What is an indulgence? "An indulgence is a remission before God of the temporal punishment due to sins whose guilt has already been forgiven, which the faithful christian who is duly disposed gains under certain prescribed conditions through the action of the church which, as the minister of redemption, dispenses and applies with authority the treasury of the satisfactions of Christ and the saints.

An indulgence is partial or plenary according as it removes either part or all of the temporal punishment due to sin. Indulgences may be applied to the living or the dead." (1471)

What are the "prescribed conditions" for receiving an indulgence? In addition to the acts of charity, penance, and pilgrimage that are particular to the Jubilee indulgence, the church prescribes three "usual" conditions:

- Sacramental confession
- Reception of Holy Communion
- Prayer for the Pope's intentions.

The traditional Catholic teaching about indulgences is based on two ancient christian truths. First, every sin is not only a disobedience of God's law; it also violates the harmony of creation established by God and is, at least in some degree, a rejection of God's love. Complete forgiveness of sin, therefore, requires not only conversion, but a reintegration of that divine order. This process involves pain and cleansing (purgation), either in this life or after death, before entering the full

see "REFLECTIONS", page ten

Pray for Vocations



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Vocation Circle

by Fr. Andy Wueste, OMI

Note from the Director of Vocations:

This article is about Fr. Andy Wueste, O.M.I., Director of Christ the King Retreat Center. Fr. Andy's vocation story shows how God's call to ministry in the Church sometimes comes in ways that we least expect. In his case, it was out of a family disaster and through the influence of a friend. At first he did not see what God wanted. Then slowly but surely, God awoke within Fr. Andy the true call of all the baptized – the call to spiritual growth and holiness. For Fr. Andy the invitation was through a life as a priest in the Oblates of Mary Immaculate (O.M.I.).

If you have had anything to do with the programs at Christ the King Retreat Center in San Angelo over the past six years, you have probably been influenced by the Spirit of the Lord that is there in Fr. Andy, the staff, and the place. A stay at the Retreat Center invites rest, spiritual growth, and peace. Fr. Andy's life story and ministry give examples of the continued seeking of a deeper relationship with God rather than the seeking of position, title or power. Seek the Lord day by day. As Fr. Andy has completed his assignment, he prepares to leave the Diocese to begin reduced active ministry with the Oblates in San Antonio. Keep him in your prayers. Remember him for the spiritual guidance he offered as he sought to deepen his own spiritual life and love for our Lord Jesus Christ by "letting go and letting God." Instead of living a life to gain, can you live a life to give?

Why did I become an Oblate and a priest? A vocation story . . .

My story as an Oblate priest really begins with my father. Dad – Gus – was born and raised in Eagle Pass, Texas, where Spanish was the language of the house because of the local community and domestic help. Dad left Eagle Pass after high school to seek his future and fortune in the big city, San Antonio. He got a good paying job, met Ann, my mother, a mid-westerner from Illinois, a student at Our Lady of the Lake College. They married, and soon my brother was born; the next year I came along. A year later, the stock market crashed. Dad lost his job, the home he was buying, his car, and his bank account! He was a crushed reed! It was the most powerful, traumatic and spiritual experience of his life – a very dark one. It profoundly shaped his life, his

values, his faith, his thinking, and our family in all its aspects. Mother and Dad's dreams died, their self esteem severely wounded.

My sister was born and named Dolores, after Dad's mother, but the significance of the name was not lost. Mother and the three of us spent much of our pre-school years living with grandparents in Eagle Pass as Dad tried to put his life together and begin again to earn. We went to Catholic School from the start, pre-kindergarten all the way through 8th grade – not because we could afford it, but because the Sisters of Divine Providence were compassionate and generous, and the Pastor, Fr. Tom Kennedy, OMI, told Dad we did not have to pay tuition as long as he put his envelope in the basket every Sunday, even if there was nothing in it. Another brother was born. We were now four children.

After 8th grade my brother Gus decided to go to St. Anthony (Oblate) Seminary. The next year I chose to go to Central Catholic in San Antonio. Mostly to get out from under Gus' eye, free at last, I thought. And my interest and course choices then were made in view of becoming a doctor. Still, at least half of my 8th grade class gave serious consideration to becoming priests. It was the culture then of family life and church: signs of the times. At Central my best buddy, now Fr. Paul Neuman, SM, and I talked about going to the seminary for the Brothers of Mary. It looked like an adventure to me. When Paul's family insisted he finish high school at home, I decided to go to St. Anthony's. Why? I'm not sure, but at the time the heroic adventure of missionary in the North Pole was fascinating. More likely, though, in my early adolescence I was worried about "saving my soul" – even though I would be back under the eye of brother Gus! Another sign of the times and Catholic education at the time was a preoccupation with the terror of sin and hell. And my vocation journey took a sharp turn.

Seminary was rather easy for me (except for playing football), and I simply stayed with the program. The novitiate year was mostly lost on me; it made very little sense. In the major seminary the ideal of priestly life and holiness was at the time an intriguing matter to study and know. My spiritual life was for the most part a pattern of things I "did." I was ordained an Oblate priest on September 14 (the day after my 25th birthday) in my home parish, St. Mary's, San Antonio. My first as-

signments were to parishes, including St. Ann's in Midland, TX, where the pastor, Fr. Kennedy again, (what a coincidence!) gave me only one assignment: "Take care of the youth." (I had no clue what to do.) I loved parish ministry, but at the same time I felt called to teach, another developmental move in my vocation journey based on my fascination to "know".

I was assigned to teach at St. Anthony's, and when the principal was killed in a car wreck, I was named Principal. That began the "career climbing" phase of my priesthood: degrees and positions. I went on to teach in the University and finally at Oblate School of Theology, where I later became Academic Dean. By then I was deeply into research into cognitive, moral and faith development. In that, I was convinced, was the human structural basis for spiritual, Christian development. A critical shift in my vocational development. I was growing up.

At a certain point I began to sense a nostalgia, a yearning to minister to ordinary people struggling with their personal and Christian lives. I left teaching and went back into parish ministry. When I was pastor of Queen of Peace parish in Aurora, CO, a huge parish, the Oblates turned the parish back to the Archdiocese of Denver. I was upset with that decision and was granted a sabbatical and went to the Jesuit School of Theology in Berkeley to study spirituality. And the rest, as they say, is history. I have been in retreat ministry since the late 80s. My vocational journey seemed to have found its home, I was developing a deeper interior life.

Coming to Christ the King Retreat Center in San Angelo was coming to a ministry I had come to love. I jumped right in, giving talks on spirituality in the bigger centers of the Diocese, days of prayer in different cities, and retreats and spiritual direction and talks here at home. I thoroughly enjoyed living here, being a part of this very energetic center of renewal. I was busy: trying to change people, fix things, be in charge of ministry – very much wanting results. Slowly, too slowly, I began to "see" that I had it all wrong, all backwards. "Results, conversions, are mine" said the Lord. Oops! My job is to plant and water; God yields the harvest. As an Oblate with a vow of poverty, I realize that the greatest poverty for anyone is not to know Jesus! And many, not just Catholics, (long before I came), have come to find CKRC a place of peace and quiet and renewal – and the presence of the Lord. More and more I work just as hard, with less

¡OYE!

Ven y Sígueme

Por Obispo Miguel Pfeifer, OMI

Me dirijo a ti, joven, que buscas la verdad, que anhelas construir un mundo mas humano y mejor.

Que estás inconforme con la superficialidad que te rodea, que inquietas por el rumbo que lleva la humanidad y descubres en tus hermanos el hambre de comida, vestido, salud, orientación, verdad, ciencia, promoción, de vida digna . . .

¡No te quedes indiferente!

Toma conciencia del potencial que encierra tu juventud y ayuda a buscar caminos de salida en solidaridad con otros jóvenes.

Desde el clamor de la humanidad y de los profundos deseos que Dios ha puesto en tu corazón, Jesús te dice: "VEN Y SÍGUEME."

Joven, Cristo te invita a pensar en una vocación al sacerdocio y a la vida religiosa. Piensa seriamente en esta llamada. Cristo te invita, y la iglesia te necesita.

De nuevo animo a todos los feligreses de la diócesis a rezar y trabajar activamente por mas vocaciones al sacerdocio y la vida religiosa. Padres de familia, discutan con sus hijos estas vocaciones.

Diocese Supports Retirement Fund for Religious

Dear Bishop Pfeifer,

Thank you for your diocesan check for \$7,966.10 which has been deposited in the Retirement Fund for Religious account. This brings your diocesan contribution for 1999 to \$55,301.72 and your total diocesan contributions for all of the years of the collection to \$475,184.87. The money has been recorded as part of Appeal XII for 1999 and will be used to provide retirement grants to eligible religious institutes of women and men in June 2000. These grants will continue to assist our religious institutes to reduce their current unfunded retirement liabilities as well as to plan for future retirement needs. All of these efforts have helped the members of these institutes in their endeavors not only to care for their elderly and infirm members but also to continue their active service for the Church.

My sincere thanks to you and your people for helping in this effort to care for the retirement needs of our elderly and infirm religious.

In God's Providence, Sister Mary A. Leahy, SP National Director

anxiety, I "do not lose heart. Even though our outer nature is wasting away, our inner nature is being renewed day by day." (2Cor 4,16)

I look forward now to entering reduced active ministry (RAM), relinquishing positions of being in charge, I am excited about the prospects of doing ministry, some teaching and retreat work, and moving into the slow lane of a more quiet, peaceful life style. Not less work, but ministry without the demands and pressures of leadership. Even so, leaving Christ the King Retreat Center is like another dying. (I ought to be getting used to this!) My sense of my life at this point is that most of the demands of priesthood and religious life which I experienced as obligations and duties for much of my life have slipped into becoming sort of existential parts of me. I cannot not be and do what my relationship to God and Church ask – and as authentically as I can manage, even when that seems to

others to be "out of step"! I live in the sense now of what someone has expressed as "a beggar telling other beggars where I found bread!"

FREEDOM from page one

In response, bishops suspended services in Mexico for three years, beginning in 1926, to protest the restrictions; some also supported a three-year-long counterrevolution, the Cristero war. The National Action Party emerged from among victims of those years of repression and for decades was the country's only opposition party.

Institutional Revolutionary Party leaders considered themselves to be the inheritor of the values of the Mexican Revolution, including the sharp separation between church and state.

Repression gradually eased in the 1930s, and constitutional changes and other reforms in 1992 lifted most restrictions.



Worldwide Stewards Set to Gather in U.S. Capital for Jubilee 2000 Conference

ICSC Will Celebrate Stewardship as a Way of Life with the U.S. Bishops During Coinciding Annual Meetings

WASHINGTON, June 12, 2000 — As pilgrims in the Great Jubilee Year 2000, participants in the International Catholic Stewardship Council (ICSC) annual conference will journey to Washington, D.C., on Nov. 12-15, 2000, to contemplate the place of stewardship as a way of life in the Catholic Church, discuss its practical applications and celebrate Mass with the United States' bishops at the Basilica of the National Shrine of the Immaculate Conception, the most important U.S. pilgrimage site for Catholics in this Holy Year.

The ICSC expects a group of about 2000 cardinals, arch/bishops, priests, religious and laity to attend its premier annual event. The Hyatt Regency Crystal City, right across the Potomac River in northern Virginia, will be the setting for the four-day gathering. The theme of this year's Jubilee conference is "Stewardship: A Disciple's Response," emphasizing the essential link between the hands-on practicalities of

stewardship and a vibrant personal relationship with Jesus Christ in the life of his Church.

According to ICSC's Episcopal Moderator Archbishop James P. Keleher of Kansas City, KS, a deeper experience of this discipleship is key to the international fruits manifested through practical stewardship methods during both good and bad economic times. "It is the Pope's wish that the occasion of the Great Jubilee will ensure that 'an ever greater number of people may fully find themselves through a sincere gift of self.' This sincere gift of self is the very life of a steward. It requires that we give everything we are and have back to the Lord for his use. In this way, we allow him to do his will-and not our own-to build up the kingdom according to his plan for the whole world."

ICSC's annual conference is widely known for its excellent speakers, beautiful liturgies, cooperative discussions among colleagues and friendships developed at meals and gatherings. To accommodate the many types of stewards who attend the annual conference, ICSC offers six separate tracks of

workshops, seminars and discussions groups as well as daily celebration of the Mass and major addresses to the entire group by distinguished speakers. A pre-conference seminar for professionals from diocesan foundations will be held on Sunday, Nov. 12, 2000.

As an adjunct of the National Conference of Catholic Bishops, the ICSC was initially begun in 1962 to raise funds for diocesan projects. Today, the ICSC offers both an overall vision of a life of Christian stewardship rooted in the discipleship of Jesus Christ, and the practical expertise on how to bring this vision to parishes, dioceses, congregations, foundations and related organizations all over the world. Through its staff and members, annual meetings and events and printed and audio materials, the ICSC allows people committed to Christian stewardship to gather, share ideas, and learn from each other. For more information on the ICSC 2000 Jubilee Conference call (202) 289-1093 or visit www.catholicstewardship.org.

Mausers Honored for Commitment to World's Poor

Christian Foundation for Children and Aging Honors Family of Columbine Victim with "Pilgrimage of Faith" Award

KANSAS CITY, Kan.—In the aftermath of unthinkable tragedy, one Colorado family has found hope, courage and commitment to those less fortunate. Tom and Linda Mauser, whose 15-year-old son Daniel died in the Columbine High School shooting in 1999, will travel to Kansas City June 12 to be honored with the "Pilgrimage of Faith" Award from Christian Foundation for Children and Aging (CFCA).

The award recognizes extraordinary contribution to CFCA's work in helping to support Catholic mission sites in 25 developing nations. The ceremony will take place at Rockhurst College in Kansas City, Mo., where the Mausers' teenage

daughter, Christine, and their late son will also be honored.

The Mausers have been supporters of CFCA for more than five years, sponsoring a poor, disabled girl in Guatemala. Following Daniel's death, they lent their support to a fund-raising effort in his name which enabled CFCA to build both a school in the village of their sponsored child, Evi Pineda, and a library in the town of San Lucas Toliman. Tom, Linda and Christine attended dedication ceremonies in Guatemala in March, and met their sponsored child in person for the first time.

Speaking of the library built in San Lucas Toliman, Tom Mauser wrote, "What a pleasant and symbolic surprise for us, given that Daniel's life ended in the Columbine library. How pleasing to know this is the first library for this city of over 20,000 people." A more com-

plete recollection of their trip is available on the Daniel Mauser Memorial Web Site (www.danielmauser.com).

The "Pilgrimage of Faith" Award was initiated by CFCA following the 1996 journey of the organization's president and co-founder, Bob Hentzen, who walked 4,000 miles from Kansas City to Guatemala to call attention to the plight of the world's poor. Hentzen continues to live in Guatemala to this day. Past recipients of the award created in honor of his walk include Archbishop James P. Keleher of Kansas City, Kan., and Rev. Allan Weinert, CSSR, editor of the national magazine, *Liguorian*.

For more information about the work of Christian Foundation for Children and Aging, call (800) 875-6564, or visit the CFCA web site at www.cfcausa.org.

Anonymous Donor Sends 100K to Catholic Extension's Monsignor Velo

Monsignor Kenneth Velo, on his national radio program "Extension Line," asked the golden question. With a Texas missionary on the phone, Monsignor said, "Dream a little with me. If someone is listening at home or behind the wheel of his or her car . . . and just happens to have \$100,000 to give away, tell us how you might be able to use that money." Much to the surprise of Velo, a generous — and anonymous — Chicago donor answered the call. The news was delivered to Velo by the donor's financial institution.

Velo serves as president of Catholic Extension, the organization which funds Catholic missionary work in America. "Extension Line" features candid interviews with American-based missionaries and is currently found Saturdays in Baltimore on WNST, in Chicago on WYPA, in Denver on KKYD, in Kansas City, Kan on KCNW, in Los Angeles on KPLS, in Milwaukee on WZER, in Minneapolis on WWTC, in Philadelphia on WPGA, and in San Francisco on KDIA.



Last Member Of Texas Missionary Order Is Still Going Strong

*By Helen Osman
Catholic News Service*

TAYLOR, Texas (CNS) — A big white house built in Taylor for a growing religious order, which provided plenty of room for the children they were teaching, will soon be home to just one sister.

Sister Joseph Moreno is the last active member of the Catechist Missionary Sisters of St. John Bosco, an order established in 1938 by Oblate Father Paul Lewis in a Texas border town to serve the growing number of Catholic children attending public schools.

The order, which never had more than a dozen or so women, moved to Taylor, about 40 miles northeast of Austin, in 1946.

Taking their missionary vows seriously, the sisters did whatever it took to pass on the faith to the children.

"For 25 to 30 years I lived out of a suitcase," explained Sister Moreno, who joined the order in 1951.

A typical week would start with all of the sisters at home in the convent in Taylor on Monday for Mass, prayers and community meetings. Then they would go their separate ways, to small towns and hamlets throughout central Texas, as well as several parishes on the east side of

Austin, a predominantly Hispanic area.

By Saturday they were back in Taylor, to help with catechetical efforts in parishes over the weekend.

Most of the sessions were held outdoors, in families' back yards or under a shade tree on the church grounds. The sisters would visit each home in a neighborhood, asking if families were Catholic and if they had any children.

The children were invited to play, then to sit down for a lesson. Instead of expensive books, the sisters used a banner they had drawn on vinyl wallpaper, or pictures cut out from religious calendars and pasted in a scrapbook, telling the story of salvation from creation to the last judgment. They would talk a little bit, then ask the children to repeat after them a prayer or other tenets of the faith, such as the Ten Commandments.

"So many children could only come for a few months" because their families had to follow the harvest as it moved north, Sister Moreno said, so the sisters attempted to include the basic elements of the faith in each lesson.

"That way, if they only had three courses, they would hear the whole story," Sister Moreno told The

see "LAST", page eight



Eucharist Must Lead Believers To Mission, Pope Says

By Cindy Wooden
Catholic News Service

VATICAN CITY (CNS)—Breaking bread and sharing the Eucharist must lead believers to share the Gospel message and their own gifts with others, Pope John Paul II said.

"The celebration of the eucharistic sacrifice is the most effective missionary act" the church can undertake, the pope said June 21 during his weekly general audience.

Among the estimated 40,000 people at the audience were participants in the June 18-25 International Eucharistic Congress.

"It is from the Eucharist that the church and every believer draw the indispensable strength to announce and witness to all the Gospel of salvation," the pope said.

Breaking the bread which is Christ's body unleashes the desire and the strength to leave self-centeredness behind and open oneself to others, especially the poor and those most in need of missionary help, he said.

Every Mass, he said, ends with "the missionary mandate, 'Go forth,'" a call to bring the Gospel to one's family, workplace and community.

"The Eucharist is, in addition, a permanent school of charity, justice and peace to renew the surrounding world in Christ," Pope John Paul said.

Given courage by the Lord's body and blood, Christians work to be agents of solidarity and renewal, "committed to changing the structures of sin in which individuals, communities and sometimes entire peoples are ensnared," he said.

The pope said a reflection on the Eucharist and mission naturally calls to mind the martyrs whose relics were placed under altars as a sign of the strength which flows from Christ's sacrifice.

"This spiritual energy leads those who eat the body of the Lord to offer their lives for him and for their brothers and sisters through the total gift of self to the point of

shedding their blood if necessary," he said.



Pope John Paul II talks with his would-be assassin Mehmet Ali Agca in a Rome prison in 1983, two years following the attempt on the pontiff's life. Italy granted Agca clemency June 13 after he served 19 years for the assassination attempt. (CNS file photo)

Spanish Prayer Group Evangelizes

by Fr. Tom Barley

Knock, knock. Who's there? You look out the window and see people standing at your door carrying Bibles. They want to talk to you. It's that time of year and you just wish one of two things. You wish that they would respect your Catholic Faith and religious practices or that you knew your Catholic Faith well enough to defend it when it is challenged or attacked.

Well, this kind of scene happened last year when members of the Spanish Prayer Group or "Ministerio de Alabanza Los Redimidos de Cristo de San Lorenzo, Texas" in St. Lawrence near Garden City and St. Thomas in Midkiff had heard of non-Catholics evangelizing around their hometown in Mexico. In Texas, these members live in an area where most of the inhabitants live in peace with their neighbors and respect the differences that exist between our church denominations. Being people who have a deep faith and willing to live it even when great sacrifice is required, several members of the group decided to do something about the situation in Mexico. Last year they made two trips during summer and Christmas to the area around San Luis Potosi, Mexico to use their musical talent to gather



people in at least nine surrounding villages to pray and share the Faith. They worked with the local priests and different Catholic groups to present a series of parish missions. They played their instruments, prayed, sang, and shared the Sacred Word of God. Every night the group members were asked to pray with many people in each village until the early hours of the morning. They participated in the Mass each day and visited the sick. They taught the youth and prayed for reconciliation within families. They prayed for healing, faith, and peace for the villagers.

Back home, they received the support and prayers of their pastor, Fr. Tom Barley, the rest of the Span-

ish Prayer Group, their employers, and the communities of St. Lawrence and St. Thomas. It takes a lot of faith, guts, resources, and love to take two to three weeks away from your routine and go out as St. Paul did to strengthen the Faith in communities where the Faith is under attack. It would have been easier for them to stay at home and earn money, but they chose the ways of Faith. The Prayer Group and Fr. Tom want to thank the priests of the parishes in Mexico for their invitation, hospitality, and support during these two visits. Without the priest's willingness to collaborate with the group, these visits would not have been possible. Since these visits, the group has gone to several other

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faith-sharing gatherings around the Diocese. While they had something to give, they also gained many graces each time they evangelize.

Members that went on these evangelization missions were Joel, Rosalinda, and Javier Gutierrez, Victor and Francisca Catillo, Enrique and MariCruz, Diana, and Magdalena Cura, Ignacio, Griselda, and Carlos Castillo, Julio and Antonio Mungia, Javier. While they were in Mexico, their ministry was recognized and acknowledged in the regional newspaper Zona Media. The group also received the appreciation of the local pastors. They definitely made an impact on

the lives of the people in the area where they evangelized.

Each of us are called by our baptismal promises to learn about our Catholic Faith, to live our Catholic Faith, and to share and defend our Catholic Faith at all cost and against all odds. Maybe the next time you hear a knock, knock at your door it will be Catholic evangelizers who will love the Catholic faith, respect the faith of others, and simply wish to share their love of Jesus Christ with their neighbors. Maybe one day you will be called by God to be a Catholic evangelizer. How will you answer God's invitation?

Jubilee Day 2000

All the photos on this page taken by Scherz Studio, San Angelo, 915-655-5759.





Jubilee Day 2000

All the photos on this page taken by Scherz Studio, San Angelo, 915-655-5759.



THANKS

from page one

Micale, Sister Rebecca Otter, OP, Elidia Padilla, John Pecoraro, Rev. Jim Plagens, Maureen Priestner, Sister Joan Markus, SSND, Lana Straub and Rev. Joseph Uecker, CPPS.

All of us are deeply grateful to the some 200 member choir that was directed by David Phillips and Edward Hernandez. Their music and inspiration filled all of us with much joy. I also thank the Liturgy Commission of our diocese for the preparation they gave to the beautiful liturgy, to all those who ministered as dancers of sacred gestures from Our Lady of San Juan parish in Midland

/ St. Vincent de Pallotti parish in Abilene, and to the St. Joseph Catholic Youth group of Stanton who made the floor logo.

A word of appreciation is also extended to the families who made and carried the beautiful banners and plants, and also to the youth from around the diocese who were candle bearers. My gratitude is also expressed to my brother Knights of Columbus for their hospitality and for standing as honor guard and for all those who shared in the baking of the thousands of cookies that we enjoyed at the end of our celebration.

A word of appreciation is also owed to the city of San Angelo Convention Center / Coliseum staff for their spirit of cooperative planning and to all the members of the media who gave special coverage of the preparations and of the actual celebration.

I recognize, too, that without the cooperation of our pastors and pastoral coordinators and so many jubilee contact persons and volunteers, that this celebration would never have taken place. It is because of the love, care and spirit of cooperation that is found in our communities that we were able to have such

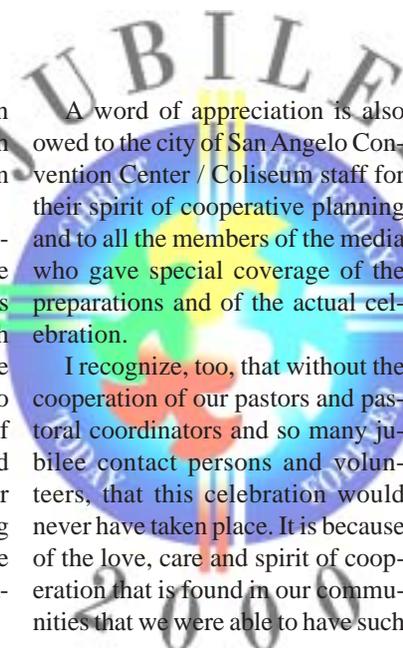
a wonderful diocesan jubilee celebration to honor Jesus on His 2000th birthday. We are indeed the Body of Christ, El Cuerpo de Cristo.

To close, I remind all of the Jubilee Pledge for Charity, Justice and Peace that we made at the end of Mass. The way to show in our daily living that we are the Body of Christ is to live this pledge. I encourage all, especially in a family setting, to read over the pledge and to look at ways to make it come alive.

During the Jubilee Mass, I indicated that the collection that was being taken was for our adopted diocese, San Pedro Sula, in Hondu-

ras, South America. I am happy to announce that our people generously contributed \$14,043.30 for our sisters and brothers of the Body of Christ of our adopted diocese. All of you were indeed very generous, and I thank you in the name of those who benefit from your generosity.

Finally, I thank all of you for recognizing my 15 years of ministry as your bishop. I am most grateful for the prayers and support and cooperation that you have given me during these 15 years. Please keep praying for me. May Christ continue to bless you and may Mary our mother watch over you.





FDA Recognizing RU-486 Not A Quick Fix To End Pregnancy, FRC Says

WASHINGTON, D.C. - "We are encouraged that the FDA is putting the brakes on the rapidly moving RU-486 train. In an effort to win political points with the abortion lobby, the Clinton Administration ordered that the drug be put on the fast track. The least the FDA can do is place restrictions on this so-called abortion pill," Family Research Council's (FRC) Chief Spokeswoman Janet Parshall said Wednesday. "It's a fallacy that RU-486 is a quick fix to terminating a pregnancy. Whether by pill or invasive surgery, abortion is never good for women."

The U.S. Food and Drug Administration (FDA) has told the Population Council, a pro-abortion group

that has U.S. rights to RU-486, that it will approve the drug under several conditions. According to the Washington Post, the FDA conditions include a national registry of all practitioners prescribing the drug; a requirement that those practitioners have admitting privileges at a hospital within one hour of their offices; and a follow-up study of all women who have chemical abortions.

RU-486 is a two-step process, which involves mifepristone, an anti-progesterone that cuts off the blood supply to the developing child and the uterine lining, and a prostaglandin that induces uterine contractions to deliver a dead child.

"RU-486 is not a magical pill that causes the baby to vanish," Parshall said. "A woman taking this abortion drug experiences cramping and bleeding and sometimes even has to undergo a surgical abortion to deliver the child. The FDA has an ethical duty not to approve a drug that would be harmful to the mothers taking the drug and to their unborn children. RU-486 has no therapeutic effects whatsoever."

"The FDA should stop listening to the abortion advocates whose primary concern is their pocket books and approve drugs that improve health to mothers and their children, rather than endanger it," Parshall said.

Take RU-486: Deliver a Dead Baby

"If RU-486 is an effective and safe drug, then why is the FDA proposing restrictions to monitor its use in the United States?" This is the question posed by Tina Whittington, spokesperson for Why Life, a national pro-life educational group for teens.

FDA's requirements for prescribing RU-486 include:

1. A national registry of all abortion doctors prescribing RU-486. "A

national registry is not required with the majority of drugs approved by the FDA," Whittington said. "If this drug did not have dangerous side effects or potential for complications, this kind of registry would not be required."

2. Prescribers must have admitting privileges at a hospital within one hour of their office. "This is required because of the need for hospitalization for those women who

experience excessive bleeding, or severe hemorrhaging requiring a blood transfusion or administration of intravenous fluid, after having taken the abortion causing chemical," Whittington said. "Hospitalization can also occur because of abdominal pain or severe vomiting."

3. Doctors must do a follow-up study of all patients who are

see "RU-486", page eleven

Death Penalty Just Plain Bad Public Policy

By Richard Daly

The recent decision by Gov. George W. Bush to grant a 30-day stay of execution for Ricky Nolan McGinn once again illustrates that the death penalty is bad public policy which creates unfortunate sagas in our state.

As Sen. Rodney Ellis, D-Houston, who as president pro-tem of the Texas Senate was acting governor the day the 30-day stay was enforced (the Gov. and Lt. Gov. were both out of the state), noted McGinn "is not a poster child for criminal justice reforms. I mean he has been a bad actor. . . but even people who have had a criminal record or problems in the past deserve the fairness in our system."

In other words, unlike other high profile condemned persons such as Karla Faye Tucker, it is very difficult to have sympathy for McGinn who will now be granted some additional DNA testing to determine whether or not he raped his step-

daughter before she was killed. There doesn't seem to be much doubt that he did the killing, but if he didn't commit the rape then he can't be condemned to death because, strange as it seems, in Texas you have to commit another crime in the process of murdering someone in order to receive the death penalty.

Karla Faye Tucker freely admitted that she had committed a heinous crime many years ago, but truly reformed her life inside prison where she served as a role model and counselor for many women. Despite the appeals of many church people, including Pope John Paul II, Gov. Bush permitted her execution to go forward in 1998.

Another twist to the McGinn case is that state officials waited until 15 minutes before the scheduled execution to actually issue the 30-day stay. McGinn had already eaten his last meal and was getting ready to die. Such a delay seems to

be cruel and unusual punishment even for someone who has done terrible things.

If we didn't have a policy of killing people to show that killing people is wrong, we wouldn't have to deal with the sagas of people such as Ricky Nolan McGinn and Karla Faye Tucker.

The death penalty doesn't act as a deterrent and it is expensive for the state because of the mandatory appeals process. For those two reasons, and a whole lot more, we ought to do away with it in Texas.

LAST

from page four

Catholic Spirit, Austin's diocesan newspaper.

The sister says she has no idea how many children her order has taught over the past 62 years, although it was probably in the tens of thousands. She has records that

Finding Hope After Abortion

By Fr. Frank Pavone
National Director, Priests for Life

Go to an abortion facility during its business hours, and you will sometimes see "escorts" who lead the girls in to get their abortion, and "protect" them from the information that pro-life people outside want to give them about alternatives. I often challenge these escorts, "Who is going to escort these girls through the grief, pain, and despair that follow their abortion?"

The answer is, "the Church."

Some have the mistaken impression that to oppose abortion means to oppose those who have them. Just the opposite is true, however. To be pro-life is to be pro-woman, and is to reach out and embrace with healing, compassionate love the person who has gone through the abortion experience, whether that be the mother, the father, the abortion practitioner, or anyone else involved.

One of my greatest joys as a priest and as a pro-life leader is to be able to say to one who has had an abortion, "Your sins are forgiven, go in peace." I recently worked with one who had ten abortions; I know of another who had 24. Even she can be forgiven when she repents of her sins. Even to her, our message is, "The doors of the Church are open!"

Particular emphasis is given to those open doors in this Jubilee Year 2000. It is a year marked by the theme of Reconciliation, and for this reason the US bishops have put the ministry of post-abortion healing at the forefront of their Respect Life Activities this year.

In one sense, post-abortion healing is one form of ministry to those who grieve a death in the family. At

the same time, however, it involves a unique form of grief-counseling, in the sense that the cause of the grief is widely denied. Nobody would deny a parent's need to grieve the loss of a five-year old child. But many deny the need to grieve the loss of a child who was aborted. After all, how can the exercise of a constitutionally-protected right bring grief?

This is precisely where pro-choice advocates lose touch with reality. They have rallies, make speeches, and cheer on candidates who sing the praises of a "woman's right to choose," scarcely realizing that by doing this, they insult those who grieve after that choice. Hardly do they see that the defense of the abortion-choice makes the post-abortion parent feel silly for feeling sad. This makes it more difficult to grieve, to express that grief, and to find healing.

Churches which take a pro-choice position are, for the same reason, especially incapable of offering the kind of healing and peace which so many seek after abortion.

During this Jubilee Year, we each have an opportunity to "Open Wide the Doors to Christ" for those who grieve after abortion. Gently tell them that hope and healing are available. Publicize the number of the National Office of Post-Abortion Reconciliation and Healing (Project Rachel), 800-5-WE-CARE. Let us together show the true face of the Church and the pro-life movement as beacons of hope!

Contact Priests for Life at PO Box 141172, Staten Island, NY 10314; Tel: 888-PFL-3448, 718-980-4400; Fax: 718-980-6515; email: pfl@priestsforlife.org; web: www.priestsforlife.org

show they taught 850 children at Cristo Rey Parish in Austin one year; for two months in 1953, from September to November, a roll shows 2,496 children were instructed.

She points with satisfaction to pictures of little boys, noting that two of them are now deacons. Today, she said, she is teaching grandchildren of some of her first students.

When asked why there are no more Sisters of St. John Bosco, Sister Moreno notes that today nearly every parish has a religious education program for children not attending Catholic schools, and that lay people are now taking more active roles.

But despite more lay involvement in the church, Sister Moreno has no intention of slowing down.

She is still involved in catechesis at Our Lady of Guadalupe in Taylor, teaching pre-baptismal and confirmation classes, as well as eighth graders and those in the Rite of Christian Initiation of Adults. Every Saturday she accompanies the pastor to the local prison for Mass and once a month goes with him to the federal prison in Bastrop.

She won't be lonely when her fellow sister moves out soon to live with family because, she says, "It's me and Jesus here."

Always the catechist, she adds: "We are never alone."



Commercializing Childhood

By Steve Neiheisel

If you are looking for childhood, don't go to the parks and playgrounds. Don't go to the libraries and ball fields. Go instead to the marketplace, online or in-line. Please have money in hand because access to childhood and the journey of growing up in modern America comes with a price tag. Childhood today has become a series of commercial transactions.

Affluence and its pursuit are destroying childhood. Our children are living privatized lives where so much of love and fun are purchased. The market mediates the parent-child relationship in startling and disturbing ways.

Love and care are purchased for our children from people who do not love them. American children spend more hours being nurtured by hired help than by their parents. Dancing a rational-emotional tango in our heads, we tell ourselves that the hired help are wonderful people and that our kids are deriving wonderful social benefits while all along, deep in our gut, we know we have struck a Faustian bargain. We have sacrificed no small amount of the spiritual currency of parenthood for the material and psychological gains of our careers.

Guilt drives us to make up for our absence by purchasing for our children a plethora of goods and services. If that was not bad enough, have you noticed how many books and toys for children today come with corporate logos attached? Books and toys are simply advertising vehicles for television and

movie programs. It is difficult to determine where brand loyalty ends and play begins.

I may be stupidly nostalgic but it seems to me that childhood fun today costs money where it once did not, more money today than it once did, and much more money than it should. Big-ticket fun is the expectation of kids today.

These expectations place an enormous burden on parents, especially the less affluent, to purchase fun. It instructs a generation of children that fun is to be found only in the marketplace and not in the more natural and less structured world around them. Access to fun is no longer direct through other people or nature but now requires an agent and a transaction.

I often suspect that my own children would have just as much fun with a large empty box and their imaginations. They never seem to get bored with their own minds, yet the trail of discarded high-priced toys that failed to sustain them is impressive. I have noticed that on Christmas morning my youngest child logs more time on boxes and wrappings than the gifts inside.

Childhood fun is not as serendipitous as it once was. Perhaps it is because parents are so rigidly scheduled that their children's fun becomes just another ranked item in their day planners, competing against other ranked items. Perhaps it is because children have their own day planners. I worry when my three-year-old daughter, who can't tell time, frequently asks me what time it is.

Today children suffer from an isolation of the vagaries of community life where much growing can be done. We shuttle our children about in private bubble transportation to the scheduled fun we think they should have. Our homes are not nesting places but launching pads to our scheduled activities beyond.

A healthy childhood requires public investments like parks and playgrounds where children can meet other children from the community and parents can meet other parents. Affluence, however, allows us to have private parks and playgrounds in our own backyards, making the pressure on government for public investments less acute.

Similarly, the decline in voluntary associations like the Boy Scouts and Girl Scouts can be attributed to affluence. These venerable organizations have historically provided low-cost activities for youth. Affluence mitigates the need to pool our resources. Therefore, our children's social relationships become attenuated because they come to experience other people as living one-dimensional lives.

Instead of experiencing Mr. Smith as neighbor, family man, accountant, boy scout leader, and weekend athlete, they get to know Ms. Nancy as dance teacher, Mr. Bob as art teacher, and John as video cashier as if these people were nothing else. This attenuation makes me worry about their ability to connect deeply with other people, understand the complexities of human character, and nurture the kinds of relationships that will sustain them in the future. In the process of commercializing childhood, we are threatening the character of our children and systematically destroying the bonds of community.

Children need to understand intuitively that what is most meaningful in life cannot be purchased. They need to appreciate that who they are and will become is determined by the quality, depth and complexity of their relationships, not the goods they own and use. Children need to know that the best things in life, love and fun, are free – and not far from home.

Steve Neiheisel, Ph.D., is chairman of the Department of Political Science at St. Mary's University in San Antonio and the married father of Jane, Steven and Emily.



U.S. bishops pray together at the start of their spring meeting at the Midwest Express Center in Milwaukee June 15. (CNS photo) Bishop Pfeifer left the meeting early due to the death of his sister, Roberta Freasier, in Selma, TX. The Bishop presided at the Mass of the Resurrection with Msgr. Larry Droll concelebrating at Our Lady of Perpetual Help in Selma on Tuesday, June 20th. Fr. Ted Pfeifer presided at the Rosary service the previous evening.

Rock for Life Launches National Tour Amidst Fierce Opposition

by Scott Weinberg
American Life League

Rock for Life (RFL), a division of American Life League, launched its national summer tour in two waves this week, under fierce defamatory fire from pro-death opponents at the National Abortion Federation (NAF). NAF is self-described as The Voice of Abortion Providers, and is comprised primarily of Planned Parenthood affiliates.

Rock for Life is so effective at bringing the pro-life message to hundreds of thousands of teens in the public forum, that NAF is resorting to underhanded tactics to silence their message, said Andrew Daub, Director of ALL's Youth Division. The pro-abortion propagandists cannot compete with RFL's positive message, and NAF has sunk so low as to lobby police departments nationwide with false and defamatory information.

The first wave of the RFL tour began on June 19, and runs to August 27. Bryan Kemper, Director of Rock for Life, travels to Fulton, Ohio, for the 13th annual Alive Festival; to Bushnell, IL for the Cornerstone Festival, July 5-8; Sonshine 2000 in Willmar, MN, July 13-15; then to concerts in Washington State, California and Pennsylvania.

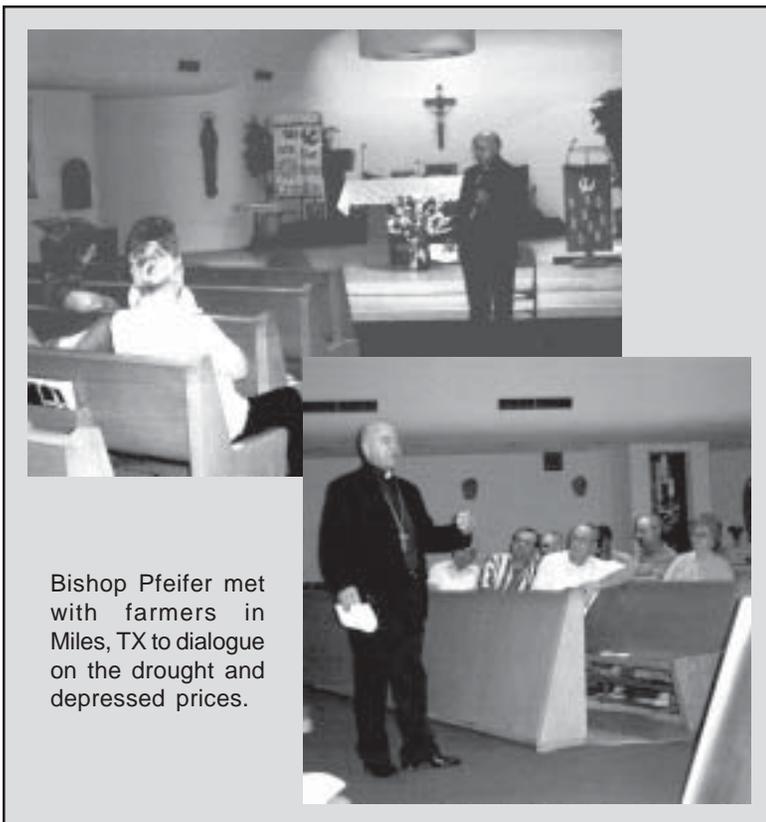
In advance of Kemper's tour, NAF broadcast false information to police departments nationwide claiming Kemper publicly advocate[s] violence against abortion. The truth is, Kemper has never advocated or performed acts of violence against abortionists or the abortion industry.

The truth is every RFL chapter nationwide has signed a Proclamation Against Violence.

They can put me behind bars, but they will never silence the truth that life is sacred from conception, said the good-natured Kemper.

The second wave of RFL's tour began June 22, when RFL Co-Director Erik Whittington traveled to Boise, ID; then on to Denver, CO; Wichita, KS; St. Paul, MN; then Spokane, Seattle and Tacoma, WA. Erik is lead guitarist for the Christian Rock band, Tragedy Ann, headlining RFL Christian rock concerts throughout the summer.

Every day, over 4,000 persons are murdered by surgical abortion in America, Whittington said. Most of our listeners were born after January 22, 1973, when the US Supreme Court decriminalized murder in the womb. For every two persons born after this date, one has died of abortion. So our listeners take our pro-life message very personally, and are moved by it. This is the generation that is going to turn the Culture of Death into a Culture of Life.



Bishop Pfeifer met with farmers in Miles, TX to dialogue on the drought and depressed prices.

Pray Today



Childhood Innocence Threatened At Beijing+5

By World Life League

NEW YORK – The Vatican delegation at the United Nations' Beijing+5 womens conference has formed a beachhead in defense of "proper parental support and guidance" for children. Mark DeYoung, director of World Life League, reports from the floor of the UN that the worlds developing nations, who comprise the G77 negotiating block, have aligned themselves behind the Vatican. But this coalition is under fierce attack from the powerful Western alliance known as JUSCANZ (Japan, United States, Canada, Australia and New Zealand).

JUSCANZ is pressing for language in the final Beijing+5 document contending that "traditional practices" such as parenthood are "harmful" to children, especially in cases of "unwanted pregnancies."

"By separating daughters from their parents, the rich nations would provide the population controllers with open access to young girls," DeYoung said. "UN delegates from the developing world fear that language usurping parental rights will be gaveled to approval in the waning moments of the conference, despite their majority opposition. The UN is flirting with disaster, and should be prepared to receive the wrath of families the world over if it bows to the wishes of radical feminists."

DeYoung said the adoption of language that rejects parental authority and undermines parental responsibility destroys any semblance of family unity. "History shows that the rejection of parental responsibility in morality and sexuality education leaves children wounded, not empowered," he said.

"The Vatican recognizes the fact that children are given to parents by God, and therefore parents have a special responsibility and duty to protect, nurture, and teach their children. If we truly desire to empower our children we must follow the example of the Holy See," said DeYoung.

Personalities and Politics

by Msgr. Thomas J. McSweeney
Director of the Christophers

The Fourth of July has rolled 'round again. Most Americans enjoy holiday activities from barbecues to band concerts to fireworks. But spare a thought for history and recall the words that helped turn this nation into a reality, the Declaration of Independence, the United States Constitution or the Bill of Rights. Yet the man who probably influenced the three most vital documents in America's history more than any other remains largely forgotten. George Mason was a successful Virginia planter, a neighbor and close friend of George Washington renowned for his intellect and grasp of both history and current affairs. His writings, including Virginia's Declaration of Rights, greatly affected Thomas Jefferson's perspective on the Declaration in 1776 and, later, influenced James Madison as he crafted the Constitution. But from 1787 until 1789, the debate over the new Constitution drove a wedge between Mason and Washington who, like Benjamin

Franklin and others, felt the need to compromise rather than risk the ruin of the new nation. For Mason the issues were what the Constitution both did – and failed to do. He believed it vested too much power in Federal rather than local governments and private citizens. And it did not contain a Bill of Rights, nor end the slave trade. Mason, a plain-speaking, hot-tempered militia colonel, had been a slaveholder all his life. Yet his opinion evolved to the point that he called slavery "that peculiar institution" which was becoming a "slow Poison ... daily contaminating the minds and morals of our people." He railed against it as an act of "despotism and cruelty" that makes citizens "callous to the dictates of humanity." Mason argued against the continuation of the slave trade and for a program of education to be created so that slaves could learn to read and write. He spoke against the interests of the rich when they abrogated the rights of the individual and supported the power of common people against the elite, arguing for popular elec-

Abortion Language Rejected At Beijing+5

by American Life League

Washington, DC – "The Western world was pushing for some of the most radical abortion language ever proposed in the history of the United Nations!" stated Mark DeYoung, director of World Life League (WLL). WLL is a division of American Life League, an NGO in consultative status at the UN, listed number one on a blacklist circulated at the UN by radical feminists. "To the surprise of the highly influential Western nations comprised of the European Union and a negotiating bloc called JUSCANZ, to which the US delegation belongs, many of the developing nations and Muslim countries stood strong in opposition to this new abortion language – and won!"

In the early hours of Saturday morning, JUSCANZ reluctantly folded and agreed to remove lan-

guage from the document that asked countries to "train and equip health service providers and take other measures to ensure that abortion is safe and accessible." JUSCANZ also rescinded at the last moment radical language that would have recognized reproductive rights, which includes abortion, as human rights. All of this new language would have established a powerful tool of coercion that the Western world could use to pressure developing nations to liberalize their abortion laws and make abortion more accessible by forcing the medical community to train their staff, as a general requirement, to perform abortions.

One reason for this unprecedented victory at the UN lies with the growing coalition of pro-life and pro-family non-government organizations that have unified as an effective lobbying force.

An emerging coalition of youth lobbyists at the UN, known as the World Youth Alliance, also contributed to this advancement of pro-family language, and the repeal of radical pro-death language. "We cannot underestimate the impact which young people have on the UN process. The participation of young people from around the world ensures that the concerns of youth are reflected in the document. This was clear in the final outcome document; young medical students can no longer be forced to undertake abortion training, and young women around the world will no longer be pressured to have abortions. This is in keeping with the original agreement reached in Beijing, and reinforces the inalienable dignity of women," stated Anna Halpine, president of the World Youth Alliance.

REFLECTIONS

from page two

presence of God (also called the beatific vision), in heaven.

The remission of temporal punishment (as distinct from eternal punishment) for sins already forgiven through prayer, fasting and good works, has been called "indulgence."

One of the areas of great confusion for many Catholics resulted somewhat from the wording and mention of a *time element* associated with these prayers for an indulgence – for example, one year indulgence.

Contrary to what many Catholics believed, an indulgence of one year did not mean one year "off" of purgatory – that state of purification after death of souls who are saved but being readied to come into the full presence of God. It meant, rather, whatever alleviation of purgatory might be achieved by one year of fasting or other penance was fulfilled in the prescribed prayers and good works of the indulgence. Thus, church teaching on indulgences never directly addressed the question of time in purgatory.

A few points need to be kept in mind about the church's renewed teaching about indulgences:

1) The number of indulgenced prayers and works has been drastically reduced. As Pope Paul VI explained, "The main concern has

been to attach greater importance to a christian way of life and lead souls to cultivate a spirit of prayer and penance, and to practice the theological virtues (faith, hope and charity) rather than merely repeat certain formulas and acts." (*Enchiridion of Indulgences, 1968.*)

2) Partial indulgences are granted using only those words, with no determination of days or years as was common previously.

A plenary (which means "full" or "complete") indulgence – such as the one Pope John Paul II has announced for the Jubilee Year 2000 – means, as it always has, that such an indulgence remits all of one's temporal punishment due to sin as long as one remains in a relationship of grace with God.

The Jubilee 2000 indulgence can be gained by visiting any church in our diocese. It can be applied to the living or deceased and can be gained only once a day.

The other usual conditions for gaining an indulgence apply in connection with the Jubilee indulgence: that the person make a good sacramental confession; receive holy communion; and offer some prayer for the intentions of the Holy Father. All are encouraged to perform some charitable act or personal sacrifice.

Great efforts are made by the church today to keep the understanding of indulgences in harmony with the Gospel and with the teachings of the Second Vatican Council.



Some Good News About Sharing The Good News

by JoAnn Marciszewski
Catholic Extension

Sister Angelica Huerta uttered only a few words. "We wish we had Bibles," she said in an Extension Magazine article. While working in rural Brownsville, Texas, Sister Angelica saw other religious groups evangelize by distributing Bibles. Due to limited funds, Sister Angelica could only lend out her personal copy of the Bible to the impoverished Catholics of Brownsville who wished to read it. Since her request six years ago, Catholic Extension, the organization that supports missionary work in America, has distributed 163,000 Bibles to needy parishes throughout the country.

"The Bible requests come from places too poor to have a church or chapel or a priest to visit regularly," says Monsignor Kenneth Velo, President of Catholic Extension, "Thanks to the generosity of our donors, we've been able to distribute thousands of Bibles." For many of the recipients, this is the first Bible they have ever owned. Children in religious education classes throughout the country are now able to use Bibles as part of their studies. Prison inmate, Victor Orena, who is serving time for conspiracy in the Federal Correctional Facility at Ashland, Ky., finds his new Bible makes prison life more bearable. "I'll keep reading it for the rest of my life," he said.

Catholic Extension also distributes Spanish Bibles, which are especially needed in areas populated by migrant workers. Yakima, Wash., where Mexican-born Catholics form 70 percent of the population, received assistance from Catholic Extension last year. Sister Maria de Jesus Ybara, O.P. of Yakima, said, "Thirty of our 47 parishes offer Spanish liturgies every Sunday." Yet, due to impoverished conditions, these parishes could not provide enough Bibles for their Spanish masses without the help of Catholic Extension.

Catholic Extension continues to receive requests for Bibles from across the country. "These Bibles will be given to children, shut-ins, migrant workers, immigrants, Native Americans, and many families living in extreme poverty who simply struggle to put food on the table," says Velo. This year, Catholic Extension hopes to distribute another 100,000 Bibles to 60 parishes.

The Diocese of Brownsville, Texas, which inspired the idea, has especially benefited from the Bible distributions. Father Pedro Bristeno, there, is so grateful that he always ends his local television show by holding up a copy of the Bible and thanking Catholic Extension. "I have seen numerous people coming back to the Catholic Church through our television show and through the Bibles that Catholic Extension provides," he says.

For more information contact JoAnn Marciszewski at Catholic Extension at (800) 842-7804 ext. 6047.

POWER

from page two

You can care for the weak.

You can remove injustices, alleviate poverty, annihilate oppression and restore righteousness in our world. The love of God in you gives you strength to defend the unborn, support the elderly, and lift the hearts of those without hope. God's grace in you helps you to see that in every person beats a heart yearning to be loved.

You have the power to touch hearts with compassion.

You can heal wounds in those around you and act selflessly. New possibilities lie before you – before all of us – at the start of the third Christian millennium. This is a Jubilee Year of celebration. This is a time to look at the world and decide how to better serve your neighbor. Thanks to God you can do it! Two thousand years ago the Father sent Jesus his Son into the world as the Savior. Now through the Holy Spirit the power of God's love lies within you, because God loves you.

Expert Warns Of Utilitarian Consequences Of Human Genome Project

by J. Scott Weinberg and
Michael P. Murphy
American Bioethics Advisory
Commission

'Quality of Life' fallacies could propel genetic discrimination in health care.

"Despite the claimed good of the Human Genome Project, President Clinton, in his endorsement of the project, has failed to warn America of any of its likely misuses," said Father Joseph Howard, director of the American Bioethics Advisory Commission (ABAC), adding that one alarming concern of the Human Genome Project is utilitarian goals derived from misguided notions of "quality of life."

"Utilitarianism is a frequent form of faulty moral reasoning in our culture," Father Howard said. "The American Bioethics Advisory Commission has reason to fear discrimi-

nation through misuse of information derived from a person's DNA profile - their genome.

"In vitro fertilization is currently being used to generate human embryos, search for 'defective' genes, and destroy any such embryos. Because of uninformed and subjective notions about 'quality of life,' personal genetic information could be easily be misused in areas of health care, care of the handicapped and the elderly as well."

"Millions of Americans have no health care coverage at present. These people could face devastating personal consequences from being denied coverage because of information derived from their genetic profile. We have seen discrimination against the handicapped. The same information could be used to 'justify' the myth that the

lives of some seriously handicapped citizens are not worth living, and many could be deprived of care that is by no means extraordinary. This discrimination could also be extended to the elderly, in the form of state-mandated euthanasia.

"Utilitarianism, aimed at misdirected notions of 'quality of life,' could be the outcome of the Human Genome Project," Father Howard said. "Such an outcome fails to respect the absolute, unconditional right to life of every human person from fertilization to natural death, without exception. In fact, this invariably will be the case, given our culture's ongoing attack on human life. Laws will likely be needed to prohibit genetic discrimination resulting from unethical application of information obtained through the Human Genome Project."

RU-486

from page eight

prescribed RU-486. "This is because women can experience bleeding for 30 to 60 days after taking RU-486, and can even develop endometritis after taking the drug," Whittington said.

4. Doctors must be trained in providing surgical abortions. "Training for surgical abortion is required because of the 8% failure rate of RU-486 in killing babies aged 49 days or less (the failure rate is 23% if the baby is between 55-63 days old). Women would then obtain surgical abortion because of incomplete RU-486 abortion, with the side-effects of extreme abdominal pain, or vomiting they are experiencing."

Whittington pointed out that the FDA admits that it is examining how RU-486 could be used safely, and this is one of the reasons FDA drew up the restrictions. "We challenge the FDA to consider banning the use of RU-486 as an abortion method altogether," Whittington continued. "Not only is RU-486 not safe for women but with or without restrictions taking the pill always results in the delivery of a dead baby."

WhyLife? is a project of American Life League, the nation's largest pro-life educational organization with more than 367,000 supporting families. <http://www.all.org/whylife.htm>

PODER

from page two

Tienes la fortaleza para pedir perdón a los que te han ofendido.

Puedes admitir tus errores y puedes pedir perdón para llegar así a establecer una nueva relación. Su gracia te puede sanar.

Puedes cuidar de los débiles.

Puedes eliminar las injusticias, aliviar la pobreza, destruir la opresión y recobrar la rectitud en nuestro mundo. El amor de Dios que habita en ti, te da fuerza para defender a los no nacidos, apoyar a los ancianos y levantar el cerrazón de los que no tienen esperanza. La gracia de Dios que vive en ti te ayuda a ver que en cada persona late un cerrazón que busca el amor.

Tienes poder para tocar corazones con compasión.

Para curar las heridas a tu alrededor y para actuar desinteresadamente. Se abren un sin fin de nuevas posibilidades ante ti – y ante todos nosotros – al comenzar este tercer milenio cristiano. Este es un Año de Jubileo de Celebración. Es una oportunidad para que miremos el mundo y hagamos la decisión de como servir mejor a nuestros semejantes. ¡Por la gracia de Dios puedes hacerlo! Hace dos mil años el Padre envió a su Hijo Jesús al mundo para ser su Salva-

dor. Ahora por el poder del Espíritu Santo, el poder del amor de Dios habita en vosotros, porque Dios te ama.

VBS

from page twelve

Church resulted when settlers came to the Rowena area in 1929 and later built a church in Wall in 1937.

St. Ambrose Catholic Parish was established in 1941 in Wall. In response to the Second Vatican Council, there has been a growing sense of respect and cooperation between the people of the two churches. The members of both churches support each other's events and work side by side in school, agriculture and community efforts. "Hopefully, our shared Vacation Bible School during Jubilee 2000 can be another step toward the unity Jesus prayed for at His Last Supper," concluded Msgr. Droll.

The President of the Bishops' Conference of the Philippines, Most Reverend Orlando B. Quevedo, OMI, has asked that the Bishops in this country be informed of "a Marian solidarity website in Manila" which was inaugurated by Jaime Cardinal Sin, Archbishop of Manila, on April 12, 2000. The address of the website is:

www.solidarity-johnpaul2.com.

Cowboys Linebacker Dat Nguyen Keeps His Moral Compass By Keeping The Faith

by MIKE KOLLER

DALLAS – If Dat Nguyen's story as a poor immigrant-turned-pro-football-player for the Dallas Cowboys were a Hollywood screenplay, it would strain plausibility since it out-Cinderellas even Cinderella.

"I know I'm fortunate, and I know I came from far away," said Nguyen (pronounced WIN). "Every day when I wake up, I thank God for giving me another opportunity to live a beautiful life for another day."

Twenty-five years ago, Nguyen's family fled their fishing village in South Vietnam ahead of advancing communist forces. They left all their material possessions and fled in their boat to the open seas in a desperate bid to survive, anywhere.

Nguyen's mother was pregnant with him when bullets fired by Viet Cong guerrillas whistled past their boat in April 1975. No one in the boat was even wounded.

His family went to Thailand, where they languished for three months aboard their boat before receiving asylum in the United States.

Nguyen was born at the U.S. Army base in Fort Chaffee, Ark., after which the family was settled temporarily in Michigan with the help of Catholic Charities and a sponsoring family.

Eight months later they fled the

harsh northern winter in a jalopy paid for with donations organized by Catholic Charities, and set out for the Texas Gulf Coast to join relatives in Rockport, near Corpus Christi.

In Texas, the three families pooled their financial reserves, bought a modest boat and resumed their livelihood as fishermen.

Nguyen pointed out the irony: They had abandoned their Vietnamese village, Ben Da, which means "Port of Rock," for life as fishermen in Rockport, Texas.

Life began to improve, for which the family constantly gave thanks.

"With God, they realized he let them put food on the table," Nguyen said. "Every time something didn't go right, they prayed and they prayed and they prayed, and that's how they made it to where they are now."

Clinging to their Catholic faith but knowing little English, the families hosted Masses in their homes with a Vietnamese priest as the celebrant. Eventually Corpus Christi Bishop Rene Gracida helped the immigrants establish St. Peter's Church for the Vietnamese.

In those days, Bishop Gracida was the main supporter of the Vietnamese community and families in Rockport, Nguyen said.

Nguyen blossomed on the protein rich American diet and grew into a fearsome linebacker play for the Texas A&M Aggies. His aggressive hitting style earned him national defensive player of the year honors and caught the eye of pro-football scouts.

Nguyen played his first season with the Dallas Cowboys in 1999. But despite the heady success as the only Vietnamese wearing an NFL jersey, he has maintained a grip on the moral compass provided by his faith.

"Without faith, I simply wouldn't be here, so it plays a big role in all aspects of my life," he said. "I'm the first Vietnamese to play in the NFL, so that's a huge step, and I'm under a microscope every day."

He hears the questions about his prospects as a player - How long will Dat Nguyen last in the NFL? Is Dat Nguyen big enough to play in the NFL? Is Dat Nguyen big enough to play every down?

"Every day, people are judging how I'll approach things, how I'll do things," he said.

Nguyen said there will always be questions, but that only motivates him to try harder, in part because he fills a role bigger than himself.

"I'm a role model to a lot of Asian kids, and kids who have disadvan-



tages, and kids with their back against the wall, because I overcame lots of obstacles to live a dream," he said. "I think I opened doors for other kids who have dreams and goals to be a football player or be a doctor. I try to let them know that whatever they want to do in life, the opportunity is there."

In the offseason, Nguyen visits elementary and high schools to speak to students. He said the return on his investment in his time gives him a strong sense of personal accomplishment.

Currently Nguyen attends St. Francis Parish in Grapevine, although he is thinking of making more regular visits to a Vietnamese church after he settles into North Texas.

But he senses a change in the devotion of younger Vietnamese Americans to their faith, and that troubles him.

"The younger generation is not as involved as the generation that came over," he said. "Our parents were so involved in the church be-

cause they know what got them here - our savior Jesus Christ - but I think the younger generation is fading from that."

He said younger Vietnamese are more Americanized and take things for granted.

"It's just part of adapting to the culture here . . . it's more relaxed and laid back," Nguyen explained.

Nguyen said he realizes that he must plan for a meaningful life off the field after football.

"I know football is going to end eventually. I won't be playing when I'm 40 years old," he said. "There's more in life and more things out there that I want to succeed at."

"What I'd like to do is get the word out when kids are young to let them know that opportunity is out there," he said. "I'd like to take a part in helping a kid, to let them know what's right and what's wrong and to get them to think about it before they do something wrong. I'd like to teach them when they are young so that when they are older, they will be on a better path."



Msgr. Larry Droll, pastor of St. Ambrose Catholic Church, and Rev. Tommy Tallas, pastor of the Wall Brethren Church, pose with third graders in the ecumenical Vacation Bible School 2000.



The first day of Vacation Bible School in Wall recalled the story of Noah's ark. The pre-school children (age 4) show their hand puppet animals.

Ecumenical VBS 2000

by Msgr. Larry Droll

"Vacation Bible School was an ecumenical event in Wall during this Jubilee 2000," said Msgr. Larry Droll, pastor of St. Ambrose Catholic Parish. "We have combined with the Wall Brethren Church, so that we can celebrate the 2000th birthday of Jesus with the youngsters of our congregations, in Christian unity, The pastor of the Wall Brethren Church, Rev. Tommy Tallas, and I were discussing what we might do to celebrate the Jubilee Year and he suggested the common Vacation Bible School. This is a wonderful addition to our annual shared event, the Wall Community Thanksgiving Service."

Two hundred and ten children, up to the sixth grade, attended VBS, held June 12- 16, in the facilities of both churches. Seventy-five volunteers mixed together to teach bible stories, make crafts, lead music, and provide snacks. The two pastors led the morning worship. Children from Holy Family Catholic Mission in Mereta and other guests attended.

The week's activities were crowned with the performance of a musical play, "Down by the Creekbank," presented in the Brethren sanctuary on Sunday, June 18, The teachers and helpers celebrated

the blessings of Vacation Bible School 2000 at a late afternoon picnic on the Rocking Chair Ranch on June 25.

"Teachers and parents have commented on the wonderful spirit of unity among the people of our churches, as we have taught and sung and played together during this week," said Msgr. Droll. "They have mentioned how many new ideas have been gained by our sharing together."

The Unity of the Brethren, as it is officially known, began as followers of John Hus, a Czech Catholic priest and reformer who died in 1415. He taught that the bible should be available to everyone (not just to clergy) in their own language (not just Latin). He also held that the cup should be given to communicants (not just the bread). Hus was a strong advocate of moral re-

form in the Church and had his doubts about the primacy of the pope. Sadly, the Catholic authorities of the time excommunicated him and had him burned at the stake. Pope John Paul II, speaking on April 21, 1990 in Prague apologized for the mistreatment of John Hus and called for renewed study of his theology with a view toward ending the scandal of separation. Again on December 17, 1999, Pope John Paul II, speaking to participants of an international John Hus conference, expressed "deep regret for the cruel death inflicted on Hus and the consequent wound of conflict and division."

The Unity of the Brethren in Texas began in 1850 with a settlement of Czech, Bohemian and Moravian immigrants in the Fayetteville area. The first congregation was organized in Wesley, Texas in 1864. The Wall Brethren

see "VBS", page eleven