IN THIS MONTH’S ANGELUS:

Good news! The long-awaited approval by Rome of the new Roman Missal, the Third Edition for liturgical use in the dioceses of the United States, has been granted. Rome also approved a series of adaptations and particular texts to be used in the Missal for the dioceses of the United States.

CALENDAR

JULY
11 -- 15th Sunday of the Year
18 -- 16th Sunday of the Year
25 -- 17th Sunday of the Year
25 -- Bishop Pfeifer 25th Jubilee Mass (Details Pg. 12)

AUGUST
1 -- 18th Sunday of the Year

Just 4 Kids
Jesus Christ challenges people to follow him / Pg. 16
From the Bishop’s Desk

Good news: Rome has approved new missal

By Bishop Michael Pfeifer, OMI

Good news! The long-awaited approval by Rome of the new Roman Missal, the Third Edition for liturgical use in the dioceses of the United States, has been granted. Rome also approved a series of adaptations and particular texts to be used in the Missal for the dioceses of the United States.

The formal recognition of the new translation, or approval date, was March 25, 2010, and soon Cardinal George, OMI, the President of the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops, will announce the date of implementation of the new Roman Missal.

Now must begin the intense preparation for receiving and implementing this new Missal. As I have been doing for more than a year, I strongly encourage our priests, deacons, women religious, and other diocesan leaders to learn as much as they can about the new Missal and to formulate plans for catechesis for the people of our parishes.

Months ago, I asked that our pastors would already begin studying with our pastoral councils the changes in the new Missal.

Pastors and other pastoral leaders will be the key to a successful and grace-filled implementation of this newly approved translation of the Roman Missal in their respective parishes. Now is the time to reflect on the ways in which we can foster a positive and spiritually-enriched presentation of the new missal for the people of God in a way that will

(Please See BISHOP/23)

SPANNING 3 CENTURIES OF CATHOLIC PRESENCE AT BALLINGER’S S. MARY

BALLINGER -- S. Mary, Star of the Sea Catholic Church, located in Ballinger, celebrated its 125th anniversary as a parish and 100 years of worship in the present church structure.

Catholic Missionaries began celebrating masses in Catholic homes in 1885 and called the community St. Mary. Ten years later, in 1895, the first wooden structure called St. Mary Church was constructed across from Brunson’s feed store.

A short time later, land was purchased at 6th and Crosson and a new church was constructed of locally quarried sandstone. In June of 1910, the new Saint Mary, Star of the Sea Catholic Church, was dedicated. Now 100 years later we come together to celebrate the pioneer spirit of the early catholic missionaries and parishioners to mark 125 years of Catholic presence in Runnels county.

A special Mass was celebrated June 6 by Bishop Michael Pfeifer, OMI, marking the 125th and 100th anniversary of the parish and the church.

Bishop Pfeifer rode to the Mass on horseback, much as did early missionaries. He celebrated the outdoor Mass with the pastor, Fr. Hubert Wade and Fathers Bob Baden and Barry McLean and newly ordained deacon, David Workman.

DIOCESAN BRIEFS

USCCB statement on oil spill

WASHINGTON—While meeting in St. Petersburg, Florida, for prayer and reflection, on June 18, the U.S. bishops voiced their prayers and solidarity for those affected by the oil spill in the Gulf of Mexico.

Full text of the bishops’ statement follows:

“We, the Catholic Bishops of the United States, gathered in St. Petersburg, Florida, for several days of prayer and reflection, take this opportunity to express publicly our heartfelt prayers and pastoral solidarity with all those affected by the oil that continues to leak into the Gulf of Mexico. We pray first and foremost for those who died in the initial explosion and for the grieving members of their families. We express our prayerful support as well for the families and individuals whose lives and livelihoods have been so negatively impacted by the oil that daily contaminates water, beaches and God’s creation in the Gulf Coast area. In a special way, in our difficult economic times, we are mindful of those who have lost their jobs and income. “Finally, we offer our prayers for our government leaders and for the industry leaders and experts who are working to cap the leak and repair this damage. May God give them wisdom and strength in this trying hour, and may He move them to seek lasting solutions benefiting the common good of our society.”

(Please See BISHOP/23)
Pfeifer comments on horrific BP oil spill in Gulf

By Bishop Michael Pfeifer

The oil catastrophe calls us to keep praying for the humans who are immediately affected by this tragedy, those who lost their lives, and those who have been injured, and all family members. Since this huge oil gusher began, it is affecting an enormous part of the environment along the Gulf coast. The real heroes of this disaster are the ones who have lost their lives and the hundreds, if not thousands doing the dirty work, day in and day out, during and after the tragedy. The people working to repair the well, the ones on the rig who perished and were injured in the blast, the emergency room staff, and the hospitals caring for them, the firefighters, the people working part of the coastal industries, hardly ever get any press. They don’t ask for it. All they ask for is our support.

I am a member of the National Catholic Rural Life Conference for the U.S. Catholic Bishops, and at our recent meeting in Minneapolis in early June, we issued the following statement about this terrible tragedy: "As the Gulf oil spill reaches the beaches and marshes of our fragile coastlines, we at the National Catholic Rural Life

(Please See SPILL/20)
The story of the Cursillo movement

By Deacon Charlie Evans

Something terrible was happening between the political and the religious in 1936 Spain. That something terrible was a strong ant clerical atmosphere. In fact, there has been no other persecution in Christian history like this War which takes the name of the Spanish Civil War. This War lasted three years and left Spain with 72,500 dead. Among them were priests, seminarians, deacons, nuns, and lay people. This event caused a great number of people to move away from the Christian Life.

In 1940, Pope Pius XII told the clergy and laity faithful of the Church to search for new methods to give to all the great love of God, especially to all those that were distanced from this Love. Through this conference, the Cursillo of Christianity was born. The primary objective of the Cursillo is that all have an intimate relationship with Jesus Christ through a very personal encounter. With that relationship, they could make the world more Christian, with families reconciled in the love of Christ with family values and strong morals. It has been 70 years since the Cursillo was held in Majorca, Spain and the objective remains the same: the transformation of atmospheres.

(please see RETREAT/21)

Una breve historia del cursillo

Por el Diácono Charlie Evans

En el año de 1936 en España sucedió algo terrible entre la política y lo religioso ya que se encontraba una fuerte asmofera ant clerical. En realidad no ha habido otra persecución en la historia Cristiana como esta Guerra que lleva por nombre Guerra Civil Española. Esta Guerra duro 3 años dejando en España a 72,500 muertos entre ellos fueron sacerdotes, seminaristas, diáconos, monjas, y personas laicas. Este suceso dejó gran número de personas alejadas de la Vida Cristiana. En 1940 el Papa Pío XII en una conferencia nos dijo al clero y todos los fieles laicos de la Iglesia que buscáramos métodos nuevos para darles a saber a todos el gran amor de Dios, especialmente a todos aquellos que se encontraban tan distanciados de este Amor.

A través de esta conferencia fue como nació el Cursillo de Cristiandad. El objetivo principal de Cursillo de Cristiandad es que todos tengan una relación muy íntima con Nuestro Señor Jesucristo, a través de un encuentro muy personal con Él para que

(Please See CURSILLO/21)

Lady in Blue correspondence

A letter from Agreda to Bishop Michael Pfeifer:

To the Most Rev. Bishop Pfeifer:

Peace and Goodness.

With these lines we thank you and the entire community of San Angelo for your great interest in, and support of, these historical celebrations. For, at the same time they reconcile the past with the present and they show us that through God there can be unity among yesterday’s men, as well as among those of today.

We are blessed through Divine Providence for the ways we learned of these events in San Angelo, both through the catechists of the Neocatecumenal Way of Texas that were visiting you at the beginning of this year, and with whom we have had contact for many years -- one of our sisters, in fact (Sister Patricia) arrived at this convent through them, and of course we also learned of the events through Marilyn Fedewa with whom we have a special friendship. It has been an experience of great joy for our entire community.

It is our dearest wish that these fraternal and ecumenical experiences around Sor Maria, the Lady in Blue, continue being celebrated. And we hope that these celebrations, together with your Excellency’s efforts, will help to promote the cause of beatification of the Venerable Sor Maria de Jesus of Agreda.

We ask your blessing for this lowly community in Agreda, knowing that we are joined to you with our prayer in this celebration and always as in the Church we are united in the love of Christ.

Yours in Christ and the Virgin Mary,

Sor Maria Luz
Abbes
On behalf of the entire community of The Franciscan Conceptionists of Agreda.

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A letter in return from Bishop Pfeifer to S. Luz:

By way of dear Marilyn Fedewa I received your kind and inspiring letter as we celebrated Mass and joined afterwards in an ecumenical service to remember dear Sor Maria de Agreda, known to us as the wonderful Lady in Blue. Your letter added a very personal peaceful touch to our beautiful liturgy and we felt very close to all of you as we came together with representatives of the Jumano community on the side of the Concho Rivers. In a human way you were very far from us and we were far from you, but through the Mass in our prayer we were indeed very close together in a spirit of peace, joy and love.

Last year I proclaimed that every June 20 be Lady in Blue Day for the city of San Angelo and for the entire Catholic Diocese of San Angelo. Our local mayor has again recognized June 20 of every year to be the Lady in Blue Day in San Angelo. In recent years, the interest in the Lady in Blue has significantly increased and Marilyn’s book has done so much to help so many people come to appreciate in a new way venerable Sor Maria de Jesus of Agreda. We feel her presence with us.

(Please See LETTER/8)
Second annual ‘Lady in Blue Day’ observed in San Angelo

By Jimmy Patterson
The Angelus

When Michelle Estrada was renovating one of her rental homes last year, she had no idea that the painting she lifted out of a dumpster behind that house would lead her to San Angelo and the mystical Sor Maria de Agreda, the Lady in Blue.

A lifelong Catholic, Estrada was at first more interested in the painter -- Murillo, a 17th century artist from Spain -- than the painting. But in the time that has passed she has learned of the story of the Lady in Blue, her ability to bi-locate and her story of bringing Christ to the Jumano Indians of the Southwestern United States.

The experience of finding the painting and learning of Sor Maria has only deepened Estrada’s faith.

The painting she found (above) was displayed during the 2nd annual Lady in Blue Day, June 20, at a Mass and ecumenical service along the confluence of the Concho rivers in San Angelo.

“Finding that painting was when I fell in love with her, because I say, that God put this painting in my hands, because he knew where my heart was. I asked myself, ‘How did I find this painting of a nun, that is 409 years old?’”

Estrada has been on the phone contacting museums and galleries with hopes that someone might authenticate the painting. She has been told that the Spanish nun only sat for three paintings in her life. The cause for Maria’s beatification has been taken up by the Vatican.

The connection between the painting and the Lady in Blue celebration in San Angelo was made when Estrada, during her research, ran across a web site published by San Angelo’s Cindy Jordan. The unveiling of the painting was a major part of the weekend celebrating the Lady in Blue in June.

Estrada is an in-school suspension specialist in Austin.

To learn more about Sor Maria de Agreda, visit www.ladyinblue.org
The Story of The Two Davids

By Rev. Mark Miller
Parochial Vicar
Catholic Churches of South Odessa

I have come to believe that the Hebrew and Christian Scriptures contain the basic stories of humankind and that there is truth in what is prophesied in Ecclesiastes 1:9, “there is nothing new under the sun.” I do not say this as a pessimist but simply as one who believes that “my story” is contained in “the story” as described in the Scriptures. If I am struggling with a decision over a certain issue, I can find the answer in the Scriptures that will guide me to a peaceful and meaningful solution. The Scriptures really are “our stories.”

Recently I was confronted with the two Davids. Most of you know the one; some of you may have heard of the other. The two Davids I speak of is David, the King, as described in the Books of Samuel. The other David is David Lee Powell whom we executed on June 15. Before you stop reading and go on to another article in this paper, hear me out in terms of these two Davids.

We know from Scripture that David, the King, was guilty of adultery and of murder. He is the one who lusted after the wife of Uriah and after he had relations with her while her husband was off to war, David called Uriah back from the battlefield and wanted him to go home to his wife so that her pregnancy would appear to be caused by Uriah and not by David. Uriah refused himself this comfort because he wanted to be faithful to his troops who were still in harm’s way. So David sends Uriah back into battle and makes sure he goes where the fighting is most fierce. Uriah does indeed get killed in battle and now David takes his wife, Bathsheba, as his own. (2 Samuel 11:1-27)

David Lee Powell killed a police officer in 1978. He was 27 years old at the time. He has spent the last 32 years on Death Row. During that time, he has shown deep remorse for his crime and has turned his life completely around. Or as one Austin police officer said recently: “the man who (would) be put to death… is not the man who committed the crime. This David Powell is an elderly man who has shown what I believe to be true understanding and remorse for his crime. This is a man who, in my feeble view, would not be any type of menace to society today and is not, in even any small way, the guy who killed that cop 32 years ago.”

I asked myself, what is the difference between these two Davids? One committed adultery and murder and is forgiven and later made King by the God of Israel. The other committed murder and we put him to death. Both of them admitted their guilt, were sorry for their sin, and turned their life around.

The stories of Scripture contain the “big story” in which our “little stories” are to find comfort and direction.

As Lucinda Williams, three-time Grammy award winner, states: “The death penalty does not allow for the fact that people can change and improve. In fact, it cancels out the very possibility of human redemption. Capital punishment is based on a depressing philosophy that bad people (or people who do bad things) will always be bad.”

If David the King can change; if David Powell can change; is it possible for the State of Texas to change?

Looking for a peaceful resolution to the Israeli-Palestinian conflict

Pope calls October assembly to help facilitate peace

By Bishop Michael D. Pfeifer, OMI
Bishop of San Angelo

The peaceful resolution of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict is a major concern not only for the Holy Land, but for our own government, and people throughout the world. The violence and tension in the land called Holy also impacts the stability of surrounding countries. The solutions are well-known to both the Israeli and Palestinian leaders, but what is needed is political will and courage. Jerusalem, which is holy to Jews, Christians and Muslims, offers a special place where different people and different religions could come together in dialogue and respect; sadly it is the volatile core of the conflict. There is a growing distance between Israelis and Palestinians—a lack of human contact that undermines trust and dialogue. Violence, insecurity, home demolitions, permits and visa problems, the route of the wall, expropriation of lands and other policies threaten both a two-state solution and the entire Christian presence. Furthermore, much more time and attention needs to be given to the implementation of the Fundamental Agreement and the facilitation of visas for workers, especially religious workers to fulfill their mission. The deteriorating situation is not good for Israelis, Palestinians, the region and the world.

To help facilitate a peaceful solution in the Holy Land, Pope Benedict XVI is convening a Special Assembly for the Middle East of the Synod of Bishops which is scheduled for October 10-24, 2010, to demonstrate the interest of the universal church. The document that will serve as the basis of discussion for this Special Assembly acknowledges that many of the challenges facing Christians in the Middle East flow from the political conflicts in the region. The document notes the impact of the Israeli occupation of the Palestinian Territories, the war in Iraq, and the political divisions in Lebanon on the diminishing Christian presence in the region, especially in the land where Christianity began.

We all need to pray for peace in the Holy Land, and especially for the success of the Synod that is important for the whole region and the world.
Sexual abuse rampant in many parts of society

AP report says sexual misconduct especially plagues our public schools.

By Bishop Michael Pfeifer, OMI

The sexual molestation of minors has existed throughout history and in every part of the globe. The Catholic Church, like every other religious and secular institution, has had its share of abuse cases. But judging from recent news stories about clerical sexual abuse in Europe and especially in Ireland, might leave some to think that the Catholic Church has a monopoly on this problem.

In a particular way, Pope Benedict XVI has been mercilessly smeared in the media, especially by The New York Times with half truths, distortions and falsehoods. Examination of all the facts that have been left out by the media, shows that Benedict acted in a responsible manner and that the pope, before and after he became pope, has done more than anyone else to deal effectively with clerical sexual abuse.

Recent news stories, especially by The New York Times, would want the world to believe that the sexual abuse scandal in the Catholic Church is widening. The evidence, especially recent national reports, show just the opposite. The latest audit conducted by an independent agency, the Gavin Group of Boston, supported by the John Jay College of Criminal Justice, shows in the 2009 report the fewest number of victims, allegations and offenders in dioceses since 2004, and states that most cases reported to dioceses were from decades ago. Data for the 2009 calendar year were collected by the Georgetown University-based Center for Applied Research in the Apostolate which began gathering data on sexual abuse of minors by clerics in 2004 as part of the bishops' annual report in compliance with the Charter of 2009. The audit report reported that almost 6 million, or 96 percent of children in Catholic Schools or religious education programs, underwent Safe Environment training during 2009 and that background evaluations were performed on over 2 million priests, deacons, seminarians, educators, employees, and volunteers of the Catholic Church in the USA. The media has given very little coverage to this outstanding record of the Catholic Church in confronting the issue of sexual abuse of children that is rampant in our country. The constant cry of the Church is for fair, equal, objective and truthful reporting on the negative and positive dimension of this issue.

To put all of this in proper perspective, let us look at the true startling and shocking statistics surrounding child abuse, and which group in society is the biggest perpetrator.

The statistics are shocking:
- 1 in 4 girls is sexually abused before the age of 18;
- 1 in 6 boys is sexually abused before the age of 18;
- 1 in 5 children are solicited sexually while on the internet;
- An estimated 39 million survivors of childhood sexual abuse exist in America today.

Who are the major perpetrators of sexual abuse:
- 30-40% of victims are abused by a family member;
- Another 50% are abused by someone outside the family whom they know and trust;
- Married men are the major perpetrators of sexual abuse.

While the Catholic Church must sadly admit, along with other churches if they are sincere, that some of their leaders have engaged in the terrible abuse and crime of sexual abuse of children, the media spotlight must focus on U.S. schools where even much more sexual misconduct is happening on a daily basis.

The Associated Press' investigation in October 2007 indicates that sexual misconduct plagues public schools. There are 3 million public school teachers nationwide, most devoted to their work and caring of their students. Yet the number of sexual abuse claims is staggering. An April poll by the Pew Research Center found that just 12 percent of those polled said Pope Benedict had done a good or excellent job in addressing the scandal, down from 39 percent in 2008, when the pope visited the United States and had an unscheduled meeting in Washington with victims of clergy sexual abuse. Those who said the pope had done a poor or fair job went up from 48 percent in 2008 to 71 percent in 2010.

The findings were part of a report, "The Pope Meets the Press: Media Coverage of the Clergy Abuse Scandal," published June 11 by Pew.

Coverage of clergy sexual abuse placed eighth in total coverage, accounting for 2.1 percent of all news coverage during the March 12-April 27 period studied, more than nuclear weapons policy coverage and that of the Tea Party movement.

It peaked the week of March 22-28 as the fourth biggest topic in news coverage, when reports surfaced that in the 1990s former Cardinal Joseph Ratzinger chose not to proceed with a church trial and possible laicization of an elderly Wisconsin priest who had abused scores of deaf boys in the church's care decades before. The Vatican had said by the time it learned of the case that the priest was old and in poor health. During the six-week period examined by Pew, health care legislation accounted for 16 percent of total news coverage, and the economy took second place with 14.5 percent. The West Virginia coal mine accident finished third with 3.4 percent. Other topics -- the Iceland volcanic eruption, the 2010 elections, the U.S. mission in Afghanistan, and the Obama administration, garnered 2.3 percent to 2.7 percent of coverage.

The scandal got a proportionately higher share of coverage on network TV, with 3.7 percent of all coverage, and online news sources, with 3.3 percent. Abuse coverage ranked fifth in each medium.

Pope Benedict was far and away the lead newsmaker during the six-week period, appearing in 51.6 percent of all abuse scandal stories. Placing second was his successor as head of the Vatican Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith, U.S. Cardinal William J. Levada, with 2.4 percent. No other figure garnered more than 1.6 percent of the lead newsmaker status.

By comparison, Pope John Paul II was the lead newsmaker in only 15.5 percent of stories at the peak of coverage of the 2002 clergy sexual abuse scandal in the United States.

The degree to which the pope was tied by the media to the scandal and the church's handling of it ranked sixth among all scandals tracked since 2007, behind golfer Tiger Woods' affairs, the arrest of film director Roman Polanski, the scandals surrounding New York Gov. David Paterson, the Ponzi scheme fashioned by financier Bernie Madoff, and the extramarital affair of former presidential aspirant John Edwards.

(Please See ABUSE/22)
Catholic charities director: Spill could be worse than hurricanes

By Mark Pattison
Catholic News Service

WASHINGTON -- The ultimate tally of the devastation wrought by the Deepwater Horizon oil rig explosion in April could be "worse than hurricanes," said the director of Catholic Charities for the Diocese of Houma-Thibodaux, La.

"The level of anxiety is incredibly high," said Rob Gorman, who has been with Catholic Charities since 1982 and married the daughter of a French-speaking bayou fisherman. "If you're a trawler, you don't know if you're going to be able to trawl this year, or if you're going to be able to trawl next year, or the year after that, or the year after that."

The same, Gorman said, applies to fishermen, crabbers and shrimpers.

While "we all get very anxious at the start of hurricane season," he said, "folk here are adept at recovering from hurricane damage" since they know what to expect should a hurricane come. If hit, "we start rebuilding and recovering," he added. "It's all very predictable."

It's not knowing the extent of the continuing crisis in the Gulf of Mexico that is ratcheting up anxiety in southern Louisiana, Gorman said during a June 23 conference call with reporters arranged by the Catholic Coalition on Climate Change.

The millions of gallons spilled into the Gulf linger in the water as "not one solid blob (but), hundreds of thousands of little, smaller blobs (which) when gathered together can go in any direction," Gorman said. "If they start sneaking under the booms we've tried to set up," he added, "it's worse in the sense that we just haven't a clue how this is going to play out."

Gorman cited an unnamed professor at Loyola University in New Orleans who told him the spill "is going to have ripple effects all throughout the country. ... If you don't have plankton, you don't have a little fish called the menhaden. The biggest port for landing that fish is in our diocese. Menhaden is a hugely important fish for us particularly. If you don't have menhaden, you don't have chicken feed. And if you don't have chicken feed, you've got a crisis for the chicken growers."

"Drilling mud -- that's a misnomer. It's a toxic lubricant," Gorman declared. "It's a mixture of heavy metals and volatile organic compounds; that drilling mud is just very dangerous stuff."

Add to that the oil and the chemical dispersant and "we have this toxic soup in the Gulf. And the folks from Alaska are saying, 'Do not take these health concerns lightly.' And the respirators are good for only 24 hours," Gorman said.

Alaska's Prince William Sound was the site of the Exxon Valdez oil tanker mishap in 1989, which likewise spilled millions of gallons of crude oil into the water.

USCCB committee explains direct abortion, legitimate medical procedure

Catholic News Service

WASHINGTON -- The U.S. bishops' Committee on Doctrine in a June 23 statement discussed the distinction between the church's definitions of a direct abortion and a legitimate medical procedure that could result in an indirect abortion.

The committee's statement, which was provided to all of the bishops, came in response to an evolving debate among ethicists and theologians over the excommunication of Mercy Sister Margaret Mary McBride and her subsequent reassignment at a Phoenix Catholic hospital after news surfaced in May about her role in a decision to let an abortion take place there in late 2009.

A copy of the statement was released to Catholic News Service.

The wide-ranging debate has focused on whether the decision by the ethics committee at St. Joseph's Hospital and Medical Center that an abortion could proceed in the case of a gravely ill pregnant woman was a direct abortion or an indirect abortion that resulted from performing a legitimate medical procedure to save her life.

The woman was 11 weeks pregnant and suffered from pulmonary hypertension, a condition the hospital said carried a near-certain risk of death for the mother if the pregnancy continued.

Dead fish are piling up as a result of the oil spill in the Gulf.

LETTER

(From 4)

today and yes we pray for her beatification.

Several months ago, I asked our people to pray for a miracle for a beautiful little baby that was ill through the intercession of Sor Maria de Agreda. This precious little baby lived beyond the time the doctors expected and while a miracle of total cure was not granted, many other miracles were worked in the hearts and lives of many other people through the Lady in Blue in the life of this beautiful baby. I had the funeral service for this little baby who lived only about six months and several hundred people joined me in the Cathedral of the Sacred Heart. The Lady in Blue and this little baby touched the lives of hundreds of people in a very special way. We keep praying for other wonderful miracles that will help to promote the cause of canonization of Sor Maria de Jesus.

I and the people of San Angelo feel a new closeness to all of you who are members of that great community of Franciscans to which Sor Maria belonged when she was with us back in the 1600s. We hope to keep establishing a deeper union of love with you and your community through prayer, communication and working for the cause of Sor Maria de Agreda.

Once again I thank you for your message and I ask Christ to pour out many new blessings upon all of you. May Mary our Mother watch over you.

Your servant in Christ and Mary,
Most Rev. Michael Pfeifer, OMI
Some things beyond our control make us feel helpless

By Stephen Kent
Catholic News Service

We can’t fix it. We can’t fix blame for it. In fact, we still can’t fully comprehend it.

It is, in words that grind into the very center of the American psyche, something that is beyond our control.

A nation that has sent men to the moon and miniaturized powerful computers to fit into shirt pockets can’t find a way to turn off the oil.

The gulf oil gusher is a sad, expensive lesson in recognizing the fallible nature of humans, having to accept that there are still things out of our control.

As follows every disaster, natural or manmade, terms unheard of previously become part of everyday conversation: “top kill,” “junk shot,” “containment dome,” “Lower Marine Riser Package cap” (the latter sounding like one of the infamous junk bonds from the financial meltdown). Concern arises for previously unknown wildlife: the newly discovered bottom-dwelling pancake batfish.

It might be August before the oil gushing from a broken pipe under the Gulf of Mexico is turned off.

In the meantime, a summer of discontent looms.

When looking for someone to blame, God is often a strong candidate.

Media mogul Ted Turner suggests the blowout is a matter of divine intervention entering national energy policy.

“I’m not a real religious person, but I’m somewhat religious. And I’m just wondering if God is telling us he doesn’t want us to drill offshore,” he said.

“Maybe the Lord’s tired of having the mountains of West Virginia, the tops knocked off of them so they can get more coal. I think maybe we ought to just leave the coal in the ground and go with solar and wind power and geo-thermals where it’s applicable.”

The governor of Texas, warning against a rush to halff offshore drilling, questioned whether the explosion and leak was “just an act of God that occurred.” Gov. Rick Perry later rephrased his remark to make God part of insurance language small print rather than a random actor.

Then there were those saying God has reverted to an Old Testament mode by bringing calamity upon people to make them re-examine their ways.

A story by The Associated Press put it well: “Fear is afoot everywhere, and polarization prevails. Faith in institutions -- corporations, government, the media -- is down. Americans are angry, and they long ago grew accustomed to expecting the resolution of problems in very short order, even if reality rarely works that way.”

“It’s frustrating,” said Doug Helton, head of a National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration team of federal scientists in Seattle. "The public has an expectation that with technology we can solve the problem. We know we can’t.”

Nothing will be fixed until August, and by August there easily could be one more scandal, explosion or disaster to divert the public’s attention.

Meantime, there are several things to be dealt with:

Patience: appreciating the incredible complexity of what the work involves.

Anger: recognizing the frustration with things beyond our reach.

Perhaps the major question is: Should we have been there in the first place? Driven that far, that deep to quench an insatiable thirst for energy?

Had not BP punched three miles under the sea floor to tap into a reservoir undisputed for millions of years, we wouldn’t have poisoned creation to maintain an energy-driven lifestyle.

(Kent, retired editor of archdiocesan newspapers in Omaha and Seattle, can be contacted at: Considersk@gmail.com.)

Responsibility: A fact of life that can save lives

By Karen Osborne
Catholic News Service

In 1989, the oil tanker Exxon Valdez ran aground on Bligh Reef in Alaska, coating miles and miles of sensitive seashore with slick, black oil. For the next few months, television showed white birds dragging oil-slicked wings up rocky beaches, thousands of dead fish washed up on shore and workers in white hazmat suits scrubbing seals with soft-bristled brushes.

In that case none of the seamen on duty was given their mandatory six hours of rest and the ship was on autopilot. In addition, the ship’s sonar system wasn’t repaired, so the pilot wasn’t aware of the impending collision.

It was an extraordinary example of what can happen when people don’t take responsibility -- on all levels.

Today, something worse is happening in the Gulf of Mexico. The Deepwater Horizon oil rig exploded, starting an oil spill that dwarfs anything the Exxon Valdez could have caused.

Investigations are focusing on technical problems aboard the oil rig that might have caused the disaster.

We don’t know what really happened. But someone somewhere down the line needed to take responsibility but didn’t.

History is littered with the debris of carelessness. Hospitals neglect to watch their patients well enough and some patients die as a result. Homes burn down because of candles and cigarettes left burning. People forget to rest sufficiently before driving and end up as casualties on the highway.

It’s not that any of these people were bad or evil. None of them wanted to hurt anyone. They just didn’t understand that they can’t shirk responsibility.

“Responsibility” is a big word to swallow, especially for teenagers. Our culture touts responsibility as a big monster of a thing, waiting in the darkness to gobble up everything that’s carefree and fun. It can leave a person with shoulders weighed down with chores and cares. People feel frightened about the responsibilities right around the corner: paying rent, buying a car, doing a job.

But responsibility is a fact of life. Maybe right now the responsibilities of teens are few -- taking care of younger siblings or cousins, going to a part-time job or finishing homework on time. However, it is through people taking responsibility that we have our awesome lives today. The cops on our streets feel responsible. The people that make sure food in a restaurant is safe to eat feel responsible. Teachers feel responsible as they teach students how to read and do math. And if it weren’t for a responsible truck driver going to work every day, I wouldn’t have mozzarella sticks to eat for dinner.

And responsibility isn’t only to others. Responsible athletes train so they don’t get injured. When they don’t train or warm up, they run the risk of injuries that could ruin their careers.

Before the icebergs, oil rigs and the police academy, there are first jobs such

(Please See OSBORNE/23)
Overselling the synthetic cell

By Fr. Tad Pacholczyk

In a recent article entitled "How We Created the First Synthetic Cell," Dr. J. Craig Venter waxes broadly about how his research team succeeded in constructing a bacterial cell out of its component parts. The story, which has captured the imagination of the media, appears to be a jaw-dropping breakthrough: "Scientists have created artificial life in a laboratory!" Such headlines evoke images of a Frankenstein creation, a Jurassic Park monster, or an alien life form. But in the final analysis, the scientific achievement of Venter and his team, although notable, is considerably less dramatic.

The term "synthetic cell" suggests that they constructed the entire cell, brick by brick, molecule by molecule, from the ground up. What they really did was create a synthetic genome (a chemically manufactured copy of all the genes of a bacterium). This gigantic piece of DNA (a chromosome that happens to be the longest string of DNA ever assembled in the laboratory) was then placed inside another bacterium. Venter's group, rather than creating bacterial life out of nonliving matter, instead achieved the impressive technical feat of converting one type of bacterium into another when the new DNA was introduced. Venter himself, notwithstanding his previous attempts at self-promotion, stressed: "We definitely have not created life from scratch because we used a recipient cell to boot up the synthetic chromosome." His accomplishment, then, was to produce a large synthetic genome, not "synthetic life" itself.

Nevertheless, a number of commentators have managed to miss the point. Bioethicist Art Caplan, writing on the Scientific American website, suggests that Venter's "synthetic cell" dispels the notion that life is "sacred, special, ineffable and beyond human understanding.

Faye Flam muses in a similar vein in the Philadelphia Inquirer: "What's shocking about the new organism isn't that it breaches a boundary between animate matter and life, but that it shows that no such boundary exists. Life is chemistry." Her article gets even more outlandish when she suggests that chemicals "have the power to assemble themselves into organisms - even complicated ones that can contemplate their own place in the universe..."

Natalie Angier of the New York Times, meanwhile, is more measured and precise in summarizing Venter's work:

"Every cell is a microcosm of life, and neither the Venter team nor anybody else has come close to recreating the cell from scratch. If anything, the new report underscores how dependent biologists remain on its encapsulated power. Bonnie L. Bassler, a microbiologist at Princeton, said, 'They started with a known genome, a set of genes that nature had given us, and they had to put their genome into a live cell with all the complex goo and ingredients to make the thing go.'"

The Vatican newspaper L'Osservatore Romano, while noting how Venter's work is an impressive example of cutting-edge genetic engineering, also stressed that the researchers who created the cell had not created life, just "replaced one of its motors."

Even though Venter's work does not fundamentally alter our understanding of life itself, it does challenge us to reflect on our increasing technical ability to manipulate life and to dominate it. The arrogant suggestion that man should create life and the accompanying Promethean quest for power and fame through such endeavors should raise some alarm bells. Reducing life, even though it is non-human life, to merely another quantity that we control, exploit, and subject to market forces is to coarsen our sensibilities towards an important measure of our own being. In every living organism, whether humble bacterium, plant or animal, we encounter a faint glimmer of our own delicate life.

Professor Erwin Chargaff, who did pioneering work on the molecular structure of DNA, once commented in his rather biting style on the modern, almost condescending scientific attitude toward life:

"Because life is a mystery and will remain so, because we still can't say what life is, we need to be very careful. If we could find a way to turn off the element of self-interest, then there would be no problem. But our era is so appalling that, if [Sir Isaac] Newton were alive today, he'd have taken out a patent on gravity and we'd have to pay to walk around. One should not impose all the conventions of a market economy on the questions of life."

Even as our ability to manipulate biological life in the laboratory continues to grow, the principle of life itself remains elusive and beyond our grasp. Living beings, with all their structure and complexity, should never cease to impress us and inspire us with a certain awe, so that even in our bated eagerness to harness their powers, we might avoid reducing life itself to a mere commodity or raw material for our biotechnical prowess to conquer.

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

Making Sense of Bioethics

Overselling the synthetic cell

Sexo y Píldoras: Viagra y Anticonceptivos

Padre Tad Pacholczyk

Agosto 2008

Un prominente político fue recientemente presionado por algunos reporteros a que comentara en relación a la “injusta situación” de que las instituciones de seguro médico estén efectuando reembolsos por el uso de Viagra, pero no así por anticonceptivos. El político declinó contestar y la controversia originada condujo a acusaciones en su contra de prejuicio de género (y hasta de misoginia). Algunos comentaristas fueron aún más lejos: ¿Por qué los hombres sí consiguen medicamentos para poder tener sexo pero las mujeres no tienen igual acceso a los tratamientos necesarios para tener sexo de manera segura y sin riesgo de embarazarse? ¿Tienen los hombres más derecho que las mujeres a tener sexo, según lo implica la cobertura inequitativa de estos medicamentos?

Detrás de estas preguntas están algunas concepciones equivocadas respecto al sexo, al embarazo, y a la moralidad, así como una confusión de origen en cuanto a las acciones respectivas de estos dos tratamientos. El Viagra y las píldoras anticonceptivas no pueden ser elementos para una comparación apresurada entre el hombre y la mujer —estas poderosas substancias se utilizan para dos diferentes propósitos, y cada uno tiene sus propias y particulares consideraciones éticas. El Viagra, en esencia, es para tratar una disfunción real, pero no sucede lo mismo con los anticonceptivos. De hecho, se puede decir que el Viagra hace funcionar un sistema descompuesto, mientras que la píldora descompone un sistema que funciona perfectamente.

Cuando la píldora se utiliza para evitar el embarazo (es el uso que mayoritariamente se le da en Estados Unidos), y no para tratar los ciclos menstruales irregulares, se está alterando un saludable sistema biológico que funciona adecuadamente, y se posibilita que la pareja casada actúe en contra de su propia y natural fertilidad. Siempre que convertimos la sexualidad marital en una transacción_radicalmente sin vida mediante el uso de anticonceptivos, se está cometiendo una grave violación moral. En nuestra sociedad, el embarazo y la fertilidad frecuentemente se ven como si fuesen algún tipo de problema de salud. La fertilidad, evidentemente, no es una enfermedad en lo absoluto, y no necesita ser tratada como si fuera un estado patológico. El embarazo es el normal y saludable proceso fisiológico por el cual los seres humanos entramos al mundo, y la vida-recorrido de cada persona incluye el quedarse un buen rato en el vientre materno. Sin embargo, en nuestra sociedad, el excesivo deseo de sexo, específicamente del separado de sus consecuencias, ha empujado a millones de personas a actuar en contra del orden adecuado en sus matrimonios recurriendo a los anticonceptivos.

Por otra parte, en el caso de disfunción eréctil, puede suceder que el proceso biológico normal se encuentre dañado debido a la edad o a alguna lesión, y mediante el uso de Viagra este problema se remedie. Este medicamento no está dirigido a alterar una función normal sino más bien a restablecerla. El uso médico de esta substancia para efectos de rehabilitación dentro del matrimonio no genera por lo regular problemas morales.

Habrá quienes argumenten que es natural y normal que el hombre pierda su función eréctil a cierta edad. ¿Debemos asumir que el hombre sigue teniendo sexo a pesar de la impotencia por la edad, mientras que a la mujer no se le puede forzar a seguir siendo fértil más allá de la..."
The Bishop at 25

Pfeifer celebrates 25 years as leader of Catholic Diocese of San Angelo

Coverage inside, Pages 12-14

The Most Rev. Michael Pfeifer, OMI
Silver Jubilee
Bishop of San Angelo: 1985-2010

Photo: Bishop Stephen Leven, left, ordains a young Michael Pfeifer (at right) as a priest in 1964. In a rare occurrence, Pfeifer would one day succeed the man who ordained him both as a priest and as Bishop of San Angelo.
Su invitación a una celebración especial del 25 aniversario

Con gran alegría y agradecimiento a Cristo y a nuestra Santa Madre les invito a presenciar la misa concelebrada para celebrar mi 25º Aniversario Episcopal el lunes 26 de julio del año 2010 a las 6:30 de la noche en la Catedral del Sagrado Corazón, 19 S. Oakes, San Angelo.

El mejor regalo: su presencia si es posible, oraciones, ayudar a un miembro familiar necesitado, o un regalo al pozo.

Recepción después de la Misa en el gimnasio escolar — al lado de la Catedral

— Obispo Miguel D. Pfeifer, O.M.I.

Mass celebrating bishop’s 25 years set for July 26

By Jimmy Patterson

SAN ANGELO — A Mass celebrating the Most Rev. Michael Pfeifer’s 25th year as Bishop of San Angelo is scheduled for 6:30 p.m. Monday, July 26, at the Sacred Heart Cathedral, 19 S. Oakes, in downtown San Angelo. A reception will follow. All are invited.

Pfeifer, appointed bishop in 1985 by Pope John Paul II, was, at the time of his installation, the first man in the history of the Missionary Oblates of Mary Immaculate (OMI) to be named diocesan bishop in the United States.

“Most diocesan bishops are appointed as auxiliary bishops and then later selected,” Pfeifer noted. “I was selected to be diocesan bishop directly out of the priesthood. A very small percentage of ordained priests become bishops of a diocese.”

Pfeifer noted that since his ordination, there have been only two other oblates that have been selected to serve by Rome as bishops, including Francis Cardinal George, former bishop of Chicago and current Archibishop of Chicago and president of the U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops. George was appointed to the position of Cardinal in 1998 by Pope John Paul II.

Bishop Pfeifer’s ordination was rare in another aspect. A priest’s 25th anniversary Mass will unofficially open a year of celebration that will culminate Oct. 16, 2011, with a diocesan-wide celebration marking the 50th anniversary of the Diocese of San Angelo. A Mass will be said at the San Angelo Coliseum and a book commemorating the diocese’s first 50 years will be available.

An official announcement regarding the plans and preparations for the 50th anniversary celebration will be published in the August Angelus.

Bishop Michael Pfeifer, at right, volunteering as a youth (at right) swinging mopsticks as a seminarian in the 1960s. Pfeifer as a young priest. Bishop Stephen Levene. It is also rare. Pfeifer noted, to succeed as bishop the bishop who ordained you.

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The following interview was first published in the July 19, 1985, edition of the West Texas Angelus on the occasion of the Most Rev. Michael Pfeifer's installation as the fifth Bishop of the Diocese of San Angelo. The interview was conducted by then-editor of the Angelus, Rev. Mark Woodruff, currently pastor of St. Elizabeth Ann Seton in Odessa. Below are excerpts from that interview.

Angelus: You have used the term ‘servant leader.’ Would you elaborate on its meaning:

Pfeifer: When I use the phrase, I always try to think about the type of leadership that Jesus Christ himself modeled for His people and for our Church today. Jesus portrays Himself in His ministry as a servant leader and this is the type of leader that I believe he wants for his church today. A servant attends to the needs of others trying to help people where their needs are greatest, but who is also willing to guide people and to help them achieve their purpose as human beings and as children of God.

Angelus: What goal would you like to see realized in the Diocese of San Angelo in the next five years?

Pfeifer: My first and greatest goal, at least during my first year, is to come to know the diocese, the good priests, deacons, women religious who are serving here and as much as possible to come to understand who the people are that I am called to serve. Another goal would be to reach out to those who are most in need, and to try to initiate the necessary programs, especially self-help programs, where these people can have a say in the planning and preparation of programs as well as a voice in carrying them out. I would also want to give strong support to our Hispanic brothers and sisters.

Pfeifer: I have spent 16 years of my priestly life as a missionary in Mexico, and it has been very fulfilling and has enriched my life in many, many ways. I believe basically the whole Church is missionary, and I have found that often missionary territories are the places where the faith is most alive and where many programs are initiated that provide new ways for the people to live their faith and to be of service to others. Missionary means being sent, and I believe that Christ sends all of us, regardless of the material development we live in, to be His messengers in order to help extend God’s Kingdom on earth.

Angelus: You have a special devotion to the Blessed Mother. How will you encourage devotion to her in the diocese?

Pfeifer: Mary has been an integral part of my life and I have tried to build up a special devotion to her as a Christian and also a missionary priest who bore her title as Oblate of Mary Immaculate. I have chosen as my motto for the Diocese of San Angelo the following: “For Christ and His People Through Mary.”

1985: New bishop tells of his desire to be a ‘servant leader’
Explaining Canon Law to those in the pews

By Father John Dietzen
Catholic News Service

Q. You frequently refer to canon law, as in your recent column discussing whether homosexuality is an impediment to the priesthood. What exactly is canon law? If it’s a set of laws for Catholics, I’d be interested in reading it. How can one obtain a copy? (Indiana)

A. The Code of Canon Law is a body of regulations that govern the life of the Catholic Church, from electing the pope and who can receive the sacraments to the rights and duties of laypeople, priests and bishops.

As an institution made up of human beings, the church has always had rules or “canons” (Greek for “precepts” or “laws”) of some sort. We find them already in the New Testament.

As human cultures and societies, including the Catholic Church, confront new developments in their environment and traditions, laws inevitably change also, requiring revisions and reorganization of one kind or another.

In the church’s 2,000 years, perhaps the most famous of these reorganizations is the 12th-century Concordance of Discordant Canons in which a monk, Gratian, attempted to reconcile all legislation prevailing at the time.

Surprisingly, the first real Code of Canon Law was published only in 1917. A revision of that code, completed under Pope John Paul II and promulgated in 1983, presently governs life in the Latin Church. Another one exists for Eastern Catholic churches.

The code is not extremely long and, as legal documents go, is nearly a gem of simplicity and clarity. It is available through the Canon Law Society of America in Washington.

I should warn anyone who is considering buying it, however, that while it is generally easy to read, the code is far from simple.

Some of my favorite parish fundraisers

By Father Peter J. Daly
Catholic News Service

Fundraising. It is a fact of life for parishes. We hate to do it, but we have to do it.

Every parish has its favorite fundraisers. Here are some of mine done in our parish over the past 15 years.

If your parish has some creative fundraisers, let me know. We can share the wealth.

“Cow Chip Bingo” was the biggest-grossing fundraiser of all time in our parish. It requires a slow-moving cow that won’t jump the fence and is not constipated. It also requires a large field and a couple of “line judges.”

We divided our parish field into about 3,500 quadrants, each about two feet square. We staked out the ends of the rows and used a laser to determine the square boundaries. We sold each square for $10.

Then we released the cow onto the field and waited for Bossy to do her business. Meanwhile, we sold refreshments to the admiring crowd. Eventually, she made a deposit on a square. The owner of that square got 10 percent of the wagers.

Our parish made about $30,000, and one happy owner of a soiled square went home with $3,000.

There is a variation on “Cow Chip Bingo.” It involves chickens. The chickens either lay an egg or make a deposit, ala Bossy.

The problem with “Chicken Chip Bingo” is the tendency of our Men’s Club to come up with names for it that we can’t put on a church poster. There is also a problem of timing if you wait for eggs. Chickens lay eggs less frequently than cows make “chips.”

“Dining for Dollars” is a close second for “most popular fundraiser.” It is easy. All you need is a local restaurant that wants extra business on a slow night. (That is practically any restaurant.)

Our youth group did this recently. They printed fliers asking people to eat at a particular restaurant on a particular night. After each of the Sunday Masses, they passed out the fliers. All the parishioners had to do was eat at the designated restaurant on the designated day and hand their server one of the fliers. The restaurant gave us 20 percent of the check (not counting taxes and tip) of each table that presented a flier.

Hundreds of people showed up. We made a couple thousand with little or no trouble. The restaurant was happy, too, because they got hundreds of first-time customers.

“Cell Phones for Cash” is also a good fundraiser. Generally, I hate cell phones, but I like them when they make us money.

We use them as a fundraiser for our preschool. People drop their old cell phones in a box at the back of church. Every month or so, a volunteer mails them off to a company that recycles them. The company pays us anywhere from $10 to $50 per phone. Easy money.

Another variation of this fundraiser is “Cartridges for Cash,” whereby we collect old toner cartridges.

Finally, there is “Ransom Father.” I didn’t like it much, but it made money. The youth of my parish made a video showing me being kidnapped by them. On a weekend when I was going to be away, they played the video in the back of church, complete with an appeal for my ransom, which I recorded “in captivity.”

We made a lot of money on this. But it’s risky. It is possible that the parish won’t pay to get the pastor back! Those are my favorites. What are yours?
1. How did the Samaritans treat the messengers?
2. How did John and James react to the messengers’ report?

BIBLE ACCENT

By the time the story from today’s Bible reading had taken place, there had been dislike between the Samaritans and the Jews for hundreds of years. When Jesus told the parable of the good Samaritan, he knew his story would have impact because it was the Samaritan who showed mercy on the injured Jewish man.

In John 4, Jesus asked a Samaritan woman for a drink from the well. She was shocked that he would even ask her for help. She summarized the origin of the animosity between the Jews and the Samaritans when she referred to the fact that the Samaritan ancestors had built one mountain to worship their gods on while the Jews worshipped their God in Jerusalem.

But Jesus always taught that we should love each other and he demonstrated that teaching with his own actions.

BIBLE TRIVIA

Who did Luke address his Gospel to in Chapter 1?
Answer: Theophilus.

PUZZLE

Unscramble the following Bible books. If you get all the answers correct, the last letter of one book will be the first letter of the next book. Example: Ezekiel, Luke.

nohj
human
chaim
oshae
scat
amules
klue
sheert
hurt

Jesus Christ challenges people to follow him

Jesus knew his time on earth would soon be over, so he made up his mind to travel to Jerusalem. He sent some messengers first to make preparations for his visit. Along the way the messengers had to pass through a Samaritan village. When they tried to make arrangements for Jesus to spend some time there, the Samaritan people were very unfriendly to them because they knew Jesus would be on his way to Jerusalem. The messengers returned to Jesus and reported what they had seen and heard.

James and John, two of the apostles, were with Jesus when the messengers told their story. They were angry with the Samaritans. They asked Jesus, “Lord, do you want us to call down fire from heaven to consume them?”

Instead of agreeing with them, Jesus criticized them for wanting revenge. He proposed a simpler alternative. They would just take a different route and go through a different village.

As was often the case, people would gather around Jesus when he traveled, hoping he would help them in some way or to ask him to explain the Scriptures to them.

One man approached Jesus and said, “I will follow you wherever you go.”

Jesus answered the man with a challenge: “Foxes have dens and birds of the sky have nests, but the Son of Man has nowhere to rest his head.”

Then Jesus pointed to another man and said to him, “Follow me.”

This man said to Jesus, “[Lord,] let me go first and bury my father.”

“Let the dead bury their dead,” Jesus told him. “But you, go and proclaim the kingdom of God.”

Another man made a similar offer to follow Jesus. “I will follow you, Lord,” he said, “but first let me say farewell to my family at home.”

Jesus said to him, “No one who sets a hand to the plow and looks to what was left behind is fit for the kingdom of God.”

But Jesus did meet many men who were willing to sacrifice their own responsibilities to follow him. He commissioned 72 disciples to go out in pairs into the towns and villages he planned to visit and told them to preach and heal in the places that welcomed them.

As he sent them out he said, “Go on your way; behold, I am sending you like lambs among wolves.”
Like empty nest syndrome, spacious nest syndrome not easy

By Jimmy Patterson

There comes a time in most parents’ lives when they know it’s the real goodbye. We said so long to two of our children this year. Not the kinds of goodbye where they will be living across town with a friend or 100 miles up the road at college. The kind of goodbye where you know … this is it. This is the real one. The one you feel deep inside.

And it ain’t easy.

Without getting all maudlin or goocy, it was the blink of an eye ago when our daughters were best friends, living in the same room, playing sports every Saturday and being the best of friends under the same roof. (Save for that one time when our middle daughter was four and she spit a mouthful of oatmeal into her big sister’s cereal bowl one morning, still one of the funniest things I have ever witnessed in my life).

Now those two daughters are 24 and 21 and living in Houston and San Antonio. Our oldest went from being a single Masters candidate one weekend to being a Masters-trained graduate with a fiancee in the span of a little more than eight days. May was a startlingly emotional time. Our middle daughter’s show of courage brought immense pride on our family when she decided to go it alone and begin a new life on her own in San Antonio.

I would be lying if I didn’t say it’s the distance that hurts most. The miles between us and our girls makes this goodbye seem like the one that will be forever. It’s just not that easy to drop in for a weekend visit when you’re 525 and 325 miles away.

Our son has two years of high school left before he goes off to wherever it is he will choose. It will not be Midland, and so my wife and I will clean the nest out entirely and try to reconcile ourselves with the circle that is life.

Parenting is not meant to be a forever thing, at least not the kind where they’re in your house and your car and your every waking moment with all there is to do through their young lives. Sometimes I think that my concern for them and our helping them is needed more when they grow up and move out than it was when they were little. It feels that way now, that’s for certain.

Again, at the risk of becoming all sappy here, this is not something I am particularly enjoying. It is a difficult time and one that I am finding hard to adjust to.

God has a plan, though, right? There’s a reason they become legal at 17, can vote at 18, and become of legal drinking age at 21. We’re weaned off of our children as they blossom into who God means for them to be, but there’s a lesson in it for parents, too: and it is that there comes a time when we must peer into our mortality. And if we haven’t done it by now, this is that time. We must grow up and accept life without our children under the same roof. But it sure ain’t easy.

When an older family member has a drinking problem

By Bill and Monica Dodds

It can be startling to discover and hard to admit that a senior family member has developed a drinking problem, but there are a number of reasons why this can happen:

▷ An older body has more difficulty processing alcohol. Maybe your loved one has been only a social drinker, but as he advances in years the same amount of alcohol packs more of a wallop and its effects last longer because his tolerance level has dropped.

▷ Medications and alcohol don’t mix. She may be taking a new prescription or an increased dosage of one she has taken for a while. But this combined with what she may dismiss as “only a glass or two of wine” could have dangerous results.

▷ An older person may come to rely on the numbing effect of alcohol to deal with pain. While alcohol seems to dull both physical and emotional pain, it eventually compounds both.

▷ Society has a better net for catching the younger alcoholic. The police stop him for drunk driving. The boss notices an employee’s productivity is down at work. A husband or wife spots a spouse’s problem and courageously speaks up. But an elderly person might not be driving anymore, is probably retired and could be a widow or widower.

This is why it is important to keep an eye out for any warning signs of alcohol abuse among senior family members.

These signs include mood swings, general confusion, increasing isolation, bruises from bumping into furniture or falling, burns from falling asleep with a lit cigarette, a lot of empty bottles leaving the house -- and “nesting,” making one spot, usually a comfortable lounge chair, an entire world with cigarettes, ashtray, TV remote, glass and bottle within reach.

If you are concerned, get professional help. Talk to a doctor, nurse or social worker. All too often, if a family member doesn’t raise the issue, it remains buried. It is understandable if you are tempted to ignore the situation. It is bound to cause a fight. You can easily rationalize that maybe you are simply overreacting. After all, Dad didn’t have that much time left, and drinking seems to be his only pleasure.

Experts on alcoholism answer those concerns this way:

First, if you suspect a problem, there probably is one -- and it will only get worse.

And second, your family member is not happy. An alcoholic who’s drinking is not a happy person. Those final years or months will not be happy for him or her if the drinking continues. In fact, drinking might shorten your loved one’s life. It is chipping away at his or her health and increasing the risk of accidents.

Do some research and learn about alcohol and aging. Be prepared to give accurate information and have resource information ready. At this point in your relationship, there might not be a better way to show how much you love him or her.

While it can be very difficult to bring up the subject of alcoholism with your loved one, Al-Anon is there to help your family.

On the Web: Help for Families
To learn more about Al-Anon, go to www.al-anon.alateen.org, or write 1600 Corporate Landing Parkway, Virginia Beach, VA 23454-5617, or call 757-563-1600.

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.
‘Toy Story 3’: Some sequels are worth the wait

By Joseph McAleer
Catholic News Service

NEW YORK -- The third time's a charm with "Toy Story 3" (Disney/Pixar), the action-packed sequel to two of the biggest animated films of all time, "Toy Story" and "Toy Story 2." Arriving 15 years after the start of the franchise, "Toy Story 3" offers a satisfying and poignant conclusion with valuable lessons on family, friendship, and destiny.

Toy owner Andy (voice of John Morris) is all grown up and heading to college, which means putting away his childish things. This is the moment all toys dread, with only three possible outcomes: storage in the attic, donation to charity, or the garbage pile. "At the first sight of the trash bags, we leave," says the leader of the green toy soldiers, as his battalion parachutes out of the open bedroom window.

Woody (voice of Tom Hanks), Buzz Lightyear (voice of Tim Allen), and the rest of the "Roundup Gang" wax philosophical as the "warm and safe" attic beckons. "Every toy goes through this," Woody says, "We've survived yard sales and spring cleaning." Although the toys have never been played with in years, Woody insists that is not their raison d'être: "It's never been about being played with. It's about being there for Andy."

Before "Toy Story 3" gets too bogged down in discussing the meaning of plastic life and the destiny of playthings, the action adventure kicks into high gear. Woody is chosen to go to college with Andy, while the other toys, prepped for the attic, are accidentally placed in the trash.

They escape, and joined by a reluctant Woody, spurn Andy and choose the next best option: donation to "Sunnyside," a daycare center which promises the one thing toys desire -- to be played with by a loving child.

At first glance, Sunnyside seems like Nirvana, and a warm welcome is offered by the resident toys and their benevolent leader, Lots-O'Huggin Bear (Ned Beatty). "Here there are no 'overs,' no heartache," Lots-O tells the refugees. "We are never abandoned or forgotten. We control our destiny."

Woody is not convinced, and his loyalty to Andy leads him to part company with his friends. But his journey home is cut short, and Woody lands in the arms of a caring child, Bonnie (Emily Hahn). Her home offers even more new toys to play with, including a hilarious porcupine dressed in lederhosen, Mr. Pricklepants (Timothy Dalton), who fancies himself a classically trained actor slumming among amateurs.

Meanwhile, back at Sunnyside, the rest of the gang savors their peaceable kingdom -- until the children arrive. The toddlers are unruly and destructive, and this dream world becomes a nightmare.

Lots-O, moreover, rules with an iron paw, imposing prison-like conditions after hours on the new arrivals. Sunnyside becomes a very dark place, and scenes of toy "torture" (and a rather menacing Big Baby doll) may upset or confuse the smaller ones in the audience.

Taking a page from "The Great Escape," "Toy Story 3" ramps up the action when Woody learns the truth and returns to help his friends. "We're a family. We stay together," he insists.

The journey is perilous, but "Toy Story 3" never forgets its core audience. Good triumphs over evil, and the denouement is heartfelt, hope-filled -- and handkerchief-worthy.

Directed by Lee Unkrich ("Toy Story 2," "Finding Nemo") with music, once again, by Randy Newman, "Toy Story 3" is a film for all ages. Baby-boomer parents will appreciate the gag-driven script with plenty of innuendo (the blossoming relationship between the Barbie and Ken dolls steals the show), while kids will delight in all the new characters -- and drag their parents to the toy store afterward.

World religion overview confirms their importance now and in the future


Reviewed by Brother Jeffrey Gros
FSC Catholic News Service

Pundits and journalists often write as though religion is on the decline and mosques, churches and temples are in retreat. However, by every objective, indicator secularization is a marginal phenomenon of Europe, and religion is alive and well, albeit in a variety of expressions in the minds and hearts of the majority of inhabitants of this planet.

In "God Is Not One," Stephen Prothero, an unbeliever himself but a career educator, attempts to document the continued significance of religion in the 21st century world and its eight major expressions.

Unlike the militant atheists who have gotten a platform far above what their number and influence would warrant since September 2001 and unlike those who would see all religions as leading to a common goal and expounding fundamentally the same message, this author attempts to tell the story of these religious traditions on their own terms, affirming the gifts each claims to offer to its members, with a reserve about their truth claims or effectiveness of each in contributing to human well-being.

This recognition of the irreducibility of the world's religions resonates with Catholic claims to the uniqueness of Christ's message and the enduring truth of the church's teaching. Much of the early scholarship on the world religions was dominated by a variety of Western biases: those of missionaries who would reduce other religions to superstitions; Enlightenment rationalists who would dismiss the supernatural and therefore all religious claims; or those who would harmonize all religions into the human quest for the transcendent.

It is Prothero's thesis that whatever one's personal belief, the claims of religions matter for the future of the world, and there are "toxic and tonic" elements in each of them. He outlines the different problems each religion attempts to answer, and the different goals provided for their adherents.

He is also concerned about the importance of religion for all educated people, believer and nonbeliever alike, for understanding the world we live in. Therefore, his primary aim is to combat religious illiteracy, not only about one's own tradition but about those of one's neighbor and the global human community.

For those who have studied world religions, his analysis will provide a fresh overview; and for those who have not, this can be a useful introduction. The religions he selects are Islam, Christianity, Confucianism, Hinduism, Buddhism, the Yoruba religion, Judaism and Daoism, with a brief analysis of rationalistic atheism interpreted here as a religious conviction, albeit a minority one.

One may be surprised in his ranking of influence: that he places Islam before Christianity, or Confucianism before Buddhism. However, whatever the reader's judgment, his reasons for these decisions are interesting in themselves.
The Bishop at 25

Bishop-elect’s statement at 1985 press conference

EDITOR’S NOTE: The following statement was made by then Bishop-elect Michael Pfeifer on June 4, 1985, at the opening of a press conference at Christ the King Retreat Center in San Angelo. It appeared in the June 21, 1985 edition of the West Texas Angelus.

God’s ways are not our ways! Although I do not fully understand what is happening, the good Lord surely does, and that is what is important, and I trust him.

It is with much humility and with a sense of my own unworthiness that I accept the appointment of Pope John Paul II to be the new bishop of the Diocese of San Angelo. I truly appreciate the trust and confidence that our Holy Father has placed in me and it will be a privilege and a joy to serve the people of God of this fine diocese. I consider this not only an honor for me but also an honor for my religious family, the Missionary Oblates of Mary Immaculate, especially for the 800 oblates in the USA.

I follow in the footsteps of a fine Church leader, Bishop Joseph Fiorenza, and I will strive with God’s grace to continue the good, dedicated leadership that he brought to the church of West Texas. In the name of all the people of the diocese, I thank Fr. Timothy Murphy, who has been the administrator of the diocese as we awaited the new bishop, for all he has done during this interim period.

God wants us all to be happy and joyful as we do his work. I am very happy to become a part of the Christian Catholic community of San Angelo, and with a spirit of joy I will strive with the help of the Lord and the guidance of our Blessed Mother, to serve all the people as a servant leader.

To all the priests, deacons and religious women and men and to all the Catholic laity of the Diocese of San Angelo as well as to all the people of this area of West Texas of whatever faith or belief, especially to their church leaders, I want to state that it is my earnest desire to collaborate with all of you in building up and extending God’s kingdom, through participation and dialogue, and in a spirit of openness, trust and love. May all of us, along with our civic and government leadership at all levels, work to promote a society built on truth, justice and peace.

The Shepherd of shepherds is Jesus Christ, and he wants us who lead to show a special concern for his sheep who are most in need -- for the poor, the forgotten, the sick and aged, the run-away youth, the unemployed, the homeless, the alien and the refugee.

To my Hispanic sisters and brothers of the San Angelo area, I am happy to say en espanol: Hermanos, para mi sera un gusto y placer formar parte de la comunidad cristiana y catolica de la diocesis de San Angelo, y sera un privilegio servirles.

I owe so much to so many people for helping me to be who I am, and for permitting me to be where I am in life. I truly realize that all depends on Christ and I also know that he has used many good women and men as his agents of grace for me. I am especially grateful to my parents, to my father who is with the Lord in heaven, and to my mother who lives in my hometown of Alamo in the Rio Grande Valley, also to my priest brother and to my several sisters and to so many dear relatives and friends.

I owe a huge debt of gratitude to my religious community, the Missionary Oblates of Mary Immaculate. In my heart I will always be a missionary oblate priest. I have always found my greatest fulfillment by working for the poor in mission.

It is with a certain sorrow that I will give up being provincial of the major superior -- of the oblate community of the Southern U.S. Province, but I accept this as God’s will and to fulfill the call of the church.

The Oblates of the Southern Province, and the dear, dedicated people who form part of our communities and participate in our many ministries are indeed very special and precious to me.

As I begin my servant leadership in the Diocese of San Angelo, I beg for the patience and understanding and support of the people I am called to serve. I realize I have much to learn from all of you and I pray for wisdom. Most of all, give me your prayers, and you have mine.

I thank you for the welcome you have given me and I will be happy to call the city of San Angelo my home.

The episcopal ordination will be July 26, 1985, in San Angelo.

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The Adult Catechism

Ordinations: The great gift of the priesthood

By Most Rev. Donald Wuerl
Archbishop of Washington

"I'm not going to confession anymore!" The man recounting his experience began by telling me that this is what he had said to his mother when he was much younger. "Why?" she asked. He told me that he replied, "Because the priest wasn't nice to me."

I never found out from the conversation what it was that drove him to that conclusion. His point to me was what his mother said to him, "You don't go to confession to see the priest. He is only the channel of God's mercy. You go so that you can receive Jesus' mercy."

We have all recognized, as we grow more deeply into our understanding of the faith, that Jesus is the living water. We priests are only the vessel that holds that precious gift that is meant to be generously and freely distributed.

Not all containers are alike. Not all vessels are always the most attractive. It is what they hold that counts.

I thought of this conversation when recently I read the results of a media poll that showed that while Catholics may be disappointed and even angry with the way Church leadership handled clergy abuse cases decades ago, they have not, on that account, left the Church. We as Catholics have always understood that our priests and bishops are human instruments of God's grace, images of Christ in our midst, but that what they bring us is God, not themselves. We see the priest as the one who brings us Jesus. But ultimately our faith is in Jesus.

At the conclusion of every confir-
CONVERSATION: Bishop discusses his upcoming retirement date

(From 13)

significant increase in men looking into the priesthood.

Angelus: Also 25 years ago, you made mention of something you called ‘satisfaction for the moment. Today we call it instant gratification, and, like vocations, it too, continues to be a concern that affects all of us in some way.

Pfeifer: And I talk mainly of lay people’s desire for instant gratification and I’m sad to say that’s growing, too. We have few instant things back then, instant coffee for example, but now, with instant communication, gee whiz, the developments in communications have been tremendous. Nobody dreamed we would all have cell phones, all these computers, and it’s led to Americans wanting instant happiness in their lives and they usually seek it in the wrong ways. The Holy Father pointed that out. Pope Paul VI pointed out that the great drama of our time is the disconnect between faith and culture or between the gospel and culture. It was a concern then and it’s an even bigger distance today. The whole purpose of preaching the gospel is to bring faith and gospel and the culture together. That’s what Jesus did, he came into our culture and brought the human and the divine together. He did that in His person. Our challenge today is to bring secular and sacred together but the gap keeps getting wider and wider.

Angelus: If I was doing an interview with you and you were a president or CEO, I would ask you what have been your biggest successes. But we don’t term it quite that way in the church. What are some of the things we’ve had to celebrate most over last 25 years that you’d like to recall?

Pfeifer: I hope, Number one, that we’ve grown in a deeper understanding in the mystery of Christ in our lives and how we share in the paschal mystery of Christ, especially in the field of liturgy and education, and how we develop our ministries. We want to express that, too, in the elements we are given in family life and marriage. Family life is the cell of the Church along with marriage in society. That’s where I give a lot of strong focus. That area is getting more difficult all the time with the breakdown of marriage, and families falling apart.

Angelus: What about more physical aspects of your 25 years here?

Pfeifer: I am satisfied, but also the efforts of our priests and so many thousands of lay ministers, women and men who have helped us reach out and encourage people to live their Catholic faith and in the process drawn in new members. Every year I’ve been here there’s been continual growth in the Catholic population. I judge this from what I know through the RCIA process. We do have some slippage but we pick up a good number every year. I judge it by the Rite of Election on the first Sunday of Lent; there’s always about 250 that come in; always a good number looking to grow the Catholic Church, and we also increase in numbers through baptism.

Angelus: What about the biggest challenges you’ve had to overcome since coming here?

Pfeifer: There have been certain priest personnel problems on the negative side; we had a priest take his life, the sexual abuse problem, although it wasn’t very strong in our diocese, mainly there were some cases from the past that we had to deal with and that was a very disheartening moment, pulling down our energy. About 12 years ago we had a financial crisis when one of our trusted individuals was syphoning off funds. It was hard to accept the financial loss that was there, but also the breach of trust. We’ve seen tragedies in our families, I can remember a plane crash that took five members of one family in a terrible accident. Mistrust through abuse and violence has always been a negative and it has led me to want to do more through the drug efforts we have here and in Midland and other places. We’ve also worked here and in other communities to decrease the abuse of children.

Angelus: What greater issues are we faced with that extend beyond diocesan boundaries that have been and continue to be a concern such as abortion, immigration and the economy?

Pfeifer: All three. Number one would be pro life, respecting the dignity and sacredness that comes out of the book of Genesis. Sadly through the years three abortion centers have come into our diocese. Try to give a lot of emphasis to counteract that. We’ve tried to develop recently a diocesan plan for the unborn.

The whole question of immigration today is a huge one. Those are the major issues plus the secularization of society. Secular values can be good but when the secular takes over its almost like you exclude the divine and when that happens we’re in deep trouble. It goes back to what Pope Paul VI said about the chasm between the Gospel and culture and that’s widening in so many ways. Drugs must also be included among the most challenging issues.

Angelus: What’s left to be done?

Pfeifer: Basically I leave it up to the Lord to keep working to the best of my ability in the time I have left. What’s left is to strengthen what we’re doing. Working on families, strengthening them; vocations, bringing the true meaning of respect for life, and working to overcome some of these major issues in societies. The gulf between faith and culture. Working on drug culture, education. But I would like to end by saying the focus is on the spiritual. It’s getting people, especially young people, to be more committed to Christ and living His Gospel. That’s how I would sum it up.

What’s left is in the hands of the Lord. I like to use the image we didn’t use 25 years ago, an image become more popular in the Church: We’re all coworkers in the vineyard of the Lord. We’re open to people who come in to work together, not just drink the wine that is there but to work according to our gifts.

Angelus: Do you think about retirement?

Pfeifer: It crosses my mind. I don’t give it a lot of thought but I know it’s coming. In the Church, bishops normally offer their resignation and in most cases it is accepted when you turn 75. Maybe a year from now I’ll think more about it because I’ll just have one more year left. Where will I be and what will I do? I think about it, pray about it and as I get closer, do some consultations. My health and energy have been good; not the same as 5, 10 or 25 years ago, but still good. The demands of the ministry are much greater than they were 25 years ago. It just grows and grows and is compounded, especially because of this instant way of communication we have today. My desk work grows and grows, but the bureaucracy is getting more demanding all the time.

But mainly I have a message of gratitude to the people for 25 years. When a leader celebrates 10, 15, 25 or 40 years, I think what we do is celebrate more the entire Church because it depends on not only the bishop but on hundreds and even thousands of people. Hopefully the one who sits in this chair has been able to guide it in a strong pastoral way.

SPILL: Every disaster brings us step closer to our final day on earth

(From 3)

Conference voice our concerns and send our prayers to the workers and residents of that region.

“We mourn the rig workers who died in the accident and the loss experienced by their families and their communities. We stand with those who face job losses in fishing, tourism and related industries, especially those impacted in rural areas. We are concerned for God’s creation that cradles life in so many diverse forms.

"In these days of anxiety, we encourage people of faith to assemble for prayer and sharing. We pray for the workers desperately struggling to cap the well, while we reflect about our own lifestyles that make undue demands on nature.

“As we approach the loving Creator, let us ask for the wisdom to live in harmony with God’s plan and the courage to serve as stewards of God’s creation.”

“Is this part of the great apocalypse, and indicate perhaps that the end times are approaching? As Christians we can say that every disaster in some way brings us a step closer to that final last day, and should be a reminder of the tremendous responsibility and stewardship that God has entrusted to us by giving us planet Earth to be our home and our source of life while we are here on Earth. While there are cases that we might call natural disasters that remind us about the final last times on earth, many of these disasters are man-made, but they are constant reminders that all life is fragile, and is a precious gift and could end at any time, and that there is a web that holds all life together. We should always strive for sustainable development that protects ecology and the environment as we search for new sources of energy and more efficient and newer ways to use the gifts of planet earth for the betterment of all humanity. This should be a wake-up call for all of us to be much more responsible for the beautiful gift of creation that God has placed in our hands.”
en este mundo hay más cristianos, más familias reconciliadas en el amor de Cristo con valores morales y humanos. Ya pasaron 70 años del primer Cursillo que se llevó acabo en Mallorca, España y aún sigue el mismo objetivo. La transformación de los ambientes donde quiera que uno vive su vida como Cristianos va sea en la vecindad, lugar de trabajo y círculos sociales usando la estrategia sencilla y fácil de hacer un amigo, ser un amigo, y traer a ese amigo a Cristo es como el Cursillo de Cristiandad a podido cumplir su meta por los últimos 70 años. A lo largo de estos años gran número de personas han regresado a Cristo y vivido sus vidas con valores morales dentro de los mandamientos de Dios.

Pero a pesar de todos los éxitos de movimiento de Cursillo de Cristiandad aún hay mucho por hacer. Especialmente en este tiempo que estamos viviendo parece que regresamos de Nuevos los tiempos pasados de 1936 ya que hora el gobierno esta destruyendo lo religioso poco a poco. Nos esta quitando los valores humanos y morales.

Y los resultados lo podemos ver large-mente. Nos estamos retirando de lo religioso dejando la puerta abierta a prácticas tan delicadas como es aborto, la homosexualidad, el sexo fuera del matrimonio y entre tantos mas la falta de amor.

El secretariado de Cursillo de Cristiandad de la Diócesis de San Angelo, Texas está al tanto de esta nueva

**WUERL:** We salute our new priests

(From 19)

the opening of this year, our Holy Father urged all priests to strive for holiness and said the ordained ministry was indispensable for the Church and the world.

"The Church needs priests who are holy ministers, ministers who help the faithful experience the merciful love of the Lord and who are convinced witnesses of that love," Pope Benedict said at a prayer service in St. Peter's Basilica in Rome the day he announced the Year for Priests. At the liturgy celebrated on the Feast of the Sacred Heart of Jesus, a day of prayer for the sanctification of priests, the pope said, the "essential nucleus of Christianity" is found in the heart of Jesus: the saving love of God that "invites us to step outside of ourselves" and "make ourselves a gift of love without reserve."

Priests, and in a special way our eight newly ordained priests, can rejoice in the realization that they are consecrated to serve humbly and with authority all of the faithful entrusted to their care.

This year as we end the Year for Priests, we salute our new priests and ask God to continue to bless them and through them his holy Church.

**OBISPO**

(Para 3)

aprobada traducción del Misal Romano en sus respectivas parroquias. Ahora es el tiempo para reflexionar en las maneras en como podemos fomentar una presentación positiva y enriqueceda espiritualmente del nuevo Misal para el pueblo de Dios en una manera que dirija a nuestra gente a un renovado espíritu "total, consciente y participación activa" en la sagrada liturgia.

Los párrocos, como líderes de la comunidad, ellos mismos deben de estar bien informados para que puedan probar a nuestra gente los recursos que sean ambos precisos y útiles para profundizar su conocimiento acerca de la liturgia en general y acerca del nuevo Misal Romano en particular. Aún ya hay en abundancia recursos disponibles en la red, de impreso y en formatos de varios medios.

Habrá algunas dificultades en adaptar a los nuevos textos del Misal. La traducción siempre es un arte no ciencia perfecta. El mismo hecho que el inglés es un lenguaje vivo significa que esta arte se evoluciona de una generación a otra. Este es un momento especial en la historia con una nueva generación para probar una catequesis viva y dinámica en los principios fundamentales de la liturgia.

Los párrocos y todos los sacerdotes no pueden permitir que este momento histórico se les pase y deben de tomar el tiempo para comprender el texto completamente. Esta es una oportunidad maravillosa para hacer algo nuevo y positivo para mejorar la vida espiritual y litúrgica de la parroquia. Como mencioné, este es un momento lleno de gracia para una catequesis efectiva que contribuirá a un sentido renovado en la liturgia que sea "total, consciente y participación activa".

Para ayudar a nuestros sacerdotes y diáconos para mejorar entender los cambios en el nuevo Misal y para implementarlos en nuestras parroquias, habrá un día de enseñanza litúrgica programado para todos ellos el 25 de agosto desde las 10:00 a.m. a 3:30 p.m. en el Centro de Retiro de Cristo el Rey. También, con la ayuda de la Comisión Litúrgica de nuestra diócesis, habrá tres días de enseñanza en cada deanery para toda la gente de la Diócesis. Las fechas son: el 2, 9 y 16 de octubre.

**RETREAT:** Easy to become involved

(From 4)

where one lives into a Christian atmosphere, whether it is in the neighborhood, workplace and social circles using the simple and easy strategy of "make a friend, be a friend, and bring that friend to Christ." This strategy is how the Cursillo has been fulfilling that primary objective for the last 70 years.

Throughout these years a great number of people have returned to Christ and lived their lives with family values and strong morals within the commandments of God.

But in spite of all the successes of the Cursillo, there is much work to do, especially in this time that we are currently living in. It appears that we have again returned to those times similar to those of 1936 since our government is attempting to destroy the religious bit by bit. They are taking away our family values and strong morals.

And we can already see the results of this. We are distancing ourselves from the religious and leaving the door open to abortion, homosexuality, sex outside of marriage and most of all the lack of love among people in general.

The Secretariat of the Cursillo of Christianity in the Diocese of San Angelo has taken on this new war against modern society and the family values and strong morals that the Church, our Mother, teaches us. And, therefore, we invite all who wish a change in their lives and in the lives of those around them to come live a Cursillo. Come see for yourself this beautiful experience that it is lived in those three full days of the Grace of God that is the Cursillo! How, do you ask? It is very easy! Contact the Ultreya leader in your parish he or she can help you. Or you can also contact Mr. Oscar Hinojos at 432-559-7225 for Cursillos in English or Mr. Elio Gaytan at 432-528-1670 for Cursillos in Spanish. Come and see!
ABUSE: Church called to provide healing, address causes in 2002 charter

(From 7)

abused students by educators, nearly three for every school day, speaks of a much larger problem in a system that is stacked against victims, and much of the media has been very reluctant to report this startling situation. Most of the cases never get reported, and cases reported often end with no action. The conclusions of the AP's report are startling and frightening: “Beyond the horror of individual crimes, the larger shame is that the institutions that govern educators have only sporadically addressed a problem that has been apparent for years.”

These findings draw obvious comparisons to sex abuse scandals in other institutions, among them the Roman Catholic Church. An intense study by America's Catholic bishops, conducted by the John Jay Institute, found that about 4,400 of the 110,000 priests were accused of molesting minors from 1950 – 2002. Clergy abuse within the Catholic Church and in other religious denominations is part of the national consciousness after a string of highly publicized cases. But until now, there has been little knowledge and sense of the extent of rampant abuse in the field of education. Beyond the horror of individual crimes, the larger shame is that the institutions that govern education have only sporadically addressed a problem that has been apparent for years. Sadly, legal, moral, and social means have not been fully taken to address this critical and increasing festering cancer of abuse of children by those in the field of education.

A report ordered by Congress and released in 2004 examined previous studies and surveys of the teacher sexual misconduct and sent a troubling message. This report estimated that 4.5 million students out of 50 million in American public schools “are subject to sexual misconduct by an employee of a school sometime between kindergarten and 12th grade.” Sadly, that alarming and challenging report, compiled by expert Carol Shakeshaft, head of the educational leadership department at Virginia Commonwealth University, was largely ignored. The written testimony that Shakeshaft submitted to the Colorado Legislature stated: “The physical sexual abuse of students in public schools is likely more than 100 times the abuse by priests.”

While this statement is understood in the context that there are more students in public schools than in Catholic schools, the percentage is alarming.

Shakeshaft did a second study of 125 cases of public school teachers whose school districts were convinced they were abusers. In only one case did an administrator not only fire the teacher but made sure he received no further school work. In most cases nothing was done.

In the landmark Charter document issued by the U.S. Catholic Bishops in 2002, there was a radical and new call to address the clergy abuse situation by the Church that had created many victims. There was also a new moral and spiritual call for the Church to provide healing for victims and to address the causes of this abuse and to deal more forthrightly and openly with offenders. The Charter also called the Catholic Church to invite and encourage other institutions of society to join in the effort to address the often hidden but rampant issue of sexual abuse, especially of young people, in society. After 8 years of intensive pastoral and professional study and many pastoral-social audits, constant teaching provided for young people and parents, development of new, updated policies calling for the highest standards for those serving in the Church on a full-time or voluntary basis, the establishing of diocesan and National Review Boards composed of qualified lay people, mandating crucial background checks, the Catholic Church is now inviting other institutions, especially in the field of education, to join in addressing this critical issue of sexual abuse in our schools and all of society. The Catholic Church clearly recognizes that much work still remains, especially in reaching out and providing healing for victims and families. While the Church was sadly an example of how not to handle sexual allegations, the Church in recent years is now a leader in how to prevent sexual abuse of minors and others.

While we know from various sources that abuse of children is a public health crisis in the United States, there is very little information on studies or reliable statistics covering scores of years about how many people in specific professions are abusers. Sexual abuse is a societal problem, one the Church can now help ameliorate.

Children, in general, spend more quality time with their educators than with their parents. Hence, for the well-being and safety of our children, it is imperative that those in education along with other agencies and institutions, and churches address together the critical issue of abuse of students in our schools and wider society. The Catholic Church invites those in education to do surveys going back 20-50 years to determine the extent and nature of abuse in public schools, and to work together where necessary to formulate and prepare programs, policies and methods of evaluation that will assure all children will have safe, sound and sacred environments to grow to their full potential.

When the John Jay investigators of the John Jay College of Criminal Justice in New York, which did the 50-year study for the Catholic Church, sought data on child sex abuse in U.S. society in general for comparisons to Church figures, they found little such data. No other organization has opened its files like the Catholic Church has to provide comprehensive figures on its employees accused of child sex abuse. The John Jay Study was unique in that it was not based on a sampling of clergy but on almost the entire Catholic clergy population, giving an accurate and comprehensive view of the situation. The 2009 Annual Report on the Implementation of the Charter for the Protection of Children and Young People shows that virtually all U.S. dioceses are compliant with all articles of the Charter. The number of sex abuse claims against Roman Catholic clergy dropped for the third consecutive year.

In calling now for these surveys, studies, and investigations in the field of education and also this should be done in the fields of media, entertainment, health and medicine, law, law enforcement, government, social service and business, the Catholic Bishops are fulfilling Article 16 of the Charter which they approved in Dallas in 2002 which states, “Given the extent of the problem of sexual abuse of minors in our society, we are willing to cooperate with other churches and ecclesiastical communities, other religious bodies, institutions of learning, and other interested organizations in conducting research in this area.”

After reviewing the AP story on abuse in public schools, now is especially the time to courageously and truthfully open the closed doors of the sexual abuse that is happening to our young people in our public schools. The media, the vast, majority nationally and locally which have ignored the AP story, must address the sexual abuse of children in public schools—for the safety of our children, and the well-being of society. When I asked for a reply in a written request about this matter with our local paper, none was given.

David Finkelhor, director of the Crimes Against Children Research Center at the University of New Hampshire said, “Schools haven’t done enough to educate professional staff about how these situations develop, how to avoid them, and how to identify them when their professional peers are involved.” “This isn’t something that can be dealt with at the federal level,” Finkelhor said. “Public schools are a state and local responsibility, and that’s where the action has to occur. The other problem is that schools are so caught up in their No Child Left Behind responsibilities that it has pushed a lot of other stuff off the plate.”

A puzzling and critical question is: Why have only a handful of newspapers nationwide featured anything about this AP series—in stark contrast to the avalanche of press received about the cases of abuse in Catholic Church since 2002? The Corporate Communications Director for the AP said he was inundated with complaints from people wondering why their newspapers were not carrying the series. What has happened? Why have newspapers and other media throughout the USA been reluctant or afraid to carry the results of this most important study that has such great importance and impact on the safety and well-being of our children? The AP’s investigation found more than 2,500 cases over 5 years in which educators were punished for actions from bizarre to sadistic.

The Boston Globe began publishing on January 6, 2002 a series of reports regarding sexual abuse of children by priests in the Archdiocese of Boston. By year-end, American papers provided their readers over 21,000 stories of sexual abuse by Catholic priests. However, when the Boston Globe editors were contacted about the failure to publish stories on the pervasive abuse in the field of education, the Globe claimed only vague knowledge of the AP series and could not answer as to whether part of it ran in their paper.

Sexual abuse of young people is a crime and a moral evil, and it must be addressed. However, this abuse is found not only in the Catholic Church but in every area of society. Much of the media focuses attention on what is happening in the Catholic Church while seldom mentioning the greater abuse that happens in so many other areas. There is definitely a bias here, even a vendetta, and much of
BISHOP: Meetings will introduce missal changes to parishioners

lead our people to a renewed “full, conscious and active participation” in liturgical worship.

Parish priests, as leaders of communities, must themselves be well-informed in order to provide our people with resources that are both accurate and helpful for deepening their knowledge about the liturgy in general and about the new Roman Missal in particular. Already there is a wealth of resources available on the Web, in print and in multi-media formats.

There will be some challenges in adapting to the new texts of the Missal. Translation is always an art not a perfect science. The very fact that English is a living language means that this art evolves from one generation to the next. This is a special moment in history with a new generation to provide a living and dynamic catechesis on the fundamental principles of the liturgy.

Pastors and all parish priests cannot afford to let this historical moment pass and must take time to understand the text completely. This is a wonderful opportunity to do something new and positive to improve the spiritual and liturgical life of the parish. As I already mentioned, this is a grace-filled moment for effective catechesis that will contribute to a renewed sense of “full, conscious, and active participation” in liturgical worship.

To help our priests and deacons to better understand the changes in the new Missal and to implement them in our parishes, there is a special liturgical workshop scheduled for all of them on August 25 from 10 a.m. -3:30 pm at Christ the King Retreat Center. Also, with the help of the Liturgy Commission of our Diocese, there will be three special workshops held in each Deanery for all the people of our Diocese. The dates are:
- October 2 from 10:00 – 4:00 pm – Our Lady of Guadalupe Parish, 1401 E. Garden Lane, Midland
- October 9 from 10:00 – 4:00 pm – St. Joseph the Worker Church, 301 W. 17th St., San Angelo
- October 16 from 10:00 – 4:00 pm – Holy Family Church, 5410 Buffalo Gap Rd., Abilene

I strongly encourage all of our priests and people to take part in these special workshops that will help all of us to be prepared to receive the beautiful new Roman Missal. As we prepare for this moment, let us pray for the guidance of the Holy Spirit so that we can truly be the best praying people of God and the worshiping Body of Christ.

MINORS: Moral issues must be addressed to solve abuse crisis

the media focus on the Catholic Church because of the Church’s teachings on sexual morality, marriage and family life.

The sexual abuse crisis that the Church and all areas of society have and are experiencing will not be resolved just by new laws, or better enforcement of present laws, nor by establishing more bureaucracy, nor court decisions with financial settlements, but by only addressing the moral spiritual dimension which is at the core of this crisis. The solution lies in a renewal based on biblical and solid moral principles. The starting point is respecting the image and likeness of God in each person—especially in each child. More emphasis needs to be given to total moral renewal in family life, in schools, churches, in media, in entertainment—in all of society. At the core of the problem of sexual abuse is a failure to live out the covenant relationship with God that goes back to the Ten Commandments, and that was ratified in a new way with the sacrifice, the death and resurrection that we celebrate in each Eucharist.

OSBORNE: Let’s be accountable

as babysitting, mowing lawns and doing the laundry.

What you learn about responsibility now will come into play later—when you’re important. When you’re behind the wheel of an oil tanker. Putting a bill through Congress. Driving a truck on the highway late at night. Teaching a kid who looks up to you. Counseling a friend who really needs your help. Deciding whether new parts for an oil rig or a tanker’s sonar equipment are needed.

Sometimes responsibilities might seem like things you’d rather cast aside. But in the future, your commitment to be responsible might change a life.

It’ll definitely change yours for the better. And in the case of an oil spill, it might even save millions of lives.
Dioce-Scenes

Francisco Aguirre
San Angelo

Alfred Camarillo
Odessa

Antero Gonzalez
San Angelo

Walter Hammons II
San Angelo

Leonard D. Hendon
Midland

Dwain Hennessey
Abilene

Daniel Holguin, Jr.
Fort Stockton

These 29 deacons, individually, and as a group, at left, were installed in a Mass in San Angelo, June 5.

PHOTOS BY ALAN P. TORRE
www.aptorre.com

Allan Lange
Wall

Diocese of San Angelo
2010 Diaconate Class

Stanley Lange
Miles

Miguel Lopez
San Angelo

Marc Philip Main
Abilene

Luis Raul Mata, Sr.
Midland

Marcos Antonio Mata
San Angelo

Federico Medina, Jr.
San Angelo

Hector Mendez
Odessa

Robert Moreno
Midland

Jesus Napoles
Midland

Reynaldo Nunez
Coleman

Victor Ramirez
Abilene

Gary Allred Rhodes
Abilene

Claudio Sanchez
San Angelo

Robert Selvera
Brady

Daniel Shannahan
Wall

Ricardo Torres
Midland

Jesse A. Vasquez
Abilene

Daniel J. Vaughan
Abilene

Luis C. Villareal
Fort Stockton

David Workman
Ballinger

Steven Zimmerman
San Angelo