‘WE ARE FREE FROM THE DEATH CENTERS OF PLANNED PARENTHOOD’

The Planned Parenthood of Midland, seen here, and the San Angelo Planned Parenthood Center both closed on the same day, August 30, 2013. The Planned Parenthood in Abilene closed in November 2012. (Photo by The Angelus).

Bishop: ‘I thank God for this welcome news’

Editor’s Note: The following letter, written by Bishop Michael Pfeifer, was read after Masses at parishes throughout the Diocese of Midland-Odessa on August 24-25.

My dear sisters and brothers in Christ of the Midland-Odessa deanery:

With all of you, I thank God for the welcome news that Planned Parenthood of Midland is closing its doors and will no longer provide surgical or chemical abortions in the city of Midland. I am indeed very grateful to all of our Pro-Life people, especially our Pro-Life committee under the patronage of Nellie Gray, of the Midland-Odessa Deanery, for your many prayers, especially the many Rosaries offered in front of Planned Parenthood, and your dedicated work which no doubt played a big part in the closing of this facility. We thank God, too, for the recent state legislation that cuts off funding to so-called health centers that kill the unborn.

As we thank God for the news that God’s precious little ones will no longer be destroyed at Planned Parenthood in Midland, our Pro-Life mission is far from over. A major part of our Pro-Life mission is to assist pregnant women with their health care needs and especially to help those who are struggling with an abortion decision. Hence, now is the time to give new emphasis to our entire Pro-Life ministry, and so I ask all of our priests and all the Catholic people to step forward and help these women and their families with their health needs.

(Additional stories, photos, pgs. 6, 7, 24)

(Please See CLOSURE/23)
A PASTORAL MESSAGE

‘Open your hearts to life’: A call to put faith in action

October is Respect Life Month; Oct. 6, Respect Life Sunday

By Bishop Michael Pfeifer, OMI

“Our hearts to life!” is the theme for this year’s annual Respect Life Sunday, the first Sunday of October, which this year occurs on October 6. The entire month of October is dedicated to Respect Life Month. On this Sunday, and during this month dedicated to human life, we are all called to open our hearts to a new appreciation for human life, and to promote respect for human life at every stage of its development from conception until natural death as determined by God. The theme “Open Your Hearts to Life” is a particular way to put our faith in action during the Year of Faith. Opening our hearts to life requires a faith-vision to live and act according to God’s plan for our lives.

This year’s Respect Life theme indeed goes counter to a culture of death which is spreading throughout the world and even being given legal approval by manmade human courts.

No less than the U.S. Supreme Court has told us that it is our choice to live as we wish—letting nothing and no one stand in our way, including the child who may be growing in his or her mother’s womb. The highest court of our land has given approval to legal abortion for any reason or none. Our high court declared in Planned Parenthood vs. Casey: “At the heart of liberty is the right to define one’s own concept of existence, of meaning, of the universe, and the mystery of human life.”

As we all know, just a few months ago the U.S. Supreme Court assumed an authority that it does not have by changing the meaning of eternal law of God and natural law as regards marriage when it did away with the Defense of the Marriage Act (DOMA).

Although it seems to have fallen out of fashion today, there is, in fact, a way of defining a concept of existence, meaning and human life that has worked exceptionally well for individuals and society wherever it has been tried. Jesus Christ

(Please See BISHOP/22)

DIOCESAN BRIEFS

Sign up for DOSAMail ... it’s free

Don’t wait until the Angelus is dropped in your mailbox. Get it in your inbox, and also receive weekly — and “as needed” — updates from the Diocese of San Angelo. It’s easy. Visit www.flocknote.com/dosamail for the free sign-up process.

San Angelo Men’s ACTS Retreat

SAN ANGELO — Hosted by St. Margaret’s Parish, Men’s ACTS retreat on Sept. 19-22, 2013. ACTS is an acronym for Adoration, Community, Theology, and Service. The theme for this retreat comes from Lk 9:35 “This is my chosen son, Listen to Him” Cost for the retreat is $180. A $50 deposit is due at the time of registration. For more information, please call David Aguirre at 325.234.0532.

St Francis’ 2nd Annual Softball Tournament

ABILENE — September 20-21, at the Jane Sellars Complex, S. 7th & Martin in Abilene (between S. Treadaway and T&P Lane). Anyone interested in participating in the tournament can contact Ismael (Mayo) Fernandez at 325-338-6591 for more information.

Vatican II Workshop in San Angelo

Vatican II: 50 Years Later

Achievements and a Work in Progress

Saturday, September 21, 2013

Newman Center, San Angelo

10:00 am – 3:30 pm

Presenter: S. Maureen Sullivan, O.P.

Fee: $25.00 (lunch included)

For more information contact the Office of Education and Formation 325-651-7500 or dosaoef@aol.com

‘Our God is an Awesome God’ Art Contest

BROWNWOOD — Calling all artists 17 years old and younger to submit art that glorifies God.

• The art must be submitted between 3-7 p.m. Thursday, September 26, 2013 to the Brownwood Art Center, 215 Fisk, Brownwood.

• Ready to hang art 14 x 18 or smaller.

• The show will take place Saturday and Sunday, September 28-29, 12 -6 p.m.

• Winning art will be on display and cash prizes will be awarded at St. Mary’s Fall Festival, Sunday, October 6, 2013 by Judge Amada Brown.

The 5 divisions are: Special Needs, 6 years and under, 7-9 years, 10-13 years, 14-17 years old. Top 3 in each category receive prizes of $25, $15 and $10. Best of Show will be awarded $50. Entry fee is $5 for each piece submitted.

Beginning Experience Retreat

For those suffering through the pain of separation or divorce or the grief of the death of a spouse, the Beginning Experience Retreat teaches coping skills in a weekend program that has transformed lives. Founded by a Catholic nun and her divorced friend, Beginning Experience serves people from all faiths who are suffering. Christ the King Retreat Center will host a Beginning Experience weekend September 27-29. Fee is $115. For more information, contact Brenda Collier, 432.288.2712 or Judy Ford, 432.386.3504, or visit beginningexperience.org.

Rachel’s Vineyard

Because of the tender mercy of our God, the rising sun will come to us from heaven to shine on those living in darkness and in the shadow of death, to guide our feet into the path of peace.

— Reflections from Footprints; Luke 1:78-79

Come experience the tender mercy of Jesus Christ. Let Him shine on the darkness and pain of your abortion. Join us on our next Rachel’s Vineyard Retreat, Nov. 15-17, 2013, Lubbock, TX.

For more information: kathy.krile@gmail.com or 806-577-5912.

Retreats are strictly confidential and open to men and women of all faiths.

‘Come and See’ Discernment Weekend

VICTORIA — Discernment weekends at the Incarnate Word Convent in Victoria are for single Catholic women 18 to 50 years of age on September 21-22, at Incarnate Word Convent in Victoria. See iwbsvictoria.org for more information. For more information, please contact us at (361) 575-7111 or email iwbsvoc@yahoo.com.

CCC Contribution

The people of the Diocese of San Angelo contributed $19,796.07 to the 2013 collection for the Catholic Communications Campaign. The U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops thanks the Catholic faithful of West Texas for their generosity. The annual contributions go toward continued communications efforts such as the West Texas Angelus.

Letter from The Vatican

5 July 2013

Your Excellency,

The Holy Father has asked me to acknowledge the offering of $21,538 which you sent through the Apostolic Nunciature as a contribution from the Diocese of San Angelo for the support of the Holy See. His Holiness is grateful for this donation and for the devoted sentiments that inspired it. He very much appreciates the support which you and your people have given to him in his service to the universal Church ... I am pleased to assure you of the Holy Father's prayers for you and for those entrusted to your pastoral care. Invoking upon all of you joy and peace in our Lord Jesus Christ, he cordially imparts his Apostolic Blessing.

Yours sincerely in Christ,

Tarcisio Cardinal Bertone, Secretary of State
From the Editor

Why you should care about the Middle East

By Jimmy Patterson

The prayers and actions of hundreds of West Texas Catholics proved one thing: We can make a difference with God on our side and with our reliance on Him. In the last nine months, three Planned Parenthood facilities have closed their doors in the Diocese of San Angelo. In fact, all three of the Planned Parenthood facilities in our diocese are now shuttered and abandoned. Abilene fell first in November 2012. And then on August 30, Planned Parenthood of Midland and the San Angelo Planned Parenthood Clinic both closed. It was a remarkable example of good finally winning out over evil.

It was proof, too, of what we are capable. Certainly prayers and work must continue for those women and children who seek affordable health care — and they are. Life-supporting health clinics have been there all along. It is not as though the closing of Planned Parenthood is any sort of end to affordable health care here.

As everyone did and is still doing with the Planned Parenthood issue, I hope you will find room in your prayer time each day to pray for the innocent women and children who have fled Syria and are headed into bordering countries, leaving behind husbands, fathers and homes just so they can survive.

Imagine having to flee from your home. The people who have been impacted by Syria’s Civil War are just like you and me. People who were living lives, children who were going to school and families who would join around the dinner table at the end of the day to enjoy breaking bread and the love of each other’s company.

The tyrannous Assad regime has uprooted over 2 million refugees, including more than 1 million children. Many of those who stayed behind fighting for their homeland have been murdered, either at the end of a gun, or in the case of 1,400 Syrians — over 400 of whom were children -- by ingesting poison gas that Assad used on his own people.

Why is this Middle East crisis any different than the others? Perhaps it is not. Perhaps it is another example of abuse of office and of leaders turning on their country for the sake of their own power and of the seemingly unending and unsolvable conflict in the region.

Pictures and videos from Egypt, Syria, Iraq are devastating and emotional. Catholic News Service sent a photo last week of Israelis lining up to obtain gas masks. Just the threat of U.S. military intervention brought on the need for additional security by a people in a country that is far from the strife itself. Israelis have long waited and worried that their country would be the target of a retaliating madman just because they are there, believe differently than the Muslim world and are allied with the United States. Imagine living in so much fear that your life depended on the actions of the leader of a country on the other side of the world. It is frightening to know how much power.

(Please See PATTERSON/19)
Organ transplants considered one of the miracles of modern medicine

By Bishop Michael Pfeifer, OMI

Several years ago, along with Susan Page, I had the honor of hosting the first organ donation committee in San Angelo. The purpose was to make people aware of the great need for more donors who would be willing to offer certain human organs when their life had ended.

Each November is National Donor Sabbath Month and faith communities throughout the country observe it as a special time as to unite for one cause: to increase awareness of the critical need for organs and tissues and the miracle of transplantation. While there is one month designated as National Donor Month, hopefully each day, week and each month, we would all learn more about the need to supply organs and tissues to our neighbors who are in need, in order to share in the greatest blessing of all—the gift of life.

USCCB’s Labor Day 2013 statement

U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops

Every human being enjoys a basic right to be respected, not because of any title, position, prestige, or accomplishment but first of all because we are created in the image and likeness of God. From an ethical and moral perspective we embrace the exhortation of St. Paul "to anticipate one another in showing honor" (Rom 12:10). Today's competitive culture challenges us to strive for victory and advantage, but for St. Paul the challenge is to build each other up and honor one another's innate dignity.

Labor Day is an opportunity to take stock of the ways workers are honored and respected. Earlier this year, Pope Francis pointed out, "Work is fundamental to the dignity of a person. . . . It gives one the ability to maintain oneself, one's family, to contribute to the growth of one's own nation." Unfortunately, millions of workers today are denied this honor and respect as a result of unemployment, underemployment, unjust wages, wage theft, abuse, and exploitation.

Even with new indicators of some modest progress in recovery, the economy still has not improved the standard of living for many people, especially for the poor and the working poor, many of whom are unemployed or underemployed. More than four million people have been jobless for over six months, and that does not include the millions more who have simply lost hope. For every available job, there are often five unemployed and underemployed people actively vying for it. This jobs gap pushes wages down. Half of the jobs in this country pay less than $27,000 per year. More than 46 million people live in poverty, including 16 million children. The economy is not creating an adequate number of jobs that allow workers to provide for themselves and their families. Jobs, wages, and poverty are interrelated.

Donations and transplantations can save lives, yet the need for organs far exceeds the supplies. An average of 18 people die each day in our country because an organ was not available for them.

Organ transplants are considered one of the miracles of modern medicine. Surgeons have the tools and skills to replace damaged hearts and livers. They can free kidney patients from a lifetime of dialysis and restore sight to those going blind. Unfortunately, they lack the organs and tissues to help those patients because too many families, when offered the opportunity to donate a loved one's organs, decline.

Following the proper guidelines of how organs are removed, our Catholic religion considers organ donation to be a wonderful life-giving act of charity. If you need more information regarding organ tissue donation or a donor card, please call Texas Organ Sharing Alliance at 1.866.685.0277. The website to be contacted is www.donatelifetexas.org.
**FALL FESTIVALS**

**SEPTEMBER 15**
St. Therese Catholic Church  
Carlsbad  
CARLSBAD — Held at the Knights of Columbus Hall 3636 N. Bryant, San Angelo.  
A barbecue brisket/homemade German sausage dinner with all the trimmings will be served from 11 a.m. - 2 p.m. Adult tickets and Meals-To-Go: $9.00; Children 10 and Under: $6.00. Cooked/Uncooked sausage and barbecued brisket may be purchased in the afternoon. An auction featuring donations from various merchants and parishioners will begin at 1:15 p.m. A Country Store, Silent Auction, Bingo and other games will be available throughout the afternoon. For more information, call St. Therese Catholic Church: 325-465-8062. All are welcomed.

**SEPTEMBER 26-29**
St. Ann’s Family Fair  
Midland  
St. Ann’s of Midland will host the 65th annual Family Fair on the church grounds (1908 W. Texas) on Saturday, September 28th from 10am till 10pm. Carnival hours are 6-12pm on September 26th & 27th, 10am – 12pm Saturday September 28th, and 1 - 6pm on Sunday September 29th. The raffle’s 1st Prize – 1965 Ford Mustang Convertible (MSRP $30,000), Go to Youtube and type - 65 Mustang - Fair raffle grand prize www.youtube.com/watch?v=_2FgOoz3d-8  
2nd Prize – Dallas Cowboys game, 5 Tickets & Parking Pass Game/Date TBD (Value $1,775.00) 3rd Prize – Ipad Mini Wi-Fi, 4GB (Value $ 424). Tickets are $3 or 11 for $30. There will be non-smoking bingo, arts and crafts, dunking booth, a country store, and the famous odds and ends Booth. Some of the great food available includes burgers, tacos, fajitas, nachos, quesadillas, turkey legs, funnel cakes and more. There is something for everyone to enjoy including loads of children’s games!!! For more information, please call 432-682-6303. The Family Fair benefits St. Ann’s Catholic School.

**SEPTEMBER 22**
Our Lady of Guadalupe Catholic Church  
Eldorado  
ELDORADO — 11 AM-4 PM on the Courthouse Lawn in Eldorado. Featuring Food, Drinks, Games, BINGO, Cake Walk, Country Store, Silent Auction, Family Fun and DJ’s.  
Raffleprizes www.youtube.com/watch?v=_2FgOoz3d-8  
2nd Prize - Dallas Cowboys game, 5 Tickets & Parking Pass Game/Date TBD (Value $1,775.00) 3rd Prize – Ipad Mini Wi-Fi, 4GB (Value $ 424). Tickets are $3 or 11 for $30. There will be non-smoking bingo, arts and crafts, dunking booth, a country store, and the famous odds and ends Booth. Some of the great food available includes burgers, tacos, fajitas, nachos, quesadillas, turkey legs, funnel cakes and more. There is something for everyone to enjoy including loads of children’s games!!! For more information, please call 432-682-6303. The Family Fair benefits St. Ann’s Catholic School.

**SEPTEMBER 26**
St. Lawrence  
The 57th Annual ST. LAWRENCE FALL FESTIVAL will be held on October 6, at the ST. LAWRENCE PARISH HALL south of Garden City. Mass will be celebrated at 9 a.m. to begin the festivities. A barbecue brisket/homemade German Sausage lunch will be served from 11:00 a.m. - 2:00 p.m. with plates to go available. Prices are $10.00 for adults and $8.00 for children which includes barbecued, sausage, potatoes, pinto beans, green beans, cole slaw, pickles, cranberries, bread, homemade desserts, coffee, tea or water. Uncooked homemade German Sausage will be sold by the pound. Game booths include BINGO, Balloons, Grab Bag, Spin A wheel and various others still in the planning. There will also be a Silent Auction, Religious Booth as well as: concessions available throughout the day. The LIVE AUCTION will begin at 2:00 p.m. Vendor Booths are also available. For more information, contact Martha Schwartz @ 432 397 2268 or martha.schwartz13@ymail.com.

**SEPTEMBER 29**
Immaculate Conception  
Festival 2013  
Knickerbocker  
Mesquite-cooked brisket & sausage plates with all the trimmings served 11 a.m.–2 p.m.  
Adults $8, Children (under 12), $6, Live Auction 1 p.m. Raffle - Country Store -- Music by the Old Hat Band.

**OCTOBER 4-5**
St. Francis of Assisi  
Grand Jamaica  
Abilene  
The St Francis Annual Grand Jamaica will be held Oct 4th - 5th on the church grounds, 826 Cottonwood St (between North 8th and 10th Street on Treadaway Street). The festivities will begin on Friday at 5 pm with the Blessing of the Animals. Entertainment will include performances from the Texas Tomatoes and the Ballet Folklorico in addition to bands and DJ’s. Raffle prizes include $600 & $400 Walmart gift cards, $300 Best Buy gift card, $200 Academy gift card, iPod, Kindle Fire, Dining table with 4 chairs and a Digital Camera. Tickets are $2.00 each. The drawing will be held Sat. Oct 5th at 10 pm.  
There will be lots of food to enjoy: brisket sandwiches, funnel cakes, burgers/fries, tamales, tortas, turkey legs, corn on the cob, burritos, snow cones, drinks and much more.

**OCTOBER 6**
St. Mary’s Fall Festival  
Brownwood  
Annual Fall Festival will be October 6 on church grounds. There will be food booths, car show, game booths, and silent and live auctions.

**OCTOBER 6**
St. Patrick’s Fall Festival  
Ed Davenport Convention Center  
Brady  
BRADY — Turkey & dressing meal with all the trimmings served from 11:00-2:00 Price: $8 a plate. Take outs available. Daily Events consists of Silent Auction, Country Store, cake walk, BINGO, Large Auction, & outdoor kids games. Win a 2013 Chevrolet Silverado Texas Edition Crew Cab & other prizes.

**OCTOBER 13**
St. Boniface Church Fall Festival  
Olfen  
OLFEN — The Olfen St. Boniface Fall Festival will be held Sunday, October 13th at the St.Boniface Parish hall in Olfen. There will be no 11:00 am Mass at St. Boniface Church on this date. A homemade sausage, turkey/ dressing meal will be served from 11:00 a.m. - 1:30 p.m. with drive through plates-to-to and drive through sausage sales available. Homemade sausage may be pre-ordered/ pre-paid by mail: to St. Boniface Sausage, 2817 Briargrove, San Angelo, TX. 76904 and available for pick up the day of the festival. Sausage will sell for $4.00 per pound. Meal prices are $8.00 for adults and $5.00 for children (under 10 years of age). All plates-to-go will be $8.00. There will be a live auction at 1:00 p.m., candy drop at 3:00 p.m., games for the children, Bingo, Country Store and concessions and sausage sandwiches in the afternoon. For more information, contact St. Boniface Church at 325-442-2893.

**OCTOBER 19**
St. Ann’s Colorado City  
St. Ann’s of Colorado City holds its Fall Festival this year on October 19.

**OCTOBER 20**
ST. AMBROSE/HOLY FAMILY  
WALL  
Turkey and Sausage Dinner will be served from 11 am to 2 pm Live Music provided by Dovetail ... Cotton and Merchandise Auction at 1:30 pm Games from 10:30 to 4:30, Bingo from 12 to 4 pm Raffle, Market, and Sausage Sales Shuttle Bus Available from Wall School from 8 am to 3 pm

**OCTOBER 26**
St. Stephens  
Midland  
St. Stephen’s in Midland will be Oct. 26th in the Parish Hall.

**NOVEMBER 10**
St. Joseph’s  
Rowena  
91st ANNUAL FALL FESTIVAL  
11am—6 pm  
Sunday Everyone welcome!  
Food booths, games, silent auction and activities on the church grounds at 311 W. Plum in Sonora. Raffle drawing for prizes at 5pm. Music and dancing 4-6pm.  
Only one mass on Sunday Oct. 27 at 10am. The Festival Queen will be announced during Mass. Homemade sausage available, taking orders in advance at church office; contact 325-387-2278.

Tickets are $100 Each. For more information or to buy a ticket, contact the Parish office at 325.597.2324 Office hours Mon. – Wed. 9-12&1-3, Thur. 9-12.

EMAIL FESTIVAL INFO To  
jimmyleepatterson@gmail.com.
Planned Parenthood kills more babies in last year than in its long history

By Bishop Michael Pfeifer, OMI

Planned Parenthood, the biggest abortion giant in the USA, continues to kill the precious unborn at an ever-increasing rate.

The new annual report released by the National Planned Parenthood abortion business shows it did more abortions in 2011-2012 fiscal year than ever before in its history — a record 330,964 abortions. Each of one these and all of these precious little ones destroyed are true human beings made in the very image and likeness of God.

These abortions are estimated to have generated $150 million for the “non-profit” organization. Planned Parenthood’s income included a hefty and ever-increasing check from American taxpayers — a staggering $542.4 million, which represents 45.2% of the group’s total annual budget. Sadly, the American taxpayers, from their hard-earned money, are being forced by our government to provide these funds for the abortion giant which continues to kill the unborn at an ever-increasing rate.

When will we Americans, and Christians, stand up and say “enough is enough?”

Rosaries prayed at closings of two Planned Parenthoods

By Jimmy Patterson

As 250 committed pro-life supporters looked on, fervently praying each decade of the Holy Rosary, Bishop Michael D. Pfeifer, who fought a long-running battle against abortionists in the Diocese of San Angelo, declared “We are free from the evils of Planned Parenthood.”

The bishop will most certainly consider the closings of the Planned Parenthood centers in both Midland and San Angelo on the same day, August 30, 2013, to be a high point during his apostolate as Bishop of San Angelo.

Though the Planned Parenthood facilities in the three diocesan deaneries are now all closed — Abilene shut down in November 2012 — the work of the pro-life movement is far from over, Pfeifer said. In order to preserve the common good, our leaders have the duty to make courageous choices. Yet some of them don’t take that courageous choice. In a democratic system, when laws and decisions are made in committee, their sense of consciousness may be weakened.”

Pfeifer also reminded those gathered for the rosary outside of Planned Parenthood of Midland that a law that violates the right to life is unjust and, as a result, invalid.

Women’s Health Care Options

Midland
- The Life Center, 2101 W. Wall, Midland, 432.683.6072
- St. Vincent de Paul, St. Ann’s Chapter, 432.684.3887
- Helping Hands of Midland, 432.520.8900

Odessa
- The Life Center, 802 N. Washington Ave., Odessa, 432.617.8378

Andrews
- The Life Center, 1412 NE Mustang Dr., Andrews, 432.523.2859

San Angelo
- Pregnancy Help Center, 2525 Sherwood Way, 325.944.1515
- Also: United Way Call for Help (211)
San Angelo Deanery Guidelines

Plan to Continue Support of Pro-Life Activities and Provision of Continued Healthcare for Women in the Deanery of San Angelo:

Deanery Level
1. Provide additional financial support in an amount supported by the Pastoral Council & Financial Council Development.
2. Maintain an information flow regarding support for payment including prenatal and post-delivery, including financial support for health care and spiritual and psychological counseling.
3. Develop a referral listing for resources to pregnant women such as food stamps, WIC, Medicaid approved by the Catholic Church.
4. Parishes plan to supply diaper, formula, clothes, through other local organizations such as Ministerial Alliance – Which parishes are going to give this and to whom? Catholic Outreach? Pregnancy Center?
5. Identify resources outside of the diocese that offer services compatible with the teachings of the Catholic Church.
6. Work with Pregnancy Center to try to provide STD testing at no cost to clients through parish financial assistance and professional volunteers.

Parish Level
1. St. Patrick Parish, Brady — The Parish prays each week to stop abortion. Our Knights pray every Monday at the Grotto to stop abortion.
   Give counseling to pregnant women. Help pregnant women with needs like money and baby needs. Make donations to the Pregnancy Center in Brady. The Clergy Association in Brady will make donations to the Pregnancy Center. Identify women who need this health care.

2. St. Ambrose/Holy Family — Knights of Columbus holds annual fundraiser for the Pregnancy Help Center of the Concho Valley. A basket is made available at the entrance of the church for baby items for the Pregnancy Help Center; this must be done at least monthly. Parishes participate in Pro-Life Post Card Campaign and in the Annual Life Walk, Promote "Celebrate Life" Magazine, Catholic Daughters ask for parishioner participation in 1,000 rosary for the unborn.

3. St. Mary, San Angelo — Support Pregnancy Help Center financially each month. Provide counseling when women exhibit need; Knights help out financially through fundraising (for sonogram); church has infant pantry for diapers/clothes/etc., for women; church supports the gala in October; parish fundraisers (walks, etc) at certain times of the year; preach about abortion/broadcast over the radio.

4. Sacred Heart Cathedral — Continue to support work of the Pregnancy Help Center’ ask Parish/Financial Councils to authorize a specific annual allotment. Refer women to Catholic Outreach Services which is funded monthly by the parish, assist with food, other needs on available basis. Continue with programs such as 40 Days for Life, counseling and referrals for walk-ins, bulletin and pulpit announcements for Pro-Life.

5. St. Theresa/Sacred Heart — Junction/Menard: Provide spiritual counseling to individuals, particularly women, who are pregnant. Provide medical financial support and home needs such as food, diapers, etc. Provide referral service for psychological counseling. Weekly liturgical prayers for abortion related issues. Blessing of families during Sunday Masses. How about financial assistance?

6. St. Joseph - Rowena/St. Thomas/St. Boniface — Support the annual Gala dinner of the Pregnancy Help Center by sponsoring a table; collect baby items such as diapers, clothes, etc. and donate to the Pregnancy Help Center; offer Masses for the unborn twice a year; hope to support the Pregnancy Help Center financially; support fundraiser to help the pregnancy Help Center; Invite speakers for youth to raise awareness to the importance of sex abstinence.

7. St. Joseph, San Angelo: Help and participate with both material and money donations with the Pregnancy Help Center; How about financial assistance to women and volunteers to help? Pro-life masses with the invitation of the Bishop (twice a year) Every month Holy Hour from 7-10 p.m.: Participation with Gala Dinner, Rosary after Mass from Monday - Friday. Continue planning to build a monument to the unborn, and Ten Commandments; Information to direct people to the right place in case of an issue with pregnancy or other issue.

8. St. Margaret of Cortona, Big Lake — Organize Natural Family Planning programs; provide counseling services to pregnant women; assist pregnant women with baby supplies; welcome newborn babies and support adoption volunteers.

9. St. Margaret of Scotland, San Angelo/ St. Therese, Carlsbad — Diaper drive, encourage people to offer assistance at Pregnancy Help Center; Participate in "Gala Dinner" for the Pregnancy Help Center; join in the Walk for Life to support the Pregnancy Help Center; host parish fundraising events annually and all the proceeds will be given to the pregnancy help center; Must be more frequent. promote abstinence programs and sacredness of life; bless babies monthly.

Midland-Odessa Deanery Guidelines

Plan to Continue Support of Pro-Life Activities and Provision of Continued Healthcare for Women in the Deanery of Midland-Odessa:

Parishes of the Deanery commit themselves to continue and even increase support of financial and staff contribution to the organizations in their locality of Catholic Family Services, St. Vincent DePaul, Helping Hands, and the Life Center of Midland, Odessa, and Andrews. We acknowledge and encourage the Knights of Columbus in their fund raising events in behalf of Pro-Life and care following abortion, and educational programs such as Natural Family Planning, Rachel’s Vineyard Retreats, and more.

Pastors will remain up-to-date with issues of family life, and offer continued support and counseling in the many areas of concern.

The continued practice and increase of on-going events of collection of items necessary for a new baby. This would be ongoing collections of diapers, clothes, bedding, etc. for babies.

Encourage our Catholic Healthcare Practitioners and Social Workers to offer their professional skills to assist parishes and other concerned organizations in the assistance of women, men and families faced with or suffering abortion, Natural Family Planning, and family life and living.

All parishes will provide material and information for those seeking information on family planning or healthcare.

To continue parish support of the Nellie Gray Pro-Life Ministry in the Deanery with a concerted effort to eliminate abortion and provide after-care of those coming from abortions, and to promote Natural Family Planning and abortion awareness Education.

Continue specific ministries that provide for Expectant Women.

Continued support of the monthly Deanery Pro-Life Mass and continued Rosary Prayer for the unborn. Continue the support of the 211 telephone number in the Permian Basin who provides information on available healthcare services.
Our never-ending need to give to the poor

By Rev. Ron Rolheiser, OMI

We need to give to the poor, not because they need it, though they do, but because we need to do that in order to be healthy. That's an axiom that is grounded in scripture, where, time and again, we are taught that giving to the poor is something that we need to do for our own health.

We see this truth expressed in many religious and cultures. For example, a story from the Bible: the widow of Zarephath gave to a prophet and was used by God to provide for his needs. This is an example of giving to the poor as a virtue, and it is a key principle in the Catholic Church.

By Moises Sandoval
Catholic News Service

As opposition to immigrants seethes in legislative halls, a recent article on Houston in Smithsonian magazine by Tony Perrottet presents a different picture. Perrottet tells the story of Hugo Ortega, who arrived in Houston in 1984 at age of 17 in the trunk of a car and was homeless, slept in the streets for weeks at a time. Now he owns one of the most diverse and profiles some of its immigrants.

Faith has shaped immigrant success in this country

By Moises Sandoval
Catholic News Service

As opposition to immigrants seethes in legislative halls, a recent article on Houston in Smithsonian magazine by Tony Perrottet presents a different picture. Perrottet tells the story of Hugo Ortega, who arrived in Houston in 1984 at age of 17 in the trunk of a car and was homeless, slept in the streets for weeks at a time. Now he owns one of the most diverse and profiles some of its immigrants.

Farouk Shami, born in a village near Ramallah in the West Bank, came to the United States with $400 at the age of 23 in 1965 and became a hair products magnate whose company is now worth more than a billion dollars.

Chloe Dao, a Vietnamese immigrant who escaped as a girl from Laos in 1976 with her parents and seven sisters, is now a fashion designer who won the reality-TV competition "Project Runway" in 2006.

The Ramoses, parents of 10 children, fit the paradigm of the ever-arriving immigrants who, from the beginning of settlement of lands now in the United States, have continually renewed the Catholic Church and strengthened the nation.

Their son Sergio became a Norbertine priest, Hector is a physician, Rosa is a city corrections officer, Ricardo is an architect, Ramiro is a state corrections officer, Estella is a psychologist and Gloria is teacher with a master's degree from Harvard University. At the time Humberto told me about his family, his brother Jaime was a doctoral candidate in economics, and Lorena, 22 and the youngest, is a psychologist.

The Ramoses settled within walking distance of a parish church in San Gabriel, Calif. They knelt down together every night to pray the rosary, were led by the father to church every Saturday for confession and to Mass every Sunday.

"The church represents a familiar institution [for Hispanic immigrants]," wrote Jesuit Father Allan Deck, a long-time student of the Hispanic church. "It is one of the few with which they can identify in an otherwise inhospitable land."
Alex Rodriguez: Where did shame, contrition go?

By Stephen Kent
Catholic News Service

Another luminary from the rich and famous crowd has entered the Hall of Shame.

An official of the New York Yankees on Monday evening announced that Alex Rodriguez, the team's third baseman, would not participate in this season because of various aches and pains, even though he was under appeal from major league baseball.

The appeal is decided, not before the season ends. "Well, how about that!" as Mel Allen, the longtime voice of the Yankees would say. How about that, proclaiming yourself to be a role model and lacing up the spikes as if nothing happened after being called a liar and a cheat.

We have disgraced politicians running for office, albeit lesser offices than the one they occupied at the time when they were caught in misdeeds. One is a candidate for mayor of New York City who electronically sent obscene photos of himself to several women, resigned from Congress as a result, and continued to do the same thing after the resignation. Then we have the call girl-challenged former governor of New York state now running for New York City comptroller. The former governor of South Carolina, who was not hiking the Appalachian Trail as he said while he was trysting with a paramour in South America, won a seat in Congress.

Whatever happened to shame? How did disdain for disgraceful conduct morph into admiration? Shame used to result in embarrassment and humiliation. Now it gets you on the cover of supermarket checkout stand magazines and television talk shows.

Forgiveness once came only after admission of a transgression, contrition for the wrongdoing and a firm purpose not to do it again.

Admission now comes under the bright lights of television, often with the "good wife" standing nearby. Some say it resembles a Greek tragedy. But these flawed politicians and baseball players lack one element: In a Greek tragedy, the protagonist recognizes his flaw.

Recent events bring to mind lyrics from "Ain't That a Shame" by Fats Domino.

The refrain:
"Ain't that a shame
My tears fell like rain
Ain't that a shame."

In the old days, as in the song, there was recognition, naming it and tearful consequences. But today, their contrition feels like the fourth line of the song: "You're the one to blame."

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Kent is the retired editor of archdiocesan newspapers in Omaha and Seattle. He can be contacted at: considersk@gmail.com.

Yes, you can: living out a charism as layperson

By Effie Caldarola
Catholic News Service

Do you admire a religious order -- the Benedictines, for example, or the Sisters of Mercy -- and know that even though you've been called to another vocation outside vowed religious life, you desire to participate in the prayer and service of that community? Do you wish you could, to the extent life allows, embrace their charism, their worldview, grow closer to their essential character?

In many orders, you can be involved. If you are drawn to a particular religious community, you should look into whether they have a "third order" or associates program that encourages and accommodates lay members. You'd be surprised how many will welcome you.

Just as the Jesuits are a religious order that has never had a female counterpart (think male and female Dominicans and Benedictines), they've also never had a "third order." Nonetheless, "The Spiritual Exercises" of St. Ignatius of Loyola, formulated by their founder, have become wildly popular among laypeople in the past 50 years. Many seek to live "the Ignatian life."

This summer, I made my first promises with Ignatian Associates, a group not formally associated with the Jesuits, but framed around the Spiritual Exercises and dedicated to an Ignatian life of prayer, discernment and service. This group exists in the tri-city area of Minneapolis/St. Paul, Milwaukee and Omaha -- what is presently the Wisconsin Province of the Society of Jesus.

The promises are simplicity of life, apostolic availability and fidelity to the Gospels. What do those mean? For each individual, the promises have unique meaning. How can my life be simplified to make more room for God? How available am I to help in Jesuit and other service areas based on my station and time in life?

Our promises followed a two-year period of formation and discernment, including practicing the Spiritual Exercises, guided by a spiritual director. I met for faith sharing with a small group three times a month. Although I have a bachelor's degree and a master's degree from Jesuit universities, I knew I had a lot to learn and found myself devouring some great books for guidance.

My spiritual director gave me Jesuit Father Kevin O'Brien's book "The Ignatian Adventure." I felt particularly at home with this since he had witnessed my daughter's marriage in Philadelphia. Although he currently serves at Georgetown University, he was a campus minister at St. Joseph's University in Philadelphia when my son-in-law attended.

I found myself drawn to other people's experience with the exercises, especially other laypersons. Tim Muldoon, a theologian and former rowing coach, advances the idea in "The Ignatian Workout: Daily Exercises for a Healthy Faith" that a commitment to Ignatian spirituality demands much of the same hard work, dedication and sacrifice as a commitment to excellence in athletics.

The poet Paul Mariani's "Thirty Days: On Retreat with the Exercises of St. Ignatius" was a touching day-by-day reflection on a 30-day silent experience of the exercises, in which he

(Please See CALDAROLA/23)

Parish the thought ...
Universal morality and natural law

By Rev. Tad Pacholczyk

People sometimes use the phrase “moral compass” to describe the innate sense of right and wrong that human beings have. President Obama, for example, recently mentioned in one of his speeches how we need to, “keep our own moral compass pointed in a true direction.” Although he didn’t spell out what that true direction might be, his remark nevertheless highlighted something that all can agree upon, namely, the importance of being guided by a moral compass.

When functioning properly, this moral compass (a.k.a. our “conscience”), not only encourages us from within to “do good and avoid evil,” but also sets off internal alarm bells when we are tempted to carry out evil acts. Some acts, such as murder, torture, theft, and adultery will trigger those alarm bells almost universally, irrespective of time period, culture, or upbringing within a particular society.

No society erects statues to honor their greatest adulterers, or to celebrate their most prolific murderers. When a genocidal leader is cast in marble, it is to memorialize qualities like courage or leadership, not his murderous proclivities.

The fact that certain actions like murder and adultery are wrong and invariably harmful, and readily perceived as such, leads to what is known as the “Natural Law.” The Natural Law signifies that we can know through our powers of reason what is right and wrong, and that our reason can thereby guide us towards an ethical life. Becoming aware of the Natural Law through a carefully formed moral compass is an essential part of what it means to be human. Those who invoke Natural Law appeal to self-evident principles that can be known by all humans.

Catholic teachings about morality also rely on the notion of Natural Law. The Second Vatican Council, to consider but one example, describes our moral duty this way: “Deep within his conscience man discovers a law which he has not laid upon himself but which he must obey.”

The Natural Law, nonetheless, is not a specifically Christian idea, but has its origins in pre-Christian thought. A number of ancient Greek philosophers discuss the notion. Cicero, the Roman lawyer and writer (106-43 B.C.), has a famous passage wherein he describes the Natural Law: “There is in fact a true Law - namely, right reason - which is in accordance with nature, applies to all men, and is unchangeable and eternal. By its commands it summons men to the performance of their duties; by its prohibitions it restrains them from doing wrong. To invalidate this Law by human legislation is never morally right, nor is it permissible ever to restrict its operation; and to annul it wholly is impossible.”

He also notes how the Natural Law cannot be “one thing at Rome, and another at Athens; one thing to-day, and another to-morrow; but in all times and nations this universal law must forever reign, eternal and imperishable.”

Despite its constancy and universality, the demands of the Natural Law are not easily specified or deduced, free of disputation or debate. Some people today, in fact, influenced by the hedonism and relativism of our age, would go further and outright deny the existence of the Natural Law.

Interestingly, though, whenever a serious crisis or threat to civilization arises, the validity of natural law reasoning tends to reassert itself. Such a resurgence occurred, for example, at the end of World War II, during the Nuremberg trials and in the prosecutions against those who had perpetrated heinous crimes against humanity. Nazi defendants objected to being placed on trial for simply following the orders of their superiors and the laws of their country. Most of their actions were recognized as being legal under the judicial system of the Third Reich. They were ultimately found guilty, nevertheless, of violating a higher law to which all nations and peoples are subject.

Sir Hartley Shawcross, the British prosecutor, stressed that there could be no immunity “for those who obey orders which – whether legal or not in the country where they are issued – are manifestly contrary to the very law of nature from which international law has grown.” The prosecutors at Nuremberg built their case on the fact that, in the final analysis, the laws of man and of nations are subject to the laws of God and the Natural Law.

To discern the Natural Law and thereby perceive our moral obligations requires reflection, reason and discipline. The darkening of our reason and the weakening of our will that has subtly infected us because of sin can make it challenging, even two millennia following Cicero, to properly grasp our natural moral obligations. The Natural Law, nevertheless, represents an essential core of universal morality, serving as a key foundation for ethics, and an antidote to the lawlessness that tempts us in every age.

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
Many of Egypt's Christians think U.S. has aligned with the wrong side

By James Martone
Catholic News Service

CAIRO — Two weeks after the churches he used to pray in were ransacked and burned in the Egyptian port city of Suez, Istafoas Youssif sat "searching for God" in a Cairo convent.

He said he hoped to get over the pain, through "reflection and prayer," and that he understood who was behind the church burnings.

What he said he could not understand was the U.S. position toward his country, Egypt.

The Muslim Brotherhood "only has one goal, either to rule the country, or burn it. We love the American people, but not what (U.S. President Barack) Obama is doing. He is supporting the Brotherhood, the terrorists," said Youssif, a second-year university student and member of Egypt's Coptic Catholic community.

Since the military's overthrow of President Mohammed Morsi in early July, many Christians in Cairo told Catholic News Service the United States is taking the wrong side, with some, like 21-year-old Youssif, even accusing Washington of openly supporting terrorism.

Their concerns echo, almost to the word, Egypt's military and its new interim government's claims that Morsi was deposed by popular demand, that now-dismantled pro-Morsi camps in Cairo were armed, and that the Muslim Brotherhood and other groups with which Morsi was aligned are the ones behind a wave of attacks on state, security and Christian institutions around the country.

"The U.S. is calling for human rights, but where are our human rights?" Youssif asked, complaining about what he perceived was "a lack of U.S. support" for Egypt's military, which, he said, had "responded to the will of the people" by ousting Morsi.

"It is wrong to call it a coup," he added.

Obama has not termed the takeover a coup, though some U.S. lawmakers have. But Obama has condemned the forced dismantling of two pro-Morsi camps in Cairo Aug. 14, saying Washington supports "the right to peaceful protest."

Hundreds, mostly protesters, were killed when the camps were raided that day by security forces who

Western church warns against attack on Syria

WASHINGTON (CNS) -- As speculation mounted about Western air strikes on Syria, a committee of U.S. bishops called for a political solution, and Catholic leaders in Europe warned military intervention could lead to an escalation of hostilities.

In a letter to U.S. Secretary of State John Kerry, the chairman of the bishops' Committee on International Justice and Peace reiterated what Pope Francis and Jordan's King Abdullah II said Aug. 29, that "the path of dialogue and negotiation between all components of Syrian society, with the support of the international community, is the only option" to end the conflict in Syria.

The committee reiterated its long-standing position that "the Syrian people urgently need a political solution that ends the fighting and creates a future ... that respects religious rights and religious freedom."

The letter, signed by the committee chairman, Bishop Richard E. Pates of Des Moines, Iowa, called on the U.S. to work with other governments to pursue negotiations and a cease-fire.

In a column in Austria's Heute daily, Vienna Cardinal Christoph Schonborn said that "taking up arms can only be a last resort."

"Were previous weapons programs successful in this region, and did the wars in Iraq and Afghanistan bring peace? What good can bombs do in a country already bleeding from a thousand wounds?" he asked.

The president of the German bishops' conference also criticized plans for the strikes and said the U.N.-backed International Criminal Court should be allowed to investigate an Aug. 21 chemical weapons attack in Damascus, Syria.

The head of the German bishops' conference warned against attack on Syria

Making peace with Iran

Responding to editors' requests for a regular sampling of current commentary from around the Catholic press, here is an unsigned editorial titled "Making peace with Iran" from the Aug. 12 issue of America, a national Catholic weekly magazine run by the Jesuits.

America Magazine

The United States maintains a number of important strategic relationships -- Israel, China and Russia come immediately to mind -- that have the potential to make a significant impact on the current geopolitical landscape. But perhaps the most important relationship the United States maintains, the one likeliest to have the greatest short- and long-term impact on global peace, is with Iran.

That is not to say that it is a positive relationship -- yet. But even a "relationship" based on animus and suspicion can be important. A Venn diagram of the geopolitical world seen through American and Iranian eyes would show overlapping cultural, political and military interests in Syria, Israel/Palestine, Afghanistan, Iraq, Lebanon and multilateral concerns such as nuclear proliferation, reducing tensions with the world's Sunni Muslims and converging economic and trade interests and conflicts.

Iran and the United States have been at odds since the Islamic revolution deposed the CIA-backed shah, and the ensuing hostage crisis wrecked the Carter presidency and any chance for the normalization of relations for decades.

The United States and Iran have been at loggerheads over Israel and the plight of Palestinians, nuclear weapons development and military and industrial espionage. A historic low was reached during the Iraq-Iran war, when the United States began what would become its disastrous "enemy of..."
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Profession of faith

By Michelle Gaitan
San Angelo Standard Times

Former computer administrator from Kentucky makes solemn profession of vows at Mount Carmel Hermitage near Christoval

CHRISTOV AL — Brother Joseph Mary doesn’t rely on many words to show his devotion to God. Sitting in a chapel flower garden, he was quiet, polite and observant as he softly recalled the moment he started his life at the Mount Carmel Hermitage. “I felt called,” Brother Joseph said. “I felt God’s grace very strong.” After six years at the hermitage, Brother Joseph Mary of the Holy Rosary made his solemn profession—a vow to live the rest of his life as a Mount Carmel monk. The 46-year-old became the fourth monk to dedicate his life to the Hermits of the Blessed Virgin Mary of Mount Carmel.

The hermitage is a place of quiet serenity surrounded by open sky and where the only competition for silence is the melody of flowing water from a fountain and the buzzing sound of hummingbirds as they hurry from one flower to the next. It is a place for reflection and prayer. Brother Joseph’s Mass of Solemn Profession was celebrated Saturday, July 20, at the hermitage in Christoval. Afterward, a reception was held in St. Albert’s Hall at the hermitage. Brother Joseph, formerly known as Paul Wahlen, was born in Kentucky and raised in Indiana; he is the youngest of eight children. Before moving to Texas to join the hermitage, he worked as a computer administrator in Colorado.

Despite owning a home and having a good career, Brother Joseph always felt an “attraction” to the life of a monk and had a desire to live his life devoted to God. After searching for Carmelite hermitages on the Internet, Mount Carmel became his first choice. Brother Joseph said. He resolved to make the hermitage his new home, he sold his house in Colorado and gave away all of his belongings with the support of his family. “My mom was a Carmelite back in the 1940s,” Brother Joseph said. “It’s very important for a person to say I will follow God in our free will because we treasure it so much.” According to the hermitage’s website, www.carmelites-hermits.org, the life of a hermit monk is one of solitude, prayer and penance for the good of the church and the salvation of the world. They are committed to a life a prayer and labor that is structured by the ideals of poverty, chastity and obedience.

This is a different life for the men from what they are used to, and they cannot go and do things without permission, Fr. Fabian said. “It’s a very difficult commitment, but it’s only by the grace of God.” Brother Joseph admits he struggled with the transition from his old way of life to the one he is now committed to. “It took several years to get here,” Brother Joseph said. “The greatest gift we can give to God is our free will because we treasure it so much.”

The hermitage is home to a total of five monks, including Brother Joseph. Brother Martin Mary, who has been with the hermitage for 12 years, said he admires Brother Joseph’s commitment to the Lord. “He is a person that is very devoted and single-minded in his faith,” Brother Martin said. “For once in his life, he hasn’t looked back. He never said he wanted to go home. He has been very zealous.” Among the others, Brother Joseph is recognized for his quiet manner. “He resembles Joseph in the Bible,” Brother Martin said. “You did not hear much from him, but he is a big character in the Bible. In that same way, Brother Joseph stays behind the scenes, but he is there, working in the chapel. It’s a blessing for him and us.” It takes about six years to become a hermit monk. Father Fabian Maria Rosette, founder of the Mount Carmel Hermitage, describes it as “a slow process,” adding that some need to push their vows back a year or two until they are certain this is the life for them. “We believe that is forever,” Father Fabian said. “It is a very difficult commitment, but it’s only by the grace of God.”

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This is a different life for the men from what they are used to, and they cannot go and do things without permission, Fr. Fabian said. “It’s a very important for a person to say I will follow the teachings of Jesus Christ by being chaste, poor and obedient,” Fr. Fabian said. “While Brother Joseph is no longer living a worldly life, he expressed an appreciation for being focused solely on prayer and Jesus Christ.

“Though there’s a freedom in that, too,” Brother Joseph said.
Howard Payne grad student interns at Notre Dame-Australia

By Jennifer L. Kotzur

The book of Proverbs tells us, “The human heart plans the way, but the LORD directs the steps,” in another words, we may have plans for ourselves but, God directs us along the path he has for us.

Four years ago, I competed at the World Baton Twirling Federation’s International Cup Championship. If you would have told me I would be back in Sydney, Australia, interning at the University of Notre Dame-Australia and the Centre for Faith Ethics, and Society, and pursuing a Master of Arts degree in Youth Ministry at Howard Payne University (Brownwood), I could have laughed at you.

God only knew, after driving by St Mary’s Cathedral in 2009 and rededicating my life to Christ at the South Texas Fellowship of Christian Athlete’s Weekend of Champions camp on April 9, 2011, only months following a life-changing car accident, I would be called to serve him in a unique capacity.

In March, my graduate program director, Dr. Gary Gramling, approved of my acceptance into the Education Abroad Network’s Summer internship program which, I would be earning credit for my “Ministry in a multi-cultural setting,” a dream come true. I was assigned to work under Dr. Sandy Lynch, assisting with Notre Dame’s Tradition Conference (July 2-5), visiting with the chaplaincy, and conducting research for the Centre. About a month prior to my two month internship, a journey 9,000 miles from home, I had the opportunity to speak with a missionary priest visiting St. Mary’s in Brownwood and with Fr. Francis Njoku about my fears. Both of my brothers in Christ assured me God was calling me to Sydney and to work in ministry for a reason, just understand my family and friends back in the States would know I was going to be safe. Two days before leaving, Msgr. John Wagner, my great uncle, jokingly said at a family reunion, “What is time? God doesn’t wear a watch. Just live each moment and follow his will.”

Upon arriving into Sydney, I was hesitant because I was the first-ever Christian studies type major for my program as well as the first ever international intern for UNDA’s Sydney campus. No sooner I arrived and met the other 15 interns, I felt God has a reason to send me back to a place I had become familiar with that had great religious roots and history.

At first, I was overwhelmed with the excitement of visiting Featherdale’s Wildlife reserve and meeting a kangaroo and koala, learning to step out of my comfort zone while trusting others on a Blue Mountain’s hike, and realizing a dream was coming true. Yet, my two months at Notre Dame, blessed me with various opportunities. Attending Mass every Saturday evening at the historic St. Mary’s Cathedral, gave me an opportunity to see the Catholic Mass setting differences and the diversity of Catholics in the community nevertheless, hearing the universal message I hear at home. Quickly I learned how multi-cultural and faith based Sydney was.

Between my research on sports chaplaincy and sports mentoring was. In connecting with Sports Chaplaincy Australia, Fellowship of Christian Athletes, and Athletes in Action, training with baton twirlers from Featherdale, I began to realize God has a purpose for me, even if things are not what I could predict. Personally, I believe God sends places and people into our life at the right moment. For me, being back in Sydney was a home away from home, and a life changing adventure. I pray God will guide me as I finish my master’s this fall and allow me to continue to do his will while serving at St. Mary’s. Nevertheless, I encourage all of you to be strong and courageous and never give up on your dreams.

Holy Family youth make summer mission trip to San Antone

By Brandon McAuliffe

SAN ANTONIO – In mid-July, youth from Holy Family in Abilene headed to the Alamo City for the 2013 Young Neighbors in Action annual mission trip.

When we arrived at St. Mary’s University, we were joined by a group from Atlanta.

For the first time in years, our entire church group of almost 30 people was sent to the same work site – the Mission Road Developmental Center.

Mission Road Ministries operates MRDC as well as one other location called the Unicorn Center in San Antonio. MRDC provides residential care and activities for children and adults with intellectual and other developmental disabilities.

What’s now Mission Road Ministries began in 1947 serving three children – including the son of founders Clifford and Adele Bledsoe, but has grown to serve nearly 1,000 people annually in 2013.

The youth of Holy Family were very fortunate to get to work with different groups on campus and despite there being no physical labor involved, it was taxing for several reasons.

For senior Day Ross, it was an emotional week.

“Going on mission trips is always special and touching to me,” Ross said. “This year was my third one and I worked with mentally handicapped adults and children. It wasn’t the easiest place to work, but every second of it was rewarding.”

Ross noted that despite only spending one week with the residents it was amazing to see how talking and playing board games with them not only was a huge impact on their lives, but also on hers.

Blake Kappel, who graduated from high school in May, was on his final mission trip before heading to the University of Texas in the fall.

“They take care of mentally challenged people and we gave people there company and helped them however we could,” said Kappel. “It was a great experience and I met a lot of loving people there and it was really interesting.”

Kappel said he was nervous the first day because he had never worked with special needs people before.

“The day we started, before we went into one of the rooms, I was extremely nervous because I’d never worked with people with disabilities before,” he said. “As it turns out, all was well. Jesus gave us the strength to cope with everything and to be a good source of happiness for them.”

For Laura Preston, the experience gave her a new perspective into what some people deal with on a daily basis. “It was really eye opening and I was nervous at first, but I was a lot more comfortable at the end,” Preston said. “It was really cool to get to know the people and bond with them.”

After spending a week at Mission Road, the hardest part of the week was leaving the center after bonding with the residents for five days.

In the evenings, we studied Church documents on social justice issues. There also was time for a pool party and a cultural night where we were serenaded by mariachis.
Plan to reduce anti-Semitism introduced

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

During the time of rewriting the document on Religious Liberty, the Council turned its attention to the brief but also highly controversial declaration on the Jews and Non-Christians. Cardinal Bea, a German, went to the microphone to outline his reasons to Pope John to have the matter discussed before and after his speech. He had become a hero to most of the bishops. But why was the Council even dealing with this topic? It had not been suggested by any of the bishops. It had come from a mandate of Pope John whose wartime experience had made him sensitive to the atrocities committed against the Jews, many of them by Catholics.

The immediate cause for Pope John’s mandate was an audience he had with the Jewish scholar, Jules Isaac. In this audience Isaac asked the pope to have the Council address a plan which anti-Semitism could be reduced. There were many others who had asked Pope John to have the Council address the situation of anti-Semitism and the relation of the Church and the Jewish people. There were political implications in this as well. How would such a declaration be accepted by the Arab states surrounding Israel? The punch line is that Cardinal Cicognani, the head of the Central Preparatory Commission and Secretary of State, knew these implications and removed the schema from the agenda back in 1962. But Cardinal Bea outlined his reasons to Pope John to have the matter discussed at the Council. He said that too often Catholic preachers had accused the Jews of deicide and presented them as accursed.

Plan presentado al concilio para reducir el anti-semitismo

Padre Joseph Uecker, C.P.P.S.

Cuando estaban escribiendo de nuevo el documento sobre la Libertad Religiosa, el Concilio se dirigió a la corta, pero muy controversia Declaración Sobre los Judíos y No-Cristianos. El Cardenal Bea, un alemán, fue al micrófono al aplauso de casi todos los obispos antes y también después de su discurso. El era héroe a la mayoría de los obispos. Pero ¿por qué estaba el Concilio tratando con este asunto? Ningún obispo lo había sugerido. El Papa Juan lo había mandado. Su experiencia durante la guerra lo hizo sensativo a las atrocidades cometidas contra los judíos, muchas por católicos. La causa inmediata por la orden fue un escándalo de la Iglesia y pidió al papa que ordenara que el Concilio tuviera un plan para reducir el anti-semitismo. Muchos habían pedido lo mismo y la relación entre la Iglesia y el pueblo judío. Hubo implicaciones políticas en esto también: ¿Cómo sería recibida tal declaración por los estados árabes alrededor de Israel? Es que el Cardenal Cicognani, el jefe de la Comisión Preparatoria Central y el Secretario del Estado conocía estas implicaciones y quitó el esquema de la agenda en 1962. Pero el Cardenal Bea le dio sus razones al Papa Juan para estudiar el asunto en el Concilio. Dijo que tantas veces los predicadores católicos habían acusado a los judíos de haber matado a Dios y los habían presentado como malditos y rechazados por Dios. El Holocausto mostró qué tan importante era poner un fin a todo lo que contribuyó al Holocausto. El Concilio Mundial de Iglesias recientemente había pedido a todas las iglesias asociadas con el concilio que condenaran el anti-Semitism. Había otras razones también. En 1963, dos meses después del final del primer período del Concilio, el drama de Rolf Hochhuth, Der Stellvertreter, trasladado como El Deputado, pero más correctamente como El Vicario (de Cristo), una dramatización larga del “silencio” del Papa Pío XII durante el Holocausto, se abrió en Berlin. El drama creó una sensación y fue trasladado muy pronto a muchos idiomas. Con igual pasión fue denunciado como denegación de un santo y fue alabado como una revelación que era muy necesaria. El asunto molestó profundamente al Vaticano y más al Papa Pablo VI que había sido un asociado íntimo al Papa Pío durante los años de la guerra. El papa tenía miedo que la declaración del Concilio podría entenderse como validación de la posición de Hochhuth.

Más allá que ese problema había el anti-Semitism más profundo y diseminado basado en el Nuevo Testamento, especialmente en el Evangelio de Juan con su presentación constante de “los judíos” como enemigos de Cristo y, aún más, en el verse de la historia Mateo del juicio de Cristo, “Que su sangre caiga sobre nosotros y sobre nuestros hijos.” No es cierto que los judíos de los tiempos de Jesús fueron responsables por la muerte de Cristo? De cierto modo, ¿no fue puesta correctamente esa responsabilidad a los judíos a través de los siglos hasta nuestro día? ¿Cómo podría un documento tratar con tales textos sin negar lo que dice el Nuevo Testamento o sin ofender a los judíos y al mismo pretender a extender la mano de amistad? Y además, no debían los católicos trabajar por la conversión de los judíos, cuya religión es incomprensiva al Mesías? ¿Diría el documento que la continuación de los judíos en el judaísmo está en falta? Si es así, ¿es correcto?

Después de mucho debate, llegó a ser evidente para el otoño de 1963 que el Concilio no pudo tratar a los judíos sin tratar a las otras religiones no-cristianas, especialmente Islam, que, como la cristianidad y el judaísmo, descendió del patriarca Abraham. Opositos de las “nuevas iglesias” de Asia querían que el Buddhismo e Hinduismo fueran incluidos. Así el documento, planeado como declaración teológica sobre los judíos y en alguna forma una condenación del anti-Semitism, finalmente llegó a ser esta versión final. El debate era muy emocionado en todo el asunto. Todo se hizo privadamente; este asunto no había llegado a la asamblea del Concilio.

El 25 de septiembre de 1964, el Cardenal Bea presentó el esquema por fin, cambiado y cambiado más, al
Why cohabitating before marriage is not the best choice

(One in a series of papers from the USCCB on aspects of family and married life. For more, visit usccb.org)

U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops

The Situation

In 2004 more than 5 million Americans were cohabiting, that is, living together in a sexual relationship without marriage. This compares to 500,000 in 1970. ("The State of Our Unions: The Social Health of Marriage in America 2005," David Popenoe and Barbara Whitehead, National Marriage Project, Rutgers University, http://marriage.rutgers.edu, p.21, 22)

Currently, 60% of all marriages are preceded by cohabitation. (Larry Bumpass and Hsien-Hen Lu, "Trends in Cohabitation and Implications for Children's Family Contexts in the U.S.," Population Studies 54, 2000)


Many couples believe—mistakenly—that cohabitation will lower their risk of divorce. Since many are the children of divorce, or have other family members or friends who have divorced, this is a widespread and understandable misconception.

Other reasons for living together include convenience, financial savings, companionship and security.

(Please See COHABITATION/20)

Coming of Age

The meaning of World Youth Day

By Karen Osborne
Catholic News Service

World Youth Day has come and gone, but I'm still glued to the pictures of Brazil and Pope Francis' messages of love and tolerance.

I'm blown away by the helicopter images taken above Copacabana beach during the last Mass of the pope's stay. They show 3 million people standing on the beach, shoulder-to-shoulder, turning the white-sand beach paradise into a colorful mosaic of people representing a hundred different nations and cultures. That day, the beach became a sea of color, with people from all nations raising their hands, waving flags, praying the rosary and singing.

The mainstream media would have us think that everyone was there to get a glimpse of the new pope. But the rest of us know better. Young people go to World Youth Day primarily because they have something to tell the rest of the world: The church matters, young people matter and standing up for the poor and underserved matters.

While I’ve never been to World Youth Day, I’ve been to a Mass celebrated by a pope in New York City twice -- once with Pope John Paul II in 1995 and again with Pope Benedict XVI in 2008. Both were amazing experiences for the same reason: In an audience of thousands, I didn't feel alone.

That's why, if possible, I recommend attending one of these large events, whether it's World Youth Day, the National Catholic Youth Conference, or an event at a local conference with other teens from your diocese.

I realized that the barriers that seemed so important before -- culture, language, clique -- no longer applied. I had conversations with people who didn't speak English, got to know people I'd never talk to at home, and made friends for life. In the world church, it doesn't matter how the syllables come out: The Mass is exactly the same, so there's always something to build on.

On top of that, nobody at these events is going to tease you or make you feel bad for believing in God or going to youth group, and you get a welcome break from the pressures of pop culture. People at these mass events aren't worried about what the celebs are wearing or doing. They're campaigning against apathy, they are building houses for the homeless, helping the poor and generally working to make the world a better place.

It's hard to be a teen and a Catholic today. The world is full of distractions and temptations that urge
Our Faith

Catholics and DNR; so what if Mass is an hour?

By Father Kenneth Doyle
Catholic News Service

Q. I am an 83-year-old woman currently considering how to word my health care proxy. I’m wondering about the ethics of requesting that I not be resuscitated if I stop breathing or my heart stops. Might I consider this to be “God calling me home” or would that be premature since I am not very elderly or very ill? (I’ve heard that resuscitation can cause ribs to break, which in turn can injure lungs and heart; I’ve also been told that one does not necessarily recapture the original state of health after being revived.) (Green Bay, Wis.)

A. A DNR (“Do Not Resuscitate”) order instructs medical personnel not to attempt cardiopulmonary resuscitation (CPR) when a patient’s heartbeat or breathing stops. CPR may involve a combination of techniques, including chest compression, electrical shock and the insertion of an airway tube, which, as you indicate, have risks, particularly when the patient’s health is already in serious decline.

A DNR order may or may not be morally appropriate, depending on the circumstances of a particular case. The decision requires a balancing of burdens and benefits. For a patient who is frail and elderly, one who is terminally ill or one who has suffered extensive brain damage, it may appropriately be judged that CPR would be excessively burdensome compared to the temporary benefit it might offer. But for an otherwise healthy person who has suffered cardiac arrest, CPR is the proper call since it would likely restore the patient to a fairly normal life. In the traditional terminology of Catholic medical ethics, whether CPR constitutes ordinary or extraordinary care can only be judged as it pertains to an individual set of circumstances.

In your situation, since no serious medical emergency has yet arisen and you have no way of forecasting the exact details of such an emergency, I believe it would be premature and unwise for you to sign a DNR. It's probably best for you simply to indicate to your health care proxy that you would be comfortable with a DNR in a circumstance where Catholic moral teaching would allow it.

Q. I enjoy reading your column, and your answers are informative and insightful. A while ago, though, one of your columns really irked me -- not your answer, which was fine, but the question itself. A woman wrote to complain about the length of her parish's Sunday Mass. She moaned that it took more than an hour, and I say, "So what?" She minded the fact that the lecturer had to walk from pew to the lectern (which probably took all of 30 seconds). She mentioned that she and her husband are of Social Security age and have no patience for delay. (My husband and I are that same age; we love going to Mass.)

Think about this: Jesus spent three hours on the cross in a terrible agony. Before that, he was whipped by Roman soldiers, had thorns pushed into his head and was made to carry a cross. And we can't spend an hour a week honoring him? That woman definitely needs prayers, and I will include her in mine. (Metuchen, N.J.)

A. Direct language from a true New Jerseyan. You're right, an hour given back to God seems rather modest. The General Instruction of the Roman Missal makes a strong plea for reverence in the eucharistic celebration, including periods of silent reflection.

The need to empty the parking lot before the crowd arrives for the next Mass is a valid concern, but it shouldn't be allowed to trump everything else. As with many things, though, balance is the key.

In No. 40 of the general instruction, we're told that there should be "due consideration for the culture of the people and abilities of each liturgical assembly," and a parish church is not a monastery.

Another casualty of the Trayvon Martin fatal shooting

By Father John Catoir
Catholic News Service

After the "not guilty" verdict in the State of Florida vs. George Zimmerman case was issued, President Barack Obama complimented the judge and jury, as well as the prosecution and defense teams for properly carrying out their respective responsibilities. He said, "A jury has spoken."

In legal jargon that means "causa finita est," or case closed.

However, the verdict did not sit well with some black leaders who tried to win by portraying George Zimmerman as a gun-happy, white racist, even though there were no facts to support such a theory. They rushed to judgment by deputing Zimmerman as an armed white bigot who was out to make trouble for innocent black people.

In fact, Zimmerman is, in part, Hispanic, and had a good record of conducting himself with restraint in his work as a neighborhood watchman.

But there were others out to paint Zimmerman in a negative light at any cost. Unlike Martin Luther King Jr., a man of truth and nonviolence, a real leader, who has earned a place of honor in American history, Al Sharpton and Jesse Jackson tried to twist the facts. They are not in King’s league. They manufactured a version of what happened that tragic evening. They promoted a different scenario in order to get a conviction.

But after the jurors who decided the outcome of this tragic incident listened to the evidence, they came to the unanimous conclusion that Zimmerman was not guilty. The prosecution failed to prove that Zimmerman was guilty beyond a reasonable doubt. It's hard to imagine how they could have decided otherwise.

Concerning the backlash, Shelby Steele, a senior fellow at Stanford University’s Hoover Institution, writing on the opinion page of The Wall Street Journal, had this to say:

"Today's black leadership pretty much lives off the fumes of moral authority that linger from its glory days in the 1950s and '60s. The Zimmerman verdict lets us see this and feel a little embarrassed for them. Consider the pathos of a leadership that once transformed the nation now lustsing for the conviction of the contrite and mortified George Zimmerman, as if a stint in prison for him would somehow assure more peace and security for black teenagers everywhere."

Prayers go out to Trayvon Martin's family and the victims of all tragic crimes. Every life is precious before God. We also pray for law enforcement officers at every level. Without them the rule of law would collapse, and the land of the free would descend into the chaos of mob rule.

Our Holy Father’s 2013 Monthly Intentions

SEPTEMBER

Value of Silence. That people today, often overwhelmed by noise, may rediscover the value of silence and listen to the voice of God and their brothers and sisters.

Persecuted Christians. That Christians suffering persecution in many parts of the world may by their witness be prophets of Christ's love.

OCTOBER

People in Despair. That those feeling so crushed by life that they wish to end it may sense the nearness of God's love.

World Mission Day. That the celebration of World Mission Day may help all Christians realize that we are not only receivers but proclaimers of God's word.

Daily Offering Prayer

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

(From 11)

my enemy is my friend" alliance with Saddam Hussein. Now the two powers once again find themselves on different sides in Syria. The United States is backing Syrian rebels, many of whom hold near genocidal ambitions for the Iranian-supported Alawites and not much more regard for Syria's significant Christian minority, and Iran is supporting the tyrant Bashar Assad.

A detente between Iran and the United States would offer welcome global breathing space on a variety of tense standoffs, but a respectful engagement with Iran could mean significant progress on a gamut of issues that have troubled the region and beyond. With Iranian cooperation, the United States could see a breakthrough on peace in the Middle East and moderation among Iranian surrogates in Lebanon and the Gaza Strip.

Iran could also contribute to reducing the violence in Iraq and tension at flashpoints like the Persian Gulf, where the U.S. Navy and the Iranian Revolutionary Guards play regular games of speed-boat chicken. Instead of using Syria as a proxy battleground, by working together the two powers could pressure both sides in this vicious civil war to a negotiating table. But before they can get Syria's warring factions to talk, Iran and the United States need to figure out how to speak together themselves.

On better terms with Iran, the United States could serve a role as bridgemaker with Saudi Arabia and other Arab states now most hostile to Iran and perhaps even help diminish the historical and increasingly dangerous tensions between the Sunni and Shiite Muslim worlds. But perhaps the most important reason for a change of tack regarding Iran is the likely endpoint of the perilous course the two nations have already taken, a clash of arms that neither side can afford.

As it finally extracts itself from interventions in Afghanistan and Iraq that have cost the nation dearly in life, treasure and esteem, the last thing the United States needs is to be drawn into yet another conflict in the Middle East. Increasingly isolated, struggling under relentless U.S./U.N. sanctions and confronting a young and increasingly vocal population restless with the pace of social change and economic development, Iran likewise should be seeking opportunities for rapprochement with the United States, not a glorious clash of arms with the "Great Satan."

The strident Mahmoud Ahmadinejad is gone. In the recent presidential election, Iranians selected the pragmatist Hassan Rouhani, the nation's most "liberal" conservative, who enjoyed the support of reformers and moderates in Iran. Recent evidence suggests that the Iranians have yet to commit themselves irrevocably to the production of nuclear weapons. The Iranian people are eager for change. Now, but perhaps for only a short time, a window of opportunity for improving relations with Iran is open.

Each March since he was elected, President Obama has issued a call to friendship directly to the people of Iran during the Iranian New Year holiday of Nowruz. This year, noting that Iran's continuing isolation "isn't good for the world," he said, "Just as your forbearers enriched the arts and sciences throughout history, all nations would benefit from the talents and creativity of the Iranian people, especially your young people. Every day that you are cut off from us is a day we're not working together, building together, innovating together -- and building a future of peace and prosperity that is at the heart of this holiday."

These are fine words. Now the president needs to reach out in a dramatic gesture that will allow the Iranians to join him in making them not only fine but true.

The views or positions presented in this or any guest editorial are those of the individual publication and do not necessarily represent the views of Catholic News Service or of the U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops.

SYRIA

(From 11)

ops' commission for international church affairs, Archbishop Ludwig Schick of Bamberg, told the Catholic news agency KNA Aug. 28 an armed intervention could not be justified in Catholic teaching, which required "total certainty of the confirmed damage," as well as "serious chance of success" and a capacity to avoid "worse damage than that to be eliminated."

U.S. President Barack Obama was convinced the Syrian government carried out the attack, but Syrian President Bashar Assad's government blamed rebels who have been fighting the government since 2011. U.N. weapons inspectors were supposed to report on the situation to U.N. Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon Aug. 31. "These are weapons of mass destruction, whose use is outlawed by international law -- if the crime by Damascus remains unanswered, then an important component of international law will come under pressure, with potentially devastating consequences for international security."

Archbishop Robert Zollitsch, German bishops' president, said Aug. 28.

He added that "the goal of military action must be defined, and it has to be asked whether a military strike might not lead to an unintended escalation of hostilities."

The British Parliament voted against involvement in strikes Aug. 29.

However, French President Francois Hollande said the vote had not altered his country's resolve to take action, while U.S. Defense Secretary Chuck Hagel said Washington would continue seeking a coalition for possible strikes.

Earlier, warnings against military intervention were voiced by church leaders in the Middle East, including Archbishop Foud Afriq, Latin patriarch of Jerusalem; Syrian-born Melkite Catholic Patriarch Gregoire III Laham; and Chaldean Bishop Antoine Audo of Aleppo.

EGYPT

(From 11)

maintain the protesters were not peaceful, were armed and that many of the country's soldiers were killed and wounded in the raid.

Since then, several U.S. lawmakers, along with Western rights groups, have expressed concern over reported military abuses and the Egyptian authorities' widespread arrests of Morsi sympathizers.

Several Muslim Brotherhood officials, including its leader, Mohammed el-Beltagy, have denied accusations that their organization is behind acts of terrorism in the country. Before being detained by security forces Aug. 29, Beltagy accused Egypt's new interim government of attempting to turn what he called a "political struggle" into a security problem by blaming the Brotherhood for attacks that have occurred.

But most Christians believe the Brotherhood is behind the attacks and say the U.S. and the rest of the world are wrong to think otherwise.

"Show all over the world that Egypt is good now, especially the Christians," 65-year-old retired engineer Samir Ebrahim told a Western reporter.

"This is a real revolution; the army got the right from the people, from the public, to remove the Brotherhood," which had been trying since 2012 elections to "to take over the country," said Ebrahim, a member of Egypt's Coptic Orthodox Church.

Father Romany Adly, a Coptic Catholic priest in the village of Nazlet Khater in the southern governorate of Sohag, wonders why Americans call Morsi's July 3 ouster a coup.

"Please give Obama my personal message; that Father Romany says it was not a military takeover. It was a revolution of the people," the priest said in a cellphone interview, referring to June 30 anti-Morsi demonstrations nationwide that led to the president's ouster days later.

In 2012, Morsi won Egypt's first-ever free elections on a largely Islamist platform, with strong Muslim Brotherhood backing.

Since the military takeover, Egyptian media has become almost entirely anti-Brotherhood and describes the ongoing crackdown on that group's members and other Morsi supporters as part of its "war on terror." One network that has not been anti-Brotherhood is Al-Jazeera, and Egyptian officials are considering banning its Egyptian affiliate.

Coptic Orthodox Pope Tawdros II and Coptic Catholic Patriarch Ibrahim Isaac Sedrak have put the support of their two communities behind the military, saying the overthrow of Morsi represents what the majority of Egypt's Muslims and Christians want.

In late August, Patriarch Sedrak reiterated his view that "that the army and the police didn't act against the people and that the (pro-Morsi) protests were not peaceful."

"Americas has interests," he told a television anchor in answer to her question about Washington's position toward the recent events in Egypt.

The majority of the 82.5 million Egyptians are Sunni Muslims, and Egypt's Al-Azhar University -- Sunni Islam's highest institute of learning -- also supported the ouster of Morsi almost immediately after it happened, but has kept a low profile since.

"Traitors" Waffa Hassan said of anyone supporting what she called "the military coup" against Morsi, for whom she voted for in the 2012 elections.
PATTERSON

(From 3)

these leaders wield over the lives of innocents who always seem to bear the murderous brunt of politics at play.

Now that we have rid our diocese of Planned Parenthood centers, our prayers can now also perhaps save others half way around the world.

The children who have had to flee Syria are living in constant fear, from bottles dropping off tables that they believe to be bombs, to door slams that sound to them like gunshots. The children who have fled Syria have also been robbed of their educations. Any sense of normalcy is gone.

Like the children killed in the womb for whom we continue to pray, the children forced from their homeland in the Middle East have no control over what happens to them. Save for the love of their mothers who will do whatever it takes to protect them, they are all at the mercy of politicians and murderers.

The similarities are eerie. Through our prayers, we have another chance to save children from leaders who have rendered life almost meaningless through ruthless and irresponsible decisions and governance.

Take time to pray for the children in these war-torn countries. And pray that those prayers can make a difference, just like they did right here in West Texas.

If we are to be pro-life Catholics, it must be not only at all stages of life but at all points around the globe.

VATICANO

(Para 15)

Concilio. Dijo: “Muchos van a juzgar al Concilio favorable o infavorablemente según su tratamiento de este asunto.”

Terminó diciendo que “Este Concilio absolutamente no puede tolerar que cualquier autoridad política o consideraciones políticas intervengan.”

El debate sobre el esquema ocurrió del 28 al 30 de septiembre. Los en contra usaron palabras fuertes. El Cardenal Ignacio Tappouni, patriarca de Antioquía en Siria, dijo que el documento los causaría problemas graves en sus actividades pastorales. El Cardenal Ruffini quería que el documento trate en general a todas las religiones no-Cristianas sin mencionar ninguna religión en particular. Después del debate, el Secretariado Para la Unidad Cristiana se sentía justificado en hacer más fuerte el documento, más cerca a lo que el original había dicho.

El 9 de octubre se cayó una bomba. La Secretariado tuvo una reunión plenaria ese día para examinar el trabajo de las sub-comisiones sobre las dos declaraciones: Libertad Religiosa y Los Judíos. El Cardenal Bea leyó dos cartas del Cardenal Felici. En la primera, Felici informó a Bea que el papa quería un texto nuevo sobre la libertad religiosa. Esta debía de ser escrita por unos miembros de la Secretariado junto con unos miembros de la Comisión Doctrinal del Cardenal Ottaviani. Así no solo sería tirado el texto original, sino también la declaración sería quitado de la Secretariado. Y mencionó los nombres de cuatro hombres que debían de ser añadidos a la sub-comisión. Todos estos estaban en extrema oposición al documento.

En la segunda, Felici le informó a Bea que una reunión colectiva del Concilio de los Presidentes, el Comité Coordinador, y los moderadores había decidido que el asunto de los Judíos no debe ser un documento aparte, sino debe ser incorporado en el segundo capítulo del documento sobre la Iglesia.

Este documento sería escrito por una sub-comisión colectiva. Casi inmediatamente la noticia de estas dos cartas de Felici llegó a los medios de comunicación que explotó con ideas de conspiración. Como ningún otro documento del Concilio, la Declaración Sobre los Judíos llegó a ser el punto central de atención mediática intensiva y escrutinio público.

¿Cómo podrían justificarse acciones unilaterales que ignoraban los procedimientos normales, acciones que al menos estaban cambiando la voluntad de la mayoría? En esto una cosa es clara: El papa ciertamente había intervenido. Lo que no es claro es: ¿Cuál de los tres: El Papa Pablo, el Cardenal Felici o el Cardenal Cicognani tenía la mayor culpa en esto?

El 11 de octubre un grupo de 13 líderes de la mayoría le escribió al Papa Pablo muy francamente. Recordaban al papa que en un asunto tan importante, toda apariencia de violar los procedimientos y la libertad del Concilio debe evitarse.

Dentro de unos días la situación fue resuelta. Volvieron a la situación antes de que Bea había recibido las dos cartas. Nadie pidió perdón y nadie explícitamente negó nada de lo que había sido escrito pero Bea salió con sus textos firmemente en la mano.
VATICAN II

(From 15)

by God. The Holocaust showed how and rejected important it was to put a stop to depictions that directly or indirectly had promoted such a massive tragedy. The World Council of Churches had recently called upon all the churches associated with it to condemn anti-Semitism. How could the Catholic Church stand aloof from the issue? The memorandum had the desired effect.

Although much of the opposition stemmed from what were perceived to be the political ramifications the declaration might have and the difficulties it might raise for Christians in the Middle East, other reasons were also at play. In early 1963, two months after the first period of the Council ended, Rolf Hochhuth’s play Der Stellvertreter, usually translated into English as The Deputy but more accurately as The Vicar (of Christ), a rambling and long-winded dramatization of Pope Pius XII’s supposed “silence” during the Holocaust, opened in Berlin. The play created a sensation and was soon translated into a number of languages. With equal passion it was denounced as a vilification of a saint and praised as a much-needed exposé. The affair deeply disturbed the Vatican and troubled perhaps nobody more deeply than Paul VI, who had been one of Pius’s closest assistants during the war years. The pope worried that the Council’s declaration might be taken as a validation of Hochhuth’s position.

Beyond that specific problem lay the deeper and all too widespread anti-Semitism that based itself on the New Testament, especially on John’s gospel with its consistent depiction of “the Jews” as enemies of Christ and, more specifically, on the verse from Mathew’s account of Christ’s trial, “His blood be upon us and upon our children.” Were not the Jews of Jesus’ time responsible for Christ’s death? Was not that responsibility in some sense rightly imputed to the Jews down through the subsequent ages to our own day? How could a document deal with such texts without either denying what the New Testament affirmed or offending the Jews while purportedly extending a hand in friendship? Moreover, were not Catholics to work for the conversion of the Jews, whose religion was incomplete without acknowledgement of the Messiah? Would the document say that the perseverance of the Jews in Judaism is without fault? If so, is that right?

After much discussion and debate, it became clear by the fall of 1963 that the Council could not treat the Jews without treating other non-Christian religions, especially Islam, which like Christianity and Judaism, descended from the patriarch Abraham. Bishops from the “new churches” of Asia wanted Buddhism and Hinduism included. Thus the document, originally intended as a theological statement on the Jews and in some form a condemnation of anti-Semitism, was eventually expanded into the final version. The discussion was very heated on this whole topic. All this was done behind the scenes; this topic had not yet made its way to the floor of the Council.

On September 25, 1964 Cardinal Bea finally presented the schema, as amended and amended more, to the Council. He said: “Many people will judge the Council favorably or unfavorably depending on how it deals with this issue.” He ended his presentation by saying that “This Council absolutely cannot tolerate that any political authority or political considerations intrude.”

The discussion on the schema took place September 28-30. Opponents of the

COHABITATION

(From 16)

and a desire to move away from the family of origin.

What social science says about cohabitation


The risk is greatest for "serial" cohabitators who have had multiple relationships. Some studies indicate that those who live together with definite plans for marriage are at minimal risk; however, there are no positive effects from cohabiting. (Popeneo and Whitehead, "Should We Live Together?" p. 5-6)

Social scientists have tried to determine whether some of the risk is due to the selection effect, i.e., that people who cohabit are already those who are more likely to divorce. While research shows the selection influence, most social scientists emphasize the causal effect, that is, cohabitation itself increases the chance of future marital problems and divorce. (Anne-Marie Ambert, "Cohabitation & Marriage: How are they related," 2005, p.13–15)

Cohabitation puts children at risk.

Forty percent of cohabiting households include children. After five years, one-half of these couples will have broken up, compared to 15% of married parents. (Whitehead, "Patterns & Predictors of Success & Failure in Marriage," p.7, from the 2005 colloquium "Promoting & Sustaining Marriage as a Community of Life & Love")

Church teaching/pastoral response

Church teaching on cohabitation reflects its belief about the dignity of marriage. Marital love is an image of God’s love for humanity (Catechism of the Catholic Church #1604) and Christian marriage is a sign of Christ’s union with the Church (Catechism #1617). This union can never be temporary or a "trial"; it is permanently faithful.

Every act of sexual intercourse is intended by God to express love, commitment and openness to life in the total, unreserved gift of the spouses to each other. Premarital sexual intercourse is sinful because it violates the dignity of persons and the nuptial meaning and purpose of sexuality (United States Catholic Catechism for Adults, p. 406). It cannot express what God intended. Rather, it says something false—a total commitment that the couple does not yet have. This total commitment is possible only in marriage; "the covenant of conjugal love freely and consciously chosen, whereby a man and woman accept the intimate community of life and love willed by God himself" (Familiaris Consortio #11).

This mutual self-giving enables the couple to become co-creators with God to bring new life into the world. The gift of sexual intercourse has two purposes: to express and strengthen marital love (unitive) and to share that love with children (procreative). Only in marriage can this total self-giving take place, and only in marriage can children be raised with the secure, committed love of a mother and father.

Pope John Paul II recognized that couples can enter into cohabitation ("free unions") for various reasons. He urged pastors and the church community to become familiar with these situations on a case-by-case basis. "They should make tactful and respectful contact with the couples concerned and enlighten them patiently, correct them charitably and show them the witness of Christian family life in such a way as to smooth the path for them to regularize their situation" (Familiaris Consortio #81).

Following Familiaris Consortio, diocesan marriage policies that address cohabitation mostly favor an approach that integrates correction with understanding and compassion. This is an opportunity for evangelization and a teachable moment. "While couples need to be welcomed with the gospel values of love, understanding, and acceptance, they also need to be challenged by the gospel message of commitment and faithfulness." (Marriage Preparation and Cohabiting Couples, a report by the Bishops’ Committee on Marriage and Family Life, /lady/marriage/cohabiting.shtml).

Conclusion

Many young people are searching for a soulmate in a marriage partner. They want an intimate and enduring relationship where they can share their deepest dreams and desires. In a misguided effort to achieve this intimacy, they often enter into a cohabiting relationship. In so doing, they undermine their chances of attaining the very thing they most want. The Catholic Church understands this quest for intimacy, which God himself has placed within the human heart. Sexual expression is a means of achieving marital intimacy, where the spouses are committed to each other and to the marital relationship. The Catholic Church has consistently taught this truth, and social science research now confirms it.
schema did not mince words. Cardinal Ignace Tappouni, patriarch of Antioch, Syrian rite, asserted that the document would cause them grave difficulties in their pastoral activities. Cardinal Ruffini wanted the document to refer in general to all non-Christian religions without singling out any one religion. After the discussions, the Secretariat for Christian Unity felt justified in making the statement stronger, much closer to what the original document had said.

On October 9, a bomb dropped. The Secretariat held a plenary meeting that day to examine the work the subcommissions had done on the two declarations: Religious Liberty and the Jews. Cardinal Bea read two letters from CardinalFelici. In the first Felici informed Bea that the pope wanted a new text drafted on religious liberty. This was to be written by some members of the Secretariat along with some members of the Doctrinal Commission of Cardinal Ottaviani. Thus, not only would the original text be scrapped, but the declaration would be taken out of the exclusive domain of the Secretariat. And he mentioned the names of four men who were to be added to the subcommission, all of whom were vehemently opposed to the document. In the second, Felici informed Bea that a joint meeting of the Council of Presidents, the Coordinating Committee and the moderators had decided that the subject of the Jews should not be a separate document, but should be incorporated into the second chapter of the document on the Church. This document would be rewritten by a joint subcommission. Almost immediately word of Felici’s two letters reached the media which exploded with conspiracy theories. Like no other document of the Council, the declaration on the Jews became the focus of intense media attention and public scrutiny. How could unilateral actions that disregarded normal procedures, actions that at the very least notably qualified the will of the majority be justified? Some things are clear in this: The pope had definitely intervened!!! What is unclear is which of the three: Pope Paul, Cardinal Felici, or Cardinal Cicognani were most to blame in all this.

The very next day, October 10, Cardinal Bea wrote directly to the pope in Italian. He told the pope that Felici’s letter did not represent what he understood the pope’s mind to be, from a meeting the two had had October 5. At that meeting, the two had agreed that the rewritten version of the declaration would be submitted to the Doctrinal Commission to be sure it was theologically correct. This was not a new procedure. But there had been no talk of a mixed commission. So, did Felici’s letter represent the pope accurately? On October 11, a group of 13 leaders of the majority wrote to Pope Paul quite bluntly: They reminded the pope that in such a serious matter, every appearance of violating the procedures and freedom of the Council should be avoided.

Within a few days the matter was settled by a return to the situation before Bea had received the two letters. No one apologized, and no one explicitly disowned anything that had been written, but Bea emerged with his texts firmly in hand.

Others’ happiness, to ignore what’s right for what’s expedient and to look down at or be afraid of others who have a different culture, different race or different economic status.

The words of Pope Francis and World Youth Day are reminders that, as Catholic young people, we can’t let the world down by meekly disappearing into the woodwork. As young Catholics, we have to be out there, raising our flags and becoming light for the world. It’s hard to do that alone.

Looking at those pictures of Copacabana beach, you know that you have 3 million people behind you.

What are you going to say?

Who Do We Hope to Be As a Nation?

Most people want to live in a more equal society that provides opportunities for growth and development. The current imbalances are not inevitable, but demand boldness in promoting a just economy that reduces inequality by creating jobs that pay a living wage and share with workers some profits of the company. It also requires ensuring a strong safety net for jobless workers and their families and those who are incapable of work. As individuals and families, as the Church, as community organizations, as businesses, as government, we all have a responsibility to promote the dignity of work and to honor workers’ rights.

Since the end of the Civil War, unions have been an important part of our economy because they provide protections for workers and more importantly a way for workers to participate in company decisions that affect them. Catholic teaching has consistently affirmed the right of workers to choose to form a union. The rise in income inequality has mirrored a decline in union membership. Unions, like all human institutions, are imperfect, and they must continue to reform themselves so they stay focused on the important issues of living wages and appropriate benefits, raising the minimum wage, stopping wage theft, standing up for safe and healthy working conditions, and other issues that promote the common good. The Church, in accord with her principles on the life and dignity of the human person, wishes to collaborate with unions in securing the rights and dignity of workers.

Private enterprises, at their best, create decent jobs, contribute to the common good, and pay just wages. Ethical and moral business leaders know that it is wrong to chase profits and success at the expense of workers’ dignity. They know that they have a vocation to build the kind of solidarity that honors the worker and the least among us. They remember that the economy is “for people.” They know that great harm results when they separate their faith or human values from their work as business leaders.

Whenever possible we should support businesses and enterprises that protect human life and dignity, pay just wages, and protect workers’ rights. We should support immigration policies that bring immigrant workers out of the shadows to a legal status and offer them a just and fair path to citizenship, so that their human rights are protected and the wages for all workers rise.

We honor the immigrant worker by remembering that the building of America has been carried out by so many who fled persecution, violence, and poverty elsewhere, coming to America to offer their talents and gifts to support themselves and their families. We welcome the stranger, the refugee, the migrant, and the marginalized, because they are children of God and it is our duty to do so. But at the same time it is important to end the political, social, and economic conditions that drive people from their homelands and families. Solidarity calls us to honor workers in our own communities and around the world.

The pain of the poor and those becoming poor in the rising economic inequality of our society is mounting. Therefore, on this Labor Day 2013, let us renew our commitment to promote the dignity of the human person through work that is honorable, pays just wages, and recognizes the God-given dignity of the working person.

At the end of Mass we are commanded "Go and announce the Gospel of the Lord." We leave with a sense of mission to show one another honor by what we do and say. On this Labor Day our mission takes us to the millions of people who continue to suffer the effects of the current economy.

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BISHOP

explained this concept in his every word and every action: Our origin and our destiny is God, our Father, who loves each of us with an infinitely tender and merciful love. The mystery of human life is that we—every one of us—are precious to God even as we are—weak and sinful. As Pope Francis has pointed out more than once, God our Father never stops loving us and never tires of forgiving us.

Opening our hearts to life means that we reject the killing of innocent human beings from the moment of conception to their natural death—by abortifacient “contraceptives” and abortion, in destructive embryo research and IVF procedures, by denying life-saving treatment to those with disabilities, and by “hastening death” of the elderly and dying in assisted suicide and euthanasia. Opening our hearts to life means opposing the death penalty, as well as slavery, human trafficking, terrorism and unjust war, and that we work to eradicate the conditions that prevent our brothers and sisters from realizing their full human potential.

Opening our hearts to life also means that we demand there be a respect for our freedom of religion, and that no government can force us to go against our conscience and to even pay for immoral practices that we hold to be inherently sinful. As we know, today there is a strong move by our government through its HHS mandate to force us to stifle the truth of life and the fullness of life by taking away our God-given freedom of religion which is granted to us Americans in the First Amendment.

Everyday, in small ways and big ways, when we do not open our hearts to life we, and our wider society, tear away at the Body of Christ. And when we act this way, especially in front of our children, the family ceases to be a school of love and we close our hearts to God’s gift of life and love that are offered us each day. To truly open our hearts to life and the love that God our Father offers us and to counteract the culture of death and violence, we must strive to make our families a haven of unconditional love, acceptance, affirmation and consolation, where children learn by modeling their parents to accept others and love generously, to share with care for those in need. The family is a place to learn humility and mercy and to learn to imitate Christ. As we know, the number one ministry selected for our diocese is Family Life and Marriage, and our number one priority is respect for all human life beginning with the precious unborn. Hence, the place to strengthen our hearts to receive the wonderful gift of God’s life and love is to work together in the Year of Faith, to center our family life on Christ and to live in His gospel beginning right in our homes.

Each day we are invited by our loving God to open our hearts to a new life and love that are offered us in small ways and big ways each day. We especially open our hearts to receive these gifts and to share them with others through prayer, through meditating on the Scriptures, and especially through the celebration of the Mass and receiving our Lord often in Holy Communion. God’s life and love are also strengthened in all the Sacraments of our church, and we especially receive God’s new life and love and mercy when we celebrate the Sacrament of Reconciliation.

With the help of Christ, and with the protection of our Blessed Mother, we can be more aware of the needs of those around us and open our hearts to all human life. After all, the focus of the New Evangelization that we are all called to share in during the Year of Faith is not primarily just memorizing doctrines and teachings. Most importantly it is about learning to live our Christian life fully and bringing Christ’s love, alive within us, and to all we meet. May Respect Life Sunday, and the entire month of October which is Respect Life month, be the occasion for all of us to deepen our appreciation of human life, and to show that respect especially by the manner we live our lives each day and by speaking out in public and courageously against the culture of death.
ABORTOS

(Para 24)

salud, ya sean emocionales, sicológicas, pastoral o espirituales, les pido a todas nuestras Iglesias Católicas que pongan en su boletín que nuestras puertas están abiertas para proveer estos servicios. También, pedimos que los doctores, enfermeras y trabajadores de servicios sociales y salud de nuestras parroquias a ofrecer sus talentos profesionales al Pregnancy Help Center y organizaciones que asisten a las mujeres y sus familias. Les pido a nuestros sacerdotes de la ciudad y por todo el deánery en los próximos días que planeen por escrito claramente maneras pastorales en las cuales nuestras parroquias ayudarán a mujeres con sus necesidades de salud.

Este es un tiempo de renovar nuestro compromiso total a nuestra misión de pro-vida, de respetar la santidad y dignidad de la vida humana, en toda etapa, y de continuar trabajando para traer un fin al aborto a través de nuestro estado y nuestra nación. Tenemos que continuar proclamando fuertemente y de manera pública, especialmente por medios públicos, que somos pro-vida en cada etapa de vida, y debemos continuar rezando que con la ayuda de Dios, daremos un fin al mal del aborto y un nuevo respeto a la santidad de toda vida humana desde concepción hasta la muerte natural. Este fin de semana del Día del Trabajo al rezar por todos los trabajadores, especialmente los desempleados y los pobres, enfatizamos la dignidad y honor de cada trabajador.

Al darle gracias a Dios que los preciosos no nacidos ya no serán matados en el Planned Parenthood en San Ángel, porque no redoblar nuestras oraciones y esfuerzos pastorales de compartir nuestro compromiso a la santidad y dignidad de toda vida humana hecha en la imagen y semejanza de Dios.

Su servidor en Cristo y María,
Muy Reverendo Miguel D. Pfeifer, OMI
Obispo de San Ángel

CLOSURE

(From 1)

Planned Parenthood, I ask all—priests and people of the cities of Midland, Odessa and the surrounding area to map out specific pastoral ways of how we will assist the health care of women, and especially help those who are dealing with a pregnancy decision. I am happy to point out that we already have a number of institutions in our area who are providing this care. We have the Life Centers in Midland and Odessa and Andrews. We also have in our area St. Vincent de Paul and Helping Hands, and I ask them to give specific attention to women and families who are in need. All of our Catholic Churches, in a spirit of compassion and care, are to assist pregnant women and their families with their needs. I appreciate the good service these Centers are giving to these health needs.

As part of our service for helping women and families with their health needs, be they emotional, psychological, pastoral or spiritual, I ask all of our priests and all of our people gather in front of Planned Parenthood, with the special Image of Our Lady of Guadalupe from Our Lady of Guadalupe Church in Midland, to offer a Rosary of Thanksgiving to Christ and our Blessed Mother for bringing an end to abortions in the city of Midland.

Your servant in Christ and Mary,
Most Rev. Michael D. Pfeifer, OMI
Bishop of San Angelo

Caldarola

(From 9)

discovered God at work in his marriage, family life and academic career.

And of course, even when they don’t touch directly on the exercises, there’s a wealth of great Jesuit writers out there.

Health Care Assistance

I am including here places where women, who struggle with health needs, can receive assistance
— Bishop Pfeifer:

- The Life Center, 2101 W. Wall, Midland, 432.683.6072
- The Life Center, 802 N. Washington Ave., Odessa, 432.617.8378
- The Life Center, 1412 NE Mustang Dr., Andrews, 432.523.2859
- St. Vincent de Paul, St. Ann’s Chapter, 432.684.3887
- Helping Hands of Midland, 432.520.8900
- United Way Call for Help (2-1-1)

Catholic Churches to put in their bulletins that our doors are open to provide these services. We also ask doctors, nurses, health and social workers of our Catholic parishes to offer their professional skills to the various Midland-Odessa health organizations that assist women.

This is a time for us to renew our total commitment to our total pro-life mission, to respect the sanctity and dignity of human life, at all stages, and to continue to work to bring an end to abortion throughout our state and our nation. We need to continue to proclaim loudly and in a public manner, especially through the media, that we are pro-life at every stage of life, and we must continue to pray that with God’s help, we will bring an end to the evil of abortion and a new respect for the sanctity of all human life from conception until natural death.

On the day of closing of Planned Parenthood in Midland, I ask that our priests and all of our people gather in front of Planned Parenthood, with the special Image of Our Lady of Guadalupe from Our Lady of Guadalupe Church in Midland, to offer a Rosary of Thanksgiving to Christ and our Blessed Mother for bringing an end to abortions in the city of Midland.

Your servant in Christ and Mary,
Most Rev. Michael D. Pfeifer, OMI
Bishop of San Angelo

House, Senate Contact information

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
-- U.S. Congressman K. Michael Conaway (District 11—San Angelo, Midland-Odessa, Andrews, Stanton, Crane, Rankin, Big Lake, Colorado City, Sterling City, Robert Lee, Bronte, Ballinger, Winters, Miles, Christoval, Eldorado, Junction, Menard, Eden, Melvin, Brady, Coleman, Brownwood, Sonora, McCamey, Mertzon, Sweetwater )
Phone: 202-225-3605
Mailing Address: 511 Cannon House Office Building, Washington, DC 20515
Web: http://conaway.house.gov/

-- Rep. Randy Neugebauer (District 19)
-- Big Spring, Abilene, Clyde
Phone: 202-225-4005
Mailing Address: 1424 Longworth HOB, Washington, DC 20515
Web: http://randy.house.gov/

-- Rep. Pete Gallego (District 23 — Fort Stockton, Iraan, Ozona
Mailing Address: 431 Cannon HOB, Washington, DC 20515-4323
Phone 202-225-4511
Web http://gallego.house.gov/

U.S. SENATE

-- U.S. Senator John Cornyn
Phone: 202-224-2934
Mailing Address: 517 Hart Senate Office Bldg., Washington, DC 20510
Web: http://www.cornyn.senate.gov/public/

-- U.S. Senator Ted Cruz
Cruz, Ted - (R - TX) Class I
Phone: (202) 224-5922
Mailing Address: B40B Dirksen Senate Office Building, Washington, DC 20510

You can't go wrong with any of Jesuit Father James Martin’s great books, and Jesuit Gregory Boyle, who wrote one of the most heartaching yet humorous books I’ve ever read when he shared his life working with street gangs in Los Angeles in “Tattoos on the Heart: The Power of Boundless Compassion.”

There are many who decry our lack of vocations in today’s church. But I look around at the many laypeople who today clamor for a deeper life of prayer and service, and I thank God for his abundant harvest.
Bishop’s letter on closing of San Angelo Planned Parenthood

August 31—September 1, 2013

My dear sisters and brothers in Christ of the San Angelo Deanery:

With all of you, I thank God for the welcome news that Planned Parenthood of San Angelo is closing its doors and will no longer provide chemical abortions in the city of San Angelo. Just a week earlier we received similar good news about the closing of Planned Parenthood in Midland which did surgical abortions. I am indeed very grateful to all of our Pro-Life people, especially our Pro-Life committee under the patronage of Nellie Gray, of the San Angelo Deanery, for your many prayers, especially the many Rosaries offered in front of Planned Parenthood, and your dedicated work which no doubt played a big part in the closing of this facility. We thank God, too, for the recent state legislation that cuts off funding to so-called health centers that kill the unborn.

As we thank God for the news that God’s precious little ones will no longer be destroyed at Planned Parenthood in San Angelo, our Pro-Life mission is far from over as we are pro-life at every stage of human life. A major part of our Pro-Life mission is to assist pregnant women with their health care needs and especially to help those who are struggling with an abortion decision. Hence, now is the time to give new emphasis to our entire Pro-Life ministry, and so I ask all of our priests and all the Catholic people to step forward and help these women and their families.

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Catholic churches, in a spirit of compassion and care, are to assist pregnant women and their families with their needs. I appreciate the good service these Centers are giving to these health needs. We all need to give more emphasis to adoption, and to reach out with compassion to women who have experienced an abortion letting them know God can forgive them, and we can help them receive Christ’s forgiveness and enter programs to make a new beginning.

As part of our service for helping women and families with their health needs, be they emotional, psychological, pastoral, or spiritual, I ask all of our Catholic Churches to put in their bulletins that our doors are open to provide these services. We also ask doctors, nurses, health and social workers of our Catholic parishes to offer their professional skills to the Pregnancy Help Center and organizations that assist women. I am asking the priests of the city and throughout the deanery to map out in a few days writing clear pastoral ways our parishes will be helping women with their health needs.

This is a time for us to renew our total commitment to our total pro-life mission, to respect the sanctity and dignity of human life, at all stages, and to continue to work to bring an end to abortion throughout our state and our nation. We need to continue to proclaim loudly and in a public manner, especially through the media, that we are pro-life at every stage of life, and we must continue to pray that with God’s help, we will bring an end to the evil of abortion and a new respect for the sanctity of all human life from conception until natural death. This Labor Day weekend as we pray for all workers, especially the unemployed and poor, we stress the dignity and honor of each and every worker.

As we thank God that the precious unborn will no longer be killed at Planned Parenthood in San Angelo, let us redouble our prayers and pastoral efforts to show our commitment to the sacredness and dignity of all human life made in the image and likeness of God.

Your servant in Christ and Mary,
Most Rev. Michael D. Pfeifer, OMI
Bishop of San Angelo

Carta a los feligreses tocante la cerradura de Planned Parenthood en San Angelo

31 de agosto-1 de septiembre del 2013

Mis estimadas hermanas y hermanos en Cristo del deanery de San Ángelo:

Con todos ustedes, doy gracias a Dios por las noticias que los preciosos bebés de Dios ya no serán destruidos en Planned Parenthood de San Ángelo, nuestra misión de pro-vida esta lejos de ser terminada siendo que somos pro-vida en toda etapa de la vida humana. Una parte mayor de nuestra misión pro-vida es la de asistir a mujeres embarazadas con sus necesidades de cuidado de salud y especialmente a quienes están luchando con una decisión de aborto. Así que, ahora es el tiempo de dar nuevo énfasis a nuestro entero ministerio de pro-vida, y es así que les pido a todos nuestros sacerdotes y todo el pueblo Católico de ofrecerse y ayudar a estas mujeres y sus familias con sus necesidades de salud. Debemos promover con más empeño la idea de adopción.

Al expresar mi gratitud a mis hermanos sacerdotes y todos los lideres pastorales por sus efuerzos al cerrar Planned Parenthood, les pido a todos — los sacerdotes y gente de la ciudad de San Ángelo y área circundante — de planear maneras pastorales específicas de cómo vamos asistir con el cuidado de salud de mujeres, especialmente ayudar a las que se afrentan con una decisión de embarazo. Me da gusto decir que aún hay unas instituciones en nuestra área quienes están proveyendo este cuidado. Tenemos el Pregnancy Help Center en San Ángelo. También tenemos una Catholic Outreach que provee asistencia y les pido que den atención específica a mujeres y familias en necesidad. Todas nuestras Iglesias Católicas, en espíritu de compasión y cuidado, han de asistir a mujeres embarazadas y sus familias con sus necesidades. Aprecio el buen servicio que estos Centros están dando a estas necesidades de salud. Debemos de poner más énfasis en adopción, y extender compasión a mujeres quienes han experimentado un aborto dejándolas saber que Dios les puede perdonar, y podemos ayudarlas a recibir el perdón de Cristo y entrar en programas para hacer un nuevo comienzo.

Como parte de nuestro servicio de ayudar a mujeres y familias con sus necesidades de...