Diocese to host Region X youth conference, Nov. 16-18

‘Shaken by the Spirit’ expected to draw over 1,500 youth

By Brandon McAuliffe
Special to The Angelus

Later this month, over 1,500 teenagers from 18 dioceses and archdioceses in Arkansas, Oklahoma and Texas will converge on the Concho Valley for the biennial Region 10 Catholic Youth Conference.

The three-day event is going to take place at various locations around the San Angelo area, but will primarily be centered at the San Angelo Convention Center and with the exception of the closing Mass on Sunday, November 18, will be closed to the general public.

This year’s conference will also mark the first time the event has been in a smaller city and not somewhere such as Dallas, Houston, Little Rock or Oklahoma City.

Year of Faith opens

Msgr. James Plagens, far left at podium, a retired senior priest in Midland, delivers the homily at St. Stephen’s Church in Midland during a special Mass opening the Year of Faith, October 11. The Mass was for Catholics in the Midland-Odessa deanery. Similar Masses were held in San Angelo and Abilene, headquarters for those deaneries. Msgr. Plagens was studying to become a priest in Rome during the years when the documents of Vatican II were being established.

Photo by Alan P. Torre / aptorre.com

Bishop honors memory, work of Nellie Gray

By Jimmy Patterson
Editor / The Angelus

Calling her the most important pro-life figure in the history of the Church in the United States, Bishop Michael D. Pfeifer, paid tribute to Big Spring native Nellie Jane Gray, who went on to establish the national Pro-Life March in Washington, DC, in two October ceremonies.

Bishop Pfeifer said he felt that one day, Gray could be canonized for her work in the pro-life movement.

The bishop made his comments at a prayer service and procession for Gray in Midland, where he used
From the Bishop’s Desk

Year of Faith: Time to answer Christ’s ‘Who do you say I am?’

By Bishop Michael Pfeifer, OMI

We are in the beautiful Year of Faith that was proclaimed by Pope Benedict XVI to begin October 11, 2012, and during this Year, we are all called to renew our commitment to the faith that as the Pope says is, “always the same, yet the source of ever new life.” Our Holy Father points out that at the center of this Year of Faith is Jesus Christ, and calls us to renew and strengthen our personal relationship with Him, as we also build up His presence in each family and in each community.

After Christ had journeyed with his apostles for a long while, He presented to them the piercing question that made them go deep into their hearts to find an answer. His question was: “Who do you say that I am?” In the Gospel, we read that Peter, replying for the others, would say “You are the Messiah, the Son of the living God.” Peter and the others had to search deeply in their hearts to give a reply to this question, which would imply their commitment to continue their discipleship.

During the Year of Faith, Christ is presenting to us that very same question: “Who do you say that I am?” Put clearly and simply, Christ is asking each one of us and each family and community, What place do I have in your life? How are you living my Gospel? How are you answering the call I make to you to be my disciples? Our faith is the foundation of who we are as Catholic Christians, and it is a gracious gift from God. Yet in our contemporary world, we are increasingly vulnerable to secular movements that want to pull...
From the Editor

Movies that make you go, ‘Hmmm’

By Jimmy Patterson

I enjoy a good adventure movie just like the next guy and I have rarely seen a Western I didn’t thoroughly enjoy. Lately, with the ease of downloading, my wife and I have been on a foreign film kick, and there are some good ones out there. But it’s the movie with a moral that we enjoy most and there seems to be an abundance of, and thank goodness for that.

“For Greater Glory” is part international, part western, part adventure and for those reasons it is a recent favorite. But the more cerebral films are greater pleasures, especially if you’re a Catholic looking for hope in the message.

“The Way” seems to be everyone’s movie of choice of late and it is a fine, fine film, but I found myself preferring “Win Win.” Starring Paul Giamatti, who did such a fine turn as John Adams in the HBO miniseries, leads a cast of largely no name actors. The great thing about the film is it asks the hard questions. It inspires a “What would you do?” type conversation while prompting discussion on whether Giamatti’s character made the best choices. Despite some language that runs throughout, I highly recommend it.

“People Like Us” is a moving story of a brother and sister coming together after a lifetime of not even realizing they had a sibling. As my wife said, “It’s not a traditional love story, but it is most definitely a love story.” The messages of love and family are timeless.

Most recently, we downloaded a little film called “Seeking a Friend for the End of the World.” The movie is about a group of people who learn they have 21 days before an asteroid strikes the world and everyone dies. The line of the movie comes when a voice over of a radio announcer says, “We’ll continue to mark the asteroid’s progress and provide coverage on the end days, along with your favorite classic rock…”

The movie opens with an onslaught of debauchery by characters who figure with just three weeks left, they’ll sleep with whomever they please, drink and drug wildly with complete disregard for anything moral. The first 20 or 30 minutes of the movie prevent me from recommending it to younger people, but once the party scenes are over, the real meat (Please See PATTERSON/18)

Del Escritorio del Obispo

El año de fe es un tiempo para contestar la pregunta de Cristo: ‘¿Quién dicen que soy?’

Por el Obispo Miguel Pfeifer, OMI

Estamos en el hermoso Año de Fe que fue proclamado por el Papa Benedicto XVI a partir el 11 de octubre del 2012, y durante este Año somos llamados a renovar nuestro compromiso con la fe que es como dice el Papa, “siempre la misma y, a la vez, es fuente de luces siempre nuevas”. Nuestro Santo Padre enfatiza que al centro de este Año de Fe está Jesucristo, y nos llama a renovar y fortalecer nuestra relación personal con Él, a edificarnos en su presencia en cada familia y en cada comunidad.

Después que Cristo había viajado por mucho tiempo con sus apóstoles, Él les presentó la pregunta muy penetrante que les hizo buscar profundamente en sus corazones una contestación: “¿Quién dicen que soy?” En el Evangelio, leemos que Pedro, contestándoles a otros, diría, “Tú eres el Mesías, el Hijo del Dios vivo.” Pedro y los otros tuvieron que buscar profundamente en sus corazones para dar respuesta a esta pregunta, la cual implicaría entender su compromiso de continuar su discipulado.

Durante el Año de Fe, Cristo nos presenta la misma pregunta a nosotros: “¿Quién dicen que soy?” Puesto claro y simplemente, Cristo nos está preguntando a cada uno de nosotros y a cada familia y comunidad, ¿Qué lugar tengo yo en tu vida? ¿Cómo viviendo mi Evangelio? ¿Cómo estás contestando la llamada que les hago de ser mis discípulos? Nuestra fe es el fundamento de lo que somos como cristianos católicos y es un don gratuito de Dios. Sin embargo, en este mundo contemporáneo, cada vez somos más vulnerables a los movimientos seculares que nos alejan de nuestra relación con Cristo. Así es que, durante el Año de Fe, somos llamados a profundizar nuestra relación con Cristo, especialmente por medio de usar los dones maravillosos de la gracia de Dios en los Sacramentos, y de vivir el Evangelio en nuestras vidas diarias. Cuando hacemos esto, entonces, el Obispo nos dice a Cristo que Él es nuestro Dios, nuestro Señor y Salvador, el único en quien podemos poner nuestra confianza completa. Por lo tanto, al continuar durante el Año de Fe, le damos respuesta a la pregunta de Cristo por medio de:

- Reflexionar sobre el don de la fe que nos ha dado a cada uno de nosotros;
- Profundizar en el conocimiento y la comprensión de las enseñanzas de la Iglesia, especialmente la enseñanza moral de la Iglesia sobre temas críticos (Mira OBISPO/20)
Some say 19th century was beginning for Vatican II

By Father Joseph Uecker, C.PP.S.

Last month we talked about the life of Pope John XXIII and how his experience prepared him to become pope in 1958. And we saw how that experience moved him to call the Second Vatican Council. But what led up to that call?

Look at the Church around 1960. In many countries around the world vocations to the priesthood were flourishing. Seminaries and convents were full. Missionaries arrived in Asia and Africa in unprecedented numbers and reported many conversions. So with things seemingly going so well, why call a Council?

Let's look at the nineteenth century. Some Catholic historians refer to the period of the late 18th century to the beginning of Vatican II as "The Long Nineteenth Century." This influenced the Council in many ways.

We in the United States do not appreciate fully what the French Revolution (1780’s and 1790’s) did to Catholics and the Catholic Church in France. It was a traumatic experience, somewhat like what September 11 was to the U.S., but much more. Not only was the influence in France, but also in Catholic countries like Italy, Spain, Portugal.

There had been movements in the world very unfriendly toward the institutional Church. The French Revolution occurred in a “Catholic” country. The Risorgimento (Italian for resurgence) was a popular movement aimed at Italian political unification with Rome as the capital. The pope, for about a thousand years, had been ruler, not only of the universal Church, but also of a territory called the Papal States, in the center of what is now Italy. All this reached its high point in 1860-1870 when the Papal States and then Rome itself were seized by the forces of this Risorgimento. This political crisis festered for another sixty years or so until the “Roman Question” (the relationship between the papacy and the city of Rome) was settled with a treaty in 1929 that established the independent Vatican City as a sovereign state. At that time the papacy relinquished any and all claims to the city of Rome.

How do you describe what was happening? Liberalism and modernism are two words used to describe this. The word liberalism should not be confused with how the word is used today in the U.S. The papacy searched for a response to this enemy of liberalism and modernism. It was to condemn the modern world. (See the Syllabus of Errors of Pope Pius IX in 1864.)

After the pope had lost the Papal States, there was a renewed movement called ultramontanism (beyond the mountains), the concentration of Church authority in the papacy. This came to its high point with the definition of papal infallibility in 1870 at Vatican Council I.

At this time, there was the rise of communism and socialism. Pope Leo XIII and later popes affirmed the right to private property, but not an unlimited right. Leo issued his famous encyclical letter Rerum Novarum in 1891 in which, among other things, he affirmed the right of workers to organize.

With regard to the ecumenical movement, there was a softening of the Catholic position. In certain limited circumstances, Catholics could come together with other Christians, but the Church was still not at all in favor of it.

What happens intellectually in the Church is important because the new historical methods affected all subjects. Catholics were beginning to apply these methods to biblical studies, to the study of liturgy and the sacraments. The basis was being laid for the monumental changes brought about at Vatican II. The monastery at Solesmes in France in the 1830’s was a center of revival. Pope Pius X insisted on the participation of the congregation at Mass and urged frequent communion. The Roman missal was translated into the vernacular so people could follow along as the priest prayed in Latin.

Then there was the revival of the study of the Fathers of the Church, the Greek and the Latin Fathers. Fr. Jacques Paul Migne published 400 volumes of the works of the Fathers. People began to read them and saw a different style of theology. They seemed to be more pastoral than the scholastic approach.

In the 1940’s the Nouvelle Théologie tried to update the patristic way of doing theology to meet the needs of the modern world.

The Council of Trent had made the Catholic Church's position on the Bible and tradition clear. But with all the changes happening in the world, the Vatican II Council had to drug Catholicism back a step. It had to reaffirm the Bible and tradition. It had to reaffirm the Church's position on the Bible and tradition.

(Please See VATICAN II/21)
New evangelization brings life to the Year of Faith

By Bishop Michael Pfeifer, OMI

The Year of Faith is a celebration by the entire Church that begins October 11, 2012 – The 50th anniversary of the Second Vatican Council--and the 20th anniversary of the publication of the Catechism of the Catholic Church, and will conclude on November 14, 2013 – the Feast of Christ the King. Pope Benedict XVI announced the Year of Faith to confront secularism and other challenges faced by our Church, and to encourage Catholic to rediscover their faith and the joy and enthusiasm of the encounter with Christ.

The Year of Faith focuses on the New Evangelization. To mark the Year of Faith, Pope Benedict has also designated the New Evangelization for the transmission of the Christian Faith to be the main topic of the Synod of Bishops that will be held at the Vatican on October 7-28.

It is by living, taking an active part in the New Evangelization, that we build up our faith, and help bring new life not only to ourselves, but to the entire Church, as we live the Year of Faith. The Year of Faith is a time for us to take time out individually, as families, and as parish communities to revisit our most fundamental beliefs as a community of disciples of Jesus.

As we live the Year of Faith by taking part in the Church’s efforts of evangelization, we remind ourselves that the Church doesn’t primarily need another program. What the Church needs is Christ, and people who not only profess their belief in Him, but make Him the center of their lives, and do everything possible to help others come to know Christ and His great love for all people. At the heart of the Christian faith is a true encounter and relationship with Jesus Christ. The goal of our evangelization is to create the possibility for this encounter. This Year of Faith is a call then to conversion and to faith in God’s merciful love. The Kingdom of God will grow in the manner in which each person learns to turn to prayer to God and following the example of Jesus Christ, and living the great goal of life which is fulfilling God’s will.

Evangelization and the call to holiness and conversion are closely bound together. To the degree that we develop our relationship with Christ and grow in our main baptismal call of striving for holiness, to the same degree will we be better witnesses to the faith as we live our lives each day.

A key insight of the message of the New Evangelization is that we must start with ourselves. Until we are evangelized anew, and truly make Christ the center of our lives, there is little chance that we will have much impact on others. Pope Paul VI many years ago wrote, “Modern man listens more willingly to witnesses than to teachers.”

In preparation for the Year of Faith, the U.S.Catholic Bishops published a pastoral document, Disciples called to Witness, and in this document the Bishops stress that New Evangelization lies in the parish, and a parish must be renewed in Christ before there can truly be effective evangelization of the larger community. As a way of living the New Evangelization, the Bishops stress that our parishes must be much more welcoming. Our Pastors and all of us must show more hospitality in our churches, and we must develop engaging liturgies and offer the availability of the Sacrament of Reconciliation, and to visit our people more in their homes. The document also calls for a greater effort in education in the faith, including sacramental catechesis and education in the prayers of the Church. Adult formation must be a priority, starting with those who are the most committed and reaching out to the rest of the community. This is a time to invite family members and others who have drifted away from the Catholic Church to come back home.

A splendid way to prepare for and live the spirit of the Year of Faith, is with a good visit to the confessional—followed by regular visits throughout the year. A great goal of the Year of Faith should be to renew our faith with the graces of this special Year and by sharing in the Sacraments of our Church, especially by frequently participating in the Eucharist, in the Mass. Another way to live the Year of Faith is for all Catholics to become more intimately familiar with the Catechism of the Catholic Church. It would be wonderful if parents would take some time with their children to review parts of this beautiful Catechism with them. This would deepen the faith of all, and lead to a deeper relationship of love with Jesus Christ as a family.

It is in this wonderful Year of Faith through our prayer, study, especially from our prayerful reflection on the Bible, we are called to a new understanding and meaning of faith. Faith is a gift from God, offered us in Christ. Faith is about believing with our minds. Yes, but faith is much more about the heart—about having a loving relationship with our God—Father, Son and Holy Spirit. Faith is about God inviting us as children of our Heavenly Father to be in a loving, merciful and compassionate relationship with our God. God invites our free, loving response, our yes, our surrender to God, and to live the Gospel of Christ guided by the Holy Spirit. Our model of listening and responding to our Heavenly Father is Mary, the Mother of Jesus, and our mother. May we humbly respond like her, “Behold I am the handmaid of the Lord. May it be done to me according to your word.”

So often when we talk about new evangelization, we talk about activities. But when it comes to families, it seems like the most important thing is being—to being together, making time for prayer together, making time to eat together, making time to share and celebrate together—being who and what God made us to be.

To truly live the Year of Faith, focused on the New Evangelization, there must be a new openness to the great power and love of the Holy Spirit that is given to each one of us in Baptism and Confirmation. It is first and foremost by letting the Holy Spirit take over our hearts and way of life that we can then come to know better our loving God and Father, and how God has manifested God’s great love for us in the person of Jesus Christ, who showed us God’s love to the point of giving His life for us on the cross. The Holy Spirit then wants us to take part in the joy of the new life that has been given to us in Christ’s Resurrection, and to share that love with others by the way we live, by the way we show compassion, by the way we forgive one another, by the way we reach out in service to all, especially to the poor, the needy, the abandoned and people who hurt in any way, and those who feel rejected by the Church.

When we do this, we are living the Year of Faith and we are truly New Evangelizers.

‘The Year of Faith’: It's time for us to get to work

The St. Louis Review
The Archdiocese of St. Louis

The numbers are startling but should come as no surprise.

In the last 20 years, our local church has seen an almost 24 percent decline in the number of parishes and a 40 percent drop in Catholic elementary school enrollment. Marriages and baptisms are down, too, by 46 and 41 percent, respectively.

There are numerous factors that have contributed to the decline, but in the end, what matters most is the reality we are left to face. In his new pastoral letter on evangelization, Archbishop Robert J. Carlson said simply that if we’re to carry on a way of life in harmony with God’s plan for humanity, we can’t keep going on with “business as usual.”

In the face of these sobering statistics, it’s time that we take on reality together as the body of Christ. But that can’t happen until we first make a personal examination of our own consciences.

What are we doing as individuals to build up the local church? At a recent priests’ summit, the archbishop said that Catholics are eager to talk about what they did over the weekend -- such as a sporting event or movie -- but rarely describe going to Mass. We talk about how our kids are doing in school, but do we speak about the youth retreat they just experienced, or the first time they encountered Jesus in eucharistic adoration?

Consider for a moment what personally drew you to the Catholic Church. Maybe you were ushered into the church as a cradle Catholic. Or perhaps you had a powerful conversion experience in your adult years. Whatever the case, think about what keeps you here. Is it the traditions? The teachings? Some of both? Those are the joyful experiences that we need to be sharing with others -- from the fallen-away Catholic to the unchurched individual. 

(Please See WORK/22)
Bishop calls for Catholic Extension Sunday in diocese

Day will be celebrated every year in the Diocese of San Angelo on the first Sunday of August

October 17, 2012

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

After consultation with our priests and as a way of expressing our heartfelt gratitude and appreciation to the Extension Society for its constant abundant generosity and our ongoing prayerful support for its countless good works, I am happy to announce that in the future—every first Sunday in August, beginning with the Sunday of August 4, 2013, will be named as Catholic Extension Society Sunday (CESS) for the Diocese of San Angelo, a special day to pray for this society. This annual day of prayer on Catholic Extension Society Sunday is our way to express our gratitude and appreciation and ongoing spiritual support for the Catholic Extension Society which has been the major outside financial benefactor for our diocese since its beginning and even before we were a diocese. The Catholic Extension Society has given our diocese millions and millions of dollars during the past 50 years for many ministries, programs and projects. Each year we receive at least $100,000 from the Catholic Extension Society for ministries and programs, plus practically every year we turn to the society to fund buildings or other projects. The vast majority of the communities of our diocese, at one time or another have received financial support for buildings and other projects from Extension.

Hence, I am asking our priests to bring to your attention this special Sunday of prayer; they have already received a letter about this. In preparation for the Day of Prayer for the Catholic Extension Society in our Diocese, I ask our priests to promote this special Sunday several weeks in advance mentioning the Catholic Extension Society Sunday in the bulletins and from the pulpit, reminding our people of this special Sunday of prayer for Extension. The main purpose of this Sunday is to offer special prayers of gratitude to our God for the generosity of Catholic Extension Society and to ask God’s abundant graces upon those who serve this Society and the thousands and thousands of generous benefactors who contribute to the Catholic Extension Society throughout the USA. The Catholic Extension Society, which has been in operation for over 100 years, has provided hundreds of millions of dollars for mission dioceses—and the majority of the dioceses in USA are considered missions—each year.

While the primary purpose of the Catholic Extension Society Sunday is to offer prayers for the society, and although no special second collection will be taken, I ask our pastors to provide boxes marked “Gifts for Extension Society” at the entrances of all of our churches on the First Sunday of August—and Saturday, the day before—and encourage all of our people to make free-will offerings. We will not be using special envelopes. All of these offerings are to be sent to the diocesan office and the entire amount will be forwarded to the Catholic Extension Society as a way of expressing our gratitude for the enormous assistance we have received from this Mission Society. This special Sunday will also be the occasion for all of our priests to promote the Catholic Extension Society calendar, which provides generous funds for the Mission Church. If it were not for Extension, we would not have the many programs of service and ministry that we have today for our people.

While the first Sunday of August will be designated in the future as Catholic Extension Society Sunday, all are encouraged to pray frequently for all the people who serve in the Catholic Extension Society and for their many, many generous benefactors. Thank you for your cooperation to make this Sunday a reality in our Diocese. May God pour out many new blessings upon you.

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

A letter from Bishop Michael D. Pfeifer, OMI
Bishop of San Angelo

Reflections on confirmation, the workings of the Holy Spirit

Bishop’s Note: On Sunday, June 24, 2012, I had the joy of celebrating the Sacrament of Confirmation with three young high school girls at St. Charles Church in Eden. Their love for Christ and commitment to be faithful to our Catholic Church were expressed in two wonderful letters that they wrote me. I share some of the inspiring reflections from these three wonderful Catholic young women.

– Bishop Michael Pfeifer, OMI

By Kacy Keith and Mirabel Mata
St. Patrick Church-Brady
Carissa Anzaldua-St. Charles-Eden

Reflections from the letter of Carissa Anzaldua to Bishop Pfeifer

First and foremost, I would like to thank you for helping me receive the sacrament of confirmation. It has been a long process, though I have learned a lot through the past years. When I was starting out in catechism, I liked it a lot, but only because I was able to see my friends. Sad to say that some days I didn’t want to go. Luckily my mom would tell me to go and I would. I always tried to pay attention and learn the best I could. As I was starting to grow up, I looked forward to going every Wednesday. There were even days that I would go and none of my classmates would go, but it didn’t bother me. Some days when I would be down and feel as if nothing could cheer me up, going to class for just one hour would. It made me feel good inside when I learned something new about God. All the assignments I did in class I kept so I could read them over and make sure that I didn’t forget anything.

Over the years at church, I tried to grasp all the lessons and meanings from the readings, gospels, and homilies. Hearing them really makes me think about how it pertains to my life and how I can use it in my everyday life. It amazes me from when I was younger and how I used to pray every once in a while, to how I have evolved into someone who prays a lot more than I have and relies more on God. To me, I believe that is the Holy Spirit growing in me and making me feel more happy and thankful for everything I have. The Holy Spirit has made me realize that God is everything and nothing would be if it wasn’t for him. I am very fortunate for everything and I try not to (Please See CONFIRMATION/23)
Decree Honoring Nellie Gray

(The following is a decree written and issued by Bishop Michael D. Pfeifer in honor of Nellie Gray, founder of the March for Life and native of Big Spring who died in August):

To remember the life and the outstanding pro-life service to protect the unborn by Nellie Jane Gray, who was born in Big Spring, Texas on June 25, 1924 and baptized at St. Joseph’s Church in Stanton, Texas on July 20, 1924, and who 40 years ago founded the annual National Pro-Life March for Life in Washington, DC, and who died on August 13, 2012, it is with great joy that today, I re-name the diocesan Pro-Life Committee for the unborn in her honor.

Hence today, October 19, 2012, at St. Ann’s Church in Midland, Texas, I am officially proclaiming that the diocesan pro-life committee for the Diocese of San Angelo will be known in the future as the Nellie Gray Pro-life Committee for the entire Diocese of San Angelo.

We thank God that Nellie Jane [her baptismal name] Gray was born and baptized in the Diocese of San Angelo and is recognized as one of the greatest pro-life leaders in the USA, because of her work to organize the annual National Pro-Life March in Washington. Nellie Gray has been called by Cardinal Sean O’Malley of the Archdiocese of Boston as “the Joan of Arc of the Gospel of Life.”

- Bishop Michael D. Pfeifer, Diocese of San Angelo
**No matter how difficult ... just hang on a little longer**

By Rev. Ron Rolheiser
President, Oblate School of Theology
San Antonio

There is a Norwegian proverb that reads: Heroism consists of hanging on one minute longer.

When I was a child in elementary school one of the stories assigned to us in our textbook for literature had that title and It told the story of a young boy who had fallen through the ice while skating and was left clinging, cold and alone, to the edge of the ice with no help in sight. As he hung on in this seemingly hopeless situation he was tempted many times to simply let go since no one was going to come along to rescue him. But he held on, despite all odds. Finally, when everything seemed beyond hope, he clung on one minute longer and after that extra minute help arrived. The story was simple and its moral was simple: This young boy lived because he had the courage and strength to hang on one minute longer. Rescue comes just after you have given up on it, so extend your courage and waiting one minute longer.

This a tale of physical heroism and it makes its point clearly: heroism often consists in staying the course long enough, of hanging on when it seems hopeless, of suffering cold and aloneness while waiting for a new day.

Scripture teaches much the same thing about moral heroism: In the Second Letter to the Thessalonians, Paul ends a long, challenging admonition by stating: You must never grow weary of doing what is right. And in his letter to the Galatians, Paul virtually repeats the Norwegian proverb: Let us not become weary of doing good, for at the proper time we will reap a harvest if we do not give up.

This sounds so simple and yet it cuts to the heart of many of our moral struggles. Simply put, we give up too soon, give in too soon, don’t carry tension long enough, and don’t carry our solitude to its highest level.

All of us experience tension in our lives: tension in our families, tension in our friendships, tension in our places of work, tension in our churches, tension in our communities, and tension within our conversations around other people, politics, and current events. And, being good-hearted people, we carry that tension with patience, respect, graciousness, and forbearance – for awhile! Then, at a certain point we feel ourselves stretched to the limit, grow weary of doing what is right, feel something snap inside of us, and hear some inner-voice say: Enough! I’ve put up with this too long! I won’t tolerate this anymore! And we let go, unlike the little boy clinging to the ice and waiting for rescue. We let go of patience, respect, graciousness, and forbearance, either by venting and giving back in kind or simply by fleeing the situation with an attitude of good riddance. Either way, we refuse to carry the tension any longer.

But that exact point, when we have to choose between giving up or holding on, carrying tension or letting it go, is a crucial moral site, one that determines character: Big-heartedness, nobility of character, deep maturity, and spiritual sanctity often manifest themselves around these questions: How much tension can we carry? How great is our patience and forbearance? How much can we put up with? Mature parents put up with a lot of tension in raising their children. Mature teachers put up with a lot of tension in trying to open the minds and hearts of their students. Mature friends absorb a lot of tension in remaining faithful to each other. Mature young women and men put up with a lot of sexual tension while waiting for marriage. Mature Christians put up with a lot of tension in helping to absorb the immaturities and sins of their churches. Men and women are noble of character precisely when they can walk with patience, respect, graciousness, and forbearance amid crushing and unfair tensions, when they never grow weary of doing what is right.

Of course this comes with a caveat: Carrying tension does not mean carrying abuse. Those of noble character and sanctity of soul challenge abuse rather than enable it through well-intentioned acquiescence. Sometimes, in the name of virtue and loyalty, we are encouraged to absorb abuse, but that is antithetical to what Jesus did. He loved, challenged, and absorbed tension in a way that took away the sins of the world. We know now, thanks to long bitter experience, that, no matter how noble our intention, when we absorb abuse as opposed to challenging it, we don’t take away the sin, we enable it.

But all of this will not be easy. It’s the way of long loneliness, with many temptations to let go and slip away. But, if you persevere and never grow weary of doing what is right, at your funeral, those who knew you will be blessed and grateful that you continued to believe in them even when for a time they had stopped believing in themselves.

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**Hunger is no game, but a war we must all help win**

By Tony Magliano

This is one war we need to fight. For without our intervention countless people will suffer, and thousands of children will continue dying daily. The name of this enemy – who deserves nothing less than total annihilation – is world hunger!

Every year around this time – Oct. 16 – World Food Day reminds us to pay attention to the multitude of people who suffer from not having enough nutritious food to maintain health and happiness.

The hunger statistics are overwhelming.

According to the World Food Programme 870 million people are hungry – that’s greater than the combined populations of the United States, Canada and the European Union.

Every day approximately 16,000 children die because they are too poor to live. Malnutrition and hunger-related diseases claim their short lives.

Iodine deficiency is the greatest single cause of mental retardation and brain damage, affecting 1.9 billion people worldwide. It can very easily be prevented by adding iodine to salt.

In the U.S., according to the Christian anti-poverty advo-
A man in Seattle has pleaded not guilty to a first-degree murder charge in a case that has raised many questions of "how could something like this happen?"

The 29-year-old is accused of pulling his car alongside a vehicle driven by a man coming home from work, firing five shots, three striking the victim in the head, and then speeding off. It happened in a neighborhood not known for such things and involved two people not affiliated with gangs. Authorities suspect it may have been an incident of road rage.

How can a person be so upset by being cut off in traffic as to pursue the driver and shoot to kill? It is hard to believe someone feels better about himself for having killed a person who was the cause of a minor annoyance.

Fast-forward to a recent Saturday in the line at a Costco gas station. This gives a glimmer of insight into the provocation. The scene is familiar: several islands with pumps, cars lined up at each one, proceeding to the pump when the other car leaves. That day, one car shot into view and, with the agility of an NBA forward, weaved through some openings in three lines and pulled up to a recently vacated pump.

"What the $%&@#$," I confess uttering in reaction to a sudden burst of pique, hoping that someone would give that guy what was coming to him.

At the gas station, the irritation of many could have led one to overreact but didn’t. What is the difference between the shooting and the gas station line? Self-restraint.

The perpetrator of the murder could not control his reaction to offense. Those in the gas line could. Self-restraint is acquired by integration of values in our daily conduct so that it becomes the automatic response.

That is why the "don't impose your values on me" argument is weak. Values are necessary to a functioning community. The disregard of values as some infringement on personal freedom is the fruit of the seed of the "me" mentality.

There's a song that carries the lyrics "I did it my way," but what if your way is the wrong way? Former California Gov. Arnold Schwarzenegger is making the rounds of television talk shows to shill for his new book publicizing his adulterous behavior. What used to be a matter of some embarrassment is now discussed with no shame as an element to marketing a book.

Instant self-gratification says what matters about being human is seeking pleasure -- and quickly.
Talking Americans down from the assisted suicide ledge

By Fr. Tad Pacholczyk

Several states are considering legislative measures to let physicians prescribe (but not administer) a lethal dose of a toxic drug to their patients, thereby assisting their patients to commit suicide. This is known as physician-assisted suicide. Advocates of this practice assure us that this can be a good choice for someone who is dying, or who wants to die.

If physician-assisted suicide really represents a "good choice," we need to ask: why should only physicians be allowed to participate? Why should only physicians be allowed to undermine public trust of their profession through these kinds of death-dealing activities?

Why not include police, for example? If a sick person expresses a wish to die, the police could be notified, and an officer would arrive bearing a suitable firearm. He would load it with bullets, cock the gun, and place it on the bedside stand of the sick patient. After giving instruction on the best way to angle the barrel, the officer would depart, and the patient could then pick the device up and shoot himself — "police-assisted suicide."

Besides physician-assisted suicide and police-assisted suicide, "military-assisted suicide" could be offered as well. Members of the armed forces could bring in a standard-issue hand grenade upon request, explaining to the sick patient how to remove the pin properly and how to place the device so as to achieve the most rapid, painless and destructive death.

The assisted-suicide paradigm would readily admit of other creative approaches as well — society could sanction "assisted drownings" where lifeguards could be asked to assist those wishing to die by providing them millstones to take them to the bottom of lakes and oceans.

But if a life-guard helped people drown, would you want him watching your family at the beach?

It is troubling how many individuals fail to grasp the radical absurdity of allowing physician-assisted suicide. Suicide is no joking matter. Regardless of how it transpires, it is a catastrophe for those who end their own lives, for their loved ones left behind, and for society more broadly.

Some people may decide that their lives are no longer worth living, but our society has always recognized that decision to be a tragedy and a mistake; that's why high bridges have signs encouraging suicidal individuals to seek help rather than jump. Suicide hotlines are open 24 hours a day because we seek to prevent as many deaths as we can. We treat as heroes those who walk along bridges or climb tall buildings and try to talk people down.

Commentator Greg Pfundstein stresses how this sound and consistent cultural message is flatly contradicted when we allow physicians to prescribe lethal drugs so people can kill themselves — it is like replacing the suicide intervention signs on bridges with signs that state, "Ask your physician if jumping is right for you." Simply put, such jumping is never a "good thing," and it is only our own foolhardiness that lets us feign it could be, whether physician-assisted or otherwise.

I remember reading a Letter to the Editor in the local paper of a small town many years ago. The woman wrote about the death of her grandparents — well-educated, intelligent and seemingly in control of their faculties — who had tragically committed suicide together by drinking a deadly substance. They were elderly and struggling with various ailments.

Her first-hand perspective was unflinching: "It took me years to forgive my grandparents after they committed suicide. I was so angry at what they had done to me and my family. I felt betrayed. I felt nauseated. At some fundamental level I just couldn't believe it had really happened, and I couldn't believe that they didn't reach out to us for help. I thought the pain would never go away. The idea that suicide could ever be a good thing is a total crock and a lie. It leaves behind deep scars and immeasurable pain on the part of family and friends. We don't have the right to take our own lives because we didn't give ourselves life."

I'm reminded of the words of the Mayor of one of our great cities, who declared: "The crime rate isn't so bad if you just don't count the murders." Assisted suicide, similarly, isn't so bad if you just don't count the victims: the many broken individuals, broken families, and broken hearts.

A friend of mine in Canada has struggled with multiple sclerosis for many years. He often speaks out against assisted suicide. Recently, he sent me a picture of himself taken with his smiling grandchildren, one sitting on each arm of his wheelchair. Below the picture he wrote, "If I had opted for assisted suicide back in the mid-1980s when I first developed MS, and it seemed life as I knew it was over, look what I would have missed. I had no idea that one day I would be head over heels in love with grandchildren! Never give up on life."

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

Contraception – the enemy of life, love

By Bishop Michael Pfeifer, OMI

After God created man and woman in His image, God's love for them was so great that He gave them the power to cooperate with Him in the creation of human life. In God's plan, no human comes into being without human participation. This new, wonderful human life comes into being through the wonderful gift of sexuality that God has given to God's people. Sadly today, many married couples frustrate the plan of God to give new life through contraception.

There is much talk today about contraception, especially in reference to the Health and Human Services mandate [HHS], that would require payment for insurance coverage that would include contraception, sterilization and abortifacient pills. Based on the teaching of Sacred Scripture, the Church has consistently taught that contraception goes against human nature as God intended, and frustrates God's plan for new life. This is in no way implies that God doesn't want parents to be responsible, and to plan for and care for the children that comes from a marriage of a man and woman. In God's design there is a natural process, approved by the Church, called Natural Family Planning [NFP] that helps humans to make good Christian decisions about being responsible parents.

Just as God takes pleasure in creating life, God also lets His humans take pleasure in living it. The body systems perform functions but also do more. For example, our eyes help us to avoid walking into walls, but also let us see the beauty of a waterfall. In a similar way our sexual reproductive system not only allows us to transmit human life, but also to know the pleasure of real love in marriage.

As is so obvious today in our sexually-orientated society, God's gift of sexuality is being abused and misused. In marriage, the sexual function as intended by God is abused by contraception, and it has wreaked more havoc than ever than we ever thought possible. When God created man and woman, along with all creation, God saw them as being very good. Later in the inspired Word of God, Paul tells us that our bodies are temples of the Holy Spirit to be respected and used according to God's plan. Centuries later Pope John Paul II tells us in his masterpiece, The Theology of the Body, how the gift of sexuality is to be lived out in their bodies by married people as temples of the Holy Spirit to bring new human life into our world. Contraception frustrates God's plan and makes the sacred temples of the bodies into temples of debasing sexual pleasure.

Contraception is the act of placing our desire to get our way ahead of God's plan for us. God intends that in sexual union a husband and wife give themselves so completely that their love overflows into new life. The act is profound and sublime, for it brings a committed couple into contact with God's will. A child becomes a true blessing to the married couple and to the world. But contraception turns the sexual act into something far different. By removing the possibility of transmitting human life, contraception turns sexual union into mere pleasure seeking and into sexual gluttony. Our cont-
Pope Benedict beatifies 7 new saints

By Cindy Wooden
Catholic News Service

VATICAN CITY — Proclaiming seven new saints -- including St. Kateri Tekakwitha and St. Marianne Cope from North America -- Pope Benedict XVI said they are examples to the world of total dedication to Christ and tireless service to others.

In a revised canonization rite Oct. 21, the pope prayed for guidance that the church would not "err in a matter of such importance" as he used his authority to state that the seven are with God in heaven and can intercede for people on earth.

An estimated 80,000 pilgrims from the United States, Canada, the Philippines, Italy, Spain, Germany and Madagascar filled St. Peter's Square for the canonization of the holy women and men who ministered among their people.

The pilgrims applauded the proclamation of the new saints, who included: Kateri, an American Indian who was born in the United States and died in Canada in 1680; Mother Marianne, a Sister of St. Joseph who traveled from Syracuse, N.Y., to Hawaii to care for people with Hansen's disease and died in 1918; and Pedro Calungsod, a teenaged Philippine catechist who was martyred in Guam in 1672.

The other new saints are: French Jesuit Father Jacques Berthieu, martyred in Madagascar in 1896; Italian Father Giovanni Battista Piamarta, founder of religious orders, who died in 1913; Sister Carmen Salles Barangueras, founder of a Spanish religious order, who died in 1911; and Anna Schaffer, a lay German woman, who died in 1925.

In his homily at Mass following the canonization, Pope Benedict prayed that the example of the new saints would "speak today to the whole church" and that their intercession would strengthen the church in its mission to proclaim the Gospel to the world.

The pope also spoke about each new saint individually, giving a short biographical outline and highlighting a special characteristic of each for Catholics today.

Pope Benedict called St. Kateri the "protector of Canada and the first Native American saint," and he entrusted to her "the renewal of the faith in the First Nations and in all of North America."

The daughter of a Mohawk father and Algonquin Christian mother, St. Kateri was "faithful to the traditions of her people," but also faithful to the Christianity she embraced at age 20. "May her example help us to live where we are, loving Jesus without denying who we are," the pope said.

Archbishop Charles J. Chaput of Philadelphia, who is of American Indian descent, told Catholic News Service, "I think many young people today are embarrassed about embracing the Catholic faith because they live in a secular culture that's hostile toward religious experience."

St. Kateri also "grew up in a place where there was great hostility toward Christianity," Archbishop Chaput said, but she resisted all efforts to turn her away from her faith, "so in some ways she would be a model of fidelity in the face of persecution on religious freedom grounds."

Archbishop Gerald Cyprien Lacroix of Quebec told CNS that the canonization of the first aboriginal of North America is "huge for us." St. Kateri, he said, is an excellent model for young people of "living a simple life, faithful to the Lord in the midst of hostility."

St. Kateri's life and canonization show that "saints don't have to do extraordinary things, they just have to love," Archbishop Lacroix said.

Francine Merasty, 32, a Cree who lives in Pelican Narrows, Sask., said, "Kateri inspires me because she's an aboriginal woman. According to sociologists, aboriginal women are at the lowest (social) strata, and for the church to raise up to the communion of saints an aboriginal woman is so awesome and wonderful."

Jake Finkbonner, the 12-year-old boy from Washington state whose healing was accepted as the miracle needed for St. Kateri's canonization, received Communion from the pope during the Mass. Jake's parents and two little sisters did as well.

Speaking about St. Marianne of Molokai in his homily, Pope Benedict said that a time when very little could be done to treat people with Hansen's disease, commonly called leprosy, "Marianne Cope showed the highest love, courage and enthusiasm."

"She is a shining example of the tradition of Catholic nursing sisters and of the spirit of her beloved St. Francis," the pope said.

Leading a group of Hawaiian pilgrims, including nine patient-residents from Kalaupapa, where St. Marianne ministered, Honolulu Bishop Larry Silva said St. Marianne is "an inspiration for those who care for those most in need, which is what all Christians are called to do. Now, with universal veneration, she can inspire people around the world."

With thousands of Philippine pilgrims in St. Peter's Square, Pope Benedict praised St. Pedro, a catechist who accompanied Jesuit priests to the Mariana Islands in 1668. Despite hostility from some of the natives, he "displayed deep faith and charity and continued to catechize his many converts, giving witness to Christ by a life of purity and dedication to the Gospel."

The pope prayed that "the example and courageous witness" of St. Pedro would "inspire the dear people of the Philippines to announce the kingdom bravely and to win souls for God."

Pope Benedict also cited St. Anna Schaffer as a model for a very modern concern.

St. Anna was working as a maid to earn the money for the dowry needed to enter a convent when an accident occurred and she "received incurable burns" which kept her bedridden the rest of her life, the pope said. In time, she came to see her pain and suffering as a way to unite herself with Christ through prayer, he said.

"May her apostolate of prayer and suffering of sacrifice and expiation, be a shining example for believers in her homeland, and may her intercession strengthen the Christian hospice movement in its beneficial activity," the pope said.

Contributing to this story was Francis X. Rocca.
The St. John’s Bible is a work of art and a work of theology. Artists in both Wales and scholars in Minnesota brought together the ancient techniques of calligraphy and illumination with an ecumenical approach to the Bible rooted in Benedictine spirituality. The result is a living document and a monumental achievement.

In the 1990s, Donald Jackson, who coordinated the artists on the project, observed the monks at the St. John’s Abbey processing with their Book of Gospels for Sunday Mass. He recognized the importance of their work.

A vision that united the artists and scholars on the project was to create a Bible that would capture the beauty and tradition of centuries of liturgy and carry it into the future.

On March 8, 2000, Ash Wednesday, the first words of the St. John’s Bible were written by Jackson. Those verses are from the Gospel of John: “In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, the Word was God.”

— Msgr. Larry Droll, Pastor
St. Ann’s Church, Midland
Celebrating the Year of Faith as a family

From the USCCB's "For Your Marriage" Web Site (www.foryourmarriage.org)

Perhaps you've heard: The Catholic Church began celebrating the Year of Faith October 11, the 50th anniversary of the opening of the Second Vatican Council.

But what is the Year of Faith and why should it matter to you and your family?

The Church recognizes that from time to time its members need a gentle nudge to deepen their relationship with Jesus. In calling for a Year of Faith, Pope Benedict XVI wants Catholics to draw closer to Jesus through prayer, spiritual reading and study, and works of charity. In living out their everyday lives with faith, hope and love, Catholics offer a profound witness to the Gospel. In other words, they evangelize the world around them, starting with the family.

How can your family participate in the Year of Faith? Your diocese and/or parish has probably scheduled events and activities to celebrate the Year of Faith. Check your bulletin and websites.

Here are a few suggestions to get started:

- For individuals and couples
  - Work through sections of the Catechism of the Catholic Church or the documents of the Second Vatican Council.
  - Pray together, daily or weekly. Share your faith and values with each other.
  - Prepare for the sacraments of Reconciliation and Communion.

- For the family
  - Put your arms around them and assure them that no one should be, or could be, expected to get that assignment in on time, treat others' property with respect, follow clearly posted rules.

Eight easy ways to spoil your children

By Bill and Monica Dodds
Catholic News Service

In an age when children easily pick up the how-to of just about any new electronic gadget, it can be tempting for parents to confuse tech-savvy with wise. For the most part, wisdom isn't user-friendly. It takes effort. It takes time. It takes practice. It takes Mom and Dad avoiding the trap of confusing "loving them" with "spoiling them."

But, at first glance, spoiling is so much easier. Here are some ways you can spoil them:

1. Let them make their own rules.
   What to eat when they're 5, when to come home on a Friday night when they're 15. At 5, because "he makes such a fuss about fruits and vegetables it's just not worth it." At 15, "because all her friends stay out and we don't want her to be some kind of weirdo."

2. Take their sides in all things.
   Is your little darling acting up in class? Impossible. What is wrong with that classmate being so mean, that teacher being so rigid, that principal being so narrow-minded?

3. Never stop telling them they're perfect.
   Healthy self-esteem is based on constantly hearing "you're the best," and not on experiencing the satisfaction of completing a job well done, right? Of course it is. What better way to help them prepare for a job and career than hearing "you never do anything wrong." Bosses are well-known for saying that to rookie employees, aren't they?

4. Be willing to endlessly debate.
   Let them learn at an early age that if they just keep talking (pouting, screaming, stomping their feet) you will cave in and give them what they're asking for. Your every parenting decision must be negotiable or you may fall into the trap of declaring "because I said so." This, of course, scars a child for life.

5. Make excuses for them.
   OK, yes, maybe they did something that was less than ideal, but they only did that because they're high-spirited, intelligent, tremendously creative, suffering from the sniffles, and on and on. Just put your arms around them and assure them that no one should be, or could be, expected to get that assignment in on time, treat others' property with respect, follow clearly posted rules.

6. Do their work for them.
   Finish that long-ignored collage that's due tomorrow. Drag that box of candy bars to work and complete her fundraising project. Complete their household chores because, honestly, it's just faster and easier if you do it yourself.

7. Spend money on them like you had all the money in the world to spend on them.
   Their wish is your desire, even as that wish quickly fades once that desire, that item, is purchased. Do this especially if you, living in the real world, and can't spend as much time with them as you'd like to and you feel guilty about that.

8. Assume that anything that causes them even a bit of discomfort can't be good for them.
   Simply ignore the second half of the adage "no pain, no gain."
   How can you avoid those silly mistakes? Make sure Mom and Dad are on the same page. Find and be encouraged by like-minded parents. Remember it's the spoiled child who's likely to become the spoiled adult. That's a terribly sad thing to see, and a horrible way to live.

Bill and Monica Dodds are the founders of the Friends of St. John the Caregiver and editors of My Daily Visitor magazine. Their website is www.FSJCare.com.

Coming of Age

Lessons from a Pakistani teen fighting for her life

By Karen Osborne
Catholic News Service

I have a new hero. Her name is Malala Yousafzai, and she's a 14-year-old girl from Pakistan. When she was 11, the Taliban took power in her valley. They enforced a harsh set of laws on the residents, among them, an edict that girls could no longer attend school. They threatened girls' teachers and burned down school buildings.

Malala, who dreamed of someday being a lawyer or a politician, wrote a blog for the BBC about her experiences in trying to get an education under the Taliban. She would do whatever it took to get to school: wear ordinary clothes, hide her books, change her daily routine. She went to school even when half her class stayed home. Her experiences made her stand up for other girls her age who wanted to go to school, too, even if it meant going against the Taliban.

"If I were caught going to school, they could kidnap me or throw acid on my face or kill me," she told journalist Rohit Gandhi in a 2011 interview.

On Oct. 9, two men boarded a bus Malala and her classmates were riding and shot her. She is fighting for her life in the United Kingdom after being transported to a hospital there days after being shot in the head and spine.

Across the world, teens her age are often barred from going to school because of cultural, social, financial or geographic difficulties. While American teens moan and whine about the school year approaching, teens in Sudan, Ethiopia, Pakistan and Bangladesh see a proper education -- with the bright future that often goes along with it -- as a dream.

In Taliban-controlled Pakistan, Malala and her friends were risking their lives to learn how to read and write. They risked everything to go to math class and to learn about biology, music and religion, to do all of the things that make some American teens roll their eyes.

To teens in our country and nations like it, school sometimes feel like a never-ending, annoying slog. It can be hard to deal with the homework, the difficult teachers and the long school days when you'd rather be hanging out with friends.

But Malala knows something that her peers in other parts of the world sometimes forget: That getting an education means more than just getting a piece of paper signifying that you successfully sat in a classroom for 13 years. Education opens doors that other
Pope names six new cardinals, including US Archbishop Harvey

By Cindy Wooden
Catholic News Service

VATICAN CITY — Pope Benedict XVI surprised pilgrims in St. Peter's Square Oct. 24 by announcing he would create six new cardinals, including 63-year-old U.S. Archbishop James M. Harvey, prefect of the papal household, in late November.

The pope said the consistory to create the new cardinals, who come from six countries, would take place Nov. 24, the eve of the feast of Christ the King.

It will be the smallest group of cardinals created since the 1977 consistory when Pope Benedict, then-Archbishop Joseph Ratzinger, received his red hat from Pope Paul VI along with three other churchmen.

The new cardinals also will include: Lebanese Maronite Patriarch Bechara Rai, 72; Archbishop Baselios Cleemis Thottunkal, 53, head of the Syro-Malankara Catholic Church; Nigerian Archbishop John Olornfemi Onaiyekan of Abuja, 68; Colombian Archbishop Ruben Salazar Gomez of Bogota, 70; and Philippine Archbishop Luis Tagle of Manila, 55.

Pope Benedict made the announcement at the end of his weekly general audience, which was attended by about 20,000 pilgrims. As is usual, Cardinal-designate Harvey was seated next to the pope during the audience. While he did not visibly react when his name was announced, the new cardinal-designate smiled and had a brief moment with the pope before returning to his normal duties of helping lead important guests up to the pope.

The pope said he was naming Cardinal-designate Harvey the new archpriest of Rome's Basilica of St. Paul Outside the Walls.

Telling the crowd that he had the "great joy" of announcing new cardinals, Pope Benedict said cardinals have "the task of helping the successor of Peter in his ministry" of strengthening people's faith and promoting the unity of the church.

The pope asked Catholics to pray that the new cardinals would "always love Christ and his church with courage and dedication."

Of the six soon-to-be cardinals, only Cardinals-designate Harvey and Salazar were not members of the world Synod of Bishops on the new evangelization, which was meeting at the Vatican when the pope made his announcement.

As the pope climbed into the popemobile at the end of the audience, Vatican security officers and Vatican ushers approached Cardinal-designate Harvey and shook his hand in congratulations.

The late-November consistory will bring the total number of cardinals to 211 and the number of cardinals under age 80 to 120. Until they reach their 80th birthdays, cardinals are eligible to vote in a conclave to elect a new pope.

Pope Paul VI limited the number of cardinal-electors to 120. After the Nov. 1 birthday of Nigerian Cardinal Francis Arinze and the Nov. 23 birthday of Italian Cardinal Renato Martino, there will be six vacancies.

Cardinal-designate Harvey has worked at the Vatican for 30 years. Born in Milwaukee Oct. 20, 1949, he was ordained to the priesthood in 1975 by Pope Paul.

He entered the Vatican's diplomatic corps and spent two years as a Vatican diplomat in the Dominican Republic before being transferred to the Vatican Secretariat of State in 1982. In 1997, he was named assessor of the secretariat, a rank similar to that of an undersecretary at a Vatican congregation, and in 1998 Pope John Paul II named him prefect of the Papal Household, the office responsible for organizing papal audiences, including those with heads of state.

When Cardinal-designate Harvey becomes a cardinal, the United States will have 19 cardinals, 11 of whom will be under 80 and thus eligible to vote in a conclave to elect a pope.

Las bienaventuranzas son el Camino a la Felicidad (Una Felicidad Distinta)

Por el Obispo Miguel Pfeifer, OMI

En el evangelio según San Mateo (5, 1-12), Cristo nos da Las Bienaventuranzas que son el camino a la felicidad en este mundo y nos llevan a nuestro destino final—la paz eterna con Dios.

En este artículo les presento esta reflexión a como llegar a una felicidad distinta tomada del folleto Misal Mensual de FEBRERO 2002.

Una felicidad distinta

La gente estaba en el llano. Su vida era plana y vacía. Pero tenían un anhelo, el anhelo de todo hombre de ser feliz. Ya habían andado por varios caminos en busca de la felicidad; pero la situación era la misma, el corazón seguía apachurrado. ¿Cuándo tendremos pan y el corazón contento? ¿Quién nos mostrará el camino de la verdadera felicidad?, se preguntaban esos hombres afligidos.

Jesús ve a esta gente con amor se interesa por ellos. Sube al monte y se encuentra con Dios. Se sienta como quien va enseñar. Y es entonces cuando los discípulos dejan el llano y se acercan a Jesús. Cristo propone una felicidad distinta, insólita, sorprendente. Todo está en acercarse a él.

La felicidad de la pobreza es esfuerzo por vivirla son felices. La felicidad de la misericordia.
Survey: Catholics urge more focus on social justice

By Patricia Zapor
Catholic News Service

WASHINGTON — A large national study on faith and political views released Oct. 23 highlighted Catholics' interest in having social justice take a bigger role in the church's policy priorities.

The American Values Survey by Public Religion Research Institute queried a cross section of all Americans but zeroed in on the opinions of Catholics, in particular, on topics including contraceptive coverage in insurance and the death penalty as well as on the pending presidential election.

In interviews during September, a majority of Catholics told pollsters that they would prefer it if the church would focus its public policy statements "more on social justice and the obligation to help the poor, even if it means focusing less on issues like abortion and the right to life." Sixty percent of Catholics concurred with that statement or with another version in which the phrasing was reversed.

Among those Catholics who attend church at least weekly, 51 percent chose the social justice emphasis, while 65 percent of those who attend monthly or less often made that choice. Among the various demographic breakouts provided by the study, just two segments — self-identified conservatives and Republicans — agreed with the statement by less than 50 percent, 46 percent and 47 percent, respectively, though that was still the plurality response.

Social justice was chosen by slightly more poll participants who self-identified as conservative and Republican than selected the opposite. For instance, 44 percent of self-identified conservatives chose: "should focus more on issues like abortion and the right to life, even if it means focusing less on social justice and the obligation to help the poor," or its parallel wording. Ten percent of conservatives answered "neither" or said they "didn't know." Michele Dillon, a professor of sociology at the University of New Hampshire who specializes in research on religion and culture, said the response reflects a long-term pattern in Catholic thinking, despite what she considered a drawback in the question forcing a choice between just two concepts.

She said previous open-ended polling elicited similar priorities. "Care for the poor and needy has been a strong theme in Catholic teaching since the end of the 19th century," Dillon told Catholic News Service in an Oct. 25 phone interview. "That's been totally in continuity with the church leadership over the decades and it's still primary for a lot of people in defining what it means to be Catholic."

"It's right up there with belief in the Resurrection with what people say it means to be Catholic," she said.

Coincidentally, two items on the agenda for the annual fall general meeting of the U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops are a proposed document on preaching that emphasizes the need to connect homilies with people's lives, and a message on the economy, "Catholic Reflections on Work, Poverty and a Broken Economy."

"There's a pretty good link between the polling data and the two documents, in the mind of one theologian who advises the bishops. "Spiritually, people are thirsting for the message of the Gospel and to find hope in the midst of economic suffering," said Meghan Clark, an assistant professor of theology and religious studies in moral theology at St. John's University in Queens, New York, and a consultant to the USCCB Committee on Domestic Justice and Human Development.

In an Oct. 25 interview with CNS and a related exchange of emails, she said that people may feel they hear enough about abortion and related topics because, "many priests are comfortable delivering a counter-cultural message on life issues because they are perceived as black/white issues."

"The survey suggests that Catholics want them to issue the same challenge on social justice issues, which are at the heart of the Gospel," Clark added. "It isn't primarily about politics, but about communicating the challenge of the Gospel that discipleship requires concern for the 'least' and dismantling structures of sin."

Clark, who teaches moral theology, said "frequently the only thing my non-Catholic students know about the faith is the teaching on abortion." The Catechism of the Catholic Church says abortion is "gravely contrary to the moral law" in all cases.

Bishops to consider new document on preaching at fall meeting

By Mark Pattison
Catholic News Service

WASHINGTON — "My dad used to say, 'I know what happened 2,000 years ago. I need to know how to live my life today.'"

These words, from Archbishop Robert J. Carlson of St. Louis, get to the heart of a new proposed document on preaching to be considered by the U.S. bishops at the fall general meeting in November.

The document, "Preaching the Mystery of Faith: The Sunday Homily," encourages preachers to connect the Sunday homily with people's daily lives.

Archbishop Carlson, as head of the U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops' Committee on Clergy, Consecrated Life and Vocations, shepherded the writing of the document, which he said had reviews by eight other USCCB committees.

"Everyone gets a chance to put their oar in the water. That's what makes it a better document," he told Catholic News Service in an Oct. 18 telephone interview from St. Louis.

Although the full text of the proposed document has not yet been made public, an Oct. 10 USCCB press release highlighted excerpts from it.

"The homily is intended to establish a dialogue between the sacred biblical text and the Christian life of the hearer," the proposed document says.

"Preachers should be aware, in an appropriate way, of what their people are watching on television, what kind of music they are listening to, which websites they find appealing, and which films they find compelling," it adds.

"References to the most popular cultural expressions -- which at times can be surprisingly replete with religious motifs -- can be an effective way to engage the interest of those on the edge of faith."

It has been 30 years since the bishops last addressed preaching, in a document called "Fulfilled in Your Hearing." Archbishop Carlson said the intent to write a new document first surfaced six years ago, although the work of drafting "Preaching the Mystery of Faith" took place over the past year and a half. New traction on the document came after Pope Benedict XVI issued the apostolic exhortation "Verbum Domini" ("The Word of the Lord") two years ago, and "Preaching the Mystery of Faith," the archbishop said, is rooted in "Verbum Domini."

With so much time between documents, "I think we really had to take a look at preaching in this country and to the students in the seminary who are preparing to become priests," Archbishop Carlson said, adding bishops were concerned over "the whole question of catechetical preaching."

"Following the Second Vatican Council and 'Fulfilled in Your Hearing,' there is a whole focus on being faithful to the Scripture. At the same time we have to pass on the deposit of the faith," he said.

"Catholics in the pews, according to Archbishop Carlson, deliver a mixed verdict on the effectiveness of their own preachers. "There are places where the preaching is considered excellent," he said, and there are others who "wish their homilies were not presented better necessarily, but (that) they were more in touch with their lives."

With fewer priests, is there more pressure on them? "Yes, priests are stretched, but this is a significant opportunity for priests to meet the people of their parish on a regular basis. So this is very important," Archbishop Carlson told CNS.
Our Faith

On holy days of obligation and sacramental sponsors

By Father Kenneth Doyle
Catholic News Service

Q. While visiting family in Maryland on the weekend before the feast of the Ascension, I attended a local Catholic parish and heard the priest announce that the feast would be observed on the following Sunday.

When I got back to Pittsburgh, I went to work that Thursday unaware that it was a feast day; I was very upset to learn later that in the Pittsburgh diocese, the Ascension is still observed on Thursday, making it a holy day of obligation. My question is: How could I have sinned in one diocese when I would not have sinned in another? I find this inconsistency quite confusing. (Pittsburgh)

A. First, forget about having "sinned." You didn't sin at all; you acted in good faith, on what you believed to be true. And yes, it is confusing. In most of the dioceses of the United States, the feast of the Ascension has been transferred to the following Sunday, which means that you get "two for one," since every Sunday is a holy day of obligation. The state of Pennsylvania is one of the exceptions, and there the feast continues to be celebrated on Thursday.

Q. My daughter has been agonizing over a problem, and I am hoping that you can help. Twelve years ago, her twin daughters were baptized. They have since made their first Communion and are now preparing for confirmation.

In reading over the confirmation material that was sent home, my daughter started thinking back to the baptism and suddenly realized, to her great dismay, that one of the girls had baptismal sponsors who were both non-Catholics. Now she is afraid that this baptism was never valid, and she has herself sick worrying over it. Was the baptism valid, and does she have to do anything about it now? (Runnemed, N.J.)

A. Please tell your daughter that she can relax. The baptism "counted", and the girl is fine. The Code of Canon Law provides in No. 872 that, "insofar as possible, a person to be baptized is to be given a sponsor who ... helps the baptized person to lead a Christian life."

Canon No. 874 further specifies that the sponsor be a Catholic who has been confirmed and "who leads a life of faith in keeping with the function to be taken on."

But the law does not absolutely require a sponsor, and one can easily envision situations where there would be no time to find one, such as a dying newborn.

So, the absence of a sponsor has no effect on the validity of baptism. In not securing a Catholic sponsor, your daughter made an honest mistake and there is no need now to re-create or to "convalidate" the baptism.

It would be wise, however, for your daughter to give added attention to the choice of a confirmation sponsor. Since the role of a sponsor is to help assure that a child is raised and educated in the Catholic faith, and since the two non-Catholic baptismal sponsors may not be in a position to do that, all the more reason to see to it that the girl's sponsor for confirmation be someone who can act as a spiritual companion, listener and mentor as the young person matures in Catholic faith and practice.

Questions may be sent to Father Kenneth Doyle at askfatherdoyle@gmail.com and 40 Hopewell St., Albany, N.Y. 12208.

We are called to be moved with compassion

By Effie Caldarola
Catholic News Service

This autumn, there was a horrific accident in Anchorage, Alaska. A man had stopped on a busy street because his truck wasn't working. As his wife sat in the cab, he crawled under the back of the truck to check it, and when he emerged, a car plowed into him with such force that both of his legs were nearly severed.

A woman, with her young son in the car, was passing by. She worked as a waitress and a nurse's aide at a local hospital, and she was coming off a long shift. Like the Samaritan of Scripture, she stopped and used her skills to staunch the man's bleeding. Passers-by handed her any scarf they could find -- even a belly dancer's scarf with coins attached -- and she, with help from another motorist, tied them so tightly around what remained of the man's legs that he didn't bleed out before the ambulance arrived. He lost his legs, but he lived.

In an interview with Julia O'Malley in the Anchorage Daily News Sept. 15, the woman described how she felt calm and prayed that the man would live as she waited with him in the interminable minutes before the paramedics came.

I suppose in every town and every city, every day someone responds with compassion to events large and small. Many are capable of great acts of compassion, and many of those are not religious people.

But those of us who believe in the Gospel are compelled to act with compassion. I think compassion encompasses the Scriptures so completely that every word needs to be read within compassion's framework.

"Moved with compassion" is a common phrase in the Gospel. It describes Jesus' own actions, and he describes the Samaritan -- a disrespected outcast in the eyes of Jesus' audience -- as being "moved with compassion" when he came upon the bloodied, injured traveler on the road to Jericho.

Jesus seems to admire above all others those who act with compassion. That should give us pause in examining our own lives.

Very pointedly, Jesus mentioned in the story about the Samaritan that there were others who passed by the victim, including a priest and a Levite who had crossed to the other side of the road. They did not want to risk ritual impurity by consorting with this wounded stranger. They wanted to avoid being soiled. They were following the rules but obviously missed the bigger rule, the law of love, which Christ was trying to teach.

Jesus was an observant Jew, and he did not advocate breaking the rules for the

(Please See CALDAROLA/23)
PATTERSON

(From 3)

of the movie is unveiled. Steve Carrell’s character Dodge really is the only one who gets it. The end of the world can mean only one thing: a final opportunity to spend time with a loved one. Problem is, his mother is dead, his father left when he was young and when his wife learned the world was nearing an end, she bailed on him too. The only thing left for him to do is try to reconnect with an old girlfriend from his past, but along the way as he tries to find her, something else begins to unfold. It’s a sweet story. How can a movie about the end of the world be sweet and have a happy ending? You have to see it to understand.

What makes “Seeking a Friend” so good, though, is, like “Win Win,” it prompts conversation. And it forces you to ask yourself the question, “What would I do if I had only 21 days left before the end of the world?

Some people will get it, like Dodge; others won’t. Learning which category you fall into is likely not difficult for those who are reading this, but it does prompt further discussion: these guys have 21 days to love family, and “Find God,” as Dodge says he wants to do, but the further question that can easily arise after watching “Seeking a Friend” is harder: Many people don’t have the luxury of planning for their ultimate earthly end. The actors in the movie had it easy -- they had 21 days.

Are you ready if yours ended tomorrow? Or today? With no warning at all?

Now there’s a message I’d like to see Hollywood tackle.
Yo ando con Dios:

The Institute for Priestly Formation

By Ryan Rojo

There is an old Spanish mantra that goes something like this:
“Dime con quien andas y te dire quien eres.” A rough translation would be something like, “Tell me who you run around with and I’ll tell you who you are.”

I think this does well to summarize the Institute for Priestly Formation.

The Institute is a summer program for diocesan seminarians that focuses on the spiritual well-being of those studying to be priests. The program was founded as a response to the Church’s call for seminarians to be integrated in all aspects of their life:

“Since spiritual formation is the core that unifies the life of a priest, it stands at the heart of seminary life and is the center around which all other aspects are integrated” (Program for Priestly Formation, no. 115).

Three seminarians from the Diocese of San Angelo had the opportunity to experience this integration firsthand. Adam Droll, Timothy Hayter, and I spent 10-weeks in Omaha, NE, learning about the importance of priestly spirituality and identity in our future ministry.

It would be nearly impossible to summarize such a powerful experience into a small blurb on a Tumblr account. That is why I think the above Spanish mantra does well to express the essence of what we learned.

The Institute for Priestly Formation loved to remind us seminarians that we were called to live in “intimate and unceasing union with God.” The beautiful thing that revealed itself to us is that this union was actually possible! It is possible to “andar con Dios!” While this insight might seem elementary, it is important to remember that it is oftentimes the small things that get overlooked. God is truly present and calling EACH OF US by name.

We must, through his grace, respond to that call in complete poverty. We are called to imitate St. John the Baptist, “I must decrease so that he may increase” (John 3:30). It is only then that we truly know who we are: beloved sons and daughters of our Father in heaven!

The tools and insights we have been blessed with will only serve and inform our future ministry. In this day when the perception of priesthood is skeptical at best, the Institute for Priestly Formation is seeking to get back to the basics:

Spirituality.

I’d like to end with a quote from Fr. Pedro Arrupe, the Superior General of the Jesuits from 1965-1983. It has served well to inspire my own prayer, and it is my hope that it does the same for you all.

¡Viva Cristo Rey! ¡Viva la Virgen de Guadalupe! ¡Andamos con Dios! ¡Somos hijos de Dios, nuestro padre!

“Nothing is more practical than finding God, that is, than falling in love in a quite absolute, final way. What you are in love with, what seizes your imagination, will effect everything. It will decide what will get you out of bed in the mornings, what you will do with your evenings, how you spend your weekends, what you read, who you know, what breaks your heart, and what amazes you with joy and gratitude. Fall in love, stay in love, and it will decide everything.” —Fr. Pedro Arrupe, S.J.

Retired San Angelo priest gives ‘two thumbs up’ to book

“Born Again in Medjugorje,” by Mary McCafferty, Not Forgotten Publications.

Msgr. Father Francis Frey
Retired Priest-Diocese of San Angelo

I received this book and set it aside to read sometime. I noticed that its back cover quoted Charles, my brother. Interesting. I will read it sometime. Sometime came and I read part of it.

The story of a Catholic woman who was an ordinary Catholic, but not too enthusiastic about it. However she did hear about Medjugorje and the different miraculous things that happened there to people. Circumstances led her to go see for herself. That is the first part of her book. The rest of it is what did happen and what did not happen to her as she entered into the spirit of this way out of the way poor place, ravaged by war, and it changed her life. She had to write about it and to repeat her visit to it over and over again.

Mary McCafferty is (was) like so many of us. Living her faith, and at the same time looking for extraordinary signs of God’s power as other people had seen. Medjugorje was the place where things were happening. In her book, she takes you with her so well that you experience all that really mattered to her. You have made the journey yourself. That is what impressed Charles. It will impress you also. I have been to Medjugorje. I have done that myself. I could read into the book more than what was written there. I revisited this place of visions and modern day miracles with her. This was good for me because I must admit that I was not overly impressed by that place when I visited it.

As I thought about the writing, it came to me that I was unhappy with the group I was with. I was the "nominal spiritual leader" but the leader kept everyone busy praying the Rosary to the extent that we did not have a real opportunity to know each other to share each others lives. Don’t misunderstand me. The Rosary is good. I pray it regularly.

I did not have the opportunity to make many friends on my trip.

Reading the book brought home to me that Mary McCafferty was impressed as much by who she met and talked with, as much as other sights and talks that happened there. Mary looked for small miracles. She found them but not as she expected them. Our God is a God of surprises. With the gift of faith we will see Him working all around us. I do not believe that we need to travel off to far off shrines. That is the reason I am writing this.

First of all, I am aware of the good things that are happening to me day after day, as well as in the past. I like to walk in the woods and see the tiny flowers giving their all to praise God who made them. This same God is working in the lives of all those I encounter as I live my daily life. Those who come to daily Mass! Each one has a story to tell. Often they do not need to tell their story. They tell it by their actions. I see it in the store clerks, the waitresses, the other motorists who make life easy for me by waiting for me to move my car. Especially, I see it in those who welcome me again and again as well as the first time I meet them. God’s miracles of love are all around us if only we would notice and praise Him for them.

When I write my book, I will go into detail about how this helped me in my journey to become a priest. Thank you for reading this. Let us pray for each other!
**VATICANO**

(Para 4)

to God completely. That is what we can place our total trust. Christ. So, during the Year of Faith, we are called to deepen our relationship with Christ. To do this, we must place our faith in action by caring for our neighbors in need.

Thus, as we go through the Year of Faith, we give an answer to Christ’s question by:

- receiving God’s mercy and forgiveness for our sins and our failures in the Sacrament of Reconciliation;
- nourishing and strengthening our faith by frequent presence at Mass, receiving the wonderful gift of the Holy Eucharist;
- making efforts right where we live to share our faith with others, inviting them into a deeper relationship with Jesus Christ;
- looking at ways to offer more service and assistance to the poor and marginalized. We put our faith in action by caring for our neighbors in need.

Each Sunday at Mass and at other times, we renew our faith together in what we call the Creed. Another early name for the Creed was Faith. And the Latin root for the word Creed means “I give my heart to God.” In the Year of Faith, we are called to give our hearts to Christ, and to let His love fill our lives and to share that love with others.

**CONTRACEPTION**

(From 10)

Contraceptive mentality is destroying us.

Contraception sends a message between spouses: I want you, but not all of you; I want to give myself, but not my entire self. Over time, sexual intercourse can devolve into self-taking rather than self-giving. When pleasure becomes more important than commitment, partners become objects rather than persons. Spouses stray in search of greater pleasure.

Contraception also opens the sexual act to unmarried people lacking any commitment to each other, some mere adolescents. Emotionally, casual sex has done a lifetime of damage to those unprepared for it. Physically, it has caused rampant disease. In the ’60s, the only two sexually transmitted diseases were syphilis and gonorrhea. Today there are over 25 STDs, some of which are incurable. There are 15 million new STD cases annually. Many contraception pills and injections bring harm to the health of women, and some are designed to be abortifacient.

Worse, the contraceptive mentality leads to the abortion mentality. Contraception treats human life as the enemy to be blocked at all costs. But it often fails. Male and female condoms fail at a 17% combined average rate. Those are worse odds than playing Russian roulette with a six-shooter. That’s why abortionists provide free condoms. When contraception users become pregnant, they are only a small horrible step away from abortion. Even before conception, the enemy already had been targeted. And the abortion mills, especially Planned Parenthood, stand ready to collect the bounty.

There are much better ways to live our sexuality as intended by God. When this gift is violated, there are terrible social, moral, psychological, physical, health and spiritual problems. In our Church, we preach zero-tolerance for smoking, drinking and drugs, but distribute condoms to kids. It’s like telling them to smoke filter tip cigarettes. We must teach abstinence; it always works, and it is the plan that is totally in accord with God’s plan for our sexuality and the moral code as established by God. We must also instill the value that true love waits until a life-time commitment has been made. Married couples must responsibly plan in a natural way for new life that cooperates with God’s wondrous plan for us. All this can be done, especially by following Natural Family Planning [NFP]. This plan works in accord with our God-given nature and is safe, healthy and holy, bringing new graces into marriage and family.

As we deal with the critical issue of the HHS health mandate, we need clear teaching on the Church’s position on contraception, and why we can never allow payment for insurance payment for immoral purposes — abortifacient pills, sterilization, and contraception. Some would hold that since most people practice contraception, it cannot be all that wrong. However, sexual morality is not determined by the numbers involved in immoral practice nor by opinion poll of people, but by the plan and purpose of God. The wonderful gift of human sexuality when lived in marriage according to God’s will will bring new life into our world and peace and happiness to parents.

**BISHOP**

(From 2)

us away from our relationship with Christ. So, during the Year of Faith, we are called to deepen our relationship with Christ, especially by using the wonderful gifts of God’s grace in the Sacraments, and to living His Gospel in our daily lives. When we do this, then we are telling Christ that He is our God, our Lord and our Savior, the only one in whom we can place our total trust.

Hence, as we go through the Year of Faith, we give an answer to Christ’s question by:

- reflecting on the beautiful gift of faith that has been given to each one of us;
- deepening our knowledge and understanding of the teachings of our beautiful Catholic Church, especially the Church’s moral teaching on current critical issues;
- reading, reflecting, and praying with the Scriptures individually and in our families;
- healing, nourishing, and strengthening our faith by frequent presence at Mass, receiving the wonderful gift of the Holy Eucharist;

**OBISPO**

(Para 3)

actuales;
- Leer, reflexionar y orar con las Escrituras individualmente y en nuestras familias;
- Recibir la misericordia y el perdón por nuestros pecados y nuestros fracasos en el Sacramento de Reconciliación;
- Nutrir y fortalecer nuestra fe por medio de estar presente frecuentemente en Misa, y recibiendo el don hermoso de la Sagrada Eucaristía;
- Hacer esfuerzos donde vivimos de compartir nuestra fe con otros, invitándolos a una relación más profunda con Jesucristo;
- Buscar maneras para ofrecer más servicio y asistencia al pobre y al marginado. Ponemos nuestra fe en acción por medio de cuidar nuestros vecinos necesitados.

Cada domingo en Misa, y en otras ocasiones, juntos renovamos nuestra fe en lo cual llamamos el Credo. Otro nombre primitivo para el Credo era “fe”. La raíz latina de la palabra “credo” significa “le doy mi corazón a Dios”. En el Año de Fe, somos llamados a dar nuestros corazones a Cristo, y dejar que Su amor llene nuestras vidas y compartir ese amor con otros.
Gray

(From 1)

the occasion to rename the diocesan pro-life committee the Nellie Jane Gray Pro Life Committee of the Diocese of San Angelo, and at a Confirmation Mass at Holy Trinity Church in Big Spring, where a plaque in her memory was unveiled.

“She has been proclaimed the Martin Luther King Jr. of the Pro-Life movement, and Cardinal O’Malley of Boston has called her the Joan of Arc of the Pro-Life movement. No one has done more for the Pro-Life movement in the history of the Church in the United States, no cardinal, no bishop, no priest, no religious. One day, down the line, I am sure she is going to become a blessed and a saint.”

Attending the celebrations in her memory in Midland were Kay Marie Donovan and Ann Mills, Gray’s nieces from Corpus Christi.

“She was very independent and true to her convictions and feelings, and she was self-educated,” Ms. Donovan said. “And she was most excited because, toward the end of her life, she noticed that children seemed to be going back to church again.”

Attending the Confirmation Mass in Big Spring was Pastor Scott Cervantes, chaplain at the VA Hospital in Big Spring and interim pastor at a Lutheran church in Abilene.

Cervantes, a longtime friend of Msgr. Gully, feared that not many understand the significance of the honor being bestowed upon Gray at the plaque unveiling because not many understand the significance of life and the sanctity and protection of the lives of unborns.

Gray was baptized in Stanton in 1924, graduated Big Spring High School when she was 15 and following her service to the Women’s Air Corps in World War II, earned her law degree from Georgetown. She returned to Big Spring briefly as an adult to be honored as a Distinguished Citizen.

Year

(From 14)

Council. Read a section and discuss it at dinner or on the way to Sunday Mass. For ideas visit the Diocese of Joliet website.

- Use your smartphone, tablet, computer or other device to help you incorporate your faith into your daily life. A variety of Catholic apps are available for most operating systems. (The USCCB has the Catechism of the Catholic Church available in ebook format.) Additionally, there are number websites that can help remind you to pray or complete a favorite devotion. (Pray More Novenas sends out novena prayers by email and Marian Minute helps create a meditative electronic environment for a short prayer.)

For families

- Pray the Year of Faith Family Prayer. Choose a time when the family is likely to be together, for example, after Sunday dinner, and make this a regular weekly practice.
- During the Year of Faith, try to acknowledge your family’s “name days,” that is, the feast of each person’s patron saint. Look up information about the saint and find a picture. Perhaps you can make a food associated with the saint. Check here for ideas to celebrate saints’ days with children.
- Take a “field trip” to visit the diocesan cathedral or a historic church or religious landmark in your area. Or simply take a good look around your own parish church. Do you know the meaning of the various symbols?
- What saint(s) does your parish honor?
- Have a family discussion to choose one area of human need that Catholic teaching highlights. Decide on a way to answer that need together this year, whether through volunteering, fundraising, donating unneeded items or a commitment to pray

Osborne

(From 14)

wise remain closed. Education means the end to ignorance and fear. It fosters the development of a society, an economy and a future.

Faced with our dumbed-down excuse for popular culture, I don’t see American teens remembering that often.

When was the last time you didn’t take school for granted? When was the last time that a teacher woke you up in class, caught you texting or not paying attention? When was the last time you skipped a class or copied your friend’s homework or didn’t study for a test? When was the last time you said, “Well, I'll never need to know that,” or “That subject is dumb”?

What would you do with your life if you were told you could no longer go to school?

I remember the many times I slept in class, crashed on the couch in front of the television instead of studying or put off my homework. Malala would be ashamed of me.

Extremists have vowed to finish the job they started. If Malala survives, they say, they’ll try to kill her again. If Malala survives, she’ll probably want to go back to school. I desperately hope she gets that chance.

Vatican II

(From 4)

the present day, but since the Church was still on the defensive, it was looked upon with suspicion by many, especially those at the Holy Office in the Vatican. Today it is called the Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith.

The pontificate of Pope Pius XII was very important; it was a link between the long nineteenth century and the modern era ushered in by Vatican II. Contrary to past pronouncements, Pius XII, in a December 1944 radio address, for the first time in the history of the papacy, approved of democracy as a viable way to govern, appropriate for our day and one that respected the dignity of the human person.

And he issued some very important encyclicals. Mystici Corporis gave a new view of the Church, after the manner of the Fathers of the Church, seeing the Church as the Body of Christ. That same year he issued Divino Afflante Spiritu which gave approval to the new approaches to Biblical studies. In 1947, he wrote Mediator Dei, in which he gives encouragement to the liturgical movement. He not only spoke in favor of it, but also made some changes to the solemn liturgy of holy week.

While the Church of 1958 gave the outward appearance of calm, turmoil churned beneath the surface and would make itself known at Vatican II.

Region X Youth Conference Schedule

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Event</th>
<th>Day</th>
<th>Time</th>
<th>Location</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Workshop Session I</td>
<td>Friday, Nov. 16</td>
<td>2:45</td>
<td>Transition break</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Workshop Session II</td>
<td>Saturday, Nov. 17</td>
<td>3:00</td>
<td>Workshop Session II</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Load buses for Ft. Concho</td>
<td>Saturday, Nov. 17</td>
<td>4:30</td>
<td>Load buses for Ft. Concho</td>
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<tr>
<td>Entertainment and Dinner</td>
<td>Saturday, Nov. 17</td>
<td>7:15</td>
<td>Entertainment and Dinner</td>
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<tr>
<td>Load buses for Coliseum</td>
<td>Saturday, Nov. 17</td>
<td>7:45</td>
<td>Load buses for Coliseum</td>
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<tr>
<td>Gathering music</td>
<td>Saturday, Nov. 17</td>
<td>9:00</td>
<td>Gathering music</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>General Session/ prayed</td>
<td>Saturday, Nov. 17</td>
<td>9:30</td>
<td>General session/ prayed</td>
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<tr>
<td>Keynote: Doug Tooko</td>
<td>Saturday, Nov. 17</td>
<td>10:00</td>
<td>Keynote: Doug Tooko</td>
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<tr>
<td>Instructions for workshop</td>
<td>Saturday, Nov. 17</td>
<td>11:15</td>
<td>Instructions for workshop</td>
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<tr>
<td>Load buses and head to Convention Center</td>
<td>Saturday, Nov. 17</td>
<td>11:30</td>
<td>Load buses and head to Convention Center</td>
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<tr>
<td>Noon Lunch</td>
<td>Saturday, Nov. 17</td>
<td>11:30</td>
<td>Noon Lunch</td>
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<tr>
<td>1:15 p.m. Workshop Session I</td>
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<td>2:45 Transition break</td>
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<td>3:00 Workshop Session II</td>
<td>Saturday, Nov. 17</td>
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<td>3:00 Workshop Session II</td>
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<tr>
<td>4:30 Load buses for Ft. Concho</td>
<td>Saturday, Nov. 17</td>
<td>4:30</td>
<td>4:30 Load buses for Ft. Concho</td>
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<tr>
<td>5:00 Ft. Concho Saturday</td>
<td>Saturday, Nov. 17</td>
<td>5:00</td>
<td>5:00 Ft. Concho Saturday</td>
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<tr>
<td>Beginners Mass/Dinner</td>
<td>Saturday, Nov. 17</td>
<td>7:15</td>
<td>Beginners Mass/Dinner</td>
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<tr>
<td>Workshop Session I</td>
<td>Saturday, Nov. 17</td>
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<td>Workshop Session I</td>
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<tr>
<td>Gathering music</td>
<td>Saturday, Nov. 17</td>
<td>9:00</td>
<td>Gathering music</td>
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<tr>
<td>General Session</td>
<td>Saturday, Nov. 17</td>
<td>9:30</td>
<td>General Session</td>
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<tr>
<td>Keynote: Fr. Tony Ricard</td>
<td>Saturday, Nov. 17</td>
<td>10:00</td>
<td>Keynote: Fr. Tony Ricard</td>
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<tr>
<td>Night Prayer</td>
<td>Saturday, Nov. 17</td>
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<td>Night Prayer</td>
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<td>Sunday, Nov. 16</td>
<td></td>
<td>8:15 a.m.</td>
<td>Doors open</td>
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<td>8:30</td>
<td>Gather music</td>
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<td>8:45</td>
<td>General Session</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>9:15</td>
<td>Closing Liturgy (Bishop Pfeifer celebrating)</td>
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In November 2007, Fr. Ricard served as the keynote speaker for the National Catholic Youth Conference, which alternates years with the regional conference, when it was held in Columbus, Ohio. According to his website, Fr. Ricard’s message to youth is, “God made us to know Him, to love Him and to serve Him.”

Louie Salinas is the youth director for Our Lady of Mercy Catholic Church in Mercedes has never attended an RCYC before, but is excited about what this conference could mean not just his church, but also his diocese.

“Our diocese is new in youth ministry, so going to the RCYC will be a learning experience,” Salinas said. “I’m sure all youth ministers and Directors of Religious Education are anxious to attend.”

While the theme is “Shaken by the Spirit,” the primary focus of the conference is going to be evangelization, which according to Bishop Pfeifer was proposed by our Holy Father, Pope Benedict XVI.

“We want to invite all of the sheep of our Lord to come and be with us as we all celebrate together this beautiful conference with Jesus, our main good shepherd,” Bishop Pfeifer added, alluding to the fact that West Texas is known for its abundance of sheep.

Each day of the conference has its own theme, and with the high school football playoffs under way, the conference is going to start at a football stadium with the daily theme of “Friday Night Lights: Evangelization to the Community” as they hit on the West Texas football tradition.

“The richness of culture, history and the evangelization spirit of San Angelo will provide the youth of Arkansas, Oklahoma and Texas with new experiences of church that they may not always see in their own home dioceses or parishes,” Adams said. “In addition, it also brings them closer together when they realize the similarities of faith and life that they share as young Catholics in the world today, no matter if their diocese is 39,000 Catholics or 1.4 million Catholics.”

Saturday is about evangelizing to your family, friends and the Church as it challenges the youth to look at “Who’s in your Posse?”

The conference wraps up Sunday showing the teens how to self-evangelize on a day titled “When the Well Runs Dry.”

“We will hit a home run with this one,” Pfeifer added, “and they’ll say ‘Hey, they’ve got a team out there’ and I think they’ll see the hospitality and they’re going to experience something pretty unique out here and want to come back.’”

WORK

(From 5)

The Year of Faith, which begins Oct. 11, has been designated by our Holy Father Pope Benedict XVI as a special time to reinvigorate our personal faith journey and to share that faith with others. But these efforts need not be relegated to just one special period of time. Indeed, the Year of Faith is something that should be celebrated and embraced every day of every year in our humanly existence.

In his pastoral letter, the archbishop noted that every Catholic is called to holiness and to mission, as Blessed John Paul II touched upon in his encyclical "Redemptoris Missio" ("The Mission of the Redeemer").

"These fundamental realities, based in our sacramental union with God, initiated at baptism, are at the heart of what all the anniversaries and celebrations and deliberations are about," the archbishop said. In his letter, he outlines specific ways in which we can live out that call to holiness and mission.

But it all comes down to this, as the archbishop simply said: "There really is a heaven and there really is a hell, and what we believe and how we live is determining our eternal destiny."

We know what our ultimate destination is. But are we walking along the right pathway to get there?

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

Spanish programming

Las estaciones de radio en las tres deanerías de la diócesis de nuevo están transmitiendo programas regulares en español cada fi n de semana por las mañanas. Las siguientes son las estaciones y el horario donde usted puede escuchar EWTN y otros esfuerzos de programaciones católicos en español en Abilene, Midland-Odessa y San Angelo:

Abilene – KKHV (106.3 FM) está transmitiendo La Hora Católica de EWTN en español los domingos a las 10 a.m.

Midland-Odessa – Padre Gilberto Rodríguez, el Vicario Parroquial de la parroquia San Esteban (St. Stephen’s Church) de Midland, presenta el programa los sábados desde las 5-10 a.m. en KQLM (108 FM) con entrevista cada sábado con el Obispo Miguel Pfeifer, OMI a las 8:45 a.m.. Además, La Hora Católica de EWTN se puede escuchar los domingos a las 7 a.m.

San Angelo – KSJT en San Angelo está transmitiendo La Hora Católica de EWTN los lunes y martes a las 7 a.m.

EWTN Spanish programming

Radio stations in all three of the deaneries of the diocese are again running regular weekly programming on weekend mornings. The following is the stations and times where you can hear EWTN and other Spanish-programming efforts in Abilene, Midland-Odessa and San Angelo:

ABILENE – KKHV (106.3 FM) is airing EWTN’s Catholic Hour in Spanish, Sundays at 10 a.m.

MIDLAND-ODESSA – Fr. Gilbert Rodriguez, parochial vicar at St. Stephen’s Church in Midland, hosts a Saturday program from 5-10 a.m. on KQLM (108 FM).

Additionally, EWTN Catholic programming can be heard Sundays at 7 a.m.

SAN ANGELO — KSJT in San Angelo is airing EWTN’s Catholic Hour Sundays at 7 a.m.
take anything for granted. Although it may not feel like it everyday, I do have a really fortunate life.

Now that I am going to make my confirmation, it does not mean that I am going to stop going to church. I still plan to go to church and church events as long as I live. It doesn’t take much to go to church at least once a week. Everything good that happens to me happens because of the Holy Trinity, and so it is best I pay my dues and respect and go to church. Every time I go to church, I am constantly learning new life lessons that I probably cannot learn from anyone else. After I do go to church, I reflect on what was said and try to live it. I feel good inside and feel very much loved from God. Often I do feel lifted and light hearted when I tell my friends about church and things I have learned. I also have no problem standing up for my religion when someone speaks down upon it. Some may say its tough being a Catholic because of the “rules,” but I say in the end it is worth it. I wouldn’t want to put anything in the way of me being able to spend eternity in heaven. Everyday I am trying to be my best to people who I like and sometimes dislike. As my dad says, “You can’t live your life being mad at people and being angry all the time.”

We are all born living a life where decisions can change everything for better or for worse. With making decisions, this also ties in with the meaning of chastity. Everyone is given the choice if they want to live a chaste life or if they don’t. If you believe in God and believe Jesus is our savior, then we will find our life partner. We need to save ourselves for the one that we will be with forever. Now days, society makes it seem as if everyone is having sex and that is what everyone should do. This is not the way to live life because it is unsafe and can cause mixed, confused feelings of what love is supposed to be.

After all the CCD classes, I do feel very prepared to make my confirmation. I do feel like I have learned so much over the years and that there is no better life than one with the Lord in it. There may be times in the future when it will get rough and hard, but I know that if I put all my worries with God, he will help me.

**Reflections from Kacy Keith and Mirable Mata to Bishop Pfeifer**

We at St. Patrick’s’s Catholic Church Confirmation class understand that the Holy Spirit is the third person of the Holy Trinity, who Christ promised to send us prior to ascending to Heaven, the advocate who will be with us until the end of time. We believe that the Holy Spirit is our strength to persevere against the temptations of the evil one who wages war for our souls. We also believe that with the Holy Spirit we can carry out our discipleship throughout our lives and within our communities at large within Brady, school, church at S. Patrick’s and future college life. The Holy Spirit is life and strength for our souls. The gifts we receive from the Spirit like wisdom, help us to know how we should be as disciples of Christ, and understanding to know our purpose as disciples in the world at large and how we can influence the communities in which we live. The Holy Spirit also gives us the ability to right judgment and knowledge so that we can follow our hearts to make better choices within our lives as per Jesus’ teachings. With fortitude and piety we gain the determination to live as Christ has taught us to love God with all our hearts, all our minds and all our strength, which means we allow God to guide our choices not the world at large. The Holy Spirit allows us to live our lives with reverence for God and all creation in that we have a responsibility to be true disciples in Christ.

We can live the Sacrament of Confirmation within our daily lives by understanding that the Holy Spirit is our guide in making moral right choices. The choices we make must fit our Catholic teachings in that we are carrying our own cross as Christ has directed us to do so to gain Heaven and salvation. Living our Sacraments is a choice not some obligation so that we can become the examples in our high schools and colleges for others to observe when we are courageous to live not according to peer pressure or the norms of society, like sex outside of marriage, excessive drinking, or drugs. We understand that God’s gifts of the Holy Spirit embolden us against the temptations of the world and the evil one who are constantly fighting for our eternal souls.

Chastity is more than not having sex out of marriage, but rather choosing to live our lives as Christ has taught us to treat our bodies as temples where God lives. We understand that when we choose to desecrate our bodies by having sex outside of married life, we choose to walk away from God the Father who sent his only begotten Son to us, and we also choose to ignore Christ (the Son) who taught us about loving ourselves as He and the Father love us and we also choose to not listen to the advocate, whom Christ left with us to guide us throughout our lives. By living an unchaste life, we choose to live in the world which challenges our moral and religious principles and to forego what our conscience tells us, and which will eventually separate us from the Holy Trinity.

We learn from the Reading of the Prophet Isaiah that God has formed us in the wombs of our mothers to do great things in the world that we live in, and we must not be fearful of living our lives as evangelists proclaiming the word of God as St. John the Baptist did, even to the point of death. We, as the Body of the Church, must proclaim our adoration for God by living according to the Spirit and the truth. God will reward those who proclaim the Word of God to the people of God even if the people refuse to listen to the word proclaimed in God’s name. We as the Confirmed must be fearless in our discipleship in Christ, in that we will be true examples of Christ in the world by being His evangelists of the Word.

We are asked to be Christ to one another in our actions and deeds and to continue to proclaim the Good News of salvation that comes from Jesus Christ.
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Jimmy Patterson
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Editor

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MIDLAND

Monsignor James Plagens, at podium, delivers a homily on the convening of the Second Vatican Council in Rome, fifty years ago on October 11, 2012. The Church used the occasion of the anniversary of the council’s opening and the 20th anniversary of the release of the Catechism of the Catholic Church to open of the “Year of Faith.”

Photo by Alan P. Torre / aptorre.com

SAN ANGELO

A Pro Life Mass was held at St. Joseph’s, The Worker Catholic Church in San Angelo, officiated by Fr. Emilio Sosa. Brother William Attaway, Council 12798, Church programs director, coordinated the mass to included Knights from surrounding councils to take an active part in the mass. Fourth Degree assemblies from surrounding cities also participated.

Photo submitted by Lee Castro

Scholarship deadline for Catholic lay approaches

SAN ANTONIO—Catholic laymen and women pursuing a graduate degree in theology or religious studies in order to serve their church in a professional capacity must submit applications for the Rev. Msgr. Larry J. Droll Scholarship by February 15, 2013.

The renewable $2,000 scholarship will be awarded to two candidates in need of tuition assistance for additional education who serve or want to serve his or her parish as an administrator, youth minister, parish coordinator or other role.

“Today many dedicated Catholics, who are not ordained clergy or women religious, serve parishes as parish coordinators or administrators, as pastoral associates, directors of religious education, youth ministers, liturgists, and many other roles,” said Msgr. Droll. “This scholarship can help provide the funds to earn the advanced educational degree in theology or religious studies that is often required for these positions.”

The scholarship is geared towards those who have already obtained their bachelor’s degree and who are either enrolled or wanting to enroll into any Catholic graduate school in Texas, Arizona, Florida, Louisiana, New Mexico, Oklahoma or Mississippi.

Applications may be obtained by submitting an application which may be found online at www.cliu.com, contacting the Communications Department at (210) 828-9921 or 1-800-292-2548 or by writing to Catholic Life Insurance, Attn: Communications Department, P.O. Box 659527, San Antonio, TX 78265-9527.