Let earth receive her King
From the Bishop’s Desk

**A few questions to reflect on this Advent season**

*By Bishop Michael Pfeifer, OMI*

Advent is a time to prepare for the birthday of Christ on Christmas Day, December 25. The four weeks of Advent preparing for Christmas is a time to reflect on the important questions as regards our relationship with Christ, and how we are becoming other Christs for people we live and work with and meet in our everyday lives.

Advent is a season of waiting; it is a season to grow in our understanding of Christ, and to take more time for prayer and reflection. Advent is a season when we especially need to practice the virtue of patience and humility, helping us realize who we are, and the great One we are waiting for on Christmas day. Advent is a time for silence and growth in the spiritual life, to attend Mass more often and to make a good confession.

After Mary learned the wonderful news from the angel that she was to be the mother of the long-awaited Messiah and Savior, for nine months Christ grew in His mother’s body in a silent way, in the simplicity of her daily life. Mary went about her daily tasks, and she had nothing to give her God but herself. She did this in a spirit of total surrender, humility and in a spirit of great faith and hope as she prepared for the birth of her Son, our Messiah and Savior. Mary is our great model of how we are to live the Advent season in a spirit of trust, surrender, and living each day the best way we can. Working, eating, sleeping, each day Mary was forming the body of Christ from hers. From her humanity, she gave Jesus His humanity.

Mary is the best one to teach us how to live these days of Advent in a spirit of patience, humility, prayer and surrendering of our lives to God so that we can truly find Christ in a new way when

(Please See BISHOP/23)

**MACC honors Bishop Pfeifer**

*The Angelus*

The Mexican American Catholic College (MACC) recently honored Bishop Michael Pfeifer with the San Juan Diego Leadership Award for his life-long commitment to Hispanic Ministry. The award, a beautiful crystal eagle, was presented during the U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops (USCCB) General Assembly in November. MACC President, Dr. Arturo Chávez and the Chairman of the Board, Most Rev. Oscar Cantú, presented the award.

“The eagle is a powerful and meaningful symbol for both the United States and Mexico representing courage and integrity. It represents St. Juan Diego who’s indigenous name means He Who Speaks Like an Eagle,” explained Dr. Chávez. “Hispanics are already the majority of U.S. Catholics under the age of 25. Unfortunately, they are leaving the Church in record numbers to join other denominations actively seeking them out through home visits and lively worship services in Spanish. Leaders like Bishop Michael are needed now more than ever to find innovative ways to bring the Gospel and catechesis to Hispanics and all Catholics searching for belonging and meaning.”

Bishop Pfeifer’s long-standing commitment to the mission of MACC, including his twenty-five years of service on the Board, is a testament to the importance of the Church’s outreach to Hispanics. During his 15-year tenure as Chair, he was instrumental in expanding MACC’s mission to become an institution of higher education precisely to prepare seminarians, deacons, religious and lay leaders to effectively and faithfully promote the Church’s call for a new evangelization.

Bishop Pfeifer was born in Alamo Texas and ordained to the priesthood in 1964. In 1985 he was appointed Bishop by Pope John Paul II to serve as Shepherd for the Catholic Diocese of San Angelo. Prior to this, he served in parishes and schools in Brownsville Texas, Mexico City, and Oaxaca. Bishop Pfeifer also served as Provincial Superior for the Southern U.S. Province and Mexico for the Oblates of Mary Immaculate in the eighties. He is renowned for his sense of humor, humility, and results oriented leadership at the Texas Catholic Conference and on several USCCB committees.

*Scholarship deadline*

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 Feb. 15, 2012. 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.

The scholarship is geared to those who have already obtained their bachelor’s degree and who are either enrolled or wanting to enroll at any Catholic graduate school in Texas, Arizona, Florida, Louisiana, New Mexico, Oklahoma or Mississippi. Applicants may also be enrolled in an extension program or in the Catholic University of America School of Canon Law. Applications can be obtained at www.ciu.com, by contacting the Communications Department at 800-292-2548 or by writing Catholic Life Insurance, Attn: Communications Department, P.O. Box 659527, San Antonio 78265. Catholic Life Insurance also offers IRAs and retirement annuities to individuals and businesses in Texas, Louisiana, Oklahoma, New Mexico and Mississippi.

**‘40 Days’ Thank You Note**

*By Bishop Pfeifer, Pastors and Staff*

“40 Days” Thank You Note

As you know, the fall ‘40 Days for Life’ recently ended, and we want to thank all those that participated. We had about 100 signed up (exclusive of the Rosary Groups on Tuesday and Fridays) and were able to cover most of the Planned Parenthood open hours at their Second Location. For those with some experience in the pro-life field, it is very difficult to ascertain the level of success during this ‘40 Days,’ but one thing we know for sure: Planned Parenthood does not want your presence there!

Your prayers and sacrifices do make a difference, we just don’t know where and how much!

-- Shawn Carney, 40 Days for Life

**Marriage Encounter Thanks**

To Bishop Pfeifer, Pastors and Staff: “We would like to express our appreciation for helping us make the October Marriage Encounter in Odessa a success. You graciously allowed us to come to your parish and recruit couples through pulpit talks and bulletin announcements. As a result, 24 couples completed the weekend. Parishes represented by couples attending included; St. Elizabeth Ann Seaton, Holy Redeemer and St. Joseph’s, Odessa; St. Stephen’s and St. Ann’s, Midland; Sacred Heart, Abilene, and Good Shepherd, Crane. Thank you for your support of this ministry that helps married couples and priests live out their vocations to the fullest.

The 2012 Marriage Encounter weekends are scheduled for February 10-12 in Midland and October 12-14 in Odessa.

-- Tom & Jeannie Van Vranken Marriage Encounter West Texas www.mewesttexas.org

**‘Pay it Forward’ fundraiser back for another year**

By Jimmy Patterson

Editor / The Angelus

MIDLAND -- Cathie Moravick knew she had to do something, she just wasn’t sure what. But after friends -- and even people she didn’t know -- helped raise more than $600 last year in a new treasure hunt-type fundraiser, Moravick knew she and others were on to something.

Simply explained, “Pay It Forward” is just that: a treasure hunt. Last year, an envelope with cash in it was hidden in a variety of locations around Midland. Each time someone located the envelope, the finder was greeted with a message that said, in effect, “If you need this money, take it. If you want to help someone who may need it more, add to it, hide it again, and log on to our Facebook page and give us clues as to here it is you’ve hidden it.”

It’s an ingenious idea for a fundraiser, one that is fun and can incorporate people of all ages into the giving process. In fact Moravick says being able to bring her children into it is one of her favorite aspects of the generosity-based endeavor.

It is similar in nature to the popular geocaching that many teens and young people do nowadays, except the reward found is not tallied in an app-based, search-and-discover contest put passed along, or paid forward, for the benefit of others.

This year the cash aspect has been taken out, especially since the starting point in the fundraiser has been established at over $2,000, an amount raised through an art show held to help Moravick.
National audit: Diocese in full compliance on safe environment programs

The Angelus

SAN ANGELO -- During the month of September 2011, the Catholic Diocese of San Angelo completed an audit of its Safe Environment Programs with auditors from Stonebridge Business Partners of Rochester, NY, an independent firm commissioned by the United States Catholic Conference of Bishops, to ensure compliance with the USCCB Charter for the Protection of Children and Young People.

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

“As bishop, I am happy to report that Stonebridge has informed me that, based on the analysis of the audit, the Diocese of San Angelo will continue its status of being in compliance with the Charter for the Protection of Children and Young People,” Bishop Pfeifer said. “Since the implementation of the Charter, the diocese has undergone seven previous annual audits in which we were found to be in full compliance with all articles of the Charter. I am pleased with the results of this audit and grateful for the hard work of so many people throughout our diocese — pastors, deacons, religious, and lay leaders — to provide a safe environment for all of our children and youth in the many programs through which we minister to them. Once again, this audit has given us a great opportunity to step back and see what we have accomplished and explore areas where we can make adjustments or improvements.”

Since 2002 the Diocese of San Angelo has conducted background checks and Safe Environment Training for over 9,000 individuals who work with children and youth throughout the Diocese. In addition, over 13,500 parents and other interested parties have attended seminars that the diocese has presented on Preventing Child Sexual Abuse. We will keep moving forward, continuing our efforts not only to provide a safe environment for our children and youth in our church programs, but to raise the awareness of child sexual abuse, and steps that everyone can take to help protect our children.

In accord with the Charter, Bishop Pfeifer and the Bishops of USA invite all Churches and all agencies of society to join hands in efforts to overcome sexual abuse, especially of children, which sadly is rampant in all areas of society.

Well-known convert/apologist
Stephen Ray to present joint mission in Midland in January

By Jimmy Patterson / Editor

MIDLAND -- Stephen Ray, a Baptist who converted to Catholicism and has subsequently become one of the Church’s most well-known apologists thanks to frequent appearances on EWTN, books and video presentations, will host a joint mission for all four parishes in Midland January 15-18, 2012. The four-night event will be held at the Midland Center.

Ray and his wife Janet will also attend a luncheon and talk at St. Lawrence the afternoon of January 15.

Ray is perhaps most well-known for his video series, “The Footprints of God,” as well as his web site, catholic-convert.com. The mission, in fact, is being held in part to help raise funds that will permit Ray and Ignatius Press to complete the 10-part “Footprints” series. Seven installments of the popular presentation, which show Ray in geographic locations telling the story of Catholicism, have been completed. Installments on Abraham, the prophets and the Fathers of the Church have yet to be completed.

“This is unique,” Ray said. “I get a lot of invitations, probably 20 a year, to do missions and conferences, but what happened in Midland was Joe Reed (a parishioner at St. Ann’s) liked the videos and wrote and asked me when the last three would be done.”

When Reed learned the economic downturn prevented Ignatius Press from having enough funding to complete the series, Reed jumped in and the wheels were in motion to help make possible Ray’s appearance in Midland.

A fundraiser January 14 in Midland will help with the cost of the completion of the project -- estimated at $200,000 per episode needed for production costs -- and love offerings at the mission will also be applied to Ray’s project.

Mission nights are from Sunday through Wednesday, Jan. 15-18.

Ray said it’s been over a decade since it first became clear to

(Catherine See FOOTPRINTS/24)

Carmelite hermit on road to priesthood

By Jimmy Patterson

Editor / The Angelus

CHRISTOVAL — Brother Martin Mary, who over 10 years ago decided to forego medical school for the hermetic life, will take another step forward in his vocation January 14 when he takes his diaconal vows en route to becoming a priest. The Mass at the Mt. Carmel Hermitage near Christoval, will be presided over by the Most Rev. Michael D. Peifer, OMI, Bishop of San Angelo.

Brother Martin entered his life as a hermit three days before 9/11 -- September 8, 2011. He was made aware of the terrorist attacks on America because of Father Fabian’s daily reports that the hermits receive in order that they may pray on news and people from “the outside world.”

Martinez says news of the attacks only confirmed the personal decision he made.

“I thought, if this was what things were coming to, it was

(Please See CARMELITE/21)
**History**

**Life in the asphalt jungle and other stories**

**Editor’s Note:** Several months ago, an offer was extended to active and retired priests asking for their memories of service as part of the Diocese of San Angelo’s 50th anniversary year. Msgr. Benedict Zientek, now retired in Brenham, was one of the first priests ordained in the diocese and shares some of his memories in this edition. Msgr. Zientek’s stories will conclude in the January 2012 edition of the Angelus.

**By Msgr. Benedict Zientek**

It was on the morning of October 16, 1961 when I received the call from the Diocese of Austin telling me that I was needed in the new Diocese of San Angelo. I was to inform the pastor, Father Leo Bunowski, in a gentle way as he had just recovered from a heart attack. His response was, ‘Drury is the new bishop.’ That rumor had been around for a year.

January 24, 1962 was the consecration (now called ordination) of the new bishop. Snow and ice were predicted so Father Leo and I drove in the day before. We stayed on the sixth floor of the Cactus Hotel, which faced the Cathedral and there was indeed some snow and ice on the streets.

Coleman was a mission of Brownwood in those days and Father Leo wanted to become pastor at Coleman. His request was granted effective in March. Bishop Drury told me he could not make young priests pastors, even though I had been a priest for four years, so he appointed me administrator in Brownwood in March.

At the Chrism Mass on Holy Thursday later that year, Bishop Drury told me not to leave before he talked to me.

“Young lad,” Bishop Drury said, “I understand you know Spanish? I will appoint you pastor in Rotan.”

If Bishop Drury didn’t know your name he called you Young Lad. I had to get a map to find out where the place was . . . talk about divine humor! I had been too young in February but had matured enough to be pastor by May! Wow! Precious memories.

My forerunner in Rotan was Father Leo Diersing. There was, at the time, a mission attached to Rotan: St. Mary, in Aspermont, 30 miles away. I had two Masses every Sunday in Rotan and one in Aspermont. My Spanish wasn’t that good but I could say Mass in Spanish, and those were the days of the migrant workers. We had to add another Mass so Father

(See Please ZIENTEK/21)

**Del Escritorio del Obispo**

**Preguntas de reflexion durante la temporada de adviento**

**Por el Obispo Miguel D. Pfeifer, OMI**

Adviento es un tiempo para prepararnos para el nacimiento de Cristo, el día de Navidad, el 25 de diciembre. Las cuatro semanas de Adviento, cuando nos preparamos para la Navidad, es un tiempo para reflexionar sobre las preguntas importantes tocantes nuestra relación con Cristo, y como llegamos hacernos Cristo para la gente con quienes vivimos y con quien trabajamos y tratamos en nuestra vida cotidiana.

Adviento es una temporada de espera; es una temporada para crecer en nuestro entendimiento de Cristo, y dar más tiempo para oración y reflexión. Adviento es una temporada cuando especialmente necesitamos practicar la virtud de paciencia y humildad, ayudándonos a realizar quienes somos, y quien es el Único que esperamos el día de navidad. Adviento es un tiempo para silencio y crecimiento en la vida espiritual, asistiendo con más frecuencia a la Santa Misa y haciendo una buena confesión.

Después que María aprendió de las noticias maravillosas del ángel que sería la madre del tan esperado Mesías y Salvador, por nueve meses Cristo creció en el cuerpo de su madre en una manera silenciosa, en la simplicidad de su vida diaria. María llevó a cabo su tarea diaria, y no tenía más que darle a su Dios que ella misma. Lo hizo en espíritu de entrega total, humildad y en un espíritu de gran fe y esperanza al prepararse para el nacimiento de su Hijo, nuestro Mesías y Salvador. María es nuestro gran modelo de cómo debemos vivir la temporada de Adviento en espíritu de confianza, entrega, y viviendo cada día de la mejor manera que podamos.

Trabajando, comiendo, durmiendo, cada día María estaba formando el cuerpo de Cristo en el cuerpo de ella. De su humanidad, ella le dio a Jesús Su humanidad.

María es la mejor persona para enseñarnos como vivir estos días de Adviento en espíritu de paciencia,
Christmas, the manger, and the Holy Eucharist

By Bishop Michael Pfeifer, OMI

The message of Christ’s birth is indeed a joyful one for all of us. Luke tells us about the birth of Christ, and the Christmas Gospel of Midnight Mass we have just heard mentions our great claim as to who Jesus is: Savior and Messiah and Lord. As Savior, He restores us to holiness, rescues us from sin and alienation from God. And Jesus, Christ, is present with sinners and saves us from destructive self-isolation from union with Him, in a nurturing and loving community. As Messiah, Jesus inaugurates the era of human peace, an indication that the end time has begun. As Lord, Jesus is God in human form. The Kingdom is for all those God has chosen.

In the Gospel of Luke, we heard that when Christ was born, there was no room for Him in the inn, and He was born in a stable for animals and placed in a manger, which was his first crib. A manger was a place where the animals came to eat and be refreshed. The Christ Child in the manger came to be our Savior and came to be the new light for our life and the spiritual food for our journey through life. The mystery of Christmas is all about the Christ Child being born of the Virgin Mary as His foster father watched, and about a message of hope and love about how God would care for God’s people in Christ until the end of time. The mystery of Christmas continues on in our day and time as Christ is still with us in a miraculous way in the wonderful gift of the Eucharist. There is an intimate connection between Christmas, the manger, and the Eucharist.

Christmas is a fact of history. It is a historical fact that the infinite and all powerful God of Heaven and earth was born of a woman and came to live among us as a man, a finite creature. The fact of Christmas is that the eternal Word of God became flesh and lived among us.

The Christmas mystery is continued in a wonderful gift that Christ has left His Church, which is the Eucharist. The fact of the Eucharist is that the same Jesus, who was born on earth who not only became man, remains man. Simply put, He stays with us day and night through the miracle of the Mass and His real, true presence in the Blessed Sacrament. The Eucharist is Christmas prolonged, because faith tells us that once God became man, He decided to remain a man with us, and He does this through His Eucharistic Presence.

Christmas and the Eucharist are not only facts they are great mysteries. The mystery of Christmas is the humanly incredible reality of why God chose to become man, why He would come and save us from our sins and live like us and die and give his life totally for us and to bring us God’s new life by dying like a criminal on the cross and even rising from the dead. Christ did not have to do this. God did not even have to make the world, and within the world, He did not have to make us. Yet in God’s great love, God made our world and God made us. We are told by John that God so loved the world that He gave His only son so that those who believe in Him might have eternal life.

The mystery of Christmas is the mystery of God’s love that chose to take on our human form in order to show God’s (Please See CHRISTMAS/22)

Working with the Holy Spirit to overcome the evil one

The Structure of the Diocesan Deliverance Ministry.

By Bishop Michael Pfeifer, OMI

St. Peter, in his writing, tells us that the devil is like a “roaring lion seeking someone to devour.” Even though many people today do not want to admit the existence of the devil, the presence of the devil is confirmed in many passages of the Bible, and as we read in the Gospels, Christ Himself often confronted and expelled the devil. Before beginning His public ministry, Christ Himself was tempted by the devil, and by overcoming the evil one He teaches us that we, because of the His death and resurrection and the power of the Holy Spirit, have the grace and means to overcome the evil one.

Recently a renowned priest exorcist of the Archdiocese of New York, Father Dennis McManus, gave a public presentation on exorcism and a day and a half seminar to all the priests of the Diocese. Father Dennis McManus helped all of us better understand how the evil one, the devil, tries to lead us away from Christ and pointed out how we have the power given to us by Christ to overcome Satan.

In general, we can say there are three ways that the devil tries to separate us from our God, and from Christ living in us. The devil tries to do this through temptation, through obsession or harassment, and in extreme cases, through possession. From what we learned in our recent seminar, we decided to set up a special Diocesan Deliverance Ministry with Blessing Teams throughout the Diocese that could be called upon to help us overcome the influence and persuasion of the devil. We have members of our Blessing Team in each of the three Deaneries of the Diocese. The Coordinator for the Diocesan Deliverance Ministry and Blessing Team for the Diocese is Msgr. Bob Bush of Sacred Heart Church in Abilene and a priest has been named to lead this ministry in each of the three Deaneries. The Diocese has developed guidelines on how the Blessing Teams will function to ask for God’s deliverance from the evil one, to overcome the devil. The Blessing Teams which have been inaugurated in the Diocese of San Angelo are to be a first response of the Church to calls from people who have reason to believe that they or their place of residence or business or other place is the locus of paranormal activity by influence of the devil. They have been trained to pray for God’s deliverance from the evil one. A priest or deacon leads the Deanery Blessing Team (Please See SPIRIT/22)
The human costs, moral consequences of the broken economy

By Bishop Michael D. Pfeifer, OMI

As I have stated before in my writings, our nation faces dismal unemployment figures in recent months. It is reported that 46 million people (15%) now live in poverty in the United States, the land of plenty. For us as bishops, these numbers are not just statistics, but people suffering and wounded in their human dignity. They are parents who cannot feed their children, families that have lost their homes and jobless workers who have lost not only income, but also a sense of their place in society. For us, each of these persons is a child of God with innate human dignity and rights that deserve respect.

The huge numbers of people living in poverty, and the some 14 million who are unemployed, and many more who are underemployed, bring home to us the human costs and moral consequences of a broken economy that cannot fully utilize the talents, energy and work of all our people. All of us know from experience the terrible toll the current economic turmoil is taking on families and communities.

As we deal with widespread unemployment, underemployment and pervasive poverty that are affecting human lives at a deep level and undermining human dignity, we must use our opportunities as pastors, teachers and leaders to focus public attention and priority on the scandal of so much poverty and so many without work in our society. We need to preach more about this critical issue, educate our faithful and to do much more to advocate on behalf of the poor and jobless.

Of course, the best way out of poverty is to work at a living wage. Pope Benedict XVI tells us, “Being out of work or dependent on public or private assistance for a prolonged period undermines the freedom and creativity of the person and his family and social relationships, work and bear the crushing burden of poverty. These economic failures have fundamental institutional and systemic elements that have either been ignored or made worse by political and economic behaviors, which have undermined trust and confidence in our government.

This is not a time to make excuses or place blame. Rather, it is a time for everyone to accept there own personal and institutional responsibility to help create jobs and to overcome poverty, each in accord with their own abilities and opportunities. Individuals and families, faith-based and community groups, businesses and labor, government at every level, all must work together and find effective ways to promote the common good in national and economic life.

Sixteen million of our children (almost one out of four) are growing up poor. This reality contradicts our national pledge of “liberty and justice for all.” It is an essential part of our work as Catholics to build a more just society and economy. We need to reach out more to feed the hungry, be more aware of how we can shelter the homeless, educate the young and welcome refugees and care for the sick and vulnerable.

In these tough economic times, we turn to our loving God and Father in prayer who loves us. We pray for those who need work. We lift up the poor and the suffering. We ask God’s guidance for our nation. This is not a time to give into discouragement. It is a time to practice faith, hope and love. Faith offers us moral principles to guide us in the days ahead and Christian hope gives us strength, and Christ’s love calls all of us to care more in a pastoral and practical way for those who lack the basic necessities of life as we deal with the broken economy.

Texas bishops urge Rep. to protect poor in deficit effort

AUSTIN – Texas Catholic bishops have released a letter urging U.S. Rep. Jeb Hensarling — Texas’ only member on the deficit reduction “Super Committee”—to preserve programs that protect the life and dignity of the country’s vulnerable citizens when seeking to reduce government spending.

The letter was sent by Cardinal Daniel DiNardo, of the Archdiocese of Galveston-Houston, and Archbishop García-Siller, of the Archdiocese of San Antonio, on behalf of all of Texas’ bishops. It urged U.S. Rep. Hensarling and the other members of the Congressional Joint Committee on Deficit Reduction to ensure that measures to reduce government spending are done in an effort of “shared sacrifice and responsibility from all.”

“We understand the tenuousness of the federal government’s current fiscal situation, and that appropriate measures be taken,” wrote the bishops, acknowledging that “continued deficits and debt will only further suffocate job creation and economic growth across all socioeconomic levels.”

Since the release of the letter, the “Super Committee” announced it had failed in its efforts to find a deficit reduction solution.

President Obama has said he will veto any bill which seeks to postpone the draconian cuts the Super Committee was supposed to avoid. Uncertainties abound, as we inch ever-closer to fiscal calamity. Our greatest fear is that whatever approach policymakers try next will disregard morally appropriate solutions and disproportionately reduce spending for programs that care for the unborn, feed the hungry, shelter the homeless, educate the young, and care for the sick both at home and abroad.

The task at hand is vital. The ranks of the nation’s poorest have climbed to a record high, with some 46 million Americans living in poverty. That’s more than ever before in our history. Unemployment rates remain dangerously close to double digits and one in four children go to bed hungry each night. Despite the obvious need, only one in seven Americans (some 36 million people) receives government food assistance to ensure they have enough to eat; approximately 3.5 million are homeless.

We cannot let this situation continue. This Advent Season, with its shared messages of charity and love, we would do well to remember that the federal budget is a moral document. Within its line items are essential programs that millions rely upon to sustain and secure themselves and their families. It would be wrong to balance future budgets by burdening those who already suffer by cutting programs for food support, affordable housing, child nutrition, health care, or international poverty assistance.

As a nation we have long prided ourselves on possessing strongly held values: reliability, faith, compassion. Our history demonstrates an ongoing commitment to those values here in America and throughout the world. We pray that our lawmakers uphold those values when taking into account those who depend on them— including the unborn, schoolchildren, the elderly, struggling families, those who are...
A physician discovers the Catholic Medical Association

By Ernest N. Charlesworth, MD

SAN ANGELO — For almost 40 years I have regularly attended professional medical meetings, learning the latest science. I would learn about the discovery of the latest cytokine resulting in tissue inflammation or become familiar with the newest humanized monoclonal antibody targeting a myriad of disease factors. My collection of medical meetings reminded me of alphabet soup: the AMA, TMA, AAD, AAAAI and the ACAAI. Even after earning more than 20 continuing education hours at a medical meeting, I would often have a thirst that was unquenched and leave the meeting unfulfilled.

What I had been missing in medicine was the humanity of medicine: the sense of humanity that defines why an individual goes into medicine in the first place and which is the essence of medical professionalism.

I found my thirst for the humanity of medicine quenched this past October at the 80th Annual Educational Conference of the Catholic Medical Association (CMA) in Phoenix, Arizona. Most people arrived the day before the formal meeting began and attended a vespers service and homily that was given by Fr. John Ehrich, CMA Chaplain. This set the tone that this medical meeting was going to be a different type of medical meeting. This suspicion of a “different type” of medical meeting was confirmed the next morning when I discovered that every day started with confession, rosary and mass. The Most Reverend Thomas J. Olmsted, Bishop of Phoenix, was the principal celebrant on that first day. There were more than 300 Catholic health care professionals in attendance, including medical students who will be the physician leaders of tomorrow. I was not surprised when Los Angeles Archbishop Jose H. Gomez said at the meeting that one of the greatest challenges facing Catholic health care is growing secularism. Archbishop Gomez pointed out that “this growing secularism endangers our religious freedom” and illustrated this point with our federal government’s Obama Care plans to cover contraception and sterilization.

One of the presentations on Friday was by Sr. Mary Diana Dreger, OP, MD and it was entitled “The Practice of Virtue in Practice of Medicine.” Sister Mary Diana is an internal medicine physician at the Saint Thomas Family Health Clinic in Nashville and she volunteers on the Clinical faculty at Vanderbilt University Medical Center in Nashville. She spoke softly but she had a powerful message for her audience. She reviewed studies on medical virtue and prudence and then she added, “Perhaps what all these studies are showing us, is that to be a good doctor means that you must, of necessity, be a good person. In other words, being a virtuous person.” She went on to say, “But without prudence, we are left with nothing but checklists and flow sheets and technology and protocols.” Physicians are turned into technicians and utterly dehumanized.” She concluded her talk by saying that “as the Lord said to Saint Catherine of Siena, if you are what you are meant to be, you will set the world on fire. We are meant to be good physicians, virtuous professionals — and the world needs to be set on fire.”

The meeting was also just a lot of fun, in addition to the medical ethics and medical science. On Thursday evening we were invited to dinner and a night of dancing with a “Latin flair.” The theme of that evening’s gala event was Tango and the Mystery of Divine Love. International speaker and Argentine tango enthusiast Katrina J. Zeno used the tango dance as the perfect metaphor for our relationship with Christ. She shared her joys, her struggles, and her arguments with God. She used the Argentine tango as a model to elucidate our connection to Pope John Paul II’s “Theology of the Body” and the mystery of divine love. That evening’s presentation reminded of the song, “Lord of the Dance.”

I danced on the Sabbath when I cured the lame, The holy people said it was a shame; They whipped and they stripped and they hung me high; And they left me there on a cross to die.

Our lives are about our dance with the Lord and the music that drives the dance remains the mystery of divine love. I continue to be excited that I discovered the Catholic Medical Association and it was uplifting to attend a meeting with other faithful Catholic physicians. The memory of seeing 300+ physicians and health care providers on their knees during morning mass, before launching into the formal scientific program of the day, will forever remain in my memory. Perhaps that is what medicine really needs: more of us (physicians) praying on our knees. As physicians, perhaps we also need to try to “set the world on fire” with the love that Christ has for humanity. I look forward to attending future meetings of the Catholic Medical Association. And I extend an invitation for physicians and health care workers throughout the Diocese of San Angelo to consider going to Minnesota next year for the 2012 CMA meeting.

La colecta anual del fondo para la jubilación de religiosas

Mis estimados hermanas y hermanos en Cristo:

El fin de semana del 10-11 de diciembre, nuestras parroquias realizarán la colecta anual del Fondo para la Jubilación de Religiosas, una oportunidad para honrar y agradecer a miles de hermanas, hermanos y sacerdotes de órdenes religiosas católicas de edad avanzada por su servicio fiel a la Iglesia por tantos años. De una manera u otra, todos nos hemos beneficiado de las enormes contribuciones que estos hombres y mujeres han hecho a la Iglesia en los Estados Unidos. Por medio del trabajo arduo, la oración y el sacrificio, construyeron escuelas y hospitales católicos, crearon programas para promover la justicia social, y atendieron a los más necesitados entre nosotros.

Al reflexionar sobre la dedicación de los religiosos mayores, siento agradecimiento por las formas en que moldearon mi propia fe y por el tremendo servicio que ofrecieron a nuestra diócesis. Espero que ustedes, también, recuerden a una hermana o un sacerdote que marcó una diferencia positiva en su vida.

Hoy, muchas comunidades religiosas luchan por cuidar a sus miembros ancianos. Los costos más y más elevados de los cuidados médicos y los menores ingresos hacen que sea cada vez más difícil proporcionar los medicamentos, la atención de los ancianos y los servicios básicos que necesitan para estos maravillosos sirvientes del Señor.

Al recoger esta colecta anual del Fondo para la Jubilación de Religiosos, les animo a dar generosamente a esta causa. Al solicitar su generosidad financiera para esta colecta anual, sinceramente les doy las gracias por su gran generosidad que siempre han demostrado para los religiosos jubilados—hermanas, hermanos y sacerdotes religiosos quienes benefician de esta colecta. Al darle las gracias a Dios por estos maravillosos sirvientes del Señor, también debemos pedir por la bendición de Dios sobre ellos en sus años de oro de vida y visitarlos cuando la oportunidad se presente. Gracias y que Dios los bendiga.

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

Observing Advent hard in our we-can’t-wait society

By Stephen Kent
Catholic News Service

At this time of year, as the nation emerges from its food coma and eyestrain of post-Thanksgiving feasting and football, it is all but obligatory for a commentary columnist to reflect upon the dichotomy between Advent and commercialism.

For this year’s task, an effort to avoid repetition resulted in me looking at the files for past Novembers to see how the matter was addressed for almost 25 years. That resulted in finding a timeline of secularization.

Early on, columns dealt with over-commercialization of Christmas. Despite the best efforts of such as the Knights of Columbus, and with thanks to the courts, that is pretty much a lost cause.

The U.S. Post Office was early in the separation, offering a choice of either a religious stamp usually featuring Madonna and child or a stamp with a warm and fuzzy Yule theme, both done by a class artist.

Later columns dealt with overspending on gifts, including what I termed the “glitz index” achieved by dividing the cost of the most expensive wristwatch in a national jewelry catalog by the price of the simplest piece available in drugstores.

And the growing use of “the holidays” as a term that in its non-specificity could take in Labor Day to Memorial Day.

Then, as the clippings became less-yellowed, the first use of ”Black Friday” was discovered, referring to the day after Thanksgiving when stores first opened a few hours earlier. Then merchants began opening up at pre-dawn, and this year, at least one national department store plans to open at midnight, leaving hardly enough time to scrub and put away the turkey roasting pan.

This year it seems almost anti-American to suggest any restraint in shopping, lest the consumer confidence index be shaken.

What has been the effect of this secularization and materialism over the years?

One clue is found in the extremely premature presidential campaign. The calendar has been pulled forward, so that things which used to occur in the spring are now in the fall.

We can't wait.

Every article, index, financial event is analyzed for signs of "the recovery."

We can’t wait.

But Advent is a time of waiting.

Reflecting on this, year by year, one sees two concepts of waiting:

-- Waiting "in joyful hope for the coming of our Savior, Jesus Christ" during Advent.

-- Waiting with no end in sight -- for "the recovery," for the next election, with no firm hope that these or any events will bring the fulfillment we long for.

-- Stephen Kent

Six ways to cultivate gratitude this season -- and beyond

By Therese J. Borchard
Catholic News Service

Cicero said that "gratitude is not only the greatest of virtues, but the parent of all the others."

The English preacher John Henry Jowett wrote that "every virtue divorced from thankfulness is maimed and limps along the spiritual road."

And, according to Aesop's Fables, "gratitude is the sign of noble souls."

It has only been with much work and lots of practice that I have been able to cultivate gratitude and be genuinely thankful.

Here are six techniques that I use to help me cultivate this parent of all virtues.

1. Change your language.

Dan Baker writes in "What Happy People Know": "Just as changing your life can change your language, changing your language can change your life. It can alter your perceptions and thought processes."

I do a lot of self-bashing, and when I'm in the middle of a rant, I'm not able to be thankful.

According to Baker, recent research concludes that it is impossible to be simultaneously in a state of appreciation and fear, which is why gratitude and appreciation are antidotes to fear.

Moreover, the words that I speak to myself and to others really do alter my perception of the world. But when I can recognize the toxic self-talk and change my choice of words, the seeds of gratitude can grow.

2. Get a gratitude partner.

Shifting perspectives, seeing that the cup you thought had one teensy drop in it is actually two-thirds full, and communicating with new language takes time, discipline -- and practice, just like working out.

So it makes sense that a gratitude buddy might help you stay in line, just like your running partner does, or... well... is supposed to.

3. Remember.

"Gratitude is the heart's memory," says a French proverb. Therefore, one of the first steps to thankfulness is to remember -- remember those in your life who have walked with you and shown kindness.

I have been extremely fortunate to have so many positive mentors in my own life. For every scary crossroad (when I was tempted to take a destructive path and walk further away from the person whom I believe I was meant to become) I’ve met a guardian, a messenger to lead me out of the perilous forest.

4. Keep a gratitude journal.

Gratitude can do more than make you smile. Research conducted by psychologist Robert Emmons at the University of California at Davis has found that gratitude can also improve your health: raise energy levels, promote alertness and determination, improve sleep, and possibly relieve pain and fatigue.

Emmons, author of "Thanks! How the New Science of Gratitude Can Make You Happier," maintains that writing in a gratitude journal a few times a week can create lasting effects.

5. Write a thank-you letter.

Emmons, who is also known as "the father of gratitude studies," also suggests the exercise of composing a "gratitude letter" to a person who has made a positive and lasting influence in your life. The letter is especially powerful, he says, when you have not properly thanked that person in the past, and when you read the letter aloud to the person face to face.


Giving back doesn't mean reciprocating favors so that everything is fair and the tally is even. That's the beauty of giving.

If someone does an act of kindness for you, one way to say thanks is to do the same for another.
Catholic Voices II

By Carole Norris Greene
Catholic News Service

Before his execution in Texas on Sept. 21 for the grisly murder of a black man, James Byrd Jr., in Jasper, Texas, in 1998, white supremacist Lawrence Brewer reportedly ordered a last meal that included two chicken fried steaks, a triple-meat bacon cheeseburger, a large bowl of fried okra, a pound of barbecue, three fajitas, a meat lover's pizza, a pint of ice cream and a slab of peanut butter fudge with crushed peanuts, but he refused to eat any of it. This prompted Texas prison officials to end an 87-year-old tradition of honoring last-meal requests of death row inmates.

Brewer also declined to make a last statement, looking only at his grieving family seconds before receiving a lethal injection.

That same day in Jackson, Ga., Troy Anthony Davis, a black man who was convicted of the 1989 killing of Mark MacPhail, a white off-duty officer, in Savannah, Ga., did not request a last meal.

"This will not be my last meal," Davis said.

For his last statement, Davis addressed the MacPhail family, saying, "You think I've killed your father, your brother, your husband. I'm not the person, I'm innocent. ... I'm so sorry for your loss. I really am. ... For those about to take my life, I forgive you. God bless you all."

Two very different men. Two very different executions.

Only 50-plus people gathered outside the Huntsville, Texas, prison for Brewer's execution.

But Davis' case, which drew international attention because of the doubts that he committed MacPhail's murder, drew hundreds of protesters. More than a million people signed a petition to stop Davis' execution, and chief among those who wrote letters on Davis' behalf were Pope Benedict XVI's envoy to the United States, the bishops of Georgia and Josephite Sister Helen Prejean.


The bishops of Georgia told the state's Board of Pardons and Paroles that "the death penalty is not compatible with the Gospel. The common good and public security can be achieved in other ways."

Sister Prejean, who for nearly 30 years has worked with families of homicide victims and condemned inmates, wrote: "We must confront the unalterable fact that the system of capital punishment is fallible."

Believe it or not, the portions of these letters that championed the sacredness of life also applied to Brewer!

With two other men in their 20s, Brewer took Byrd, 49, to a remote country road after offering him a ride, beat him severely, urinated on him and chained him by his ankles to their pickup truck, dragging him for three miles, decapitating him. What was left of his remains, which were found in 81 places on the road, was dumped in front of an African-American church before the three accomplices headed off to a barbecue.

But even in this disturbing case, Catholic teaching is unflinching: It is our duty to "uphold the sacredness and dignity of all human life," no matter how repugnant a person's actions are. We are to keep our eyes focused on Christ and on what he says to do or not to do.

"Beloved, do not look for revenge. ... 'Vengeance is mine, I will repay, says the Lord'" (Rm 12:19).

But first and foremost, Christ came to save souls!

Our duty as Christians, therefore, is to offer constant prayers for the coming of Christ's kingdom in the hearts of all of people, mindful that only God knows what transpires in a person's heart at the moment of death.

Is God sovereign? Can he tell us what to do?

Pride can be a roadblock to second starts

By Father William J. Byron, SJ
Catholic News Service

Christianity is a religion of second starts.

Anyone who tries to push nature too far -- attempting, for example, to defy the law of gravity - - will discover how unforgiving nature can be.

But anyone imbued with the principles of Christian spirituality will be convinced of the availability of mercy at any time and the readiness of God to grant forgiveness whenever it is asked for honestly.

We all know this to be true through the sacrament of reconciliation; we do not ordinarily apply it to other areas of life, say an economic setback, where a new beginning might be needed.

How do you begin your new beginning?

Consider whether forgiveness should be the first step in your recovery strategy from any reversal.

-- If you refuse to forgive yourself for past mistakes, large or small, you will never get off to a fresh start.

-- If you refuse to forgive others, your feet may well be encased in the cement of hatred.

You cannot undo the past. But there is a future that is beginning now, and a new stream of events can start at any time you are willing to let them begin.

Second starts always look to the future. If initiated under the impulse of a faith-based spirituality, these new beginnings do not represent a fuzzy faith in the future; they represent a faith in God who owns the future and holds the human planner's destiny in his hands.

The success of any second start will depend on the accuracy of your identification of the issue that prompted the necessity of a rebound or recovery. In other words, you have to frame the issue correctly.

A solid second start requires more than just the will to begin again. It takes faith in yourself and in your ability (with the help of friends) to get back on your feet, cranked up and moving forward.

The unbeliever may say that is all it takes. But the believer knows that it also takes faith in God, the God who holds his destiny in all-powerful, all-loving hands that are reaching out toward him at every moment of his existence, in good times and in bad.

And more often than not, simply because this is the way God wills to work, it takes a human intermediary through whom God chooses to work in order to touch a person right where she is.

You will not be touched unless you reach out for help, unless you take that first step and give another human being a chance to help you.

Why is it that most of us find it so hard to ask for help?

The first (and almost always accurate) answer to that question is simple: pride.

Pride is a tricky trait. It is to some degree necessary for the proper maintenance of self-esteem.

But pride can get out of hand very easily. And when it does, it sometimes moves in very deceptive ways.

Pride often borrows humility's garb and masquerades as virtue.

Pride in the face of failure can be a protective measure. What is being protected is, of course, one's proud estimate of one's own superiority and independence.

Perhaps you know from personal experience that, unless you are willing to "come off it," acknowledge that you have two flat feet of clay, and ask for help, your second start could be deferred indefinitely, possibly forever.

Resolution, schmesolution

"I've made a New Year's resolution to eat more broccoli. If I can't stand it, I'll give it up for Lent."
Making Sense of Bioethics

Should we vaccinate kids to prevent sexually transmitted diseases?

By Father Tad Pacholczyk

Last month, an advisory committee of the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) in Atlanta recommended that 9 to 12 year old boys be vaccinated against the human papillomavirus (HPV), a virus transmitted through sexual contact. The goal of the recommendations was to prevent cancers caused by HPV, such as certain cancers of the digestive tract.

The same committee had already recommended, back in March of 2007, that girls and young women between the ages of 9 and 26 be vaccinated against HPV, to help prevent various cancers of the reproductive tract, such as cervical cancer.

While the motivation to prevent cancer and diseases is clearly good, a universal recommendation of this type raises ethical concerns. Because the recommendations of the committee relate to important aspects of human behavior and sexuality at formative ages for children and adolescents, parents need to look at the psychological and social messages they might be conveying by choosing to vaccinate their children against HPV. Beyond all the medical considerations, parents also have a duty to inoculate their children against harmful and immoral behaviors. Thus, decisions about vaccinations ultimately need to be made on a case-by-case basis within a particular family.

Parents are often rightly concerned that getting their kids vaccinated for a sexually-transmitted virus could be taken to signal tacit approval of pre-marital sex. Young people might surmise that their parents and physicians do not believe they can remain chaste, but instead begrudgingly expect them to become sexually active prior to marriage.

The widespread phenomenon of condom distribution among youth certainly conveys the same message, and young people today are not fools; they perceive how the culture around them has caved in on this question, no longer insisting, or even believing, that they have the wherewithal to refrain from pre-marital sex. Girls and boys are no longer treated as free individuals who can make higher and better choices when encouraged and supported, but instead are treated as mere creatures of sexual necessity.

I recall one time speaking with a middle-aged woman about the CDC vaccination recommendations. “When I was a girl, if my mom had taken me to get vaccinated for a sexually transmitted disease, I would have been horrified,” she said. “I would have wondered to myself, ‘What does she suppose I am, a tramp or something?’”

Parents do need to be careful about conveying a sense of fatalism when it comes to questions of the sexual behavior of their kids. Against the backdrop of a highly permissive culture, parents, who are the first educators of their children in sexual matters, are right to be concerned about sending conflicting messages.

Pursuing universal vaccination for sexually transmitted diseases like HPV could have the unintended effect of setting up a false sense of security, a kind of mental “safety net,” for boys and girls who are potentially sexually active. In the hormonally-charged environment of adolescence, young people might come to believe that the risks of premarital sex would be reduced by the vaccination, to the point that they would be “protected” and could risk promiscuous behaviors, when in fact, they would be increasing their odds of contracting sexually transmitted diseases (STDs) of any kind.

To consider an example where using the HPV vaccine might be sensible, we could consider a young woman who had been chaste all her life but who was preparing to marry a man whom she suspected had been sexually active (and might therefore expose her to HPV in their marriage). She could decide, prior to marriage, that receiving the HPV vaccination would be reasonable, and even without any suspicions about her future spouse’s past behavior, she might still prefer to leave nothing to chance.

Evaluating the potential risks and benefits of vaccinating boys or young men would similarly indicate various situations where the HPV vaccination would be reasonable. Also, at younger ages, children may not need to know the exact purposes behind a vaccination. They could simply be told by their parents (if they even asked) that the vaccine would protect them against possible cancers in the future.

Parents themselves, however, might still have doubts about the safety of the HPV vaccine, given that its side effects and complications are still being actively debated and studied. They might still have questions about its long-term benefits since it affords only a 5 year window of protection, and has only been surmised, but never scientifically demonstrated, to prevent cancer at a timepoint far in the future.

In sum, many factors need to be considered. Rather than a universal mandate, a careful, case-by-case risk/benefit analysis ought to be made by each family to determine whether the HPV vaccine is a reasonable choice, not only medically, but also in terms of where a young person may be in his or her life as a “moral agent.”

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

Campaign do's and don'ts remain the same, but new mood seen in US

WASHINGTON (CNS) -- The names on the ballot may change from one election to another, but the guidelines for what tax-exempt religious organizations can and cannot do in a political campaign remain basically unchanged.

"The law says that organizations exempt from federal income tax under section 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code, which includes charities and churches, may not participate or intervene in any political campaign on behalf of, or in opposition to, any candidate for public office," the Internal Revenue Service says on its website.

That means no endorsements, checklists, guides promoting one candidate over another or sample ballots by tax-exempt parishes and organizations or their publications.

But it does not prevent religious leaders or members of other tax-exempt organizations from speaking out on the issues, organizing voter registration drives or non-partisan educational forums or publishing candidates' responses to a questionnaire as long as the questions cover a broad range of issues and do not reflect any bias.

"The rules are still the same. There has been nothing that has changed substantially" since the 2008 presidential elections, said Deirdre Dessingue, associate general counsel at the U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops.

"But there has been a change in the mood."

She cited several factors affecting that change in mood -- a 2010 U.S. Supreme Court on corporate contributions to political campaigns that led some to question the limits on political intervention by charitable organizations; a district court ruling in Minnesota that IRS determinations about whether to investigate a church's tax-exempt status were being made by officials at too low a level; and continuing efforts by the Alliance Defense Fund to draw the IRS into a battle with a church whose pastor has endorsed a political candidate from the pulpit.

More than 500 Protestant ministers from 46 states and Puerto Rico participated in the Alliance Defense Fund's fourth annual Pulpit Freedom Sunday Oct. 2 by preaching sermons that presented biblical perspectives on candidates' political positions.

"ADF hopes to eventually go to court to have the IRS rule known as the Johnson Amendment struck down as unconstitutional for its regulation of sermons, which are protected by the First Amendment," said a news release from the organization.

"Churches should be allowed to decide for themselves what they want to talk about," said Erik Stanley, ADF
The Angelus DECEMBER 2011 Page 11

Makes a GREAT Christmas present!!

50 YEARS
THE STORY OF
THE DIOCESE OF SAN ANGELO

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— Most Reverend Michael D. Pfeifer, OMI
Bishop of San Angelo

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TREASURE: Hunt helps others

(From 2)

and friends provide a nice kick-start for ‘Pay it Forward.’ Moravcik said it made her nervous to think about an envelope of cash being searched for all over town. Instead, inside will be a smaller envelope in which people can mail their donation after locating its whereabouts. Players in the game will still re-hide the envelope and then visit Facebook to provide clues as to its whereabouts.

“I believe God speaks in echoes,” said Moravcik, a parishioner at St. Ann’s in Midland. “And this was an echo or a whisper of an idea that just kept coming back to me.”

Last year’s game started out with $28 dollars, initially hidden on the grounds of Midland’s Museum of the Southwest. Other hiding spots were at a Taco Villa drive-thru, under the reindeer and sleigh display at Midland College, at the downtown prayer garden and at Grande Communications Stadium.

A week after the game began, about midnight on Christmas Eve -- the conclusion of the treasure hunt -- the envelope had been stuffed full with $600 and found by Peggy Kayser, a Midland woman who donated the money she found to the Make-A-Wish Foundation.

This year, Moravcik says it is her hope that the final amount, whatever it ends up being, will be donated to a less-fortunate family.

“That kind of money can really make a difference to a family in need,” she said.

Moravcik said she will have a vote in who receives the final amount to avoid any awkward occurrence such as a donation to an organization not in keeping with the Catholic faith; she said, for instance, she wouldn’t want the money to end up in the hands of Planned Parenthood.

Almost 30 people participated last year. Anyone can play but access to Facebook is essential.

To get started, submit a friend request to “Pay it Forward Treasure Hunt” on Facebook and watch for clues for the first drop. The hunt will be held the week before Christmas.

EDICTAL SUMMONS
November 28, 2011
CASE: GLOVER (LAMBERT) -- MILLER
NO.: SO 11/45

The Tribunal Office of the Catholic Diocese of San Angelo is seeking Michael Peter Miller.

You are hereby summoned to appear before the Tribunal of the Catholic Diocese of San Angelo, at 804 Ford Street, San Angelo, Texas 76905, on or before the 31st day of December 2011, to answer to the Petition of Sheryl Denise Glover (Lambert), now introduced before the Diocesan Tribunal in an action styled, “Sheryl Lambert and Michael Miller, Petition for Declaration of Invalidity of Marriage.” Said Petition is identified as Case: GLOVER (LAMBERT) -- MILLER; Protocol No.: SO 11/45, on the Tribunal Docket of the Diocese of San Angelo.

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

Given at the Tribunal of the Diocese of San Angelo on the 28th day of November 2011.

Reverend Tom Barley, MSW, MBA, M. Div., JCL
Judical Vicar
As part of the Diocese of San Angelo’s 50th Anniversary celebration and Mass, October 16, 2011, at the San Angelo Coliseum, each parish and mission in the diocese was asked to create or bring an existing banner to the celebration.

Photographer Alan P. Torre, of Odessa, stitched together this tapestry that features all of the banners that were on display at the coliseum during the 50th anniversary event.
Bishops report on success of ads aimed at strengthening marriage

By Patricia Zapor
Catholic News Service

BALTIMORE — A series of advertisements for the U.S. bishops' campaign to strengthen marriage have been successful in the numbers of people they have reached and the awards they have garnered from professional advertising organizations, Bishop Kevin C. Rhoades of Fort Wayne-South Bend, Ind., said Nov. 14.

The bishop, who is chairman of the Committee on Laity, Marriage, Family Life and Youth, made the comments on the opening day of the bishops' fall general assembly in Baltimore.

In a presentation on the work of the Subcommittee for the Promotion and Defense of Marriage, Bishop Rhoades said the public service announcements with messages about marriage had been measured as having 1.3 billion "audience impressions" since they began several years ago.

He said the campaign "which won a national public relations award in 2009, has been the most successful of its kind ever sponsored by the USCCB."

A series of public service announcements with the theme of "a good marriage goes a long way," was released in September to 1,600 television stations and 7,000 radio stations, he said.

Celebrating Christmas with your perfectly imperfect family

By Bill and Monica Dodds
Catholic News Service

It's not your fault, thinking that Christmas, even Christmas with your family, should be perfect. We humans tend to romanticize the past, remembering the good and forgetting what was less than pleasant.

Then, too, Christmas carols speak only of silent, holy nights and holly, jolly Christmases. (None of the verses of "O Tannenbaum" mention the tree tipping over because the cat jumped up on it.)

So, as you prepare to celebrate Christmas with your imperfect family, it can help to keep in mind the following:

1. The first Christmas was, it seems safe to speculate, far from the ideal that Joseph and Mary imagined: traveling to register to pay taxes, no room in the inn, and -- surprise! -- here comes the baby in the cave/stable! All of this happened in a family where two out of three members were sinless, and the third was chosen to be the foster father of the Son of God.

What chance does your family have?

2. If your immediate or extended family included only perfect individuals at the gathering, then you wouldn't get an invitation, would you?

3. As a follower of Christ, you are to love all people. (This doesn't mean that you have to like all of your in-laws.)

4. Christmas 2011, as with all Christmases, isn't going to be a total disaster just because the lights on the house refuse to twinkle as they should, "the" gift of the year is out of stock, the dinner rolls burn or a snowstorm keeps you stuck at home for the day or stuck at your parents' home for three days.

As with all Christmases, this year's will have some things good and some less than good. Every day of life on earth does. Enjoy and appreciate the good!

5. The world is much bleaker, and your family members seem much less intelligent, when you're tired. Attempting to do "all that needs to be done" for Christmas pretty much guarantees that you'll enter Dec. 25 suffering from sleep deprivation.

And your loved ones will suffer, too.

Admitting that you're less than perfect is a perfect solution. (You can't get all of the Christmas decorations up, can't haunt the malls, looking for just the right gifts, can't bring homemade pies, and on and on.)

6. Because you're imperfect, it makes great sense to move "get to confession" to the top of your get-ready-for-Christmas list. Grace is to your soul and well-being what eggnog is to ... (well, we aren't sure what eggnog is to, but you get the point).

Preparing spiritually (which can include frequently muttering, "Oh, dear God, help me!") can't be overstressed.

7. And, speaking of stress, there's no way around it. Even if you feel pretty good, someone
What the Church can learn from Penn State

By Father William J. Byron, SJ
Catholic News Service

The story is complicated and will continue to unfold -- unravel may be a better word -- for months and years to come.

Penn State University lost a president and a football coach in the wake of a November 2011 grand jury report that a former assistant coach sexually abused young boys a decade or so earlier and university officials failed to report the abuse to law enforcement authorities.

Commentators have already made comparisons with the Catholic Church.

If Penn State were an archdiocese, the president would be the "archbishop"; he is no longer president.

The football coach might be thought of as a "pastor"; he has been fired.

And the assistant coach would be comparable to an "assistant pastor," or, as we now say, a "parochial vicar." He's been arrested and is free on $100,000 bail, awaiting trial.

Other "archdiocesan officials" (the university's athletic director and chief financial officer), along with a member of the coaching staff who witnessed one instance of alleged abuse, are on administrative leave.

The university was slow to move when reports of the abuse first surfaced; it moved promptly when the grand jury report was released. The board of trustees took action.

An important difference between any archdiocese and a university is the presence and power of a board of trustees in a university and the absence of any corresponding entity in an archdiocese.

Many were stunned by the prompt actions taken by the Penn State board.

Many have been appalled at the inaction in various dioceses where clergy sex abuse was reported.

The point here is not to argue that there should be lay trustees in the church with oversight responsibilities and the power to remove a bishop or pastor; the point is simply to suggest that, in the absence of trustees, the responsibility to respond and act decisively when criminal activity is reported lies within the persons in authority who constitute the governance structure of the parish or diocese.

Pastors and bishops are not accountable to lay boards; they are nonetheless accountable before God and higher ecclesiastical authority. They are also accountable to their own consciences.

Another difference between an archdiocese (or loosely speaking, "the church") and a university is that the church is a mediator of divine forgiveness. It is no exaggeration to say that the church is in the forgiveness business.

Granting forgiveness can influence the outlook of church officials relative to the application and consequences of disciplinary action in areas outside the confessional.

Absolution is and should be readily given; protection from the consequences of criminal behavior should not.

Like the church, Penn State had an understandable impulse to protect its image and its own employees. There was less evidence, however, of an overriding concern for the safety and welfare of children.

The same can be said of the church in the wake of disclosures of sex abuse of the young on the part of church personnel. In the case of Penn State, the difference is the presence and action of a board of trustees.

Few of us, lay or clergy, are willing to perform surgery on ourselves.

Trusteeship was part of Catholic Church life in America in the 1780s. It didn't last. Nor has it yet been replaced by any mechanism that incorporates lay oversight, lay power and lay control over parochial or diocesan affairs.

The church is, of course, divinely established; it is not a human invention. It relies on the guidance of the Holy Spirit.

What might the Holy Spirit expect the church to learn from the Penn State experience? How can the laity help?

(Jesuit Father Byron is professor of business and society at St. Joseph's University in Philadelphia. Email: wbyron@sju.edu)

Changes in the Mass will be good for all

By Father Peter J. Daly
Catholic News Service

After all the "sturm und drang" ("storm and stress") of the past few years, the changes in some of the words at Mass will probably turn out to be a good thing. Here is why.

First, they will make us pay more attention to the celebration of the Mass, at least for a while.

Second, they will make us talk about the history and the development of the Mass.

Third, they will be a better sign of the unity of the church, at least in the Mass of the Roman rite.

Those are all positive things, and like most pastors, I want to accentuate the positive.

By definition, any ritual is routine. By frequent use, we run the risk of saying words automatically and without reflection.

Even though the changes in the Mass are relatively minor, they will make us more attentive.

When the priest says, "The Lord be with you," those in the pews will have to say, "And with your spirit." The addition of the word "spirit" makes us aware of the spiritual quality of the greeting. It makes us conform to the translation in other languages.

No doubt we will bumble around for a while. But we will be more aware of our words.

Like most parishes, we have bought laminated cards with the changes highlighted in bold print. For a while, we will be holding the cards and reading the words. But, eventually, we will learn them. After a while, it will become more natural.

National Catholic Reporter recently reported that Catholics in South Africa are now getting used to the new words after a rocky start more than a year ago.

The same will happen here.

The very strangeness of some of the new words will make us think about them. I doubt that anyone uses the word "consubstantial" in everyday speech.

The change will make us talk about the historical development of the creed -- why it was important to the Greek fathers who wrote the Nicene Creed that we emphasize that the Christ is "homo osceous" (in Greek) "of the same substance" with the Father.

They were trying to make it clear that Jesus, the Christ, is a co-equal member of the blessed Trinity. He is not merely some exalted "creature."

Even seemingly trivial changes, such as changing "seen and unseen" to "visible and invisible," will make us think. God is the creator of things that we cannot see. It is not so much about our perception as it is about God's creation.

Some changes will make us more aware of the Scripture. For example, at the invitation to Communion, the priest will say, "Behold

(Please See DALY/20)
Bishops discuss religious liberty, marriage, finances

BALTIMORE (CNS) -- During their annual three-day fall assembly in Baltimore, the U.S. bishops' discussed threats to religious liberty, efforts to support traditional marriage and the need to keep a close eye on health care issues.

They also were updated on the Roman Missal translation and the new U.S. ordinariate to bring former Anglicans into the Catholic Church.

During the Nov. 14-16 meeting, they also voted on several items, ranging from approving the annual budget of the U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops to adding new optional memorials for Blessed John Paul II and Blessed Marianne Cope to the U.S. liturgical calendar.

New Orleans Archbishop Gregory M. Aymond, chairman of the Committee on Divine Worship, gave a brief report Nov. 15 on the adoption of the new Roman Missal, addressing questions related to its implementation this Advent.

When asked if it were possible to still use the old missal translation in certain circumstances such as when eucharistic ministers visit the elderly for Communion services, the archbishop said: "The guidelines say to use the new one. But the pastoral practice should allow for some flexibility."

In votes cast during the first two days of the meeting, the bishops elected Archbishop J. Peter Sartain of Seattle as president and Archbishop Timothy M. Dolan of New York said the news that has led to the indictment of several Penn State officials and the firing of the university's president and its longtime football coach, Joe Paterno, "has reopened a wound in the church as well."

"It shows that the scourge (of sex abuse) is not limited to any one faith and certainly not limited to priests," he said. "It's in organizations, in universities, all over the place, in families and, yes, in priests."

Archbishop Dolan said the church's own sex abuse scandal "makes us a little timid about wanting to give advice -- glass houses and all that."

But he said the church's experience with providing safe environment training to help children and their parents, as well as clergy and church volunteers, become more aware of the warning signs of child sex abuse has been "phenomenally advantageous" over the past decade.

"We've got a long way to go, but we have made major strides," he said.

"One of the good things that God might bring out of this is some kind of alliance between the church and the educational community," he added. "We might come with a little wisdom earned the hard way to that table."

"To our deep regret we have not been a good example of how to deal with this in the past," the archbishop said. "We would like to be a good example in the future."

Archbishop Dolan offered "our love and prayers" to the sex abuse victims, their families and "the entire Penn State community."
Bishops approve plans, priorities for coming year

BALTIMORE (CNS) -- The U.S. bishops overwhelmingly approved priorities and plans for 2012 for the U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops’ committee and departments in a vote Nov. 14, the first day of their three-day fall general assembly in Baltimore.

The vote was 219-6 with three abstentions.

Bishop George V. Murry of Youngstown, Ohio, chair of the USCCB’s Committee on Priorities and Plans, said the committee considered five criteria when determining whether a planned activity or program of committees and staff offices fell within the mission of the U.S. bishops.

First among them was the acronym SMART. The "S" stands for "specific and motivating," followed by "measurable," "attainable," "relevant" and "trackable."

The committee also considered whether the planned activity or program in accord with the mandate of the USCCB committee or workgroup to which it is assigned.

Also examined was whether the planned activity or program belonged appropriately to the domain of USCCB work -- "significant and national in scope where the bishops wish to exercise leadership," Bishop Murry said -- as opposed to the purview of dioceses, parishes or other Catholic organizations.

Bishop Murry said the committee also looked at whether the planned activity or program was redundant or duplicative of activities of other USCCB committees and offices, and whether it involved the collaboration of other committees and offices.

Dolan: Time to reclaim truth about Jesus’ church

By Nancy Frazier
O’Brien Catholic News Service

Baltimore -- Archbishop Timothy M. Dolan of New York called on his fellow bishops Nov. 14 to communicate to the world that the sinfulness of the church’s members is not "a reason to dismiss the church or her eternal truths, but to embrace her all the more."

In his first presidential address since election as president of the U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops last November, Archbishop Dolan opened and closed with the words: "Love for Jesus and his church must be the passion of our lives."

Describing the church as a spiritual family that "to use the talk show vocabulary ... has some 'dysfunction,'" he said the bishops' "most pressing pastoral challenge today is to reclaim that truth, to restore the luster, the credibility, the beauty of the church."

But he cited "chilling statistics we cannot ignore that "fewer and fewer of our beloved people -- to say nothing about those outside the household of the faith -- are convinced that Jesus and his church are one."

"So they drift from her, get mad at the church, grow lax, join another or just give it all up," Archbishop Dolan said. "If this does not cause us pastors to shudder, I do not know what will."

He also acknowledged the enthusiasm of "young people, new converts and recent arrivals" as well as "the wonderfully deep and radiant faith of Catholic immigrants who are still a most welcome -- while sadly harassed that culture is light years ahead of a languishing, moribund church."

But rather, "the church invites the world to a fresh original place, not a musty or outdated one," he said. "She dares the world ... to foster and protect the inviolable dignity of the human person and human life; ... to protect marriage and family; to embrace those suffering and struggling; to prefer service to selfishness; and never, ever to stifle the liberty to quench the deep-down thirst for the divine."

Archbishop Dolan urged the bishops to "resist the temptation to approach the church as merely a system of organizational energy and support that requires maintenance."

"The church we passionately love is hardly some cumbersome, outmoded club of sticklers, with a medieval bureaucracy, silly human rules on fancy letterhead, one more movement rife with squabbles, opinions and disagreement," he added.

"Our urgent task to reclaim 'love of Jesus and his church as the passion of our lives' summons us not into ourselves but to Our Lord," Archbishop Dolan said. "Jesus prefers prophets, not programs; saints, not solutions; conversion of hearts, not calls to action; prayer, not protests; 'Verbum Dei' rather than our verbiage."

But like Jesus on Calvary, the church has wounds, the archbishop said.

"Instead of running from them, or hiding them, or denying them, she may be best showing them, like he did that first Easter night," he said.
Culture: Video Gaming

Does Mario go to Mass? Catholic gamers and the gaming industry

By Adam Shaw
Catholic News Service

NEW YORK -- Is it possible to be a faithful Catholic and a video gamer?
That's a question all Catholic gaming enthusiasts -- including the young adults at whom many of the industry's offerings are primarily targeted -- must ask themselves as this medium continues to develop and expand its influence over contemporary society.

Once upon a time, back in the 1980s and early 1990s, classic games such as "Pac-Man" and "Super Mario Bros." raised few if any moral issues. So youthful Catholics could casually -- and comfortably -- pick up whatever new release was available at the local store. There was no need for them to worry that the sensitivities of their faith would be assaulted or that troublesome opinions would be aggressively foisted on them by game developers.

Things are different, of course, in the second decade of the 21st century. The world of video games has never been more exciting or more innovative. Instead of the primitive platforms of 30 years ago or the basic, blocky shooters available 10 years after that, today's games are accompanied by hyper-realistic graphics and complex, multifaceted storylines. In short, the best of them present an entire alternate reality just waiting to be explored.

It would be uselessly contrarian to deny that this is, in itself, a positive thing. Yet, along with such increased sophistication, come a number of difficulties and dilemmas for gamers striving to stay faithful to Christ and his church.

The Catholic gamer knows that, as with most things in our modern world, there are aspects of this pastime we can enjoy, but also aspects we would be well advised to avoid. This process of discernment can sometimes be easy; all too often, it can prove extremely difficult.

When initially making a purchase, for example, the consumer is frequently flying blind, with no knowledge of all that the game will ultimately contain. And, unlike a $15 movie ticket or an even less expensive video rental, where the option always exists simply to walk out of the theater or turn off the disc, a $60 product to which the buyer has already devoted some hours of play is likely to be a lot harder to just set aside and forget.

This belated discovery that a game's content is tasteless and/or morally offensive is one of the most frustrating aspects of being a Catholic gamer, especially with increasingly stringent returns policies being enforced.

That's where Catholic News Service hopes its video game reviews will come in handy. In keeping with CNS' approach to assessing other media, games will be analyzed from a faith perspective as well as providing a summary of their aesthetic and technical qualities. The emphasis will not be on condemning, but on providing guidance.

Along with informing young adult and older gamers -- and, of course, parents -- about objectionable content (i.e., gore, language and sexuality), CNS also will provide an assessment of the ethical and moral content of the issues and themes raised within each game. We'll examine what sort of message the game is attempting to promote, what the motivations of its lead characters are, and what sort of mindset it's encouraging. In this way, we hope to explore the full range of spiritual and moral questions posed by interactive entertainment.

Given that readers may have differing levels of tolerance for certain content, reviewers will note in some detail the potentially offensive elements each game includes, and assign a classification indicating its appropriate audience -- from everyone to no one at all. These classifications will be identical with those used in CNS' film reviews; game reviews also will carry the Entertainment Software Rating Board's rating.

As experienced gamers themselves, CNS' reviewers recognize the importance of a title's technical distinction. So, while their work will focus primarily on matters of philosophical outlook and morality, the quality of the game-play will by no means be ignored.

So to the initial question of whether a faithful Catholic can also be an avid gamer, the answer is an emphatic yes. But prudence is required -- and so too, perhaps, is the well-grounded advice of some like-minded fellow players.

Shaw is a freelance writer currently based in Manchester, England.

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Parents should set limits, approve game content

By Nick Grevas
Catholic News Service

NEW YORK -- American parents are facing a problem that was never an issue for those who raised them: video games.

These games are highly stimulating, have been considered addictive and have even inspired government action. California tried to protect children from the violent content in video games with a 2005 law making it illegal for retailers to sell such items to minors. The Supreme Court June 27 ruled the law was unconstitutional, but it was not unfounded.

According to a 2010 survey by the Electronic Software Association, 18 percent of all gamers are between the ages of 12 and 17, yet three of the five top-selling games on the market received an "M for Mature" rating from the Entertainment Software Rating Board.

That's roughly the equivalent of the Motion Picture Association of America's R rating for a film, and indicates "content that may be suitable for persons ages 17 and older. Titles in this category may contain intense violence, blood and gore, sexual content and/or strong language."

So how can parents find out more specifically what's in these games before buying them for their children? In addition to its ratings system, the ESRB provides a detailed description of all potentially inappropriate elements included in each game. Parents can access these comprehensive assessments on the organization's website: www.esrb.org.

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GAMING

(From 18)

By way of a further safeguard, video game manufacturers are now designing their systems to come with parental controls that block content according to the ESRB rating. The Playstation 3 and Nintendo Wii both come with parental control options that can prevent particular kinds of games from being played, via the use of a PIN-number code.

For the Playstation 3 console -- which lets users connect to the Web to buy games and compete with other players -- the controls for the Internet browser and content settings can be found under "security settings." Here, parents can make adjustments to block content according to the rating on video games, Blu-ray discs and even DVDs. Parents can also set up a PIN-number system for prohibiting online purchases by entering the "account management" settings.

The Wii operates on a similar platform, using a universal PIN code to access particular content. To set this code and choose what to lock, parents can go to the Wii menu at the bottom left, select "console," then "console settings," and the option for parental controls can be found on the second page of options. Once there, a parent can set the PIN and will be able to block the Internet channel, the messaging board channel, game content and other Wii functions. "When?" and "For how long?" are two other questions parents must address, since children may show a tendency to gravitate to the video screen at inappropriate times -- opting, for instance, to play baseball inside on the television rather than outside in the fresh air. Thus, the Electronic Software Association's survey found that 80 percent of parents place limits on the amount of time their children are allowed to devote to video games.

Wendy Wood -- a mother of five in Goshen, N.Y., who says that video games have had an adverse effect on her children -- is among them. She says the games cause chaos, fighting and "unnecessary drama" over whose turn it is to play, especially between her two boys, Ryan, 14, and Jared, 10.

During the last school year, Wood only permitted the use of video games after all chores were done and homework finished. The result, however, turned out to be rushed chores and shoddy homework, she said. This year, Wood plans to implement a strict "weekends only" rule.

Other popular strategies among parents include requiring an hour of reading for an hour of games, and a simple limit of one hour per day for gaming.

The Adult Catechism

Christmas: Bringing together human, divine

By Cardinal Donald Wuerl
Archbishop of Washington

A merry and blessed Christmas to all! Christmas celebrates the most remarkable moment in human history. Two thousand years ago in Bethlehem of Judea, heaven and earth met. On the first Christmas day God came among us in the person of Jesus Christ, Emmanuel, God with us. Nothing in human experience is more exciting and defining than this truth and no one has so changed history as has the infant son of Mary, who is also the Son of God. Christmas naturally calls us to look back, to focus on Bethlehem and the birth of Jesus, and to celebrate this unique, historic moment.

But the Church calls us also to look forward. The same creed that professes faith in Jesus Christ born of the Virgin Mary also proclaims that Christ will come again. This coming will take multiple forms. Ultimately the Second Coming will herald the end of time as Jesus gathers his people and presents his kingdom to his Father. This is not simply poetic apocalyptic language and imagery. This is the faith in which we live and the hope in which we face daily life and, ultimately, death.

Christ also comes to us in our day-to-day living. Sacramentally, the coming takes place in an enduring manner when we celebrate the Eucharist. In a very real and tangible manner, heaven touches earth in the presence of Jesus in the Eucharist. In the Mass, the Risen Savior who is seated at the right hand of the Father is with us. Sacramentally present, Jesus Christ touches and enters more fully into each of us who approach the altar of the Lord.

Just as to those who were present at the first coming of Jesus - at his birth - in the stable in Bethlehem, so, too, is Jesus present to us in the Eucharist, really, truly, sacramentally present to receive our gifts of faith, hope and love.

Sometimes the profoundly spiritual meaning of Christmas can be obscured by our own excitement in anticipation of its celebration and all of the shopping and festivities that mark the season. All the more can the true meaning of Christmas be overwhelmed by the day-in and day-out proclamation of a secular and material gospel that sees no presence of God with us and does not experience God's loving care.

We, God's people, possess a great and abiding truth. In Jesus Christ, heaven truly does meet earth. God's Son comes among us to teach us the truth about God and ourselves. Jesus comes to be with us in all our difficulties and in all the trials, joys and sorrows of daily life.

This Christmas, as you and I make our way to the crche, the manger, the Nativity scene, when you and I make our way to this celebration of Eucharist and communion, let us bring a gift. God has already given us the greatest gift, his Son Jesus.

This Christmas let us offer our gifts of faith, of hope and of love. We might also want to leave another gift. Perhaps we can entrust to the infant Jesus something that is really weighing on our heart, something that is tugging at our conscience. We might give our promise to offer to someone we know a special act of forgiveness, reconciliation or compassion.

As we leave our gift, whatever it might be at the manger scene, let us all ask God for the grace of this wonderful holy day so that we can take one straw from this sacred place where heaven and earth meet and make something wonderful happen in the life of someone else.

On Christmas, as we remember and celebrate the story of Jesus' birth and the beginning of our redemption, may we do so with a fresh spirit of confidence in what we proclaim and a renewed spirit of solidarity, not only with our whole archdiocesan and parish Church, but also with the entire body of Christ, the Church Universal, that struggles as well with the challenge to be continually and constantly renewed in Jesus Christ.

May Christmas be a time of confident faith, joy and peace for you and your families and a time when in our own lives earth truly does meet heaven.

Sex, when done according to the will of God is beautiful, holy

BISHOP's NOTE: The following reflections on chastity come from the letter of the Confirmation candidates from Good Shepherd Church in Crane which they wrote me before their Confirmation on November 9, 2011. -- Bishop Michael Pfeifer, OMI

Good Shepherd-Crane Confirmation Class

“We read your pastoral message on sex and chastity and these are some of our thoughts.

Just as he has always done, the Holy Spirit works through us during the period of time when we are waiting for our spouse. He is there guiding us and helping us realize the importance of chastity. Sex is not only a “no” for now but a “yes” for God and our future spouse. God gave us our body and our body is for the Holy Spirit to dwell within us, we should keep it holy and pure. God allows us to make our own decision, but he also wants us to make the best ones and so the Holy Spirit lives within us to help us. The Spirit shows us through our conscience how we are to find our true happiness. If we follow this guidance when it comes to sex, we will know what to do. We know from our faith that marriage is a sacrament and therefore so very precious but we also know that to enter into any sacrament, we should be pure and holy, not damaged or denying our own purity. Sex should never be done to satisfy only ourselves, it is not ugly or bad. It is meant to bring couples in marriage closer together so that they can build a strong bond and raise up the children that are the blessings from this union. Children should never have to pay for their parents’ mistakes and sex when done according to the will of God is beautiful and holy, just as it should be. Sex must always be saved for the commitment of marriage and not wasted for casual affairs.”
TCC

(From 6)

homeless or sick, and refugees in our country and abroad – by maintaining and prioritizing funding to the most vulnerable.

Our Catholic Churches and other faith groups assume much of the responsibility for serving our vulnerable brethren in their communities and dioceses, but we cannot do so alone. Recognizing the responsibility of government to provide for the common good, San Angelo Bishop Michael Pfeifer and his brother bishops in Texas and across the nation are encouraging lawmakers to use their authority to direct resources where they will best promote the common good of all, especially “the least of these” (Matthew 25) who struggle to live in dignity in difficult times.

Limiting spending requires shared sacrifice by all, and all bishops encourage lawmakers to consider eliminating unnecessary military and other spending, while also raising adequate revenues to fund necessary programs and services at a sustainable level.

Daly

(From 15)

the Lamb of God." This is a direct allusion to John the Baptist when he sees Jesus near the Jordan.

The congregation will reply, "Lord, I am not worthy that you should enter under my roof," making a direct allusion to the centurion in Matthew’s Gospel just as they do in Italian and Spanish. It is a better echo of the "mea culpa" of the Latin. It reminds us of our link to the universal church.

The changes to the Mass are coming. For those who would like to get the answers, a California-based group that describes itself as "one of the nation's largest lay-run apostolates of Catholic apologetics and evangelization," prompted an IRS investigation even though it did not include the names of any candidates for political office.

The IRS began a separate investigation into two e-letters sent by Karl Keating, Catholic Answers president, questioning whether Sen. John Kerry, a Catholic from Massachusetts who was the 2004 Democratic presidential nominee, should receive Communion at Mass because he supported keeping abortion legal.

Catholic Answers was opposed to paying excise taxes for 2004 and 2005, but the IRS returned the taxes with interest in 2009, saying that the alleged political activity "was not willful and flagrant." Catholic Answers contended throughout the process that the e-letters were not political activity.

Although both investigations were eventually closed, James Bopp Jr., an attorney representing Catholic Answers, announced Oct. 21 that the organization would ask the U.S. Supreme Court "to let it sue the IRS for improperly taxing its constitutionally protected political speech." Lower federal courts said Catholic Answers had no standing to sue because the money had been refunded.

This allows the IRS to harass and penalize nonprofits who discuss public officials who are also running for office while leaving those nonprofits without any recourse: simply return the money at the last minute and never be sued for taxing protected speech that shouldn't be taxed in the first place," Bopp said.

For those who would like to get the IRS' guidance on political campaigns directly from the source, the agency offers at minicourse on "Political Campaigns and Charities: The Ban on Political Campaign Intervention" at www.stayexempt.irs.gov/Portals/0/PDF/Political_Campaigns_and_Charities.pdf.

The U.S. bishops' "Faithful Citizenship" website at www.faithfulcitizenship.org offers guidelines for parishes that focus as much on the do's of political responsibility as on the don'ts.

"While it is important to be clear about what we can't do, the most important thing to focus on is what we can do," it says. "In a democracy, loving our neighbor and caring for the least among us means supporting leaders and policies that promote the common good and protect society's most vulnerable members. Helping Catholics to recognize and act on this dimension of their faith is an essential task for parish leaders."
Martin, was not until 2007.

Better to realize my vocation as quickly as possible so I could start doing what I was supposed to be doing.”

In Brother Martin's case, that is pray, a near constant in a hermit's life. The handful of Carmelites at the hermitage pray and work all day, every day. They are up as early as 3 a.m. in time for lauds and Mass.

Brother Martin said becoming a hermetical priest was not on his radar screen early in his vocation. Entering the priesthood is not something seriously considered by a hermit until after he takes his solemn vows which, for Brother Martin, was not until 2007.

When he takes his priestly vows within the coming months, Brother Martin's responsibilities as a priest will differ than that of priests who work for a diocese or within a parish.

“It's important to realize that at the hermitage, we're not engaged in the type of pastoral ministry such as at the diocesan level, and so in that sense we don’t do baptisms, funerals, weddings or anointings of the sick. The context of the heremetical priesthood is to serve in the sacramental life.”

Brother Martin says heremetical priests still given the authority to administer the sacraments not used in a hermitage setting, such as baptisms, marriage and hospital ministries, though celebrating the Eucharist, hearing confessions and administering last rites in the rare event of the death of a brother hermit are the sacraments more likely celebrated inside a hermitage.

Brother Martin says once he completes the celebration of the Eucharist, he will return to his daily life as a brother.

“I am obedient to Father Fabian, my prior, and to Brother John David, my subprior, so taking my vows as a priest will not change the structure of my life. Being a priest to me means being a priest on the altar. When Mass is finished, I don’t have any authority over anyone, unless it is given to me.”

And in fact that authority may one day come. Brother Martin will likely be successor as prior of the Mount Carmel Hermitage at such a time that Father Fabian is no longer in that position.

For now, Brother Martin said, “My life won’t change much at all.”

Directions to the Mt. Carmel Hermitage: From San Angelo, take State Hwy. 277 south towards Eldorado. Stay on 277 past the town of Christoval and the Tres Amigos convenience store and gas station. Take a right on Allen Ln., the third street on the right past Tres Amigos. Continue for a mile and a half and look for the Hermitage entrance on the left with the street sign "St. Joseph’s Way." Stay on the paved road until you arrive at the main entrance.

Arnold Boeding came from Hermleigh to say an evening Mass in English. One Sunday I had 11 baptisms.

The mission of Aspermont was an interesting experience. There was no church, and Mass was said at someone’s home. This was the day before face to face confessions. The lady of the house had a bedspread and she hung it over the entrance to her closet. I sat in the closet and heard confessions before Mass.

As time went on we bought the old Christian Church, an old wooden building, and had it moved to the property the Church owned. We left the baptistry (a large galvanized tank with steps into it, full immersion) that the Christian church had. A man came by one day to see if we would sell the tank to him. We had no use for it. But he wanted it for a minnow tank -- he sold fish, bait. I always joked that whoever bought from him went fishing with holy minnows.

In Rotan they would have a Spanish meal every quarter. My Spanish being limited, I announced, “Tamales, Menudo, Enchiladas y otras cosas,” which means, ‘other things.’ A man came to the hall and he wanted a ‘plate of otras cosas.’ Some people called me Padre Otras Cosas.

In the Fall of 1965 I was named pastor of St. Mary's in Odessa. I had two assistants, Father Bill McNara and Father Luciano Biasi, from Italy. I thought Odessa was a desert with oil wells all over the countryside. A parishioner who was a dentist, said to me, “I hear you like to fish? This is the ideal place: 400 miles from the coast and 400 miles from the mountains.”

In November 1967, they brought me to the cathedral in San Angelo to serve as the rector. I arrived in San Angelo on November 2, All Souls Day. It was a happy 10 years I spent at the cathedral. At first I thought it was purgatory. On January 24, 1962, during Bishop Drury's installation, from the 6th floor of the Cactus Hotel I couldn't understand how people could live in this asphalt jungle. Five years later I had come to live with them.

There were five assistants at the time and two or three would go out to cover other places. Among them, now deceased, were Father John Lavin, Father Bob Kelly, Father Tom Diab, Father Russell Schultz and Father Louis Droll. Among the living assistant are Monsignor Fred Nawarskas, Msgr. Larry Droll, Msgr. Bob Bush. Msgr. James Plagens was my assistant in Odessa.

Some of the memorable things that happened while at the cathedral was the night a doctor was shot in his office across the street from the cathedral; another night when a young woman threatened to jump off the top of the six-story bank building, and then there was the night the doorbell would not quit ringing. I got up to answer the door and found Father Fred Nawarskas at the front door in his pajamas and bathrobe holding someone’s shirt in his hand. Fred had come down to get a drink of water in the rectory kitchen and found a stranger. A foot chase began that went out the front door. As the stranger started to run across Beauregard Street, Fred grabbed the man’s shirt. The man ripped the front buttons off the shirt and took off toward the Cactus Hotel. Fr. Fred later came ringing the door bell to get back in the church. It was a very interesting life in the asphalt jungle.

In January: Msgr Zientek is transferred to Rowena.

Bishop Rhoades reported that a series of ads for the "For Your Marriage" campaign that began in July 2007 had nearly a quarter of a million broadcasts.

A website developed for the campaign - - "For Your Marriage," www.foryourmarriage.org, and its Spanish-language counterpart, "Por Tu Matrimonio," www.porutamatrimonio.org -- also is being used in the campaign, he said.

"Since it was launched four years ago, it has attracted over 1.7 million visits with more than 6 million page views," said Bishop Rhoades. "I'm also proud to report that (the site) won a first place Thoth Award from the Washington chapter of the Public Relations Society of America."

He said the Spanish-language counterpart of the campaign has also done well, with a following of more than 1,900 Facebook fans, 300,000 visitors to the "Por Tu Matrimonio" website and a radio campaign being aired around the country.

And a new website has just been launched -- "Marriage, Unique for a Reason." The site is www.marriageuniqueforreason.org.

In a related report, Bishop Salvatore J. Cordileone of Oakland, Calif., chairman of the Subcommittee for the Promotion and Defense of Marriage, said there are a great many challenges on the legal front to traditional marriage, ranging from various states legalizing same-sex marriage to the repeal of the "don't ask, don't tell" policy on gays in the military.

He said one thread of the subcommittee's efforts is to work on persuading the Obama administration to "press the reset button on the trajectory of undermining marriage."
great love for us by living our life, by being dependent on human parents, by suffering for us, and by giving His life totally on the cross for us. The mystery of Christmas is the mystery of God’s unfathomable love that God wants to be with us and that God will never abandon us. This wonderful mystery reminds us that God actually cares about all humans on planet earth and wants to spend an eternity with us. The mystery of Christmas, the mystery of God’s love, continues on for us in the great gift of the Eucharist.

The mystery of the Eucharist is the same as the mystery of Christmas. The mystery of Christmas and the Eucharist are all about love, God’s love for us and wanting to be with us. It is the mystery of God becoming a man, and as a man, suffering and dying for our sins and bringing us new life through His resurrection.

The best way to continue the mystery of Christmas in our lives is by receiving Christ often in the Eucharist and by being faithful members of His body and reaching out to bring Christ’s love, forgiveness, and goodness to other members of the Body of Christ. The mystery of Christmas and the mystery of the Eucharist are really one. The Eucharist is merely an extension—an continuation—of what happened over 2,000 years ago in Bethlehem. Because Mary gave birth to the Son of God, we now have the flesh of the Son of Man—God with us—when we receive Him in Communion with us.

To truly comprehend the mystery of Christmas and the Eucharist requires that we take on a humble attitude, and first go before the Child in the manger and consider the mystery of the one born of Mary. The one in the manger is the great God who created the entire universe, who took flesh to become one of us, from this simple maiden from Nazareth. The manger is a place of feeding for animals, and the Child Jesus came to be our food and love by beginning His life in a manger. To understand the Eucharist, we need the same spirit of faith and humility to accept the fact that our God lives among us today, when a piece of bread and a little bit of wine become His Body and His Blood.

Each time that we receive the Eucharist, we are celebrating the mystery of Christ taking flesh and living among us. We are celebrating the mystery of Christmas.

To accept this great news and the wonderful mystery of the connection between Christmas, the manger and the Eucharist, let us take to heart the words of the angel of Christmas—Do not be afraid—I proclaim to you good news. For today a Savior has been born for you, who is Christ and Lord.

and coordinates this ministry with the local pastor of the place and the local dean. When the Blessing Team is contacted, they arrange with the person who called to go to the place affected at a time when (if it is a dwelling) all those who reside there are able to be present (if possible).

As Father Dennis McManus pointed out in his informative presentations, extreme cases of the influence of the devil happens in what we call diabolical possession. These are cases where the devil, and most often with the cooperation of the possessed person, has taken control of a person, and makes every effort to hang on to the person, with the purpose of leading that person to hell. Thank God, Christ has given special powers to the Church through its proper ministers to confront the evil one, and to drive out the devil in cases of possession. Christ Himself often confronted and expelled the devil, and He gave special power to His followers to expel the devil, the evil spirits. There are many passages of the Gospels that tell us about this special ministry Christ gave to His disciples.

By way of this article, I wish to inform you of the Diocesan Deliverance Ministry Structure that has been established to help us deal with the influence of the evil one in our lives, especially with cases of diabolical possession of a person or place. In each deanery, there is a priest who has been assigned to coordinate the deliverance ministry of the Blessing Team and to review the number of cases that might occur. The official priest representatives of the bishop in each of the three deaneries for this vitally important ministry are: Father Arturo Pestin, OP, for the Midland/Odessa Deanery; Msgr. Robert Bush, for the Abilene Deanery (Msgr. Bush is also the Coordinator of the Deliverance Ministry for the Diocese.), and Rev. David Herrera of St. Mary’s Church in San Angelo for the San Angelo Deanery. These priests from the three deaneries, while not exorcists, will be working closely with the Blessing Teams of each deanery to carry out the deliverance ministry for people in need and gather information on special cases of diabolical influence on people and places by sharing this with the Pastor of the place, the local dean and with the bishop. These three priests form with the bishop and two professional, very qualified people, one a medical doctor and the other a psychiatrist, a core diocesan group, the Diocesan Deliverance Ministry Board, to determine true cases of diabolical possession of a person.

In cases of diabolical possession which are rare but do happen, the Church asks that we use the natural sciences to verify that there is not some medical, psychiatric or psychological cause that might seem to be a diabolical possession. To help the Bishop and the priest Deanery representatives who form the Diocesan Deliverance Ministry Board for these extraordinary cases to establish if there is a true situation of diabolical possession, I would seek the advice and cooperation of two very fine doctors who have agreed to assist me in this critical ministry. The medical doctor who will be advising in these cases is Dr. Ernest Charlesworth of San Angelo. Dr. Charlesworth practices medicine at the Shannon Clinic in San Angelo, Texas. He is board certified in internal medicine, in dermatology, in diagnostic laboratory immunology and in allergy/immunology. Dr. Charlesworth went to medical school at the University of Texas Medical Branch in Galveston and did his specialty training at Johns Hopkins University School of Medicine. He retired from the US Air Force in 1995 with the rank of Colonel and came to Shannon Clinic 12 years ago, after practicing at Scott and White Clinic in College Station following his Air Force retirement. I sincerely thank Dr. Charlesworth for accepting this service.

The psychiatrist who will be assisting the Bishop is Dr. John Snuggs of San Angelo. Dr. Snuggs received his doctor of medicine from the Texas A & M University Health Science Center. He was a distinguished medical student and was among a select few who were inducted into Alpha Omega Alpha Medical Honor Society. He did his special training in psychiatry at Scott & White Clinic in Temple, Texas and in 1999 he became a board certified psychiatrist and is currently a diplomate of the American Board of Psychiatry. I also sincerely thank Dr. Snuggs for this important service.

If after consultation with the Diocesan Deliverance Ministry Board there is verifiable evidence of a true case of diabolical possession, the Bishop will name a qualified priest to conduct an exorcism of a possessed person.

As mentioned earlier, sadly today many people do not believe in the devil, but Sacred Scripture points out the reality of the existence of the devil going back to the Book of Genesis and when Christ Himself confronted the devil and gave His apostles and disciples the special power to drive out the devil, the evil one. Among the basic gifts Christ gave those He sent out on mission is the power to expel demons and cast out impure spirits. The best way to overcome the influence of the evil one is to live a good Christian life, taking up our cross each day and following Christ, living by the Gospel values Jesus has given us, celebrating the Sacraments, especially receiving often the Eucharist, and constantly seeking the guidance of the Holy Spirit. And we have the protection and guidance from our Blessed Mother who is always there to assist us, along with saints of our Church who overcame diabolical influence in their lifetime, and the assistance of the great Archangel Michael, who conquered the devil in God’s name.

We are dealing here with an issue that is real and can be frightening and is other-worldly, and it is important that we always follow the teaching given by Christ and the guidance of the Holy Spirit in our beautiful Catholic Church. Remember, by His suffering, death and resurrection, Christ has already conquered the devil, sin and death, and gives us all the grace we need to overcome the evil one, the devil, Satan.
bishops voted to establish a permanent Subcommittee on Health Care Issues under the Committee on Doctrine's jurisdiction. Prior to the 214-15 vote, Archbishop Henry J. Mansell of Hartford, Conn., said he was "strongly in favor" of the new sub-committee because health care is part of "the Gospel mission of the church" and involves "billions and billions of dollars in funding."

The new subcommittee will address such issues as guidance in implementing the bishops' "Ethical and Religious Directives for Catholic Health Care Services" and in addressing non-Catholic hospitals in Catholic health systems, for-profit Catholic health care, canonical status of Catholic health facilities, conscience protection and health care reform.

The bishops approved Oct. 22 as an optional memorial for Blessed John Paul II in the U.S. liturgical calendar. They also approved an optional memorial for Blessed Marianne Cope, with the date to be determined.

Washington Cardinal Donald W. Wuerl announced Nov. 15 that a new ordinariate -- functionally similar to a diocese -- will be created Jan. 1 to bring Anglicans into the Catholic Church.

The cardinal said that 67 Anglican priests have submitted their dossiers seeking ordinatio in the Catholic Church, and 35 of those have received the initial approval from the Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith. That means they can move to the second stage of approval, which includes a criminal background check, psychological evaluation and a recommendation from the Catholic bishop where he lives and from his Anglican ecclesiastical authority.

The actions followed the November 2009 issuance of an apostolic constitution authorizing the creation of an ordinariate to bring in Anglicans, or Episcopalians as they are more commonly known in the United States, who seek to leave their tradition and join the Catholic Church.

The cardinal later told reporters that Anglican parishes with a total of about 2,000 members have asked to become part of the Catholic Church through the process established in 2009. Cardinal Wuerl was named by the Vatican to head an ad hoc committee for the constitution's implementation.

On the first day of the meeting, Bishop William E. Lori of Bridgeport, Conn., and chairman of a new Ad Hoc Committee for Religious Liberty, outlined threats to religious liberty issues, saying there seems to be a pattern in culture and law to treat religion "as merely a private matter between an individual and one's own God."

Regarding efforts to support traditional marriage, the chairman of the Committee on Laity, Marriage, Family Life and Youth reported to the bishops Nov. 14 that their campaign to strengthen marriage has reached a large audience and has been honored by professional advertising organizations.

In a presentation on the work of the Subcommittee for the Promotion and Defense of Marriage, Bishop Kevin C. Rhoades of Fort Wayne-South Bend, Ind., said public service announcements with the theme of "a good marriage goes a long way" were released in September to 1,600 television stations and 7,000 radio stations. He also announced the launch of a new website -- www.marriageuniqueforareason.org -- aimed at educating Catholics on the meaning of marriage as the union of one man and one woman. The website corresponds with a new DVD, guide, and booklet.

In a related report, Bishop Salvatore J. Cordileone of Oakland, Calif., chairman of the defense of marriage subcommittee, said there are a great many challenges on the legal front to traditional marriage, ranging from various states legalizing same-sex marriage to the repeal of the "don't ask, don't tell" policy on gays in the military.

He said one thread of the subcommittee's efforts is to work on persuading the Obama administration to "press the reset button on the trajectory of undermining marriage."

The bishops also heard from Cardinals Daniel N. DiNardo of Galveston-Houston, Sean P. O'Malley of Boston and Donald Wuerl of Washington about the church's efforts to expand and strengthen the church's post-abortion healing ministry, Project Rachel.

Women who have had abortions, as well as the men and parents who might have encouraged it, "need to know that God forgives them and that all is not lost," said Cardinal O'Malley, who described Project Rachel as "one of our best pastoral initiatives."

In another report, two bishops who recently visited Iraq said the United States and American Catholics must do their part to help keep Iraq from sliding into chaos once U.S. troops leave the country at the end of the year.

"The U.S. withdrawal of combat troops does not reduce the obligation to help," principally to protect Iraqis and provide assistance, said Bishop Gerald F. Kicanas of Tucson, Ariz., chairman of the board of Catholic Relief Services, during a Nov. 15 press briefing at the bishops' meeting.

"It would be extremely important for our government to participate in an orderly transition ... The great fear right now is if the troops leave, the violence will intensify," Bishop Kicanas said, adding the United States must "make sure people's lives are protected and violence doesn't erupt."

In his opening address Nov. 14, Archbishop Timothy M. Dolan of New York, USCCB president, said the church needs to restore its luster, credibility and beauty in the hearts of its members. He called on his fellow bishops to communicate to the world that the sinfulness of the church's members is not "a reason to dismiss the church or her eternal truths, but to embrace her all the more."

The archbishop said the church still has plenty to say to the modern world.

humildad, oración y entrega de nuestras vidas a Dios para poder verdaderamente hallar a Cristo en una nueva manera al celebrar Su cumpleaños en la navidad. Sí, Cristo quiere que tengamos nuestras fiestas, tener nuestras decoraciones, nuestras lucecitas, nuestras celebraciones de Adviento y navidad, pero más que todo, necesitamos que enfocar nuestras vidas en el Unico quien es la razón verdadera de la temporada. Al hacer esto necesitamos que preguntarnos algunas preguntas importantes para poder preparar mejor durante la temporada de Adviento para el nacimiento de Cristo:

¿Cómo está creciendo Jesús en mi vida diaria, especialmente al tratar de compartir el amor de Cristo con otros?
¿Cómo llevo a Cristo en mi corazón a donde Él quiere estar e ir cada día por medio de mí?
¿Cómo es el trabajo de mis manos, al ir por mis tareas diarias y esfuerzos, llegando ser la Palabra hecha Carne?
¿Cómo estoy practicando paciencia durante este tiempo de espera de nuestro Salvador?

Durante estos días de Adviento, refleja en estas preguntas con María, pidiéndole ayuda para poder prepararnos bien para el cumpleaños de su Hijo, nuestro Señor y Salvador, Cristo Jesús. La manera de cómo contestamos estas preguntas verdaderamente
Dioce-Scenes

Odessa

Students at St. Mary's Central Catholic School in Odessa set aside time to pay tribute to our nation's veterans on Veterans Day, November 11, 2011. (Photos by Alan P. Torre.)

Miles

MILES -- St Thomas Church, in Miles, celebrated Priesthood Appreciation Day with a parish meal honoring its pastor, Rev. Ariel Lagunilla, right, on Oct 30. Also honored were Father John Kuehner, center, a Redemptorist priest residing in Miles and working for the San Angelo Diocese, along with Deacon Stanley Lange, left. Parishioners inundated the three with cards of appreciation for their selfless service to St. Thomas. Religious Formation students presented original their appreciation posters and cards that were used to decorate the room. A special cake was inscribed with 'Thank You to clergy for your service to God and community.'

FOOTPRINTS

(From 3)

Students at St. Mary’s Central Catholic School in Odessa set aside time to pay tribute to our nation’s veterans on Veterans Day, November 11, 2011. (Photos by Alan P. Torre.)

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The Ray Family entered the Catholic Church in 1994, a journey from the Baptist tradition to Catholicism. Since, Steve has been busy writing books, giving talks, leading pilgrimages and producing the awardwinning "The Footprints of God: The Story of Salvation From Abraham to Augustine”.

According to his web site, Steve’s Footprints of God apostolate is one of adventure and education, demonstrating the truth, beauty and excitement of the Christian life lived in the heart of the Catholic Church.

His work has been endorsed by his current and former bishop in Lansing as well as the pastor of his Lansing, Mich., parish.

him what he needed to do to help spread his newfound faith.

“I woke up at 2 in the morning in 2000 and it was in my mind, right there in the front of my mind, and I knew exactly what I needed to do,” Ray said. “I shook my wife, Janet, awake, and said, ‘We have to do a 10-part video series on salvation from the Catholic perspective.’”

And Janet’s response was, ‘We can’t even take good pictures, how does God expect us to take movies?’

“So, I typed up the whole outline, ten parts, biographies, from Abraham thru Augustine. I flew out to pitch the idea to the editors at Ignatius with Janet, and they said ‘How soon can you get started?’”

The documentary series, Ray said, is one of the most popular series on EWTN, one of the reasons it is important that the final three episodes finally be produced.

Ray is also a documentary producer, Bible study writer and teacher, frequent guest on radio & TV.

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