Midland College shelves papal exhibit’s West Texas stop

By Jimmy Patterson
Editor

Saying not enough time remained to work out important details, Midland College president Dr. Steve Thomas told the school’s board of trustees October 20 that an exhibit featuring items belonging to Pope John Paul II -- the first of its kind to ever tour the United States -- had been postponed.

The “Have No Fear” exhibit, scheduled to open Dec. 7, was to open its multi-city U.S. tour in Midland, a coup for an area that frequently must play second-fiddle to larger cities like New York, Chicago, Milwaukee and Albuquerque, all cities that are scheduled to host the exhibit.

The hang-up occurred when the Totus Tuus, LLC group and the Lubbock-based National Exhibits Association were unable to reach an agreement and (Please See EXHIBIT/20)

As we prepare for Christmas, let us proclaim Jesus reason for the season

This year, don’t let Christmas be purely a secular event.

By Bishop Michael D. Pfeifer

Even though it is only October, already many shopping centers and stores are displaying Christmas decorations and gifts, and featuring Santa Claus. As you shop and spend your money in these places, please insist that they feature Christian Christmas symbols.

There are many today who want to secularize the true meaning of Christmas, but the hard fact is that Christmas is a Christian celebration that goes back to the early centuries of the Church. The very word – Christmas – refers to the great Mass of Christ, which is the Midnight Mass and other Masses on Christmas to celebrate the birthday of the greatest person who ever lived. If we take Christ out of Christmas, then there is no Christmas.

Brothers and sisters as you go (Please See SEASON/21)
Charity in Truth: A message on global economy, politics, environment

By Bishop Michael Pfeifer, OMI

Recently Pope Benedict XVI published the long-awaited encyclical letter entitled, Charity in Truth (Caritas in Veritate), which gives helpful moral and spiritual guidance for the global economy, politics, and environment. This papal letter deals with moral questions of the economic system in the contemporary world in search for truth.

The Pope’s letter affirms the progress that has been made in world development, yet it notes that other challenges exist given newly emerging problems in global society. The letter offers sound reflections on the vocation of human development, as well as on the moral principles on which a global economy must be based. It challenges business enterprises, governments, unions and individuals to re-examine their economic responsibilities in the light of charity governed by truth.

In his message, Pope Benedict XVI gives a call to see the relationship between human and environmental ecologies, and links charity and truth in the pursuit of justice, the common good and authentic human development. In doing so, the Pope points out the responsibility and limitations of government and the private market, challenges traditional ideologies of right and left and calls all men and women to think and act in a new approach to the economic crisis. Pope Benedict states, “If human conception, gestation, and birth are made artificial, if human embryos are sacrificed to research, the conscience of society ends up losing the concept of human ecology. (Please See BISHOP/23)

St. Stephen’s youth asks others to choose life

We the St. Stephen’s youth group would like to voice our opinion on the very controversial subject of abortion. We speak on behalf of those whose voices have been silenced against their will; we feel there is a need for change in the hearts of the people of this nation. And we also pray that as their mothers did before them more people will begin to choose life. God the Father, in the Ten Commandments, has instructed us not to kill. Yet in today’s society we have allowed a sheet to be thrown over our heads and the killing of innocent children to be an everyday occurrence. The time to act has come and passed. We must now come together as the voices of the innocent to end this massacre and allow the love of God to ignite the fires of our hearts and those of this nation, that we might not think only of ourselves but of the lives of others. That is why we, the St. Stephens’ youth group, ask you to be Pro-Life.

The St. Stephen’s Youth Group
Midland
October 21, 2009

Loyola Institute for Ministry to begin extension program in diocese

The Diocese of San Angelo is working with Loyola University New Orleans to begin Cycle 4 of the Loyola Institute for Ministry Extension (LIMEX) in Spring 2010. With this program we have the opportunity to offer a Catholic university graduate education program leading to a Master of Religious Education or Master of Pastoral Studies degree with focus areas in Small Christian Community Formation, Pastoral Life and Administration, Religion and Ecology, Marketplace Ministry, Christian Spirituality for Ministers, Youth Ministry and Hispanic Ministry. Learning Groups are now being formed in each of the three deaneries -- San Angelo, Abilene and Midland/Odessa.

LIMEX is a 4-year graduate program that consists of ten courses which are taken in learning groups at a local site and led by a Loyola-certified facilitator. In addition to the 10 core courses, students choose two additional courses in their focus area.

Persons who are involved or preparing for ministry or seeking deeper connections between faith and work are encouraged to consider participating in this program.

If you have questions about the LIMEX program, call S. Hilda Marotta at the Diocesan Pastoral Center in San Angelo at 325-651-7500.

Holy Land Pilgrimage

Barbara and Deacon Jerry Schwabl of Holy Family Catholic Church in Abilene are organizing a Pilgrimage to the Holy Land from February 18-27. Father Michael Rodriguez of Holy Family Catholic Church in Sweetwater, will be the Spiritual Director. Places to be visited on our spiritual journey include: Galilee, Nazareth, Bethlehem, the birthplace of Jesus, Jerusalem, Cana (couples may renew their wedding vows at Cana), Jesus’s Stations of the Cross (The Via Dolorosa), the Garden of Gethsemane, the Rock of Agony, the Church of the Holy Sepulchre, and many other religious shrines. There will be Holy Mass, Liturgy of the Hours, Rosary and Prayer daily. Please call Barbara Schwabl at 325-692-0515 or email TXSMARTMOM@AOL.COM.

Help Wanted

The Diocese of San Angelo is seeking a full-time Director for the newly formed Office of Family Life and Marriage at the Diocesan Pastoral Center. Extensive travel throughout the 29 counties of the diocese is required. Benefits include paid vacation, health insurance and retirement.

Qualifications:
-- Masters Degree and work toward a graduate Degree in Theology, pastoral ministry or comparable field with a preferred emphasis in family life studies and marriage.
-- 5 years pastoral experience, preferably in parish ministry.
-- Roman Catholic in good standing with the Church.
-- Bi-lingual in Spanish, good communication, leadership, organizational skills, computer proficiency with MS Office.

For more information, please contact Mr. Tom Burke at 325-651-7500.

San Angelo parishioners installed as Knights, Ladies of Holy Sepulchre

Four persons from the Diocese of San Angelo were installed as Knights and Ladies of the Holy Sepulchre at the Cathedral of St. Stephen in San Angelo on October 18. The organization promotes peace in the Holy Land and provides financial assistance to educational and humanitarian projects of the Catholic Church in Palestine, Israel, Jordan and Cyprus.

The new members are Ernest & Margaret Charlesworth and Terry & Jackie Martin, all of San Angelo. The impressive ceremonies and Mass were presided over by Daniel Cardinal DiNardo, Archbishop of Houston.

The previous day, several Knights and Ladies from the Diocese of San Angelo were promoted. These were Joe and Carolynne Rhone and Jane Koch, of Midland, and Max & Pam...
BRIEFS (cont'd from Pg. 2)

Mass, 9 a.m.
Heart Cathedral, Thanksgiving Mass at 9:00 a.m. and 10:00 a.m.
24 -- SAN ANGELO, Sacred Heart Cathedral – Christmas Midnight Mass
25 -- SAN ANGELO, Goodfellow Parish – Christmas Day Mass at 9:00 a.m.
26-29 – Rest and Prayer.

CHRIST THE KING Retreat Center
NOVEMBER
19-22 -- Men’s Walk to Emmaus
23 -- Heart of Mercy Prayer Group
24 -- Adoration
26-29 -- Closed – Thanksgiving Mass
30 – Heart of Mercy Prayer Group

DECEMBER
1 -- Adoration of the Blessed Sacrament
4-5 -- La Esperanza Clinic Board of Directors
6 -- Natural Family Planning
Class 2-4 pm
7 -- Heart of Mercy Prayer Group
8 -- Office Closed – Feast of the Immaculate Conception
8 – Adoration of the Blessed Sacrament
9 -- Presbytery & Finance Council Meeting
10 – Catholic Daughters Christmas Party
11-13 -- Deacon’s Training Program
14 -- Heart of Mercy Prayer Group
15 -- Adoration of the Blessed Sacrament
16 -- San Angelo ACTS
17 -- Community Mass
19 -- Heart of Mercy Prayer Group
22 -- Adoration of the Blessed Sacrament
25-Jan 1 – Office Closed – Christmas Holidays
28 – Heart of Mercy Prayer Group

Vocation Boom Website
Religious and lay people around the world celebrate the Feast of the Holy Cross in what Pope Benedict XVI has called the “Year for Priests.” It is also the exciting launch of VOCATIONBOOM.com, a website dedicated to increasing and supporting the call to priestly life.

Founded by Jerry Usher, creator and former host of Catholic Answers live, Vocation Boom is intensely passionate about helping young men answer the call and live a life’s vocation and mission, encouraging, mentors and friends to aid in the discernment process and beyond.

This “Year for Priests” is the theme of the website, the priesthood is the love of the heart of Jesus. But the Holy Father has also expressed his concern for a growing priestly shortage, saying, “The great misfortune for us is to see priests being so few” and he has called for an increase in vocations. VOCATIONBOOM.com is a new source of inspiration for this spiritual numbness as it simultaneously helps young men answer the call and let their voices be heard. Log on to discover the first step in a leap of faith! Show your support of the priesthood by becoming a member today, www.vocationboom.com

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

SAN ANGELO, Christ the King Retreat Center, (325) 651-5532, 2-4 p.m. Dates: Dec. 6, 2010

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

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

Offender/Scheduled Execution Date:
Robert Thompson/November 19
Danielle Simpson/November 18
Michael Sigala/March 2, 2010

Del Escritorio del Obispo
La Cardidad en la Verdad
Mensaje del Papa Benedicto XVI tocante la economía global, política, y el ambiente natural

Por el Obispo Miguel Pfeifer, OMI

Recientemente, el Papa Benedicto XVI publicó su muy-esperada carta encíclica intitulada, La Caridad en la Verdad (Caritas in Veritate), que ofrece guía moral y espiritual para la economía global, política, y el ambiente natural. Esta carta papal trata con cuestiones morales del sistema económico en el mundo contemporáneo en búsqueda de la verdad.

La carta del Papa afirma el progreso que se ha hecho en el desarrollo mundial, sin embargo nota que otros retos existen dados por nuevos problemas que han emergido en la sociedad global. La carta ofrece reflexiones sanas sobre la vocación del desarrollo humano, tal como en los principios morales en los cuales la economía global debe basarse. Reta a empresas de negocios, gobiernos, uniones e individuos a re-examinar su responsabilidad económica en la luz de la verdad.

En su mensaje, el Papa Benedicto XVI llama a ver la relación entre la ecología humana y el ambiente natural, y enlaza caridad y verdad en la búsqueda de justicia, el bien común y el desarrollo auténtico humano. Al hacer eso, el Papa señala la responsabilidad y limitaciones de gobierno y el mercado privado, reta ideologías tradicionales de derecha e izquierda y llama a todo hombre y mujer que piense y actúe en una nueva manera de enfocar la crisis económica. El Papa Benedicto declara, “Si se hace artificial la concepción, la gestación y el nacimiento del hombre, si se sacrifican...”

(Mira OBISPO/23)
National audit finds diocese in full compliance

SAN ANGELO -- During the week of August 17-21, the Diocese of San Angelo completed an audit of its Safe Environment Programs with auditors of the Gavin Group of Boston, an independent firm commissioned by the United States Catholic Conference of Bishops (USCCB), to ensure compliance with the USCCB Charter for the Protection of Children and Young People.

The Charter, originally adopted by the USCCB in November 2002, sets forth specific requirements which enable dioceses across the country to establish safe environment programs to protect children and youth from sexual abuse. During this audit, Diocesan Safe Environment Policies; Safe Environment Programs for church personnel, parents, and children; as well as procedures for assisting victims of abuse were examined.

“As Bishop, I am happy to report that the Gavin Group has informed the Diocese that, based on the analysis of the audit results, we will continue our status of being in compliance with the Charter for the Protection of Children and Young People for 2009,” Pfeifer said.

Since implementation of the Charter, the Diocese has undergone five previous annual audits in which it was found to be in full compliance with all charter articles.

“I am pleased with the results of this audit which represent the hard work of so many people throughout our diocese to provide a safe environment for all of our children and youth in our many programs,” Pfeifer said. “The audit has given us a great opportunity to step back and see what we have accomplished and explore areas where we can make adjustments or improvements. We will continue our efforts not only to provide a safe environment for our children and youth in our church programs, but to raise the awareness of child sexual abuse and steps that everyone can take to help protect our children.”

A Spiritual Bouquet during the Year for Priests

Kind people of the Diocese of San Angelo, here is an idea about how you can show your spiritual support for our priests during this special year. Cut this out of the paper and make copies to be used by family members and friends. —Bishop Michael Pfeifer, OMI

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Blessing of New Buildings

MIDLAND -- Bishop Michael Pfeifer, above and at left with Msgr. James Bridges, visited Midland October 14 to bless new buildings and facilities at St. Stephen.

The church recently completed a major construction project which resulted in a new sanctuary, a new office building, a new parlor and a new dining hall.

Photos by Jimmy Patterson

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A Spiritual Bouquet during the Year for Priests

Prayers for Priests during the Jubilee Year for Priests

Spiritual Bouquet for our Priests

(Ramillete Espiritual por nuestros Sacerdotes)

I, _____________________ of ________________(church) offer the following for priests during the Year for Priests and in particular for Father ____________________.

[ ] Daily Mass [ ] Misa Diaria
[ ] Sunday Mass [ ] Misa Dominical
[ ] Rosary [ ] Rosario
[ ] Fasting [ ] Ayuno
[ ] Other penance [ ] Otra penitencia
[ ] Hour of Adoration [ ] Una hora ante el Santisimo
[ ] Divine Mercy Chaplet [ ] Coronilla a la Divina Misericordia
[ ] Family meals [ ] Comidas con familias
[ ] Other [ ] Otro
[ ] Other [ ] Otro

Please send your Spiritual Bouquet to your Pastor or to the priest whose name you have mentioned above.

Por favor, mande su Ramillete Espiritual a tu parroco o al sacerdote mencionado arriba.
Four seminarians take major step toward priesthood

Submitted by Lorenzo Hatch, Seminarian

Taking the second major step toward the Altar of Priesthood, four men from the Diocese of San Angelo studying at Assumption Seminary in San Antonio, were installed into the Ministry of Acolyte on Saturday, October 24th, 2009.

The four new acolytes are Lorenzo Hatch, Innocent Eziefule, Francis Onyekozuru, and Sam Matthiesen; all are second year graduate theologians.

H.E. Bishop Flanagan, Auxiliary Emeritus of the Archdiocese of San Antonio, representing H.E. Bishop Michael Pfeifer, conferred the ministry.

In his homily, Bishop Flanagan exhorted the four seminarians to recall the words of the late Pope John Paul II in his Apostolic Letter Mane Nobiscum Domine: “Stay with us, Lord, for it is almost evening (cf. Lk 24:29).

“This was the insistent invitation that the two disciples journeying to Emmaus on the evening of the day of the resurrection addressed to the wayfarer who had accompanied them on their journey.”

In their new ministry of the Altar, the acolytes are endowed with certain rights, privileges, and responsibilities such as serving the priest and deacon at the Altar, distributing Holy Communion at Mass and to the sick, and purifying the Sacred Vessels.

“A privilege that we also have is to officially bless bread and fruit, an act that, according to the canonists, was not suppressed with the minor orders,” said seminarian Lorenzo Hatch. “We would all like to thank Bishop Pfeifer for his continued support as “Father” to the men and women of the Vocation team, and of course our friends and family.”

Carlsbad parishioners complete another Christmas in October project

Submitted by Deborah Michalewicz

CARLSBAD -- The “Rebuilding Together/Christmas in October: project, once called “Christmas in April,” took place last month with volunteers from St. Therese Catholic Church in Carlsbad (the biggest little Parish in West Texas).

One of the elderly in the community of Carlsbad recently died, leaving a partially remodeled home and an elderly wife. The insurance company was threatening to cancel the policy which would result in the mortgage company calling in the loan.

As a result, Elizabeth Little, Executive Director of Rebuilding Together San Angelo, called J.D. Gould at St. Therese to see if the Faith Community could assist.

After several days of prep work and buying from the homeowner’s friends and family, the faithful of St. Therese arrived October 3 with paintbrushes, hammers, and saws in hand to fix, frame, add fascia, and prime all the old wood. Fortunately friends of St. Therese, Tommy Tomerlin, joined in with a whole trailer-load of professional tools, equipment, and know-how, and the job went into full swing.

Less than an hour later, Mark and Ginger Bruton appeared on-scene with a smoking bar-b-que pit, and the whole neighborhood took on the flavorful aroma of an impending lunch. St. Therese parishioners at the work site, all the way from 4 year-old Zaara Michalewicz to 84 year-old Ernest Michalewicz, spent the misty day doing what they could to make the home safe and weathertight.

During the next week, the friends and family continued working so when professional painter Robert Pustka showed up with his airless paint sprayer, the end was in sight. The home was painted a crispy white while other parishioners lavished gallons of whippoorwill blue on the trim.

That day the homeowner treated the team to the best chicken and dumplings ever tasted which made the cool, drizzly day seem bright and sunny.

This was the 33rd home in 11 years which St. Therese has taken on because the Faith Community holds Matthew 25:40 very highly. But ask Mark Bruton about the little card he always carries close to his heart. It is a quote from St. Francis that says, “Preach the Gospel at all times . . . when necessary . . . use words.”
St. John Vianney: The inspiration for Year for The Priests

By Bishop Michael Pfeifer, OMI

In proclaiming the Jubilee Year for Priests, Pope Benedict XVI indicated that he was inspired to make this proclamation because of the 150th anniversary of the death of St. John Vianney, the patron of parish priests who died August 4, 1859. The Pope stressed that the Year for Priests is the occasion to thank Christ for the beautiful gift of priesthood that he left to our Church. During this special year, Pope Benedict points out that it is the occasion for all men who share in the priesthood to re-evaluate their priestly life and service according to the model for priests, the humble French diocesan priest, St. John Vianney. The Jubilee Year began on the Feast of the Sacred Heart in 2009 and will end on the same Feast in 2010.

The theme for the Year for Priests as defined by the Pope is “the faithfulness of Christ, faithfulness of priests.” The great symbol of Christ’s loving faithfulness for all God’s people, but especially for priests, is found in the image of the Sacred Heart of Jesus, who pours out His love in a special way on those who share in His priesthood. To begin and end this Jubilee Year for priests, the Pope has selected the two feasts of the Sacred Heart to be like the two spiritual bookends for this special year. Imitating Christ who is always faithful, during this Year for Priests, priests are asked to renew their faithfulness to Christ, who is at the heart of their life and ministry, and to develop a new zeal for their spiritual lives and for all people. Pope Benedict further stated, “Precisely to encourage priests in this striving for spiritual perfection on which, above all, the effectiveness of their ministry depends, I have decided to establish the special ‘Year for Priests’. ... It is the 150th anniversary of the death of the holy Curé d’Ars, John Mary Vianney, a true example of a Pastor at the service of Christ’s flock.”

In many ways, St. Vianney is a forgotten saint, not because his priestly charisma and inspiration are not relevant to our age, but rather because many priests have not studied the life of their patron, nor reflected on how to center their priesthood totally on Jesus Christ as modeled by St. Vianney.

As the Year for Priests was called to remember the special anniversary of Vianney’s death, it is well for all, but especially for priests, to take a little time to reflect on the life and ministry of this wonderful saint. St. Jean-Batiste-Marie Vianney was born on May 8, 1786 and died on August 4, 1859. He is often referred to even in English as the “Curé d’Ars” [the parish priest of the village of Ars]. Jean Vianney became notable internationally for his priestly and pastoral work in his parish due to the radical spiritual transformation of his parish and its surroundings. The Church attributes this to his saintly life, his immense love for the Eucharist, his spirit of mortification and compassionate care for people in his ministry, especially in the Sacrament of Confession.

Jean-Marie Vianney was born in the French town of Dardilly and was baptized the same day. His parents had six children, of which Jean-Marie was the third. He grew up on his family farm in the rural town of Dardilly.

During the French Revolution, many loyal priests were forced to hide from the government in order to carry out the Sacraments in their parishes. The Vianneys continued attending Mass and being faithful to their Catholic practices even though it was illegal. John had to work full-time on his farm and his mortified way of life and his love for the poor and sick. He had a kind word for everyone. Very soon he had won the hearts of all.

St. John Vianney is especially known for his devotion to the Sacrament of Reconciliation. People began traveling from distant places to hear his sermons and to go to Confession. During the last 10 years of his life, Father Vianney spent 16-18 hours a day in the Confessional.

Jean-Marie Vianney died on August 4, 1859 at the age of 73. Biographers recorded miracles performed throughout his life; obtaining money for his charities and food for the orphans, and he also had a supernatural knowledge of the past and future, and could heal the sick, especially children. In 1905 St. Pius X declared him Blessed and proposed him as a model for the parochial clergy. In 1925, Pope Pius XI canonized him.

(Please See VIANNEY/23)
‘We enjoy his spontaneous singing during the Mass’

Submitted by the Youth of Sacred Heart Parish-Coleman

COLEMAN -- We, the youth of Sacred Heart Parish in Coleman are most grateful and proud to have a priest in our parish. Fr. Romanus Akamike works very hard for both our parish and Our Lady of Mount Carmel in Winters. He has gone the extra mile to celebrate masses daily in Coleman and at least twice a week in Winters. His dedication is very inspiring to us and we hope he will be with us for a long time.

In addition, he is present at our CCD classes as often as he can be. He lets us know that he is always there for us no matter the time of day. He teaches us through his homilies and helps us understand many things that were unclear to us before. We know that without him we would not have masses and the sacraments. We know that he gives much of himself in his time and in the way he lives out his vocation. We are very grateful for that.

We enjoy his manner of singing spontaneously during masses and the way he gets and keeps our attention with stories of his personal experiences as well as the experiences of the saints and modern day people. We hope that he will continue to bring visiting seminarians to give us talks on vocations and other spiritual subjects. He has taught us many things that will help us stay on the correct path in life and to make good decisions.

For those reasons we plan to continue attending Mass on a regular basis and to attend as many other spiritual activities that our parish schedules. We plan to give a parish community dinner in his honor during the month of October. It will coincide with his birthday so we plan to make it extra special for him. We plan to show him through events like these and other occasions exactly how grateful and appreciative we are to have a wonderful pastor like him.

Lastly we will pray for him daily and at every opportunity that God keep him healthy and happy with our parish community. In gratitude we promise to make ourselves available to him whenever he needs our input and participation.

We also thank you, Bishop Pfeifer, for sending wonderful priests to our parish.

‘Our priests are a bridge and passage way for the Holy Spirit to reach us’

MIDLAND -- Greetings from the Youth Group at Our Lady of Guadalupe Parish and Shrine, we want you to know that we also enjoy the time you spend with us when you visit our parish. It is a pleasure to share with you our thoughts and reflections about our wonderful priests, their great ministry and the many gifts and talents they share with us each and every day.

We feel that in relation to the gift of the Eucharist that Christ has left us, our priests are a bridge or passage way for the Holy Spirit to reach us. It is such a blessing to know that they have consecrated their lives to serve Christ us, and by so doing they are able to give us the Eucharist each time they celebrate Mass.

There are many things that we appreciate about our priests, the most important one being that Fr. Ed has made our liturgies youth-friendly. He helps us to recognize God’s call to each of us and so when we are able to share our gifts in different ministries at Mass and other activities with his encouragement. Our priests are so committed to their call and giving of their time to help guide all people in the path of Christ through the sacraments. They are wonderful teachers and are very loving and caring.

By becoming involved in parish life we are letting out priests know that we support them and what they do for us. We can do so many different things such as cooking, baking, cleaning, remembering their birthday and anniversary of ordination and by simply saying thank you and letting them know that the message they gave during a homily or presentation helped us by bringing Christ’s light into our life, and ways we can express our love to them.

We would like for our priest to continue to add vision to our path toward Christ so that we may be able to remain focused in our faith and formation; to keep encouraging us by being loving and supportive, and praying for us.

We did plan and have a surprise party for Fr. Ed for his birthday in which we all took it upon ourselves to decorate, cook and be present for the occasion when he also shared with us about when he received his call to the priesthood. We also include them in our weekly group prayers and will have a Mass offered in Thanksgiving for their work and ministry.

In promoting vocations we first of all pray that we learn to listen to God’s call in our lives, knowing that he has a special plan and vocation for each of us. We pray for the many diocesan vocations we have and the four Oblate vocations from our parish. We send them cards through the year and let them know that we are praying and thinking of them. We also support the Vocation Cross program we have at our parish. We feel that we should help guide any of our friends that may consider priesthood or religious life by encouraging them to talk to one of our priests or sisters and letting them know we will pray for them and that they can count on our support.

Bishop, we hope we have answered some of your questions and that you understand how much we care and value our priest. It is difficult to express the gratitude we feel for the sacrifice that you and our priest have done for us. Thank you so much for the wonderful job you do in guiding our priests and us.

-- In the peace of Christ, Our Lady of Guadalupe Parish and Shrine Youth Group

‘We believe we are truly blessed and fortunate to have three priests on loan’

(Editor’s Note: Msgr. Larry Droll, Msgr. James Plagens and Fr. Emilio Sosa of St. Ann’s in Midland also serve the parish of St. Joseph in Stanton).

STANTON -- We, the youth of St. Joseph, are writing to you today in response to your request for a letter to recognize our Parish Priest on this glorious celebration of the Year of the Priest.

We have come together as a youth community to develop this conglomerate of thoughts and ideas expressing what we believe is the importance of our parish priest and the very important jobs they perform for us, as well as what we can do to make their lives more rewarding.

We believe we are truly blessed and fortunate to have three priests on loan from St. Ann’s parish. The good Lord has given us three great people who have shown us much understanding and love. We realize that these men are many things to many people, such as teacher, role model, friends, leader and most importantly our representative sent from God. We do not understand the sacrifices that our priests have made to accept the calling of God to deliver to us the word of God and the Eucharist.

Without these individuals our Catholic religion would not be able to sustain itself. Their belief in the Holy Spirit is as true as anyone else. Priests themselves are proof to us that God is watching over us by...
10 questions on the Revised Translation of the Roman Missal

U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops

1. Why the changes?
The Missale Romanum (Roman Missal), the ritual text for the celebration of the Mass, was promulgated by Pope Paul VI in 1970 as the definitive text of the reformed liturgy of the Second Vatican Council. That Latin text, the editio typica (typical edition), was translated into various languages for use around the world; the English edition was published in the United States in 1973. The Holy See issued a revised text, the editio typica altera, in 1975. Pope John Paul II promulgated the third edition of the Missale Romanum (editio typica tertia) as part of the Jubilee Year in 2000. Among other things, the third edition contains prayers for the celebration of recently canonized saints, additional prefaces for the Eucharistic Prayers, additional Masses and Prayers for Various Needs and Intentions, and some updated and revised rubrics (instructions) for the celebration of the Mass. To aid the process of translation of the Missale Romanum, editio typica tertia, the Congregation for Divine Worship and the Discipline of the Sacraments issued Liturgiam Authenticam, the Fifth Instruction on Vernacular Translation of the Roman Liturgy, in 2001, which outlines the principles and rules for translation. In 2007, the Congregation for Divine Worship issued the Ratio Translationis for the English Language, which outlined the specific rules for translation in English.

2. Who is doing the work of translation?
The process of translation is a highly consultative work of several groups. The International Commission on English in the Liturgy (ICEL) is chartered to prepare English translations of liturgical texts on behalf of the conferences of bishops of English-speaking countries. Currently 11 conferences of bishops are full members of the Commission: the United States, Australia, Canada, England and Wales, India, Ireland, New Zealand, Pakistan, the Philippines, Scotland, and South Africa.

The USCCB and the other member Conferences of Bishops receive draft translations of each text from ICEL and have the opportunity to offer comments and suggestions to ICEL. A second draft is proposed, which each Conference of Bishops approves (a Conference reserves the right to amend or modify a particular text) and submits to the Vatican for final approval.

At the level of the Vatican (the Holy See), the Congregation for Divine Worship and the Discipline of the Sacraments examines texts and offers authoritative approval (recognitio) of texts and grants permission for their use. Currently the Congregation is aided by the recommendations of Vox Clara, a special commission of bishops and consultants from English-speaking countries convened to assist with the English translation of the Missale Romanum.

3. What's new or particularly different about the revised translation?

From the Ratio Translationis:

The unique style of the Roman Rite should be maintained in translation. By "style" is meant here the distinctive way in which the prayers of the Roman Rite are expressed. The principal elements of such a style include a certain conciseness in addressing, praising and entreating God, as well as distinctive syntactical patterns, a noble tone, a variety of less complex rhetorical devices, concreteness of images, repetition, parallelism and rhythm as measured through the cursus, or ancient standards for stressing syllables of Latin words in prose or poetry. (no. 112)

The texts of the revised translation of the Missal Missal are marked by a heightened style of English speech and a grammatical structure that is based on the Latin text. In addition, many biblical and poetic images, such as "Lord, I am not worthy that you should enter under my roof..." (Communion Rite) and "...from the rising of the sun to its setting" (Eucharistic Prayer III) have been restored.

4. What is the significance of the translation pro multis in the words of Institution of the Eucharistic Prayer?

In October 2006 (after the bishops of the United States approved the Gray Book text of the Order of Mass), Francis Cardinal Arinze, Prefect of the Congregation for Divine Worship, communicated to Conferences of Bishops the desire of the Holy Father for a faithful translation of pro multis as "for many" in the formula for the consecration of the Precious Blood at Mass. The use of "for many" renders a translation more faithful to the accounts of the Last Supper found in the Gospels of Matthew and Mark. The phrase "for many" does not mean to imply that Christ did not come to save all, but that salvation rests in part on personal acceptance of the salvation freely offered by Christ. Please see the separate section, "Six Questions on the Translation of Pro Multis" for more information.

5. What is the significance of the changes to the Nicene Creed?

Some of the most significant changes to the expressions of faith which contain Catholic doctrine. The first change is the translation of Credo as of "I" instead of "We" in the opening phrase in order to maintain the person and number indicated in the Latin text. While the profession of faith is a communal liturgical act, each individual in the liturgical assembly professes his or her own faith which is joined to the profession of the whole assembly. The second change concerns the translation of particular expressions of faith such as Unigenitus, consubstantial, and incarnatus. The theological terminology has been preserved, in accord with Liturgiam Authenticam, in the translation to English: "Only Begotten," "consubstantial," and "incarnate."

6. "And with your spirit?"

One of the more noticeable changes in the people's parts of the Mass is the response to the greeting, "The Lord be with you." The Latin response, et cum spiritu tuo, is rendered literally in English, "and with your spirit." Liturgiam Authenticam calls for the faithful rendering of expressions that belong to the heritage of the ancient Church, and cites et cum spiritu tuo as an example (no. 56). Most modern languages have translated this phrase literally, so the English text now more closely parallels other vernacular translations.

(Please See MISSAL/22)
Texas bishops say health care reform must protect life at all stages

By Catholic News Service

AUSTIN -- The Catholic bishops of Texas in an Oct. 27 statement emphasized their support for "genuine, life-affirming reform" of the nation's health care system, but also expressed concern that current health care proposals fail to guarantee fundamental rights and protections for humans at all stages of life.

"Health care reform is a vital concern to us in Texas, as our state has one of the highest numbers of uninsured persons in the nation," the bishops said in a statement released by the Austin-based Texas Catholic Conference, which represents the state's 15 dioceses on public policy.

They noted the numerous Catholic health care facilities in Texas, saying that the Catholic Church in the state "brings both everyday experience and strong convictions to the issue of health care reform."

The bishops said health care reform must include:

- Restrictions on funding of abortion and respect for the consciences of health care providers who do not want to perform procedures or prescribe treatments that violate their religious principles.
- Cost structures that do not impose excessive financial burdens on low- and moderate-income individuals and families.
- Measures that safeguard the health of all of society, including the poor, the elderly and immigrants.
- Access to comprehensive and affordable health care coverage by legal immigrants and their families.
- An adequate safety net for those who remain uncovered.

U.S. House leaders unveiled an $894 billion health care reform bill Oct. 29 called the Affordable Health Care for America Act. It combines bills passed by three committees in July into one piece of legislation that members were to begin debating on the House floor in early November. Floor action on the U.S. Senate bill had not yet been announced as of Oct. 29.

The U.S. bishops have criticized the Senate measure for not explicitly barring funding of abortion coverage. The House bill also does not resolve the issue of abortion coverage.

Andrew Rivas, executive director of the Texas Catholic Conference, said the Texas bishops provide multiple perspectives on the issue of health care reform, because the church in its ministries in the state is both a health care employer and provider.

(Please See TEXAS/21)

Statement on Health Care Reform
From the Bishops of the Texas Catholic Conference

October 27, 2009

In 2005, the Texas Catholic Conference issued a pastoral statement on the urgent need for health care reform. Today, as the health care debate unfolds in our nation's capitol, the Bishops of Texas feel it is once again appropriate to express hope that our national leaders will work together to bring about genuine life-affirming reform to our nation's health care system.

Improving our nation's health care system is the responsibility of all. His Holiness Pope Benedict XVI, addressing the Pontifical Council for Health Care, reiterated this responsibility, stating that "going to the aid of the human being is a duty: both in response to a fundamental right of the person and because the care of individuals redounds to the benefit of the group."

Our Catholic moral tradition teaches that every human being, from the moment of conception to natural death, has an innate dignity that entitles him or her to certain rights and protections, including the fundamental right to life and the right to affordable healthcare, which flows from the right to life.

As the Catholic Bishops of Texas, we are hopeful that such reform legislation will someday be enacted into law. However, we must also express our concerns that the current healthcare reform proposals being considered by the U.S. House of Representatives and the U.S. Senate do not yet rise to the level of guaranteeing these fundamental rights and protections.

True health care reform must maintain longstanding public policies that restrict funding for abortion and respect the consciences of health care providers. The language in the Capps amendment, which is part of several proposed bills, does not adequately ensure the protection of all human life. In addition, the cost structures of any health care reform plan must not impose excessive financial burdens on low and moderate income individuals and families. Measures must also be in place to safeguard the health of all of society, including the poor, the elderly, and immigrants. Legal immigrants and their families must be allowed timely access to comprehensive and affordable health care coverage and an adequate safety net must be maintained for those who remain uncovered.

Health care reform is a vital concern to us in Texas, as our state has one of the highest numbers of uninsured persons in the nation. Health care is a fundamental component of the Catholic Church's ministry. In Texas there are 43 Catholic acute care hospitals, 8 nursing homes and 17 other Catholic-sponsored service organizations including hospice, home health, assisted living, and senior housing facilities that provide quality health care to millions. The Church itself is a major purchaser of health insurance for the thousands of employees in our many agencies and institutions. The Catholic Church in Texas brings both everyday experience and strong convictions to the issue of health care reform.

The Catholic Bishops of Texas will continue to support reform of our nation's health care system in ways that respect the lives of all human persons while providing affordable access to health care for all. We will be a committed partner in advancing reform on this life-and-death issue; but if the final form of the legislation does not include acceptable language in these areas then we will have to oppose it vigorously. We will continue to pray that our national leaders will place the poor and those most vulnerable first, for only when they do will our nation achieve genuine health care reform.

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When a pregnancy goes ‘awry’

By Rev. Tad Pacholczyk

Human pregnancy begins whenever a sperm unites with an egg inside the fallopian tube. The newly-minted embryo must then travel along the fallopian tube during the next few days before finally implanting into the wall of the mother’s uterus.

In rare instances, the embryo will fail to reach the uterus, and will instead implant in the fallopian tube along the way, which is a very narrow tube not designed to support a pregnancy. Such "tubal pregnancies" are highly risky, because the wall of the tube can stretch only a limited amount before it will rupture from the increasing pressure of the growing fetus, possibly resulting in the death of both mother and child.

Whenever an embryo implants in the wrong place, whether in the fallopian tube or in another place like the abdomen, such a pregnancy is called "ectopic" (meaning "out of place"). Ninety-seven percent of all ectopic pregnancies occur within the fallopian tube. Ectopic pregnancy is one of the leading causes of maternal sickness and death in the United States, and presents a formidable challenge to the physician who is trying to help both mother and child.

Of the three commonly performed procedures for addressing ectopic pregnancies, two raise significant moral concerns while the third is morally acceptable.

The first procedure involves a drug called methotrexate, which targets the most rapidly growing cells of the embryo, especially the placenta-like cells which attach the early embryo to the wall of the tube. Some have suggested that methotrexate might preferentially target these placenta-like cells, distinct from the rest of the embryo, so that it could be seen as "indirectly" ending the life of the embryo. Others, however, have noted that these placenta-like cells are in fact a part of the embryo itself (being produced by the embryo, not by the mother), so that the use of methotrexate actually targets a vital organ of the embryo, resulting in his or her death.

A significant number of Catholic moralists hold that the use of methotrexate is not morally permissible, because it constitutes a direct attack on the growing child in the tube, and involves a form of direct abortion.

Another morally problematic technique involves cutting along the length of the fallopian tube where the child is embedded and "scooping out" the living body of the child, who dies shortly thereafter. The tube can then be sutured back up. This approach, like the use of methotrexate, leaves the fallopian tube largely intact for possible future pregnancies, but also raises obvious moral objections because it likewise directly causes the death of the child.

Interestingly, both procedures are normally presented to patients exclusive of any moral considerations. They are framed strictly as the means to assure the least damage possible to the mother’s reproductive system. Many doctors will admit, however, that these techniques usually leave the fallopian tube scarred, increasing the chances of yet another tubal pregnancy by setting up the conditions for the occurrence to happen again.

About half of the cases of tubal pregnancy will resolve on their own, with the embryo being naturally lost without the need for any intervention. When an ectopic pregnancy does not resolve by itself, a morally acceptable approach would involve removal of the whole section of the tube on the side of the woman’s body where the unborn child is lodged. Although this results in reduced fertility for the woman, the section of tube around the growing child has clearly become pathological, and constitutes a mounting threat with time. This threat is addressed by removal of the tube, with the secondary, and unintended, effect that the child within will then die.

In this situation, the intention of the surgeon is directed towards the good effect (removing the damaged tissue to save the mother’s life) while only tolerating the bad effect (death of the ectopic child). Importantly, the surgeon is choosing to act on the tube (a part of the mother’s body) rather than directly on the child. Additionally, the child’s death is not the means via which the cure occurs. If a large tumor, instead of a baby, were present in the tube, the same curative procedure would be employed. It is tubal removal, not the subsequent death of the baby, that is curative for the mother’s condition.

Some say that cutting out a section of the tube with a baby inside is no different than using methotrexate because, in either case, the baby ends up dying. Yet the difference in how the baby dies is, in fact, critical. There is always a difference between killing someone directly and allowing someone to die of indirect causes. We may never directly take the life of an innocent human being, though we may sometimes tolerate the indirect and unintended loss of life that comes with trying to properly address a life-threatening medical situation.

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

Ética y ‘corrección’ de defectos mitocondriales

Padre Tad Pacholczyk
Septiembre, 2009
(De la serie “Making Sense Out of Bioethics”)

Las mitocondrias son unas estructuras pequeñas y alargadas que se encuentran dentro de una célula y que producen energía. Estas “baterías celulares” contienen su propio material genético (ADN), independiente del que se halla en el núcleo de la célula.

Los defectos o mutaciones en este ADN mitocondrial pueden originar diversos padecimientos. En casos severos, puede ser la causa de que los bebés nazcan con ceguera, epilepsia, incapacidad para gatear, presentar retardo neurológico severo y morir a corta edad. Más allá de tratar los síntomas, no existen terapias reales para la mayoría de los problemas mitocondriales.

Científicos en Oregón, E.U., sin embargo, anunciaron recientemente una técnica para reemplazar las mitocondrias defectuosas de un óvulo con mitocondrias sanas de otro. Esta técnica se asemeja a la donación ya que implica transferir el núcleo del óvulo defectuoso a un óvulo sano, al que se le ha extraído su propio núcleo. El óvulo recién “reconstruido” contendrá ahora únicamente las mitocondrias de este segundo óvulo y ninguna del óvulo original. Después de esto, el óvulo reconstruido puede ya fertilizarse mediante la técnica de fertilización in vitro (FIV) y crear así un embrión libre de mutaciones o defectos mitocondriales.

Este método de reemplazo mitocondrial, seguido por la FIV, se ha estado usando con éxito en el laboratorio con óvulos de macacos y se han logrado nacimientos libres de padecimientos. Los científicos especulan que quizá pronto las mujeres podrán recurrir a esta técnica para evitar la transmisión genética de trastornos mitocondriales a sus hijos. Sin embargo, la utilización de este método en humanos podría presentar por lo menos dos objeciones éticas serias.

(Mira PADRE TAD/23)
Catholic Voices

All Souls Day allows us a lesson from defeatist obituaries

By Stephen Kent
Catholic News Service

The first Monday of November is yet another way that Catholics are able to show our way to the inevitable end of our earthly pilgrimage.

Current culture does not agree. Consider the language used in obituaries in one edition of a daily newspaper: "Valiant three-year battle with cancer." "Lost her courageous battle with cancer." "Lost his courageous fight with throat cancer." "Ending her long battle with Alzheimer's." "Battle with cancer." "Fight against sarcoma."

So we battle, fight and struggle, yet inevitably lose. Death is a failure. There is something off-putting about this language, as though the deceased are losers. If they had been stronger, the doctors better, the surgery successful, they would have lived.

The incessant attempt by human beings to achieve longevity, if not immortality, has been the topic of legend and amusement for centuries. Ponce de Leon searched the New World for the fountain of youth. Cryonics would place human remains in deep freeze until a cure can be found for what ailed the body. There have been pseudoscientific attempts to send human remains into outer space to await a more propitious time to return to earth.

Such explorations do harm by advancing the concept that the human body is but one more machine. Science and medicine can medically (and morally) transplant organs from one human being to another. They can even substitute manufactured devices -- artificial hearts, knees and hips -- into the human body.

A quest for immortality, with science on its side, reduces the body to a machine, wonderfully designed by God, but still in need of upgrading by humankind.

The human person, however, is created by God as body and soul, and for this reason has a dignity that cannot be changed by anyone.

Death is inevitable, not to be feared by those who have faith in the purpose of creation and the goodness of its Creator.

Among that one day's defeatist obituaries, one stood out for containing this thought: "He courageously won his three-year battle with esophageal cancer as his soul soared triumphantly to its heavenly home."

It is good we have a commemoration of the departed and the opportunity to reflect upon our own inevitable end.

(Stephan Kent is the retired editor of archdiocesan newspapers in Omaha and Seattle. He can be contacted at consider-sk@comcast.net.)

Change: Little deaths that give way to new growth

By Effie Caldarola
Catholic News Service

Just when I needed it, someone sent me an e-mail with these words by Charles Darwin: "Change is inevitable, growth is optional."

I needed it because I'd just returned from delivering my youngest child to her first year at a good Jesuit university. I'm thrilled for her, and she's happy.

But I don't always do change well, and leaving my baby three hours away by jet was change that didn't come easily.

Arriving back home, I surveyed Maria's room. It was, naturally, quite a mess. It looked as if someone had been whisked away to a witness protection program after being told she had an hour to pack, rather than the three months Maria had.

The once-vital, framed pictures of dear friends were mostly left behind. There were dried flowers from proms still pinned to the bulletin board, and her good sterling silver rosary from Grandma was left behind for safekeeping.

My little clotheshorse had left rejected garments on hangers in the closet and a few on the floor. Half-used bottles of perfume too difficult to pack, coins, a candy wrapper, dust, an unmade bed -- these were left for Mom.

These, and a lot of memories.

I'd recalled many times the prayer a Jesuit friend of mine says every morning: "Lord, surprise me today."

What a lovely prayer, and yet I find it difficult to say. A control issue, perhaps.

I drive down my street in the fall and I see the golden leaves glittering in the fall sun. I try to commit the view to memory, against the day the street will no longer be mine, against a change I don't even see coming yet.

I cling to what I love, and change seems to be the one constant challenge to preserving all of that.

But that's a one-dimensional view of change, isn't it?

If you pick change up and turn it all around in the sunlight, you see more possibilities.

True, each change brings with it a little death.

A wedding is a beginning, but it's also a farewell to all those other beaus who once sought your hand.

The day you first hold your baby daughter is the day you leave behind the promise that that child might have been your son.

The new job you accept closes the door on all the other ones you might have chosen.

And an exciting beginning to college means there are no more high school students in my house.

An empty nest means I'm not in the day-to-day mom business any more. I spent a lot of my first 30 years longing to be a mom, and now the detail work on that project is over.

So I look forward to the option of growth.

You can spend a lot of time looking at the door closing behind you, or you can look at all the doors opening up before you. I guess it boils down to that in all of our lives, doesn't it?

One of my favorite Scripture metaphors is Christ's description of the grain of wheat. Unless it falls to the ground and dies, it remains but a single grain.

Often, we think of that in terms of our death, but the grain image can follow us around for a lifetime, accompanying us on all the little goodbyes we say, the little deaths we experience that give way to new growth.

I resist asking the Lord to surprise me each day, but I can ask God to make my life not a single grain but a harvest grown in fertile soil.
Editor’s Note: The story of the number of vocations that come from the small towns of Rowena and Olfen, northwest of San Angelo, will be included in a commemorative book to be published to coincide with the 50th jubilee of the Diocese of San Angelo in October 2011.

By Jimmy Patterson

Editor

RUNNELS COUNTY — The most recent edition of the Texas Almanac lists cotton and cattle as two of the most important items produced in Runnels County, northeast of San Angelo. The mostly-rural agriculture county is known primarily for its farms and ranchland.

Were it to be a complete overview of the most fruitful byproducts of the county, however, editors of the Almanac would most certainly have had to include vocations.

Through the years, 29 priests and women religious have professed their holy vows from these two tiny farming communities. The numbers are staggering. With a total population in the two towns hovering around the 500 mark, the 10 priests and 19 sisters that grew up here represent 6 percent of the all the town’s people. And while those 39 are spread across different decades, if you applied that same percent number to Ector County, the most populous county in the Diocese of San Angelo, the numbers would single-handedly place on religious formation and loyalty to the Church.

Editor’s Note: The story of the number of vocations that come from the small towns of Rowena and Olfen account for many men, women who have devoted themselves to the Church they bond with each other, and support each other. They celebrate festive occasions and grieve with each other over the death of loved ones. Those who marry an Olfenite or Rowenaite marry not only that person but a way of life and become part of it.”

San Angelo Bishop Michael Pfeifer said all the credit for the vocations in the area to God. “Thank God this call has been heard by many generous and loving hearts of both women and men who wanted to serve Christ and His Church in a more committed and full-time way,” Pfeifer said.

“The large amount of vocations from these two communities is due, yes, to God’s grace, and to the great spirit of faith and love that is found in the parish and family members of the parishes of Boniface in Olfen and St. Joseph in Rowena.”

Bishop Matthiesen noted, too, that families from these communities teach their children to love the land, respect their elders, cherish their history, honor their dead, and hold God and Church at the center of their lives.

With them, it is God, family, land, and country. “Regardless of the time of day and at all church attendance, respect for priests, deacons, and Sisters, active participation in the liturgy, care of church property, including the cemetery, are expected,” Matthiesen said.

When parish life began in Olfen and Rowena, Matthiesen noted, priests and Sisters were the most educated persons in the community. They were respected and revered even when their human weaknesses became evident. That was not lost on young people.

The work ethic is strong here, too, and families with many children are considered a boon for families with farms. Children were expected to pitch in and do their part of the daily chores and because their presence on the farm was so needed and important, when a child expressed an interest in leaving to become a priest or nun, the parents never expressed discourage or encouragement, Matthiesen said.

Finally, Matthiesen said a long-standing custom from a parish priest also serves to heighten interest in serving the Church. With the priest shortage the church is facing and with the international priest program, Rowena and Olfen are now served by foreign-born priests. The people of these small communities, it has been

Priests, sisters from Olfen, Rowena

OLFEN

Msgr. Anthony Matthiesen Bishop Larry Matthiesen Father Richard Rathe


Sister Helen Lange, Order of St. Benedict Sister Rosannita Matthiesen USB Sister Mary Immaculata CV Sister Patricia Block CDP Sister Janet Block CDP Sister Pauline Block OSB Sister Margaret Block OSB Sister Cynthia Pauletti, Sisters of St. Joseph of the shoe

Sister Deborah Ann Fuchs CDP Sister Lucy Block

ROWENA

Msgr. Bernard Gully Rev. Louis Droll Msgr. Larry Droll Rev. Daniel Dierschke

Sister Adeline Rollwitz CDP Sister Immaculata Rollwitz CDP Sister Eulalia Rollwitz CDP Sister Veronika Rollwitz CDP Sister Lucy Grace CVI Sister Anna Grace CVI Sister Mary Helen CVI Sister Mary Joseph CVI Sister Marie Hanley CDP

Sister Veronica Holowell OSB Sister Maria Theresa Manzi, ODF

Eva, Establa and Ventura — who would profess holy orders with the Sisters of Divine Providence (CDP). “If we could put our fingers on exactly who this has happened, we could replicate it elsewhere, I suppose,” said Msgr. Larry Droll, himself a Rowena native and currently pastor of St. Ann’s Church in Midland. “I think it has to do with strong Catholic families actively involved in the church.

There is a strong family influence there. In my own family we had a number of first cousins of my mother and father who became priests, and a number of their aunts who became sisters. There certainly is a family connection there. The family itself is not only strongly connected to the church and actively participates, but taught an acceptance of the idea that someone could become a priest or a sister.”

San Angelo Bishop Michael Pfeifer gives all the credit for the vocations in the area to God. "With them, it is God, family, land, and country. “Regardless of the time of day and at all church attendance, respect for priests, deacons, and Sisters, active participation in the liturgy, care of church property, including the cemetery, are expected,” Matthiesen said. When parish life began in Olfen and Rowena, Matthiesen noted, priests and Sisters were the most educated persons in the community. They were respected and revered even when their human weaknesses became evident. That was not lost on young people.

The work ethic is strong here, too, and families with many children are considered a boon for families with farms. Children were expected to pitch in and do their part of the daily chores and because their presence on the farm was so needed and important, when a child expressed an interest in leaving to become a priest or nun, the parents never expressed discourage or encouragement, Matthiesen said. Finally, Matthiesen said a long-standing custom from a parish priest also serves to heighten interest in serving the Church. With the priest shortage the church is facing and with the international priest program, Rowena and Olfen are now served by foreign-born priests. The people of these small communities, it has been

Celebrating 50 years of the Diocese of San Angelo 1961-2011
USCCB distributes bulletin inserts on health care reform nationwide

WASHINGTON (CNS) -- The U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops has sent bulletin inserts to almost 19,000 parishes across the country in an effort to urge Catholics to prevent health care reform from being derailed by support for abortion funding.

"Health care reform should be about saving lives, not destroying them," the insert states. It urges readers to contact Senate leaders so they support efforts to "incorporate long-standing policies against abortion funding and in favor of conscience rights" in health reform legislation.

"If these serious concerns are not addressed, the final bill should be opposed," it adds.

The insert highlights an amendment sponsored by Rep. Bart Stupak, D-Mich., which "addresses essential pro-life concerns on abortion funding and conscience rights."

"Help ensure that the rule for the bill allows a vote on the amendment," the insert states. "If these serious concerns are not addressed, the final bill should be opposed."

The insert also directs Catholics to the Web page www.usccb.org/healthcare.

Parishes also were receiving suggested pulpit announcements and petitions in support of this effort.

Bulletin inserts were distributed to dioceses Oct. 29, the day House Speaker Nancy Pelosi, D-Calif., and other House leaders unveiled an $894 billion health care reform bill called the Affordable Health Care for America Act.

The inserts -- expected to be placed in parish bulletins in early November -- contain information about how Catholics can take specific action by writing, calling, faxing or e-mailing members of Congress to let them know health care reform must explicitly ban abortion coverage.

The House measure combines bills passed by three committees in July into one piece of legislation that members were to begin debating on the House floor in early November. Floor action on the U.S. Senate bill had not yet been announced.

The U.S. bishops have criticized the Senate measure for not explicitly barring funding of abortion coverage. The House bill also does not resolve the issue of abortion coverage.

"The debate and decisions on health care reform are reaching decisive moments. We write ... to ask for your active and personal leadership to ensure that needed health care reform protects the life, dignity and health care of all," said the president of the USCCB and the chairmen of three bishops' committees in an Oct. 28 letter to their fellow bishops across the country.

The letter accompanied the bulletin inserts urging the bishops to promote the campaign in their dioceses.

It was signed by Cardinal Francis E. George of Chicago, president; Cardinal Justin Rigali of Philadelphia, chairman of the Committee on Pro-life Activities; Bishop John C. Wester of Salt Lake City, chairman of the Committee on Migration; and Bishop William F. Murphy of Rockville Centre, N.Y., chairman of the Committee on Domestic Justice and Human Development.

They thanked all of the bishops for their work so far to make Congress understand the bishops' "principles and (Please See USCCB/20)"

Catholic leaders laud agreement to end Honduran crisis

By David Agren
Catholic News Service

MEXICO CITY (CNS) -- Catholic officials in Honduras lauded a political agreement that aimed to end the four-month political crisis sparked by a June coup that unseated President Manuel Zelaya.

"This is a big step forward for the country," said Father German Calix, president of Caritas Honduras, the church's charitable aid agency. "It relieves much of the political pressure that we had been experiencing."

His comments were echoed by Father Efrain Romero, director of Caritas in the Diocese of Santa Rosa de Copan, where many church leaders had been outspoken in their opposition to the coup.

"The agreement "was long overdue, but we're now able to have a dialogue on how to emerge from this political crisis," he said.

Both men spoke to Catholic News Service by telephone Oct. 30 after political parties reached the agreement that seemed to promise to end the four-month crisis that had produced allegations of human rights violations and repression and had battered the national economy.

It restores Zelaya to office, pending a vote in Congress and a nonbinding opinion from the Supreme Court. The agreement also establishes a power-sharing government, transfers control of the military to the top electoral tribunal and allows for the full recognition of elections scheduled for Nov. 29 that will select a new president. It discards any amnesties for political crimes and forbids the possible convening of a convention to rewrite the Honduran Constitution.

Interim President Roberto Micheletti authorized his negotiators to sign the agreement Oct. 29.

Zelaya, who called the agreement "a triumph for Honduran democracy," was expected to sign it Oct. 30. Neither man is a candidate in the November elections.

Zelaya had attempted to convene a consultation on reforming the constitution so that re-election would be permitted. The Supreme Court declared the initiative illegal, and Zelaya was whisked out of the country. He returned to Honduras Sept. 21 and has been holed up in the Brazilian Embassy ever since.

Many countries refused to recognize the interim government, and development aid from the international agencies, the United States and Latin American countries such as Venezuela had been cut.

Juan Sheenan, country director for Catholic Relief Services in Honduras, said the U.S. bishops' international relief and development agency had $750,000 in funding frozen after the coup.

No timetable has been outlined for Congress to make its decision or the Supreme Court to issue an opinion on Zelaya's return to power.

Pornography a 'sexual Katrina' tearing men down

NEW ORLEANS (CNS) -- The scourge of addiction to pornography, especially among men, has created "a sexual Katrina" that is destroying families, church and society, a prominent speaker on sexual integrity told a recent gathering of men in New Orleans.

Dan Spencer, an advisory member of the "My House" anti-porn initiative in the Diocese of Kansas City, Kan., told 200 men at the 13th annual Morning Men's Spirituality event that pornography is so prevalent it qualifies as one of the major battles the Catholic Church must speak out against.

"It is the single largest battle, in my view, in this room," said Spencer, an advertising executive and consultant. "There are men here -- and not just one or two -- who are addicted to pornography and who struggle with sexual issues. This sexual Katrina is destroying homes, families, men, our society, our church. This is enormous." Spencer, who spoke Oct. 17 at St. Rita Church, said as many as 54 percent of men admit to viewing porn in a one-month period, and 10 percent are addicted, including those who regularly attend church."
Our Faith

Wanting proof of the miracles of Jesus

By Father John Catoir
Catholic News Service

A classroom full of Catholic high school students took turns challenging their religion teacher. They wanted some kind of proof that Jesus really performed the miracles attributed to him.

The teacher explained that the apostles were firsthand witnesses of the extraordinary events in Jesus’ life.

We read their accounts and make an act of faith in the trustworthiness of their testimony. Jesus performed dozens of miracles to support his divinity: healing the sick, restoring sight to the blind, bringing people back to life, changing water into wine, walking on the water, calming a storm at sea.

His greatest miracle was his own resurrection from the dead.

Skeptics and atheists go so far as to say that there is not a shred of evidence in the entire universe for the existence of the supernatural. They demand empirical evidence before they will believe anything.

Believers know that the entire universe did not just appear out of nowhere, that something doesn’t come from nothing. Faith in God as a benign creator is not an irrational act; it is based on deductive reasoning, for example, the way Sherlock Holmes solved his murder mysteries.

Through revelation we know that God created our wonderful universe out of love.

Doubt is basically a refusal to believe this, unless scientific evidence can prove it. Doubt is a flat refusal to accept supernatural truths.

It is not the same as an intellectual difficulty. All the difficulties in the world do not add up to a single doubt.

A difficulty is a feeling of unease as we try to comprehend the mystery behind a doctrine. For instance, we believe in the Trinity, but we cannot figure out how three can equal one. Everyone has difficulty trying to explain how Jesus Christ is both God and man, but believers accept the teaching as an imponderable mystery.

Accepting mysteries can be difficult, but it is not unreasonable. Jesus revealed these mysteries to us. Belief in Jesus is more than an act of accepting the historical facts about his life. It is primarily an act of the will, prompted by grace. We accept Jesus as our personal Lord and Savior.

Once we do this, we banish all lingering doubts.

Remember when the apostle Thomas said he wouldn’t believe that Jesus rose from the dead unless he could put his finger into the Lord’s nailmarks and put his hand into Christ’s side? Once Thomas did that, he believed fully.

Later Jesus said to Thomas, "Have you come to believe because you have seen me? Blessed are those who have not seen and have believed" (Jn 20:29).

Faith is a gift, the benefits of which are immeasurable. The will to believe is a grace, which can be accepted or rejected.

Take the leap of faith with a prayer as simple as this: Father I accept the gift of your love with deep humility and gratitude. Help me to overcome my doubts. I trust you as my Lord and my God.

St. Damien: I want to be a priest like that

By Father Peter J. Daly
Catholic News Service

In the dark of our parish theater, people could not see the tears rolling down my face. They could not see my chin quivering as actor Reid Sasser made Father Damien de Veuster come alive for us in Aldyth Morris’ play "Damien."

But I was not the only one crying. I could hear sniffles. I could see people reaching for hankies. I could hear them blowing their noses.

This happened the same day that Father Damien was canonized by Pope Benedict XVI in Rome.

Morris’ play is a powerful script. The one-man show lays out the life of Joseph de Veuster, a Belgian farm boy who went halfway round the world to Hawaii in the 19th century, took the name Damien and died serving the lepers on the island of Molokai.

The most beautiful line for me is when St. Damien explains what a vocation is. He says, "If we are lucky, we get a call within a call. We find our niche."

He found his niche with the lepers of Molokai. When he saw them for the first time from the boat, fingers and toes missing, faces eaten away by disease, he said, "I knew I must go and be their priest."

Reid Sasser’s presentation of Morris’ play was a chance for me to introduce another generation to St. Damien, the holy man of Hawaii, just as I met him 50 years ago.

When I was a kid I saw a film about St. Damien. The nuns showed it to our grade school. In the 1950s it was a rare treat to see a movie in school.

Assembled in the school gym, we watched a grainy black-and-white film based on the book by John Farrow, "Damien the Leper."

Those images are still imprinted on my mind. I was shocked that leprosy existed in the real world, not just in the Bible.

St. Damien is a "boy’s saint." He is not some delicate figure, hidden away in a cloister. He is in the battle for Christ.

Like most men, he had a temper. But he put it to good use for the lepers. Jesus had a temper too.

St. Damien was a fighter. He battled bishop and bureaucrat for his leper friends. I loved that he himself helped to care for all creation.

(Please See DALY/22)
God provides for Elijah and a hungry widow

The Lord said to Elijah, "Leave here, go east and hide in the Wadi Cherith, east of the Jordan. You shall drink of the stream, and I have commanded ravens to feed you there.

Elijah obeyed the Lord, and the ravens brought him bread and meat in the morning and the evening.

Eventually the stream ran dry, because there had been a drought.

Then the Lord said to Elijah, "Move on to Zarephath of Sidon and stay there. I have designated a widow there to provide for you."

Again Elijah obeyed the Lord. When he entered the city, he met a widow gathering sticks.

"Please bring me a small cupful of water to drink," he said to her. The woman nodded and went to fetch the water. Elijah added, "Please bring along a bit of bread."

The woman shook her head and said, "As the Lord, your God, lives, I have nothing baked; there is only a handful of flour in my jar and a little oil in my jug. Just now I was collecting a couple of sticks, to go in and prepare something for myself and my son; when we have eaten it, we shall die."

Elijah looked at her and said, "Do not be afraid. Go and do as you propose. But first make me a little cake and bring it to me. Then you can prepare something for yourself and your son."

The woman looked into Elijah's eyes. There had been a drought. She had enough food for one last small meal with her son.

Sensing her feelings, Elijah said, "For the Lord, the God of Israel, says, 'The jar of flour shall not go empty, nor the jug of oil run dry, until the day when the Lord sends rain upon the earth.'"

The woman hurried back to her home to do what Elijah had requested. Because she obeyed the Lord, as Elijah promised, her jar of flour and her jug of oil remained full, no matter how much she used to prepare her meals, for a year, until the rains came and ended the drought.

But then her son became very sick and he died. "Why have you done this to me?" the widow asked Elijah. Elijah took the boy and laid him on a bed. "O Lord," he said, "my God, will you afflict even the widow with whom I am staying by killing her son? ... Let the life breath return to the body of this child."

The Lord heard Elijah and restored the boy's life.
Generations X and Y: Have today’s young people lost their faith?

By Therese J. Borchard

According to a few recent polls, we can safely say that in the future there will be fewer folks frying fish on Friday and organizing parish picnics than there were in the past.

According to the Pew Research Center Social & Demographic Trends survey, released in June, as many as one-fourth of Americans ages 18 to 29 say they are atheists, agnostics or have no religion. Only 7 percent of those over the age of 65 describe themselves that way. Among those ages 30 to 49, 13 percent claim to be atheists, agnostics or reject religion.

If that's not depressing enough, the American Religious Identification Survey, conducted by Trinity College of Hartford, Conn., and published in March, shows that the percentage of Americans who define themselves as Christians has dropped from 86 percent in 1990 to 76 percent in 2008.

And finally, the Pew Forum on Religion and Public Life, conducted by Harvard University professor Robert Putnam, published in May, indicates that the number of young Americans who say they have no religious affiliation has jumped from between 5 percent to 10 percent in past years to between 30 percent and 40 percent today.

Putnam, the author of "Bowling Alone," is alarmed about the decreased involvement today in community and civic affairs not so much for spiritual or religious reasons but for social ones. Because, according to his research, people who attend church are much more apt to vote, volunteer and give to charity.

So our agenda should be more than getting Gen X and Y into the church doors; we must engage them in the community life of a church.

From my perspective, it's much more fun to claim allegiance to a church when you are involved on a variety of different levels and have friends attending the same functions as you.

An active community life, I believe, is why so many folks are flocking to the nondenominational megachurches today. In fact, according to the American Religious Identification Survey, the number of Americans who affiliate with megachurches has increased from less than 200,000 in 1990 to 2.5 million in 2001 to over 8 million today.

Evangelical Christians made up 5 percent of the population in 1990 and 11.8 percent in 2008.

If Putnam is right, and I think he is, changes in the religion landscape could have profound impact on our society and culture in America, not only for us, but especially for our children.

It's time to make our own contribution and get involved in our faith communities.

When a loved one has depression

By Bill and Monica Dodds

For someone with depression, there's often a feeling of hopelessness. For the loved one of someone with depression, there's often a feeling of helplessness.

In its section on men and depression, the National Institute of Mental Health says: "The most important thing anyone can do for a man who may have depression is to help him get to a doctor for a diagnostic evaluation and treatment. First, try to talk to him about depression -- help him understand that depression is a common illness among men and is nothing to be ashamed about. ... Then encourage him to see a doctor to determine the cause of his symptoms and obtain appropriate treatment."

There's no denying that any form of mental illness still carries a stiff social stigma and that may be especially true for men and teens. As the spouse, sibling or parent of an adult child, it can be tough to even raise the issue -- the specter of depression. As the mother or father of a teen, you know how hard it can be to get someone in that age group to admit any kind of vulnerability.

It can also be hard for you to consider that possibility. You don't want your loved one to have depression. You prefer to hope that maybe this is something he or she will "just snap out of" or just grow out of.

But the more you learn about this condition, the more you'll come to realize that, if it is depression, the odds of snapping out of it or growing out of it are miniscule.

Learning about depression, as frightening as that might be, is how you not only better identify it within your family but prepare yourself to help your loved one get the diagnostic evaluation and treatment that the NIMH so highly recommends.

These are other suggestions from the NIMH:

- Sometimes you may need to make an appointment for the depressed person and accompany him or her to the doctor. Once he or she is in treatment, you can continue to help by encouraging the person to stay with treatment until symptoms begin to lift (perhaps several weeks later) or to seek different treatment if no improvement occurs.

- Second only in importance to that evaluation and treatment is offering emotional support to the depressed person. (Understanding, patience, affection and encouragement!) This means not brush-

ANSWERS

Answers:

1. God, 2. Aaron,
3. Saul, 4. Herod,
'Christmas Carol': Latest adaptation could scare younger kids

By John Mulderig
Catholic News Service

NEW YORK -- Acclaimed on its publication and so popular since that it has never gone out of print, Charles Dickens' classic 1843 novella "A Christmas Carol" also has provided the basis for innumerable stage and screen adaptations.

The latest, a lavish and well-crafted 3-D animated version from Disney, though free of objectionable content, does feature images and special effects likely to disturb sensitive youngsters.

As faithfully retold by writer-director Robert Zemeckis, this is the familiar story of miserly misanthrope Ebenezer Scrooge (voice of Jim Carrey), who notoriously regards Christmas as a "humbug."

After spending the eve of the holiday making his much-put-upon clerk Bob Cratchit (voice of Gary Oldman) miserable, and rebuffing the cheerful invitation of his nephew, Fred (voice of Colin Firth), to a celebratory family dinner, Scrooge retires to his dreary mansion for a supper of cheap gruel. But his routine is interrupted by the tortured specter of his late business partner, Jacob Marley (also voiced by Oldman).

Chained to heavy money chests symbolic of the greediness that marked his life, and condemned to wander in eternal restlessness, Marley -- a grimly decaying animated corpse -- warns Scrooge that he is headed for a similar doom, and that he will soon be visited by three spirits who will try to persuade him to change his ways.

These, of course, are the ghosts of Christmas Past, Present and Yet to Come, all three voiced by Carrey.

The first, who appears as a flickering candle, returns Scrooge to the scene of his lonely childhood and his apprenticeship under fun-loving Mr. Fezziwig (voice of Bob Hoskins), during which he fell in love with gentle Belle (voice of Robin Wright Penn). As the sprite also forces Scrooge to recall, however, their romance was eventually ruined by his idolatrous love of money.

The Ghost of Christmas Present, a jolly, thriving figure, gives Scrooge a "heavenly perspective" on current events, revealing the straitened circumstances in which Cratchit's meager salary leaves his family, especially his sickly, crippled, but ever-chipper son Tiny Tim (Oldman's voice as well), and the pitying mockery with which Scrooge is discussed by Fred and his guests.

With the approach of midnight, the Ghost of Christmas Present suddenly turns corporeal and is replaced by the last apparition, a black-robed, silent skeleton. The vision he conjures sees Scrooge chased for his life by a runaway horse-drawn hearse and forced to experience his own un mourned death.

Such eerie elements, though present in the original, make this unsuitable viewing for the most impressionable. But heartier family members of almost any age will be delighted by a sweeping survey of Victorian London, from its coziest fireplaces to its gloomiest graveyards.

As for the central conversion story, its Christian context is unashamedly detailed in the lyrics of carolers, in the lingering view of the ornamental cross above a city church and in the upbeat piety of the original, make this unsuitable viewing.

"A Christmas Carol" will be shown on both Imax and conventional screens.

'Three Cups of Tea' and the Pennies for Peace Project

'Submitted by Deborah Michalewicz

Three Cups of Tea is the best-selling, astonishing, and uplifting story of a real-life Indiana Jones, Greg Mortenson, and his remarkable humanitarian campaign in the Taliban's backyard.

All American Greg tried to climb K2 in Pakistan, but God had different plans. Greg was exhausted because he had just returned from a rescue mission, and his own climb ended in his being nearly frozen to death – alone and on the mountain. However, a poor tribe of Balti Pakistanis took him in and nursed him to health by sharing with him from their meager pittance. When he recovered, Greg asked how he could ever repay them. The village elder, Haji Ali, took Greg to the top of a hill where the girls and boys were scratching in the dirt with sticks. Greg turned to the chief with a puzzled face so Haji explained the children were doing their lessons. A teacher occasionally came by, gave some problems, and left only to return a month later - maybe. Brokenhearted, Greg promised to build a school for the village of Korphe. His story can be found in the book Three Cups of Tea.

Greg goes on to tell about how he was once kidnapped by Taliban factions, and how he saw firsthand wahhabi madrassas, military schools, springing up all over Afghanistan and Pakistan funded with American dollars deposited by you and I at local gas station around the United States. In this poorest of the poor countries, these military centers offered the riches of food, clothes, a roof and an education to the young boys.

The only trouble is, the education they offered is one of hate, fear, war, and death. And girls are excluded from this so-called education.

Greg not only built the Korphe School, but also kept returning again and again to build 130 schools – now with over 50,000 students – for girls and boys. During the 11 Days of Global Peace, The Peace Ambassadors of West Texas wanted to see more schools built and maintained, we wanted to see educated teachers living in each village teaching daily, and we wanted to see girls and boys with real pencils and paper; not sticks and dirt.

Instead of allowing the Taliban to corrupt and brainwash the innocent young with daily indoctrinations of hate, suicide bombs, and destruction, we asked people to take the seeds of peace – pennies – from their pockets and purses and change this world.

The Peace Ambassadors campaigned to save our young ones from going into the war and to educate other young ones in the world's poorest region passionately believing we can all learn to coexist by planting the seeds of peace with education. There are Pennies for Peace collection cans around San Angelo. Checks made payable to Peace Ambassadors are also accepted if one would like to grow a whole garden of peace. All can make a real and lasting difference for the world.

Deborah Michalewicz is coordinator of 11 Days of Global Peace in San Angelo. Contact her at 325.484.3365 and 325.656.4594. Inquiries and donations can be mailed to Peace Ambassadors of West Texas, 3222 Vista Lane, San Angelo, Texas 76904.
The Angelus

CCHD collection focuses on helping families struggling in bad economy

By Catholic News Service

WASHINGTON -- "Families are struggling. Faith is calling" is the theme for this year’s national collection for the Catholic Campaign for Human Development, which will be taken up in most U.S. Catholic churches the weekend of Nov. 21-22.

"This year, our call as Catholics to bring glad tidings to the poor ... to proclaim liberty to captives and recovery of sight to the blind, to let the oppressed go free is more important than ever before," said Bishop Roger P. Morin of Biloxi, Miss., who is chairman of the U.S. bishops’ CCHD subcommittee.

He made the comments in a letter to parishes asking Catholics to be as generous as possible during the annual collection that is the primary source of support for the U.S. bishops’ domestic anti-poverty program.

Twenty-five percent of the proceeds support projects in the diocese where the funds are collected.

"The mission of CCHD is crucial in 2009 -- to uplift and embolden all who are one layoff or one medical scare away from the poverty line -- and all who are already there," the bishop said.

The nation’s current economic crisis has left many families and individuals without the security of a job, health care or a sufficient retirement fund, a press release on the collection noted.

According to U.S. census figures, the number of people currently living in poverty is estimated at 39.8 million, which is almost 3 million more than a year ago. The unemployment rate reached a 26-year high of 9.8 percent in September.

OLFEN: Respect taught at early age

(From 13)

demonstrated recently with Fr. Bhaskar Morugudi and the recently departed Fr. Magnus that Olfenite and Rowenaites love their pastors just the same, it matters not where they are from or how thick their accent.

"I think the deep faith of the early parishioners and the knowledge that sacrifice and service were a deep part of that faith was passed on to their children," said Fr. Bhaskar.

"Family life has always been held in high regard. This seems to be an important factor in raising children with the attitude that sacrifice and service is something to strive for.

"I heard one former pastor state that the people of St. Joseph’s always put their pastor on a pedestal and that this respect for those in religious life is also passed on to their children."

Jeff Latta picks pumpkins outside his house in Albany, Ohio, in early September. He grows them and sells them for extra money to help him stay current on his mortgage. The U.S. bishops’ Nov. 21-22 Catholic Campaign for Human Development collection will focus on helping families still struggling in tough economic times. (CNS photo/Nick Carey, Reuters) (Oct. 28, 2009)

The Adult Catechism

‘Amen’: synonymous with ‘This I believe’

By Most Rev. Donal Wuerl
Arch Bishop of Washington

How often the word "Amen" is on our lips. We say it at the end of grace before and after meals, as we conclude morning and night prayers, numerous times during the celebration of the Eucharist, particularly at the Great Amen; and when we receive a blessing, especially at the conclusion of Mass. It is our most frequent response in public and private prayer. As the Catechism of the Catholic Church concludes the study of Part I, the Profession of Faith, it devotes a whole section to the word, "amen." It is pointed out that the Creed, like the final book of the Bible, ends with this Hebrew word, amen.

The last book of the New Testament and, therefore, of the Bible in its penultimate verse proclaims, "He who testifies to these things says, 'Surely I am coming soon.' Amen! Come Lord Jesus!" (Revelation 22:20). Then the final verse is a prayer directed to God on our behalf: "The grace of the Lord Jesus be with all the saints. Amen." (Revelation 22:21)

The concluding words of the New Testament are an affirmation of faith in the Lord Jesus, in his return, and in his loving presence with us as we await his Second Coming. For as we learn in the Catechism, "In Hebrew, amen comes from the same root as the word 'believe.' This root expresses solidarity, trustworthiness, faithfulness. And so we can understand why 'Amen' may express both God’s faithfulness towards us and our trust in him" (1062). Our living response to God’s revelation recorded in the pages of sacred Scripture and professed in summary form in the Creed is amen - I believe.

The process is timeless. God speaks to us and reveals who he is and that it is God who speaks. Out of this recognition on our part comes adherence both to God and what God says is an act of faith. Revelation and faith are personal gifts of a loving God who acts freely in this world and in the human heart. In the Second Vatican Council’s Dogmatic Constitution on Divine Revelation, we are instructed that for faith to be shown, "The grace of God and the interior help of the Holy Spirit must precede and assist, moving the heart and turning it to God, opening the eyes of the mind and giving joy and ease to everyone in assenting to the truth and believing it" (Dei Verbum, 5). Reaching back over more than 1,400 years, the Council reaffirms a statement of the Second Council of Orange in 529 that the act of faith is one done in "joy and ease."

The key to our ability regularly to affirm our belief with as simple an effort as "amen" is the fact that the gracious assistance of grace, God makes it possible for each of us to have personal faith. Faith is always free and personal. No one is forced to believe. It comes from the inner conviction that we have heard the word of God and God can neither deceive nor be deceived. What God reveals to us is the truth -- a truth on which we can base our lives and direct our actions. Rather than force us against our will to accept and believe in him, God makes himself present in the world by his wondrous saving deeds and words and also in our hearts by his grace. God invites us to recognize him in the light of God’s self-revelation.

Here we touch the very heart of the mystery of faith in God and our own human free will. God reveals to us that it is God who speaks to us. Since with our limited human capability we have no way of verifying that it truly is God who speaks, we need to make a leap of faith. To do this requires God’s grace.

At the same time our free will must choose to accept that it is God who speaks to us and to adhere to

(Pleas See WUERL/21)
Diocese holds family faith formation workshop

Submitted by the Diocesan Office of Education and Formation

After a very successful priests’ convocation last March, John Roberto, president of LifelongFaith Associates and editor of the journal LifelongFaith, returned to the diocese to address parish leaders. The Office of Education and Formation coordinated the event. Twenty-nine parishes/missions were represented at the workshop entitled Approaches and Practices for Family Faith Formation on September 26.

The U.S. bishops’ 1994 pastoral message to families, Follow the Way of Love, states, “A family is our first community and most basic way in which the Lord gathers us, and acts in the world. The early church expressed this truth by calling the Christian family a domestic church or church of the home... Your domestic church is not complete by itself of course. It should be united with and supported by the parishes and other communities within the larger Church.”

Roberto showed how this concept can be developed at the parish level with practical activities that can be easily implemented.

Several times Roberto stressed the need to be faithful to the process and not worry about numbers. One needs to be patient for the harvest. The challenge is to be more intentional about focusing on the family dimension in all we do in the ministries of the parish. “We can do this”, Roberto kept repeating as he pointed out the many possibilities of making others aware of the family focus.

PHOTOS: Representatives from some of the 29 parishes and missions, top, heard John Roberto, right, at the diocese’s Family Faith Formation workshop Sept. 26 in San Angelo.

USCCB: Bishops favor health care bill with no expansion of abortion

(From 14)

priority for health care reform the Catholic Church has long supported.

"We now ask you to redouble your efforts to ensure that we speak clearly, effectively and together for health care reform that protects life and conscience and reaches out to the vulnerable and marginalized who need life-affirming health care the most," they wrote.

"The bishops want health care reform, but they recoil at any expansion of abortion," said Helen Osman, USCCB communications secretary, who helped organize the campaign. "Most Americans don’t want to pay for other people’s abortions via health care either."

"This impasse on the road to reform of health care can be broken if Congress writes in language that assures that the Hyde amendment law continues to guide U.S. federal spending policy," she said.

The Hyde amendment bars funding of abortion in the spending bills for the departments of Labor and Health and Human Services and in military hospitals, federal employees’ health benefits, foreign assistance and other circumstances.

A USCCB release on the bulletin-insert campaign said that the Catholic bishops have a long history of support for health care reform "based on its teaching that health care is essential for human life and dignity and on its experience providing health care and assisting those without coverage."
**SEASON: Proclaim Christ proudly**

(From 1)

Christmas shopping keep proclaiming loudly and clearly wherever you go Merry Christmas, and let people know that Christ is the Reason for the Season. Tell store owners you want to see signs that say “Merry Christmas”. Those who want to secularize and downgrade the Christian meaning of Christmas should not celebrate Christmas at all because they primarily want to capitalize on the economic dimension of this celebration, but overlook the person who is at the center of Christmas – The Christ Child. Jesus makes Christmas truly be Christian. When people try to celebrate the Christmas season without Christ, then it loses its meaning, and becomes just a secular event.

There are many secular crusaders who want to neuter Christmas, saying that we need to give more attention to the phrase, Happy Holidays, than to Merry Christmas. Those who want to do this need to remember that even the expression of “Happy Holidays” is a shortened term of the phrase “Happy Holy Days”. This expression refers to the Holy Days that are celebrated during the season of Advent and Christmas, the Immaculate Conception of Mary, the Patroness of the United States, and the Feast of Our Lady of Guadalupe, the Patroness of the Americas. Happy Holy Holidays also refer to the Holy Days of St. Stephen, the first martyr, and of the blessed feast of the Holy Innocents! Happy Holy Days should also mean enjoy your St. John the Evangelizer Day and may you grow in the faith as you celebrate the Solennity of Mary the Mother of God on January first.

Those who want to secularize Christmas and make only the Christmas symbols something commercial, devoid of the spiritual, need to remember that the spiritual dimension of Christmas is so ingrained in our culture in ways many people have forgotten. Take for example the holly. The holly with its pointed leaves and red berries traditionally was meant to represent two things – the burning bush that attracted Moses and Christ’s crown of thorns and drops of blood. The babe in the manger that we are now honoring is the Son of God Who appeared to Moses in the burning bush many centuries ago, and shed His blood on the cross for all of us.

The Christmas tree is perhaps the best known of all the yuletide symbols, and is exclusively a Christian custom. The ball-shaped Christmas ornaments on the tree represent the tree of knowledge of good and evil. The candy canes and other sweet decorations represent the tree of life. As the tree is always green, it represents the hope and new life that Christ bring us.

Of course, at the center of all of our Christmas celebrations is the crèche, the crib with the Child Jesus in the manger, the One Who is the Reason for the Season. How sad it is that there are some of those who want to celebrate the Christmas season and the vacation days that go with it, but want to remove the One Who is the Reason for the Season from our schools and other public places. Those who strive to do this should not celebrate Christmas but continue their ordinary activities of work during the Christmas season and not buy gifts because all gifts remind us that all gifts are first and foremost for Christ, and that He is God’s great gift for us.

Each Christmas I remind the Knights of Columbus of our diocese to make special bumper stickers that proclaim “Keep Christ in Christmas.” When you shop and people want to discourage mentioning Christ, or want to remove His image, please remind them that they have lost the true meaning of Christmas, and even let them know that you will prefer to shop at some other place.

A little early before Christmas but maybe not as stores are already filled with commercial material elements of Christmas. May all have a hopeful Advent and a blessed and joyful Christmas with Christ and remember – Jesus is the Reason for the Season.

**EDICTAL SUMMONS**

**CASE: GLEASON (SAYLES) -- PELL**

**NO.: SO 09/49**

The Tribunal Office of the Catholic Diocese of San Angelo is seeking Hans William Pell.

You are hereby summoned to appear before the Tribunal of the Catholic Diocese of San Angelo, at 804 Ford Street, San Angelo, Texas 76905, on or before the 30th day of November 2009, to answer to the Petition of Lindsay Joanne Gleason (Sales), now introduced before the Diocesan Tribunal in an action styled, “Lindsay Sayles and Hans Pell, Petition for Declaration of Invalidity of Marriage.” Said Petition is identified as Case: GLEASON (SAYLES) -- PELL; Protocol No.: SO 09/49, on the Tribunal Docket of the Diocese of San Angelo.

You may communicate with the Tribunal in person or in writing. Failure to communicate within the prescribed period of time will be considered your consent for the Tribunal to continue its proceedings in the above-named case.

Given at the Tribunal of the Diocese of San Angelo on the 30th day October 2009.

Reverend Tom Barley, MSW, MBA, M. Div., JCL
Judicial Vicar

**CASE: ENGELE -- WOMACK**

**NO.: SO 09/50**

The Tribunal Office of the Catholic Diocese of San Angelo is seeking Wanda Lou Womack.

You are hereby summoned to appear before the Tribunal of the Catholic Diocese of San Angelo, at 804 Ford Street, San Angelo, Texas 76905, on or before the 30th day of November 2009, to answer to the Petition of Leo Herman Engele, II, now introduced before the Diocesan Tribunal in an action styled, “Leo Engele, II and Wanda Womack, Petition for Declaration of Invalidity of Marriage.” Said Petition is identified as Case: ENGELE -- WOMACK; Protocol No.: SO 09/50, on the Tribunal Docket of the Diocese of San Angelo.

You may communicate with the Tribunal in person or in writing. Failure to communicate within the prescribed period of time will be considered your consent for the Tribunal to continue its proceedings in the above-named case.

Given at the Tribunal of the Diocese of San Angelo on the 30th day of October 2009.

Reverend Tom Barley, MSW, MBA, M. Div., JCL
Judicial Vicar

**TEXAS: Government plan not best option**

(From 9)

"We offer assistance to those who face hardship due to a lack of access to health care through our Catholic hospitals, nursing homes and hospice care, as well as ministries such as Catholic Charities, Respect Life and Immigrant Outreach," he said.

A resolution on health care reform adopted by the Catholic Medical Association during its 78th annual educational conference in Springfield, Ill., Oct. 22-24, called for a complete change in the government's approach to health care reform.

It urged Congress and President Barack Obama "to 'reset' the effort to enact health care reform legislation, to re-examine their commitment to the principles of the current legislation, and to begin the process anew."

Dr. Louis Breschi, association president, said the group has become "highly concerned by the direction health care reform legislation has continued to take. The whole thrust of the legislation voted out of congressional committees is flawed. It tries to fix the real problems we have in health care with massive new government spending and mandates."

The resolution also urges the legislators and Obama to exclude funding of abortion in health care reform and provide meaningful protection for the conscience rights of health care providers in any legislation.

**WUERL: Free will elevated by God’s grace**

(From 19)

God’s word. While our free will may be touched by God’s grace, it is still a human act of self-determination elevated by God’s grace.

The United States Catholic Catechism for Adults reminds us that "the Church initiates members into an intimate relationship with God -- indeed, into a particip-
ST. JOSEPH: Youths express desire to learn more about vocations in letter

sending a glorious gift such as our priest to spread his word to everyone in our community.

We appreciate the time that the priest spends with us the most. Especially since we do not have a priest of our own, we are totally grateful for the three priests who come to us and truly treat us like we are their own parish. We also like the way the priests have taken an interest in us, the youth of the Church. We like the way they include us in the Mass and are always talking with us after Mass and host and participate in retreats for us.

Some of the things we can do to show our appreciation for our priests are simply showing up to Church for Mass every week. We should also be involved and tithe during Mass and not just show up. Since most of our priests are away from their families we need to embrace them as a part of our own family and invite them to attend family functions or just invite them out to eat or have them over for dinner or lunch. These are just some of the things we came up with to show our thanks and gratitude for all the work they do for us.

All we ask of our priests is to be more involved with us, the youth. We know that they are very busy individuals, but we believe that the youth of the Catholic faith are the future of our religion and we always want to be involved in any and all ways.

Some of the activities we have planned for our priests this year include inviting them and you, Bishop Pfeifer, to our Youth Blessing of the cars and keys of our driving youth. We are also having a float in the Christmas parade which shall feature our priests and our youth. We decided that the representatives of Christ should be showcased in the parade used to celebrate the birth of Christ. We are also planning on having a breakfast celebration with our priest on Good Friday and total participation in the Stations of the Cross. In June, we are planning an appreciation and recognition youth dinner for our priest and adult leaders.

We think the more participation with the youth by the priests could result in more young people being interested in vocations in the Church. While people are young they are more inclined to learn about and become interested in vocations. If priests spend more time with youths describing and teaching more about their vocation we think more young people would be more interested in pursuing these vocations.

In finishing, we are very grateful for what we have and have been blessed with a trio of priests that go above and beyond for our parish. We thank you all for what you do.

With God and love,
St. Joseph Parish Youth

MISSAL: New translation still months, perhaps years away from adoption

7. What about the rest of the Missal?
The text of Ordo Missae I (Order of Mass) is the first of twelve (12) sections of the Missale Romanum, editio typica tertia undergoing translation. The remaining sections, which include the Proper of Seasons, Ordo Missae II (containing Prefaces, Solemn Blessings, and additional Eucharistic Prayers), Proper of Saints, Commons, Masses and Prayers for Various Needs and Intentions, Votive Masses, Masses for the Dead, Eucharistic Prayers for Masses with Children, and Antiphons, as well as Introductory Material and Appendices, have undergone first drafts (called “Green Books”). The second drafts (called “Gray Books”) for several sections have been completed and await votes by the Conferences of Bishops. Each section must follow the same process as the Ordo Missae I.

8. When will all this be complete?
Because this work involves the participation of ICEL, the USCCB as well as other English-speaking conferences of bishops, and the Holy See, it is difficult to set a firm date for the completion of the process of translation and approval. The current estimate, however, for the completion of work by the USCCB is November 2010. Once the final section of the Roman Missal has been approved by the USCCB, the complete text of the Missal must still be submitted to the Congregation for Divine Worship and the Discipline of the Sacraments for recognition.

9. When will this be implemented for liturgical use?
The approved text of the Order of Mass has been released as a text for study and formation, but is not intended for liturgical use, that is to say it cannot be used in the celebration of the Mass. The intention of the Congregation for Divine Worship and of the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops is to enable and encourage a process of preparation and catechesis for both priests and the faithful, as well as to make the texts available to composers of liturgical music who can begin to set the texts, especially the acclamations, to music in anticipation of the implementation of the texts for liturgical use. It is hoped that when the time comes to use the texts in the celebration of the Mass, priests will be properly trained, the faithful will have an understanding and appreciation of what is being prayed, and musical settings of the liturgical texts will be readily available. The revised translation of the Order of Mass will be permitted only when the complete text of the Roman Missal (Third Edition) is promulgated.

(From 7)
(From 8)
(From 15)

Daly: Being a priest who helps people a constant desire


Years later, I went to Hawaii to see my high school friend, Charlie Connor, who was stationed there in the Navy.

Charlie suggested we go to Molokai. We rode mules down the steep cliffs to the Kalaupapa peninsula. Escape by land or by sea from that place was almost impossible for the lepers.

We got a tour of the leper settlement by Richard Marx, the "sheriff" of Kalaupapa. He was a leper himself. He was missing some fingers. In his voice you could hear that St. Damien was a living presence. The lepers of Molokai still mourn that St. Damien's body was taken back to Belgium in the 1930s.

People need heroes.
St. Damien is one of mine.
I hope in that theater there was another boy thinking, "I want to be a priest like that."
OBISPO

(Para 2)

Embriones humanos a la investigación, la conciencia común acaba perdiendo el concepto de ecología humana y con ello de la ecología ambiental.

El Papa Benedicto enfatiza que los valores éticos son necesarios para superar la crisis económica global existente, al igual, para erradicar el hambre y promover el desarrollo verdadero para todas las personas del mundo. Él enfatiza que la caridad, el amor, no es opción para los Cristianos, declarando, “Vivir la caridad en la verdad lleva a comprender que la adhesión a los valores del cristianismo no es solo un elemento útil, sino indispensable para la construcción de una buena sociedad y un verdadero desarrollo humano integral.” Él continúa, “El primer capital que se ha de salvaguardar y valorar es el hombre, la persona en su integridad.” [Pasajes especiales del mensaje papal, La Caridad en la Verdad]

“El riesgo de nuestro tiempo es que la interdependencia de hecho entre los hombres y los pueblos no se corresponda con la interacción ética de la conciencia y el intelecto, de la que pueda resultar un desarrollo realmente humano. Sólo con la caridad, iluminada por la luz de la razón y de la fe, es posible conseguir objetivos de desarrollo con un carácter más humano y humanizador.” [9]

“El libro de la naturaleza es uno e indivisible, tanto en lo que concierne a la vida, la sexualidad, el matrimonio, la familia, las relaciones sociales, en una palabra, el desarrollo humano integral.” [51]

BISHOP: Man primary capital to be safeguarded

(From 2)

and along with it, that of environmental ecology.”

Pope Benedict stresses that ethical values are needed to overcome the current global economic crisis as well as to eradicate hunger and promote the real development of all peoples of the world. He stresses that charity, or love, is not an option for Christians, stating, “Practicing charity and truth helps people understand that adhering to the values of Christianity is not merely useful but essential for building a good society and for true integral development.” He continues, “The primary capital to be safeguarded and valued is man, the human person in his or her integrity.”

From the papal message, Charity in Truth:

“The risk for our time is that the de facto interdependence of people and nations is not matched by ethical interactions of consciences and minds that would give rise to truly human development. Only in charity, illumined by the light of reason and faith, is it possible to pursue development goals that possess a more humane and humanizing value.”

“The book of nature is one and indivisible: it takes in not only the environment but also life, sexuality, marriage, the family, social relationships: in a word—integral human development.”

PADRE TAD

(From 10)

La primera objeción es que esto promovería la FIV como un medio de producción de vida humana. Aunque esta técnica ya se ha vuelto cosa común en nuestra sociedad para engendrar hijos, ésta sigue siendo una aproximación inherentemente antíctica a la reproducción humana. La FIV no sólo refrenda la manipulación, el congelamiento y la destrucción de embriones humanos, sino que también viola el sentido íntimo de la procreación humana al reducirlo a un acto de manufactura o producción.

Dicho llanamente, nuestros niños tienen el derecho a ser procreados, no fabricados; tienen el derecho a venir al mundo dentro de la donación marital amorosa de sus padres, no en el frie e impersonal espacio de vidrio de un tubo de ensayo de una caja de Petri; tienen el derecho a estar vinculados de manera única, exclusiva y directa con su madre y su padre que los traen al mundo. La fertilización in vitro no reconoce al hijo todos estos derechos.

La segunda objeción al reemplazo mitochondrial en humanos está en que introduciría una disolución de la paternidad al crear niños que heredarían material genético de tres progenitores. Mientras la madre y el padre contribuirían con la mayor parte del material genético del óvulo y el esperma, una pequeña parte provendría de una segunda madre que dona mitocondrias sanas de sus propios óvulos. En otras palabras, el procedimiento diluye la paternidad al introducir otro progenitor, otra madre, en la procreación del hijo.

Es importante notar que bajo el esquema del reemplazo mitochondrial no sólo se transfieren las mitocondrias sanas sino que de hecho todas las otras estructuras celulares también provienen del óvulo de la segunda mujer (excepto el núclee y sus cromosomas). Dicho de otra forma, una mujer proporciona el ADN de sus propios cromosomas, mientras que otra mujer proporciona todo lo demás: toda la maquinaria subcelular del óvulo, incluyendo las mitocondrias. Por lo tanto, en resumen, no estamos solamente “reparando” un óvulo defectuoso sino construyendo uno nuevo, otro, claramente diferente, con las aportaciones de dos mujeres por separado. El nuevo óvulo no corresponde realmente a ninguna de las dos, de manera que las manipulaciones tecnológicas introducen así una desvinculación entre el hijo concebido a partir del óvulo manufacturado y las dos “madres”. El hijo resulta “distanciado” o “huérfano” de ambas madres involucradas en el proceso.

“Curar” de manera ética los defectos mitochondrial en los niños de la siguiente generación será posible el día que los científicos logren corregir directamente en el ADN mitochondrial las secuencias genéticas mutadas, quizá con el óvulo aún dentro del ovario, de manera que con la ovulación la pareja logre la concepción y el embarazo en la relación marital normal.

No está de más recordar que nuestras células sexuales, tanto esperma como óvulo, contienen y expresan de manera única nuestra individualidad y nuestra identidad, así como los caracteres paternos y maternos. Evidentemente, estas células no deberían traspasarse o venderse, ni integrar en partes, a otras personas para producir hijos. Particularmente, la decisión de una mujer de donar a otra mujer sus óvulos, o parte significativa de ellos, viola la exclusividad inscrita en su cuerpo y en su sistema reproductivo. Por lo tanto, y contrario a la creencia popular, la tecnología del reemplazo mitochondrial no es un ejemplo auténtico de “cura” o “corrección” de un padecimiento. Se trata de un medio para establecer un sistema alternativo, completamente diferente, para hacer un bebé, y que, invariablemente, va en contra del orden auténtico de la procreación humana en el matrimonio.

El Padre Tadeusz Pacholczyk hizo su doctorado en neurociencias en la Universidad de Yale y su trabajo postdoctoral en la Universidad de Harvard. Es Sacerdote para la Diócesis de Fall River, Massachusetts, y se desempeña como Director de Educación en el Centro Nacional Católico de Bioética en Philadelphia. The National Catholic Bioethics Center: www.ncbcenter.org Traducción: María Elena Rodríguez
Abilene

Left and right, scenes from the Holy Family/Abilene Youth Group protesting at Planned Parenthood on Oct. 11.

San Angelo

From left to right, Ann Hoelscher, Becky Gould, Cindy Lemley and Loretta Sughrue priming the lattice porch and front of a “Rebuilding Together/Christmas in October” house project. The work is done every year by parishioners at St. Therese in Carlsbad. (Story/Pg. 5)

Dioce-Scenes

Rowena

A Rosary Rally was held on the Rowena Town Square on October 10 as part of the “America Needs Fatima” movement. At left, Father Bhaskar gives the final blessing ending the Rally. The event was the 5th annual Rosary Rally that has been held in Rowena.

Carlsbad

Parishioners at Holy Family in Abilene came together to “Celebrate the Family” at its 24th annual FallFest. Everyone enjoyed great food, live entertainment, bingo, and all kinds of games for the kids. Decorated with festive fall colors, the facilities provided an atmosphere for the harvest celebration and an opportunity for parishioners and guests to visit and get to know each other better. Proceeds from this year’s FallFest will go back into the community to assist nonprofits and others who provide health and human services to members of the community. Over 250 parishioners volunteered to work shifts at FallFest to make the event’s operations run smoothly. By providing that service to one another, FallFest was a great success.