Inside this issue:

- The Catholic response to coronavirus fears (Pages 3, 5)
- Lenten Penance Service schedule (Page 4)
- The new pastoral plan takes shape around the diocese (Page 12)

Bishop Michael Sis delivers the homily at an Ash Wednesday Mass Jan. 26 at The University of Texas Permian Basin in Odessa. Bishop Sis also celebrated an Ash Wednesday Mass at Midland College and held listening sessions with the young adults at both campuses. These listening sessions are one aspect of the current Pastoral Plan for the Diocese of San Angelo. For more on how the diocese is putting the Pastoral Plan into action, see Page 12.
'Powerful words of understanding': Pope backs indigenous in Amazon

By Barbara J. Fraser
Catholic News Service

LIMA, Peru (CNS) — Saying the world has much to learn from Amazonian indigenous peoples, Pope Francis declared the Catholic Church their ally in their struggle to protect the region’s forests and rivers.

In Querida Amazonia (Beloved Amazonia), the apostolic exhortation issued Feb. 12, the pope called on Catholics to respond to environmental destruction in the Amazon region with outrage and indignation while building networks of solidarity with its traditional inhabitants.

The document is Pope Francis’ response to recommendations made by participants in the Synod of Bishops for the Amazon, held in October 2019 at the Vatican.

With its often lyrical language, the exhortation takes another step toward a closer relationship with native peoples, which the pope launched in Peru in January 2017. At an encounter there with several thousand Amazonian indigenous people, Pope Francis asked his listeners to help church leaders understand their culture and their lives.

With the exhortation, the pope has made it clear that the church — and the world — must listen to them and recognize them as equals, said Moema Maria Marques de Miranda, a lay Franciscan who was an observer at the synod.

"After 500 years, indigenous peoples are recognized in their wisdom and their abilities. That is a paradigm change," Miranda told Catholic News Service.

That message is woven into the document from the beginning, where Pope Francis describes four dreams.

He says he dreams of an Amazonia that fights for the rights of indigenous peoples, an Amazonia that preserves its cultural riches, an Amazonia that preserves its natural beauty, and Christian communities that give the church “new faces with Amazonian features.”

That image of dreams has a double meaning. For most Westerners, dreams express hopes for the future, but for indigenous people, they transmit messages from God, just as they did for some Biblical figures, Miranda said.

Such dreams are visions "that connect with something very deep within the person," said Medical Mission Sister Birgit Weiler, who works in Peru and was an expert at the synod. "It commits you to taking a new path."

One message that stands out clearly in the exhortation, she said, is that the church sides with indigenous people who defend their lands against extractive industries like logging and mining or the encroachment of industrial-scale farming and ranching.

That is also a sign the church workers “have the backing of the pope” when they accompany communities in those struggles, she said. Such efforts sometimes draw criticism from others in the church, but the pope has made clear that “they can’t call you communist” for opposing industries or infrastructure projects that threaten communities, she said.

The exhortation "is a response from Pope Francis to the cry of pain of the Amazon, from its peoples, nations and indigenous organizations, Jose Gregorio Diaz Mirabal, coordinator of an umbrella organization of Amazonian indigenous groups, said in a statement released Feb. 12.

Pope Francis’ message comes as threats against the environment and those who defend it are on the rise in Amazonia and other parts of Latin America and the world.

Widespread fires in southern Brazil and northern Bolivia, where forests were razed for farming and ranching, made international headlines in 2019. Africa’s Congo basin, which faces similar threats, also suffered a fierce fire season.

Brazilian President Jair Bolsonaro has submitted draft legislation to that country’s Congress seeking to open indigenous territories to extractive industries.

“The businesses, national or international, which harm the Amazon and fail to respect the right of the original peoples to the land and its boundaries, and to self-determination and prior consent, should be called for what they are: injustice and crime,” the pope wrote.

When businesses seek profit above all, corrupt authorities give companies access easy to timber and minerals, and companies "raze the forests and pollute the environment, economic relationships are unduly altered and become an instrument of death," he added.

For those who defend their lands against loggers, miners and ranchers, the stakes are high. At least 164 people were killed worldwide in such efforts in 2018, according to the nonprofit organization Global Witness, which says the figure is probably low. In many cases, the killers are never brought to justice.

The deadliest countries include Brazil, Colombia, Guatemala and Mexico. The pope’s exhortation was issued Feb. 12, the anniversary of the 2005 murder of Notre Dame Sister Dorothy Stang, who worked with small-scale farmers in Brazil.

Although Pope Francis warns that extractive industries are a new form of colonialism in a region where the church must work to dismantle the vestiges of a colonial past, the exhortation is not a political statement, Archbishop Roque Paloschi of Porto Velho, Brazil, told CNS.

The pope’s words “make us aware that we must respond to the cry of God in the cry of the poor and the cry of creation,” Archbishop Paloschi said. "More than a political impact, it needs to have an impact on the church and require us to take a united stand."

Nevertheless, the church must become more and more prophetic” in speaking out against policies that threaten indigenous peoples and the environment, Brazilian Sister Rose Bertoldo, a Missionary Sister of the Immaculate Heart of Mary who was an observer at the synod, told CNS.

For Sister Bertoldo, one notable omission in the exhortation was the concept of "ecological sin." Synod participants had recommended that actions like pollution, environmental destruction and environmental injustice that endanger...
Coronavirus and the Liturgy

In response to concerns about COVID-19 (the Novel Coronavirus), the Diocese of San Angelo has instituted temporary changes to some of the practices in the Mass, in the interest of the health and well-being of our faith community. These changes are to take place immediately, and they will remain in place until determined otherwise by the bishop. Parishes will be notified when the temporary measures are lifted.

We should be vigilant but not panic. Since it is possible for a person to be contagious for some time without being aware of it, we should all take care not to be inadvertent transmitters of the virus. We should take seriously the advice of public health authorities in our local areas.

If you are sick:

We care for the Body of Christ by first taking care of our own body. The obligation to participate in Mass is not required for those who are sick. If you are sick, do not worsen your illness by trying to get to church, and do not put others at risk of catching your illness. It is not sinful to miss Mass if you are sick; it is actually an expression of care for the health of others. If your children are sick, keep them home from Mass, religious education, or youth ministry meetings.

If you are seriously ill, the Church wants to celebrate with you the Sacrament of the Anointing of the Sick. You can arrange for this by contacting your parish office.

If you or someone in your family shows symptoms of the Coronavirus, please seek medical attention.

Don’t cough or sneeze into your hands:

Use a tissue to cover your mouth and nose when you cough or sneeze, then throw it away. If you don’t have a tissue handy, do what school children are taught to do: cough or sneeze into your shirt sleeve at the bent elbow, and avoid touching the area of fabric you coughed into.

Wash your hands often:

Soap, water, and a good scrubbing are the best defense against viruses. This is especially important after coughing, sneezing, or blowing your nose, and before sharing food or drink with others. Scrub your hands with soap and water for at least 20 seconds. If you are not near soap and water, use an alcohol-based hand sanitizer or disposable hand wipe.

Greeting people:

Those who greet people at the entrances of churches should limit physical contact, refraining from shaking hands, instead using smiles, eye contact, kind words, waves, simple bows, pats on the back, or even elbow bumps.

Holy water fonts:

Holy water should be removed from fonts at this time.

Holding hands:

In this particular time of public health concern over

See BISHOP, Page 21

Espacio de Oración

Opción en defensa del matrimonio

Dios Padre nuestro, te damos gracias por el don del matrimonio; vínculo de vida y amor, y fuente de la familia.

El amor de marido y mujer enriquece a tu Iglesia con hijos, llena el mundo con una abundancia de fecundidad espiritual y servicio, y es signo del amor de tu Hijo, Jesucristo, por su Iglesia.

La gracia de Jesús brotó en Caná a petición de su Santa Madre.

Concedemos que tu Hijo, por la intercesión de la Virgen María, derrame sobre nosotros una nueva medida de los Dones del Espíritu Santo al unímenos con toda persona de buena voluntad para promover y proteger la belleza única del matrimonio.

Concede que tu Santo Espíritu ilumine a nuestra sociedad para que atesoré el amor heroico de marido y mujer, y que a nuestros líderes para que sostengan y protejan el puesta singular de padres y madres en la vida de sus hijos.

Padre, te pedimos que nuestras oraciones se unan con las de la Santísima Virgen María, que padece que tu Verbo Divino transfigure nuestro esfuerzo por salvaguardar el incomparable esplendor del matrimonio.

Te pedimos todas estas cosas por Cristo nuestro Señor, Amén.

San Joaquín y Santa Ana, rueguen por nosotros.
**Lenten Penance Services**

**March 2020**

4 ABILENE, Sacred Heart Church, 7:00 p.m.
5 COLEMAN, Sacred Heart Church, 7:00 p.m.
10 SWEETWATER, Holy Spirit Church, 7:00 p.m.
11 ABILENE, St. Vincent Pallotti Church, 7:00 p.m.
12 SAN ANGELO, St. Margaret of Scotland Church, 7:00 p.m.
12 STANTON, St. Joseph Church, TBD
14 ABILENE, St. Ambrose Church, 7:00 p.m.
15 MIDLAND, San Miguel Arcángel, Rite of Election at 3:00 p.m.
17–19 ENGAGE ENTRANCE & NATURAL FAMILY PLANNING RETREAT
20–22 ENGAGE ENTRANCE & NATURAL FAMILY PLANNING
23 HEART OF MERCY PRAYER GROUP
25–26 DOSA ANNUAL PRIEST RETREAT
26–29 MEN’S WALK TO EMMAUS
30 HEART OF MERCY PRAYER GROUP

**April 2020**

1 SONORA, St. Ann Church, 6:00 p.m.
10 SAN ANGELO, Sacred Heart Cathedral, Mass at 12:10 p.m.
10 SAN ANGELO, Sacred Heart Cathedral, Palm Sunday Mass at 5:00 p.m.
11 SAN ANGELO, Sacred Heart Cathedral, Palm Sunday Mass at 10:00 a.m.
12 SAN ANGELO, Holy Angels, Seder Meal at 5:30 p.m.
12 CHRISTOVAL, Carmelite Monastery, Day of Reflection for Priests
12 SAN ANGELO, Sacred Heart Cathedral, Chrism Mass at 6:30 p.m.
12 SAN ANGELO, Sacred Heart Cathedral, Mass of the Lord’s Supper at 7:00 p.m.
13 SAN ANGELO, St. Margaret, Good Friday procession at 1:00 p.m.
13 SAN ANGELO, Sacred Heart Cathedral, Service of the Lord’s Passion at 7:00 p.m.
13 SAN ANGELO, Sacred Heart Cathedral, Easter Vigil at 8:30 p.m.
14 B L I N N, St. John, Confirmation Mass at 11:00 a.m.
14 T R E N T, Holy Angels, Confirmation Mass at 11:00 a.m.
14 BROWNWOOD, St. Mary, Mass of Installation of Pastor at 5:00 p.m.
14 ODESSA, Our Lady of Lourdes Church, Confirmation Mass at 7:00 p.m.
14 ODESSA, Our Lady of Lourdes Church, Confirmation Mass at 7:00 p.m.
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Coronavirus fears elicit response, tips from Catholic leaders

West Texas Angels

SAN ANGELO — The recent spread of novel coronavirus (COVID-19) around the world has led leaders within the church and other Catholic organizations to highlight the Catholic response so far and to reiterate the steps people can take to prevent the spread of the disease that has killed 22 people in the United States and over 3,800 worldwide as of March 9.

In a Feb. 18 joint statement, Bishop David J. Malloy of Rockford, Illinois, chairman of the United States bishops’ Committee on International Justice and Peace; Sean Callahan, president of Catholic Relief Services; and Sisters of Mercy Sister Mary Haddad, president of the Catholic Health Association of the United States, wrote that they “hope that governments will work together in partnership to improve all nations’ capacity to prevent, detect, and respond to this virus.”

The joint statement continues to say, “The Catholic Church in the United States stands in solidarity with those affected by the coronavirus and their families, health workers who are valiantly trying to diagnose and treat patients, and those under quarantine awaiting the results of their screening for the virus.”

The three also note that “Catholic healthcare providers are at the front line of the ongoing treatment and care to those impacted by the virus.” They praise the actions thus far of the Vatican — which in early February sent 700,000 respiratory masks to China, the initial site of the coronavirus outbreak — and the United States government, which transported more than 17 tons of donated medical supplies to China.

“This response to the novel coronavirus demonstrates the critical importance of the need to work together and to invest in crucial health care systems here and in other countries, thus preventing and responding to community-wide emergencies,” the statement reads.

As COVID-19 spreads, Catholic entities worldwide take precautions

By Bronwen Dachs

Catholic News Service

Catholic aid agencies are protecting their staff’s safety as they increase their weekly efforts to stop the spread of the coronavirus COVID-19.

Catholic dioceses around the world, too, are following protocols issued by their government health ministries.

Catholic Relief Services, which works in more than 100 countries, is “restricting all but the most mission-critical travel, with contingency operational plans in place should the disease take hold in any of the countries where the organization operates,” it said.

The U.S. bishops’ international relief and development agency is working “to prevent and mitigate the spread of the deadly virus” while protecting the safety of its staff, it said in a March 3 statement.

CRS suspended its education programs for children in camps in Afghanistan and is now “working with local health agencies to educate those families on preventing infection and distributing 60,000 bars of soap,” it said. In Cambodia, it is piloting a work-from-home arrangement.

The agency, part of the Caritas Internationalis network, noted it has vast experience “fighting fast-moving disease outbreaks,” citing the outreach of its partners in vulnerable and remote communities.

Caritas Internationalis has increased checks on its staff and is distributing surgical masks to people in need in Hong Kong, where two people have died among the 103 people infected. Members of the Caritas network of aid agencies are running risk awareness and hygiene education campaigns in the countries where they work.

More than 3,000 people have died globally from COVID-19, which emerged in the Chinese city of Wuhan in December. The World Health Organization said that, by early March, more than 92,000 infections had been confirmed.

Dioceses around the world took precautions such as recommending that Communion is received only in the hand and that people do not shake hands during the sign of peace at Mass, especially in places frequented by pilgrims.

The French Shrine of Our Lady of Lourdes announced that pilgrims were still welcome, but the pools the sick bathe in, hoping for healing, would be closed temporarily.

The Latin Patriarchate of Jerusalem issued precautionary guidelines to follow during celebration of Masses, noting the local church’s “unique situation.”

“Thousands of pilgrims from different parts of the world come to the Holy Land to visit the holy sites and churches,” the patriarchate said, noting that “in some cases, the pilgrims are also in contact with our local churches and communities.”

Its directive said Communion is to be received only in the hand and made the “preventive suggestion” that holy water fonts be emptied, especially in the holy sites and sanctuaries.

The Israeli education ministry told Catholic News Services that 14 students from the Rosary Sisters’ High School in East Jerusalem were in self-quarantine following their return from a conference in Genoa, Italy.

The spread of the coronavirus in Europe has intensified, with the majority of cases in Italy; as many as 20 countries on the continent recorded new cases.

The Italian Civil Protection Service said 3,089 people in Italy had the coronavirus as of 6 p.m. March 4. Of those, 107 have died and 276 have recovered.

Schools closed in all of Italy March 5-15.

The Archdiocese of Milan suspended all public celebrations of Mass until further notice in compliance with Italian health ministry precautions.

Schools and universities were closed to prevent the spread of the coronavirus

Pope skips penance service with Rome clergy due to mild cold

By Junno Arocho Esteves

Catholic News Service

VATICAN CITY (CNS) — Pope Francis did not attend a traditional penitential service with priests of the Diocese of Rome due to a mildcold, the Vatican said.

In a statement Feb. 27, Matteo Bruni, director of the Vatican press office, said that due to “a slight indisposition,” the pope preferred to remain close to the Domus Sanctae Marthae, where he lives.

However, “other commitments will proceed normally,” Bruni said. According to the Vatican, the pope met with members of the Global Catholic Climate Movement in one of the meeting rooms of the Paul VI audience hall.

News of the pope’s cold comes as Italy has been on high alert due to the spread of the coronavirus. According to the Italian civil protection service, 528 people have been infected with the virus as of noon Feb. 27. Twelve, and perhaps, 14 people have died, the office said. The majority of people infected are located in the northern Italian region of Lombardy and Veneto.

During his weekly general audience Feb. 26, the pope reduced his contact with people in St. Peter’s Square, shaking hands with only a few people before beginning his talk. The pope circled the square in the popemobile, waving and blessing people from afar, and the driver and the pope’s security detail did not stop to pick up any children as customary.

At the end of his address, the pope assured all those affected by the coronavirus of his closeness and prayers. He said his prayers were also with the health care professionals and public officials who were working hard to help patients and stop the spread of the disease.

Lazio, the region surrounding the Vatican, has had three confirmed cases of coronavirus infection, including a married couple from Wuhan, China, the epicenter of the outbreak. All three have recovered from the virus and will soon be released from the hospital, the health ministry said.

Follow Arocho on Twitter: @arochoju


Source: CNS PHOTO | REMO CASILLI, REUTERS

See PRECAUTIONS, Page 21
Grant application period open for San Angelo Catholic Foundation

The Catholic Foundation for the Roman Catholic Diocese of San Angelo held its Annual Meeting on February 3, 2020. The trustees, after reviewing the positive returns on investments, adopted a five-percent payout rate for Foundation endowments as of December 31, 2019.

Therefore $39,027 will be available from unrestricted endowment funds to be distributed as grants this year for projects and programs of parishes, schools, and Catholic organizations throughout the diocese.

Interested parties can apply for a grant by reviewing the Grant Policy and completing the Grant Application found on the website: www.catholicfoundationsanangelo.org. All Grant Applications must include the pastor’s signature and be filed by Friday April 10, 2020. The Board of Trustees will review all grant applications and approve those addressing critical needs in our diocese at a meeting in April. All grants made will be paid before June 30, 2020.

Grants of $67,773 were also paid in February to the beneficiaries as designated by the donors of the designated endowment funds. In addition, $211,124 was distributed to the agencies who have Investment Management Agreements with the Foundation for the management of their endowment funds. The total value of our portfolio on December 31, 2019, was $8,924,301.

The Catholic Foundation was established in 2010 for the benefit of our diocese. The Foundation is a non-profit corporation that is legally separate from the Diocese of San Angelo. The trustees of the Foundation are: Bishop Michael J. Sis, Chairman; Mrs. Lois Folger, President; Mr. Steve McKay, Secretary/Treasurer; Rev. Timothy Hayter; Ms. Michelle Allen; Mr. Oran “Trey” Berry III; Mr. David Boutin; and Mr. Douglas Burns. The trustees are extremely grateful for the confidence of the donors to the Foundation. Donor generosity has made it possible for the Foundation to make investments and achieve the growth that has allowed continued grant making from endowment funds on an annual basis.

Donations given to the Foundation are tax-deductible to the extent allowed by law. A gift to an Endowment Fund is a gift that will serve the Catholic family in the Diocese of San Angelo in perpetuity. The value of the principal of the original gift will be preserved while the growth and earnings on the investment may be distributed out in grants on an annual basis. Additional information on how to set up an Endowment Fund is available on the Foundation website at www.catholicfoundationsanangelo.org.

Perpetual adoration chapel celebrates 15 years

By JoAnn Turner

From the West Texas Angelus February, 2005: “Bishop Michael D. Pfeifer, OMI, Bishop of San Angelo, dedicated and blessed the Perpetual Adoration Chapel at a Mass at St. Margaret’s Church on Wednesday evening, January 26, 2005, at 7:00 p.m. St. Margaret’s Church, at 2619 Erv St. in San Angelo, now has the only chapel in San Angelo that will be open to the public twenty-four hours a day, seven days a week, every day of the year.”

On Friday, Jan. 31, 2020, at 6:00 p.m. Bishop Michael Sis offered Mass at St. Margaret Church, at 2619 Erv St. in San Angelo, in celebration of 15 years of perpetual adoration of Our Lord in San Angelo.

For 15 years this chapel has been a haven for those who need solace, a place to go to quietly listen to the Lord. Bishop Sis reminded us of the importance of silence in our busy and hectic world. He asked us to “think of things that happen in silence: The blood flows through your veins, silently. The tree grows in the forest, sinking its roots into the soil, stretching its branches toward Heaven, in silence. The fish swims gracefully through the water. The beautiful deer runs and jumps over fences. Only in silence can you notice the beat of your heart. Re-

Book on Marian Consecration offered to Diocese of San Angelo readers at discounted price

What do St. Louis de Montfort, St. Maximilian Kolbe, St. John Paul II, and St. Teresa of Calcutta all have in common? They have all made the Consecration to Jesus through Mary.

The lives of these saints prove that devotion to the Mother of God leads to a greater union with Jesus Christ.

Bishop Michael Gaitley is the author of the bestselling book 33 Days to Morning Glory. The book summarizes the Marian teaching of these 4 giant saints, and explains how making this Consecration changed their lives. It is a 33 day, do-it-yourself retreat in preparation for Marian Consecration.

And now … the Association of Marian Helpers is giving a special discount to the Diocese of San Angelo! To receive this $15 book for only $5 (English and Spanish), go to www.shopmercy.org. Use the promo code dosa20 at checkout. (For more information call Diane Eggemeyer at 432-556-6593).

From the West Texas Angelus February, 2005: “Bishop Michael D. Pfeifer, OMI, Bishop of San Angelo, dedicated and blessed the Perpetual Adoration Chapel at a Mass at St. Margaret’s Church on Wednesday evening, January 26, 2005, at 7:00 p.m. St. Margaret’s Church, at 2619 Erv St. in San Angelo, now has the only chapel in San Angelo that will be open to the public twenty-four hours a day, seven days a week, every day of the year.”

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Father Josh Gray (foreground) and Deacon John Rangel hold candles to the throats of attendees as part of the traditional blessing given on the feast day of St. Blaise Feb. 3 at the Cathedral of the Sacred Heart in San Angelo. St. Blaise, a fourth century bishop, is patron of throat illnesses.

The Diocese of San Angelo’s Catholic Charismatic Service Committee sponsored a Healing Mass of the Holy Spirit and Anointing of the Sick in Big Spring on Tuesday, Feb. 11. Holy Trinity Catholic Church and pastor Father Serafin Avenido hosted the event with Father Albert Ezeanya as the celebrant. Even though wintry weather was predicted for the area, the church was at full capacity. Inspiring praise and worship songs were sung throughout the evening. Father Albert’s message was one of forgiveness. He said that unforgiveness could block the healing God has for us. Signs and wonders were evidence of the Spirit at work; many physical, emotional and spiritual healings took place throughout the evening. Please join us at our next Healing Mass of the Holy Spirit at 7 p.m. on Tuesday, March 10, at Sacred Heart Catholic Church, 837 Jeanette Street, Abilene, TX. For more information, please go to www.catholiccharismatic.com.

The Diocese of San Angelo’s Finance Office hosted the members of the Diocesan Fiscal Management Conference from Region X (Arkansas, Oklahoma, and Texas) for a conference Feb. 1–3. Pictured are attendees before a Mass celebrated Bishop Michael Sis Feb. 2 at Christ the King Retreat Center in San Angelo.
As we offer forgiveness, we are to offer mercy and will be put into your lap. For the measure you give, pressed down, shaken together, running over, given; give, and it will be given to you; good measure, pressed down, shaken together, running over, will be put into your lap. For the measure you give will be the measure you get back" (Lk 6:37b–38).

As we offer forgiveness, we are to offer mercy and prayer — and when we can, correction.

In the seven Spiritual Works of Mercy we are told (1) to instruct the ignorant — by sharing the faith and especially by example; (2) to counsel the doubtful — in times of trial and temptation through faith sharing, prayer, and companionship; (3) to admonish the sinner — in love and humility; (4) to bear wrongs patiently — without resentment or vindictiveness; (5) to forgive offenses willingly — "as many as seventy times seven"; (6) to comfort the afflicted — with prayer, friendship, and assistance; (7) to pray for the living and the dead. Monsignor Keith Derouen in writing about the Spiritual Works of Mercy, uses this quotation: “Our private intercession for our neighbors and for the departed brings us little fame or admiration from others, but in the end, when we stand before God, we will be able to give an account of our prayerful mercy to others, and so Jesus will in turn show us mercy.”

"I really don't want to get involved in someone else's life. How someone chooses to live his life is none of my business. Live and let live." Are we our brother's keeper (Gen 4:9)? "Brethren, if a man is overtaken in any trespass, you who are spiritual should restore him in a spirit of gentleness. Look to yourselves, lest you too be tempted. Bear one another's burdens, and so fulfill the law of Christ" (Gal 6:1-2). Ultimately, our concern should be for

Poor baker’s apprentice became patron saint of Vienna

For all intents and purposes Johannes (Dvorak) Hobauer was destined to become a baker. He was born on December 26, 1751, in Moravia (eastern part of the Czech Republic). As the ninth child in a poor family, there were few job choices available for a boy with no funds for a formal education.

His father died in 1757 when Johannes was six, and at age 15 he became a baker’s apprentice. He had hoped to attend the diocesan seminary, but he lacked the funds and instead became a hermit for a time. He came into the town near the mountains of Tivoli to attend Mass. It was after Mass one day when he offered to hail a carriage for two ladies that his life changed forever.

The Rev. Clifford Stevens writes in The One Year Book of Saints that while Johannes chatted with the ladies and they found out he was too poor to study for the priesthood, they offered to pay for his education at the University of Vienna.

After his education, Johannes and his friend Thaddeus Hulb went on three pilgrimages to Rome. On the third trip in 1784 they joined the Redemptorists while Alphonsus Ligouri was still alive. Paul Burns writes in Butler's Lives of the Saints that Johannes then realized his true vocation was that of a missionary.

Johannes was ordained and took the names of Clement Mary. He was sent to Lithuania, the first member of the relatively new Congregation to be sent north of the Alps.

The Papal nuncio sent him next to Warsaw to minister to several thousand German speaking Catholics in the city. In 1787 Clement Mary opened the house of St. Benno which became the center for his missionary work. For the next 20 years, Clement Mary and his friend Peter Kunzmann worked among the poor, built orphanages and schools and begged in taverns to support his work. He set up religious associations and established Redemptorist houses in Germany and Switzerland. Clement Mary became vicar general for Middle Europe in 1793.

David Farmer writes in the Oxford Dictionary of Saints that Napoleon's invasion brought this work to an end. Clement Mary and his fellow Redemptorists were arrested and imprisoned in 1808. While he and his companions were imprisoned in a fortress on the banks of the Oder, the influence of their hymn singing for their fellow prisoners brought crowds that gathered outside. Burns writes that the authorities were forced to expel Clement Mary and his companions and send them back to their native country.

Clement Mary returned to Vienna where he worked in the Italian quarter and was the chaplain to the Ursuline nuns and rector of their church. He became widely known as a preacher and founded a Catholic college in Vienna and was influential in revitalizing the religious life of the German nations.

During this time, Clement Mary fought vigorously against the whole concept of Josephinism — the secular domination of the Church and hierarchy by the secular ruler.

Clement Mary became ill in 1819 and died on March 15, 1820. His funeral in Vienna was attended by thousands who heard Pope Pius VII declare that Catholicism had lost its mainstay in Austria. He was canonized by Pope Pius X in 1909. He is the patron saint of Vienna and the Redemptorists regard him as the second founder of their Order.

Mary Lou Gibson writes about the saints for the West Texas Angelus from her home in Austin.
**Challenges and graces of Christus Vivit**

One year ago this month the document *Christus Vivit* was released. *Christus Vivit (Christ is Alive)* is the post-synodal apostolic exhortation that was written by Pope Francis in response to the Fifteenth Ordinary General Assembly of the Synod of Bishops on young people, faith, and vocation discernment that was held in October of 2018. It must be noted that the age group considered by the Synod is 16–29 years old. In the document, when referring to “young people,” the same age range is applied.

While this exhortation is a short and easy read, it is a challenging document. Pope Francis reminds both the young people and the church-at-large that what we’ve been doing no longer works. The world we live in has changed and we no longer have a clear understanding of our faith. This is especially true of Millennials and Generation Z. As Pope Francis puts it, “Consequently, the Church should not be excessively caught up in herself, but instead, and above all, reflect Jesus Christ. This means humbly acknowledging that some things concretely need to change, and if that is to happen, she needs no use for adults who look down on the young or lorded it over them. On the contrary, he insisted that ‘the greatest among you must become like the youngest’ (Lk 22:26). For him, age did not establish privileges, and being young did not imply lesser worth or dignity” (14).

There is a tendency in youth ministry for some to look at what they consider a successful program and want it repeated. While this is not always bad, we must keep in mind that every community is different, and what works with one set of young people may not work the same with another because of these differences. Pope Francis reminds us of this when he writes, “I encourage communities to examine, respectfully and seriously, the situation of their young people, in order to find the most fitting ways of providing them with pastoral care” (103).

Youth ministry must be synodal, meaning that the young people must be involved in all aspects and ministries of the parish. We often delegate ministry to young people to a particular group or program, but it should involve the entire community. While effective youth ministry does require proper planning and organization, we are reminded that “Youth ministry needs to become more flexible: inviting young people to events or occasions that provide an opportunity not only for learning, but also for conversing, celebrating, singing, listening to real stories and experiencing a shared encounter with the living God” (204). Ministry should be comprehensive, incorporating a variety of methods and components, and not simply focused on one thing such as social events or learning facts about the faith.

Pope Francis also emphasizes “that youth ministry involves two main courses of action. One is outreach, the way we attract new young people to an experience of the Lord. The other is growth, the way we help those who have already had that experience to mature in it” (209). While some tend to look strictly at numbers when evaluating ministry, we must also remember that effective ministry helps people to grow in faith, not simply show up at events. Effective ministry gives young people the skills needed to live out a life-long faith, not just a group to belong to that will leave them floundering when they are no longer part of that group.

In addressing the young people, Pope Francis shares a message that should be at the center of all our ministries — God loves you, Christ saves you, Christ is alive! These three truths, according to Pope Francis, are something “we should never keep quiet about” (111).

Pope Francis does not only challenge older generations, he also challenges young people: “Let us steer clear of young people who think that adults represent a meaningless past, and those adults who always think they know how young people should act” (201). We are reminded that we need both the older and the younger generations in our church. We must strive to remember that we need to listen to each other and learn from each other as everybody, regardless of age or experiences, has something worthwhile to contribute.

Young people are also challenged to grow in their faith without losing the good things about their current stage of life: “I hope that you will be serious enough about yourselves to make an effort to grow spiritually. Along with all the other exciting things about youth, there is also the beauty of seeking ‘righteousness, faith, love and peace’ (2 Tm 2:22). This does not involve losing anything of your spontaneity, boldness, enthusiasm and tenderness” (159).

Young people are reminded that holiness is unique to each individual: “I would also remind you that you won’t become holy and find fulfillment by copying others. … You have to discover who you are and develop your own way of being holy, whatever others may say or think” (162). While we all should encourage each other to grow in holiness, that does not mean that their holiness must look like ours.

Pope Francis also implores young people not to waste their young years: ‘Dear young people, make the most of these years of your youth. Don’t observe life from a balcony. … Take risks, even if it means making mistakes. … Make a ruckus! Cast out the fears that would have held you back” (163).

**See CHRISTUS VIVIT, Page 23**

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**The crosses of Calvary... why three?**

In all four of the Gospels, it is reported that Jesus did not die alone on Calvary but, rather, in the company of two other men. Mathew (27:38) tells us that “Two insurgents were crucified along with him, one at his right and one at his left.” Similarly, we read in Mark (15:27), “With him they crucified two insurgents, one at his right and one at his left.” Luke (23:33) explains: “When they came to Skull Place, as it was called, they crucified him there and the criminals as well, one on his right and the other on his left.” Finally, John (19:18) concurs, “There they crucified him, and two others with him: one on either side, Jesus in the middle.”

Why three? If I were God, I would have had Jesus alone so that all the attention would be on him and no one else would have shared the spotlight. Why three? Why not two or four? Ten? I never had ever thought about it much before and perhaps that hadn’t either, just taking it as a “matter of fact.” But there is a very important reason why three. Just as each scene in a movie is not included “by accident,” but rather because it is important to the filmmaker that it be seen by the viewer, we can be certain that God wanted us to remember three crosses ... but why? The answer will be found in Luke, but before he tells us, I want to tell you about a wonderful local Catholic woman.

I met Paula 26 years ago, when she was 40. Since that time, I became a close family friend to her, her husband, children, and grandchildren. Never have I ever seen a person suffer as much as she did. She refused to make a big deal out of the many medical conditions she had because she did not want to draw attention to herself and refused to allow physical impairments to stop her from living life to the fullest and doing everything she could to help loved ones and strangers alike.

On July 3, Paula’s spirit was freed from her body after eight months of supremely intense pain. Throughout the entire time it was my great gift to know and be spared from feeling pain so intensely. She modeled love for her husband, children, and grandchildren and babies about to be aborted would be asked for the gift of suffering so that her children, grandchildren, and babies about to be aborted would be spared from feeling pain so intensely. She modeled love and I have no doubt she was asking Jesus to let her suffer like him for others right up to the very hour of her death, for Jesus tells us, “No one has greater love than this, to lay down one’s life for one’s friends” (Jn 15:13).

When I told people what Paula did with her pain, they were often astounded by her faith and love. Of course, many of my therapist colleagues might say to me “Ha! A classic example of a martyr complex.” To them, I say, in turn, that they are classic examples of superficial myopic perception bordering on the inane in its lack of depth. For they would equally be confused by the words of Paul in Colossians (1:24) when he writes “Even now I find my joy in the suffering I endure for you. In my own flesh I fill up what is lacking in the sufferings of Christ for the sake of his body, the church.” And what is it that is “lacking in the sufferings of Christ?” Simply OUR participation as we unite our sufferings with His.

The reason for three crosses becomes clearer now and Luke helps us to understand when he tells us, “One of the criminals hanging in crucifixion blasphemed him: ‘Aren’t you the Messiah? Then save yourself and us.’ But the other one rebuked him: ‘Have you no fear of God, seeing you are under the same sentence? We deserve it all. We are only paying the price for what we’ve done, but this man had done nothing wrong.’ He then said to Jesus, ‘Remember me when you enter upon your reign’” (23:39–42). There you have it ... the answer for three crosses.

There has always been, is now, and always will be only two choices when we are faced with great pain and suffering ... we either blaspheme God, and spew out poison with hatred the main emotion or, like the “good thief” and like Paula, we unite our sufferings with the sufferings of Christ where love is the primary concern. This is the example of true martyrs, not less. I have long prayed that I might follow in the footsteps of Jesus ... now I have added Paula’s! ...  

Dr. James Sulliman, a graduate of Rutgers University and Florida State University, has 50 years’ experience in individual, marriage, and family therapy. He is also the Ahlilene-area pro-life coordinator for the Diocese of San Angelo.
New weekly Latin Mass offered in Odessa

St. Elizabeth Ann Seton Parish in Odessa has added a 7:30 a.m. Mass to its regular Sunday schedule. This Mass is celebrated in Latin using the Roman Missal of Pope St. Paul VI, usually called the Ordinary Form. Father Mark Woodruff, pastor of St. Elizabeth’s, hopes this Mass will help preserve the Latin Patrimony of the Roman Catholic Church. Just to be clear, the form of the Mass is not the Tridentine or Extraordinary Form. In this Mass, the congregation answers the Mass parts. All are welcome.

Small Town Womens’ ACTS Retreat

You are invited to attend the Small Town ACTS (STACTS) Women’s Retreat for 2020. The retreat is April 23 to April 26, 2020, at Christ the King Retreat Center in San Angelo, Texas. The retreat begins Thursday, April 23, at 6:00 p.m., with check-in at St. Mary’s in Ballinger, Texas, and ends Sunday, April 26, with a closing Mass also at St. Mary’s. A meal and reception for the retreatants, their families, and the STACTS community will follow in the parish hall after Mass.

Retreatant transportation will be provided to and from Christ the King Retreat Center. This weekend retreat gives you the chance to spend quality time with God, focus on your faith, and cultivate friendships among members of the church community.

For more information or to register, please contact one of the following: Lupe Juarez (325-365-1330, lupejuarez2222@gmail.com), Gaye Pelzel (325-656-2590), Elke Hughes (512-659-7451), Darla Williams (325-450-5871), Mary Etta Kwapil (325-365-1248), or Joan Schwartz (325-234-3958).

Sponsored by the Small Town Catholic Communities of Ballinger, Miles, Olfen, Rowena, St. Lawrence, and Wall.

Congregation of Divine Providence

High School girls are invited to attend: What's a Sister? A weekend experience with Religious Sisters

March 21-22, 2020

Contact: vocationministry@cdptexas.org or 210-587-1135
"Anchor your marriage in the joy of Christ"
A Future Full of Hope
The Diocesan Pastoral Plan in Action

In October 2019, the Diocese of San Angelo initiated a new pastoral plan to highlight four areas of increased focus over the next few years: form disciples, engage young adults, accompany youth, and nurture families.

Here are some ways in which these priorities are being lived throughout the diocese.

**Form Disciples**

A full house was on hand at the Cathedral of the Sacred Heart for the Rite of Election March 3.

The candidates and catechumens who will be officially joining the church during their parish’s Easter Vigil Mass this year stood as each of their names was called aloud.

After the Rite of Election, candidates, catechumens, and their godparents and families were invited to a reception and opportunity to have their photo taken with Bishop Sis in the Cathedral’s gym.

**Engage Young Adults**

As part of the pastoral plan priority of engaging young adults, Bishop Michael Sis has promised to meet with young people throughout the diocese. Pictured here are those who attended a recent listening session at Midland College, Feb. 26.

**Accompany Youth**

The Diocese of San Angelo’s Vocation Office hosted a “Many Paths to Discipleship” informational day about the various vocations available within the Catholic Church, Feb. 29 at St. Mary Church in San Angelo.

While one goal of the day was to reach youth who are approaching the end of high school, the day’s talks were open to all.

Left: Father Adam Droll answers a question from the audience while his fellow panelists—seminarian Upton Lewis, Father Freddy Perez, and Father Ryan Rojo—listen during a session focusing on the vocation of the priesthood.

Divine Providence Sister Elsa Garcia and Carmelite Sisters Mary Grace Erl and Elisha Marie Bernal led a session on the vocation to religious life.

Consecrated Virgin Jenna Chang showed photos of her consecration while explaining the ceremony during a talk on her particular call to the vocation of single life.

**Nurture Families**

Holy Spirit Parish in Sweetwater held their first Covenant of Love Date Night/Pacto de Amor Noche de Cita on Feb. 23. Parishioners Sandy Gallegos and Dina Villa have been placed in charge of a parish committee dedicated to nurturing families at Holy Spirit.

Representatives of every parish in the diocese were invited to Christ the King Retreat Center on Feb. 15 to learn more about the pastoral plan and how they can implement the priorities of the plan in their parish communities.
Guadalupe Radio Network to celebrate 20th anniversary with testimonials, special offer

Have you ever wondered how the Radio Ministry of the GRN began? Tune in during the first Radio Share-a-thon of 2020, from March 24 thru 27, and hear glimpses of the history and testimonies of the impact that the GRN has had throughout the years.

Usually anyone who makes a donation at the Angel Level ($10/month or 1-time donation of $120) receives the Talk CD for that Share-a-thon. However in celebration of the 20th anniversary of the GRN, ANYONE who calls in to make a donation at any level will receive the Limited Edition CD which shares, in detail, how St. John Paul II, Mother Angelica (founder of EWTN) and a Marian apparition in South America all influenced the genesis of the GRN.

Also, when you call the 1-800-476-3311 number during the 7 a.m. to 7 p.m. Share-a-thon hours, you will also have the option of briefly sharing on the air why you enjoy your favorite programs and about the need of having and supporting Catholic Radio in our day and time.

Start thinking now about what you would like to share during your 30-60 seconds of fame!

Droll v Gully: Two monsignors go head-to-head in first GRN Vino Veritas event of 2020

The Guadalupe Radio Network (GRN) hosted the first Vino Veritas of 2020 with a “Clash of the Collars” Feb. 13 featuring Msgr. Larry Droll versus Msgr. Bernard Gully, both of St. Ann Parish in Midland. Father Ryan Rojo, also of St. Ann, was the official “Gong Master.” The Catholic trivia game was very close but Msgr. Droll prevailed before a full house at The Way Retreat Center in Midland. These two cousins were also honored for their February birthdays prior to the trivia match.

Clockwise from top left: Msgr. Larry Droll and Msgr. Bernard Gully prepare to blow out candles on a cake commemorating their February birthdays; the two monsignors answer Catholic trivia questions; Msgr. Droll, the evening’s trivia victor, displays the championship collar awarded to the winner of this recurring contest.
Churches work to alleviate suffering of people who 'Remain in Mexico'

By David Agren
Catholic News Service

MATAMOROS, Mexico (CNS) — From a row of tables set up amid a sea of tents, volunteers in teal shirts distributed bags of basics such as beans, rice and cooking oil to a long line of asylum-seekers in this makeshift camp along the banks of the Rio Grande.

Dressed in a navy habit, blue Oxford shirt and Birkenstock sandals, Sister Norma Pimentel greeted the asylum-seekers and listened to their concerns. She also heard stories of hardship from a people living in the squalor of tents with little governmental assistance, surviving in an unsafe Mexican border town and trying to navigate the U.S. asylum system.

The people there "seem to be a nuisance to the government," a problem that they have to make go away," Sister Norma said from the camp, which formed last July in response to a program known as "Remain in Mexico.

"It was done in a way that they swept it away under the rug: send it to Matamoros. Now it's Mexico's problem," she said of "Remain in Mexico."

It's sort of like turning their backs on this reality. ... As long as the problem is not in the United States, it is resolved, according to them."

The "Remain in Mexico" program has forced more than 60,000 asylum-seekers to wait on the Mexican side of the border as their claims are heard in U.S. courts. It has proved controversial as critics contend it destroyed the traditional asylum system.

Immigration lawyers interviewed by Catholic News Service also say the rules are vaguely written and ripe with irregularities, with people ineligible for the program — such those suffering illnesses — being sent to Mexico.

The 9th U.S. Circuit Court of Appeals invalidated the program, formally known as Migrant Protection Protocols, Feb. 28, but later stayed its ruling.

Sister Norma welcomed the initial ruling and said of the "Remain in Mexico" scheme, "We cannot be OK with policies that contribute to the human suffering of people. If they hurt a human being, then they're wrong and need to be replaced with something more humane."

Sister Norma has long sought to ameliorate the suffering of migrant families arriving at the U.S. border.

As the director of Catholic Charities of the Rio Grande Valley, she opened a relief center in 2014 in the city of McAllen, which receives migrants from the Border Patrol. Catholic Charities then helps coordinate travel to destinations throughout the United States, places where they would be cared for by family.

But when "Remain in Mexico" was rolled out in the Rio Grande Valley, migrants stopped arriving. Sister Norma subsequently started crossing into the violent state of Tamaulipas to tend to them.

"(It) took the migration crisis to an even more severe level," she said of "Remain in Mexico."

"What were we talking about before was a humanitarian crisis. This is even worse," she said. "It is total abandonment of these families in conditions that are so terrible."

The Mexican government promised to provide the asylum-seekers with access to health care, work and education. But many of the migrants have been forced to fend for themselves and have suffered indignities such as kidnapping, as gangs seek ransoms from their relatives already in the United States.

Civic organizations and kind-hearted individuals have provided for the tents, volunteers in teal shirts distributed bags of basics such as beans, rice and cooking oil to a long line of asylum-seekers in this makeshift camp along the banks of the Rio Grande.

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Civic organizations and kind-hearted individuals have provided for the tent city residents, who until recently lacked toilets — resulting in illnesses — and were forced to wash and bathe in "the polluted waters of the Rio Grande," Sister Norma said.

"It was not until we took action that the Mexican government decided that they wanted to take part in the response," Sister Norma said. "We work with them now and they're very helpful," having improved sanitation and installed some infrastructure.

The Diocese of Matamoros also provides support and spiritual attention to the migrants. It operates a migrant shelter in the city, too.

The shelter has seen few guests, however, as migrants prefer to stay close to the bridge — even if living in tents — as many cling to the hope the U.S. border will open, said Father Francisco Gallardo, diocesan director of migrant ministries.

"It's a false hope," Father Gallardo said. "This is why migrants are staying so close to the border bridge.

The recent court decision invalidating "Remain in Mexico" stirred hopes in the tent city of being able to cross into the United States. Many migrants started packing their bags and heading to the border bridge upon learning of the court decision.

That hope was short-lived as lawyers told migrants the following day that the decision had been stayed.

They counseled the asylum-seekers to stay put, to continue working on their court cases and not to cross the Rio Grande illegally, an act that could result in their deportation or expedited removal.

Patience for many of the asylum-seekers appeared to be wearing thin, however.

"It morally kills you," Jose, an electrician from Honduras, said of the court process. "They don't give you any hope, even though you have proof" to support a claim, he said, adding he had fled a gang demanding extortion payments back home.

Roughly 3 percent of the participants in "Remain Mexico" have a lawyer, and the rate of those winning their cases is around 1.4 percent — with those having legal representation six times more likely to win, said Jodi Goodwin, a Brownsville immigration attorney. Most of those winning are from Venezuela, Cuba and Nicaragua, whose cases are "more straight-up political," Goodwin said, rather than the northern triangle of Central America, where people are fleeing gang violence.

Observers say the number of "Remain in Mexico" participants in the Matamoros tent city is shrinking due to Mexico stepping up enforcement in its southern states and new U.S. policies, which limit the categories for asylum applications, expedite removal or fly asylum-seekers to Guatemala and force them to seek protection there.

Mexicans fleeing violence in their own country are keeping the camp population steady.

Sister Norma sees the camp — with its increasing infrastructure — taking on a sense of permanence.

She regularly brings Catholic and civic groups wanting to assist migrants across the border, but says they should first look to help out at home.

"People say: 'What can we do?' I always start by saying: There are already a lot of refugees in your own community. Why don't you respond to them? They need to feel welcome. They need to feel part of a community,'" she said.

"Start with them. If you want to do more, then you're welcome to come to South Texas and help us out."

Texas/Mexico border bishops hold semiannual gathering

The bishops of the dioceses of Mexico and Texas that abut the international border between the U.S. and Mexico gathered in Brownsville, Texas, March 2-4. During a visit for Mass at La Lomita Chapel in Mission, Texas, the bishops posed for a photo with a local canine (center). The bishops meet twice a year to discuss the challenges faced in leading a diocese, like the Diocese of San Angelo, that shares boundaries with the international border.
The Angelus

Catholic Voices

The benefits of intermittent fasting, good counsel for the Lenten season

Moises Sandoval
Seeking Life

Just in time for Lent, The New York Times posts a persuasive article by personal health columnist Jane E. Brody on the benefits of intermittent fasting. She focused on research by Mark P. Mattson, a neuroscientist at the National Institute on Aging, and his colleague, Rafael de Cabo. It seems like a win-win proposition, achieving a more svelte self while fulfilling Lent's counsel to fast during this holy season.

The researchers found benefits of intermittent fasting on "a wide range of chronic disorders, including obesity, diabetes, cardiovascular disease and neurodegenerative brain diseases." Their review of both animal and human studies found improvements in a variety of health indicators and a reversal or slowing of the aging and disease processes.

They said people trying to lose weight should strive for 16 calorie-free hours. My daughter Rose, an account executive in health insurance, told me she stops eating at 7 p.m., and does not eat again for 14 hours.

"It takes 10 to 12 hours to use the calories in the liver before a metabolic shift occurs to using stored fat," Mattson told Brody. "After meals, glucose is used for energy, but fat is stored in fat tissue, but during fasts, once glucose is depleted, fat is broken down and used for energy."

We Americans should need no persuasion about the health benefits; the National Center for Health Statistics estimates that in 2015-2016 in the U.S., 39.8% of adults 20 and over were obese. Another 31.8% were overweight. By 2030, projections show that one in two of us will be obese and one in four will be severely obese. Overindulgence could well describe this age, not just in food but also alcohol, drugs and hallucinogens.

The same time, 37 million Americans struggle with hunger, including 11 million children and 5.5 million people 60 and older, a number that has more than doubled since 2001.

Upon reflection, it seems that for our fasting to be of spiritual benefit, we must, to use an analogy from rocketry, burn out the stage of our self-concern before we can ignite the stage of our concern for others. Only then can those of us who eat too much heed feed those who are hungry. Indeed, that transition must occur, for as Matthew's Gospel (Chapter 25) tells us, only the elect will hear on the last day: "I was hungry and you gave me to food."

We live at a time when we have a pill for everything. And to supplement that, we have drugs, licit and illicit, to help us deal with our anxieties, depression and a host of other maladies. If we can't sleep, we take a pill. If we are depressed, there is a medication for us. One goes to the doctor and, more often than not, comes home with new prescriptions.

Yet, I marvel that the rituals and practices that have come down to us from the faith of our ancestors often have the remedies we need, without the side effects of drugs.

Because I often wake up at night and sometimes can't go back to sleep, I once asked my mother what she did when that happened to her. She said: "I pray the rosary." I tried it, and it worked then and does now, many decades later. Similarly, I suspect that many of our anxieties lie in meditation, solitude, prayer and stillness.

Henry David Thoreau wrote about his reveries: "For the most part, I minded not how the hours went. The day advanced as if it light some work of mine ... I silently smiled at my incessant good fortune."

What is synodality?

Bishop Robert Barron
Word on Fire Ministries

It was a great privilege for me to participate in the Synod on Young People in the fall of 2018. Along with about three hundred other bishops and ecclesiastical experts from around the world, I spent four weeks in Rome exploring the complex question of the Church’s outreach to the young.

About three weeks into the Synod process, a sub-committee of writers presented a preliminary text, meant to reflect our deliberations, questions, and decisions to that point. This draft represented, for the most part, an accurate account of our work, but there were a few pages that troubled a number of us. More or less out of the blue, a vigorous defense of “synodality” appeared in the text, though we had never, either in general session or in the small language groups, so much as discussed the theme. Moreover, the language was so imprecise that it gave the impression that the Church is a kind of freewheeling democracy, making up its principles and teachings as it goes along. Rather alarmed by this section of the draft, a number of bishops and archbishops, myself included, rose to speak against it. We wondered aloud how to square this language with the teaching authority of the bishops, the binding quality of the Church’s dogmatic statements, and the practical process of governing the people of God. Mind you, none of us who expressed concern about the language of the text was against synods as such; after all, we were happily participating in one. It was the vagueness and ambiguity of the formulation that bothered us.

Just after our interventions, a well-known and deeply-respected cardinal asked to speak. He opined that our objections were baseless and that the texts in question were not threatening to the authority of the bishops or the integrity of the Church’s doctrine, though, to be honest, he provided no real argument for his position. When he sat down, applause rang through the Synod Hall, and we moved on to another topic. At the time, I thought, "Well, you win some and you lose some."

But I will confess that this episode came vividly back to mind last summer when I learned that the German Bishops’ Conference was gathering under the rubric of “synodality” and had committed to turning the “synodal path.” My attention was once again turned to something closer to alarm when I learned that the Congregation for Bishops, under the headship of Cardinal Blase Cupich, had asked to speak. He opined that our objections were baseless and that the texts in question were not any of the delegates to the gathering, rather than the Holy Spirit. This last observation is of signal importance. The point of a democratic assembly is to discern the will of the people, for in a democratic polity, they are finally sovereign. But in a synod, the point is discerning, not the will of the people, but the will of the Holy Spirit, for the Spirit in that context is sovereign, or in the language of Pope Francis, the “protagonist.”

Having heard the Pope on this score, I couldn’t help but hearken back to that moment at the Youth Synod of 2018. Whatever Pope Francis meant by “synodality,” he quite clearly doesn’t mean a process of democratization, or putting doctrine up for vote. He means, it seems to me, a structured conversation among all of the relevant ecclesial players — bishops, priests, and laity — for the sake of hearing the voice of the Spirit.

Bishop Robert Barron is an auxiliary bishop of the Archdiocese of Los Angeles and the founder of Word on Fire Catholic Ministries.
La Cuaresma, una invitación a practicar la solidaridad

La Cuaresma es una época hermosa para renovar nuestro espíritu. Es un momento especial para reflexionar sobre nuestro camino de fe y evaluar qué tan auténticamente vivimos nuestro discipulado cristiano.

Hace poco escuché en una homilía, "¿Qué vas a hacer durante esta Cuaresma?" La pregunta siempre es desafiante porque exige girar nuestra atención hacia la particularidad de esta época del año y su invitación a la conversión.

Sin embargo, el "hacer" durante la Cuaresma debe ser más que añadir algunas actividades o evitar otras en nuestras vidas, pues esto puede reducir la experiencia a una lista de cosas a cumplir: sacrificio el chocolate… hecho, visita a un lugar para personas sin hogar… hecho. Fue a Misa durante la semana… hecho. Aunque estos pequeños esfuerzos y prácticas sencillas tienen mucho valor, con seguridad podemos eximirnos mucho más.

La Cuaresma nos pide más. Creo que esta época litúrgica se trata más de "ser" que de "hacer". En otras palabras, la Cuaresma es una época importante del año para reflexionar sobre quién soy en mi relación con Dios y con mis hermanos y hermanas.

Durante la Cuaresma (re)descubrimos que vivimos en relación con un Dios que es solidario con nosotros. Sí, Dios camina con nosotros y ahora, nos sostiene con amor misericordioso, nos llama a la amistad y sana nuestras heridas a medida que trasegamos por la historia.

Dios, a quien Jesucristo reveló plenamente con sus acciones y sus palabras, es la medida de la solidaridad cristiana. Por consiguiente, estamos llamados a relacionarnos con nuestras hermanas y hermanos como Dios lo hace con nosotros: caminando con los demás, especialmente los más vulnerables, sosteniéndonos mutuamente con amor misericordioso, viviendo en amistad y sanando heridas.

Esta idea de solidaridad cristiana suena muy distinta a otras que podemos encontrar en nuestra sociedad. Con frecuencia, se reduce la solidaridad a la camaradería, o la lealtad incondicional e incluso a cuidarnos las espaldas unos a otros. Tales definiciones tienen algo en común: Son transacciones y asumen que hay un cierto beneficio personal.

El papa Francisco, en su exhortación apostólica "La Alegría del Evangelio", observó que la "palabra solidaridad está un poco desgastada y a veces se la interpreta mal, pero es mucho más que algunos actos esporádicos de generosidad" (No. 188).

La Cuaresma nos ofrece la oportunidad de reflexionar sobre la solidaridad como algo que es mucho más que una transacción o un acto esporádico.

Al orar durante esta Cuaresma y preparar nuestros corazones como comunidad de creyentes para contemplar el misterio de la muerte y resurrección de Jesucristo, nos encontramos con una manera de entender la solidaridad que se fundamenta en la convicción de que Cristo está presente en los demás, sin excepción alguna.

Por lo tanto, la solidaridad cristiana es una invitación a ver el rostro de Cristo en la otra persona, especialmente los pobres, los que sufren, lo más vulnerables. Cuando tenemos ese encuentro, se nos exige hacer algo.

La solidaridad, dice el papa Francisco en la misma exhortación, "debe vivirse como la decisión de devolverle al pobre lo que le corresponde" (No. 189).

La solidaridad exige que saquemos tiempo para escuchar el clamor de nuestras hermanas y hermanos. Dios lo hace. Es tentador prescribir lo que otros necesitan o juzgar su condición a la luz de nuestra experiencia particular.

Con frecuencia hacemos esto cuando la persona es pobre, discapacitada, inválida, miembro de una minoría, herida, o adicta, entre otras.

Pero tenemos que escuchar. Cuando escuchamos, afirmamos la agencia de nuestra hermana al igual que el derecho del hermano de nombrar la realidad. Cuando escuchamos, aprendemos y creemos en compasión.

¿Qué vas a hacer durante esta Cuaresma? Escuchar atentamente en lo cotidiano como una manera de ser para así practicar la solidaridad como Dios lo hace. Y tú, ¿qué vas a hacer?...
A hundred love letters

In a recent essay in the Wall Street Journal, Kimberly Cutter chronicled the death of her father by suicide. As he struggled with rapidly progressing prostate cancer, he lost more than 30 pounds, becoming gaunt and emaciated. Back pain and nausea forced him to spend much of his time in bed.

A few days before Christmas, he shared with Kimberly that he was thinking about shooting himself. Kimberly argued with him, stressing that she and her sisters couldn’t accept a violent ending: “If he shot himself, he would die alone. Someone in our family would have to find him,” she wrote.

His daughters convinced him to look into other options. When he started investigating lethal drugs he ran into questions of reliability. He encountered horror stories about “wrong dosages and unreliable contents, painful, draw-out demises.” A lifelong marksman, he deemed the gun his best option: “If I shoot myself, I know I won’t miss.”

Kimberly then describes an important decision she made: “I couldn’t accept my father’s threat to shoot himself. I thought about violence and the fear that always lies beneath it. How violence, in essence, is a twisted cry for help. At some point, it occurred to me that what I needed was a way to make my father feel loved. If I could make him feel loved enough, maybe he would not forget my sisters and me in his lowest moments and do what he his darkest impulses urged. Late that night, I had an idea. It was childishly simple. Corny, really. I would start sending him daily love notes. I sent the first email the next morning. The subject line read: ‘Reasons Why I Love You.’ … As soon as I sent it, I knew I was onto something. For the next 99 days, I continued sending my father a different reason why I loved him each morning. They ranged from the ridiculous to the sublime — from memories of snorkeling with him through a school of angelfish in Jupiter, to his incomparable Daffy Duck imitation: ‘Suffering Succotash!’ … I could tell the emails were working; I could hear it in my father’s voice when I spoke to him on the phone; could feel it in the grateful emails he sent back in response. The daily act of pulling up a reason I loved him and sending it to him seemed to restore him in some esential way. … My father never again would die alone, discovered by a stunned family member. And while his suicide was perhaps not as violent, death by overdose can feel just as violent as death by gunfire. The underlying reality of pills, powders or poisons still involves a brutal devastation of our physiology. Our bodies often resist, with the vomiting of pills, convulsions, paralysis, and the like. Although Kimberly and her sisters may have preferred that their dad succumb to toxins instead of a bullet, those sentiments, in the final analysis, are more poetic than rational.

Sometimes the poetic may feel like all we have when we’re confronted with the tragedy and incoherence of certain human choices. Another incoherent part of Kimberly’s story is the fact that, despite her father’s suicide, she seems to support the idea of physician-assisted suicide. While no one wants a loved one to experience pain and agony in the final days, only a false and misguided sense of compassion could conclude that instead of eliminating the suffering, we should eliminate the sufferer.

Kimberly may well have been aware of these inconsistencies as she embarked on the project of crafting a hundred love letters to her father, striving to help him understand that he was treasured and still a source of blessing to others in spite of his painful trials. Each of our loving human gestures speaks volumes about the singular power of love to overcome fear, and to strengthen us in adversity. While the hundred letters did not ultimately dissuade him from giving into the temptation to take his life, they nevertheless give us a step we can take when confronted with loved ones who think their life no longer has meaning or that death is better than life. And there is hope to want until loved ones are in agony to pick up the pen to say, in one or more ways, how much and why they’re loved.

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Rev. Tadeusz Pachelczyk, 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.

The Catch-22 for religious freedom

I’ll always remember reading Catch-22. Joseph Heller’s novel about what he saw as the absurdities of war.

In Heller’s account, enlisted men trying to escape those absurdities encountered ingenious military rules or “catches” so they could never prevail. The novel’s title refers to a catch for those who sought a discharge claiming insanity. The catch was this: If you realize how horrible war is and want to escape it, you are clearly too sane to qualify for the discharge.

Recent developments on religious freedom remind me of Catch-22. It will take a little background to explain why.

In January, NBC News ran an Associated Press story with the headline: “South Carolina group can reject Gays and Jews as foster parents, Trump admin says.” The story concerned a Christian organization, Miracle Hill Ministries, that participates in South Carolina’s system to find foster homes for needy children. The organization received a federal waiver allowing it to place children only with members of its faith, as long as it referred other prospective foster parents to other agencies in the system.

The article quoted an attorney calling this “state-sanctioned and government-funded discrimination.” The Human Rights Campaign, which promotes the LGBTQ agenda, called it “unconscionable.” Similarly, the Seattle area has seen outraged protests against a Catholic school after two teachers had to seek employment elsewhere because they are entering same-sex civil marriages, which are against Catholic teaching.

The “catch” arises because what these two organizations did is exactly what the church’s secular critics have said they must do to receive a religious exemption from legal mandates.

A leader in this area is the American Civil Liberties Union, which has insisted that Catholic hospitals, for example, are too “secular” to win a religious freedom claim. “In the public world,” it says, “they should play by public rules.” The ACLU has argued that a right to be exempted.

Lent as an invitation to practicing solidarity

Lent is a most beautiful season for spiritual renewal. Lent is a time to reflect about our journey of faith and to assess to what extent we are living authentically our Christian discipleship.

I heard recently in a homily, “What are you doing for Lent?” The question is always challenging because it invites me to shift my attention to the distinctiveness of the season and its call to conversion.

The “doing” during Lent, however, should be more than just adding some activities or giving up others in our lives. That may reduce Lent to a simplistic checklist: I gave up chocolate … done. I visited a shelter … done. I went to Mass during the week … check. Small steps and practices are valuable, of course, but we must up the ante.

Lent seems to ask for more. The liturgical season, I think, points more to “how” he seemed to restore him in some essential way. … My father never again would die alone, discovered by a stunned family member. And while his suicide was perhaps not as violent, death by overdose can feel just as violent as death by gunfire. The underlying reality of pills, powders or poisons still involves a brutal devastation of our physiology. Our bodies often resist, with the vomiting of pills, convulsions, paralysis, and the like. Although Kimberly and her sisters may have preferred that their dad succumb to toxins instead of a bullet, those sentiments, in the final analysis, are more poetic than rational.

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The black Catholic nun every American should know

When asked to offer examples of the church’s faithful whose experiences are essential to our understanding of American Catholic history, there is one black woman’s story that I always tell.

The extraordinary journey of Anne Marie Becraft, who became Oblate Sister of Providence Mary Aloysius, is one that powerfully illustrates the foundational presence of black Catholics in the U.S. church and nation at large. It is also a story that disrupts and revises much of what has been said and written about the American Catholic experience.

In recent years, Becraft’s name has been resurrected in the nation’s memory in connection with Georgetown University. In 2017, Georgetown officially renamed one of the earliest schools for black children in Washington. Seven years later, Becraft won the support of a Jesuit priest who underwrote the expansion of her academy for free girls, which became the nation’s first black Catholic school, and relocated it across from the Visitation Convent.

Called to religious life but barred entry into the early white sisterhoods ministering in Washington due to her color, Becraft turned over the administration of her school, then known as the Georgetown Seminary, to a former student and entered the historically black Oblate Sisters of Providence in Baltimore in 1831. Two years later, Becraft died at age 28.

Despite her relatively short life, the significance of Becraft’s insurrectionary presence and that of her black Catholic girls’ academy within sight of the Visitation Convent, where more than 80 enslaved people labored against their wills, and Georgetown, where more than 250 did the same, cannot be overstated.

Neither can the reality of Becraft’s connection to the prominent and slaveholding Carroll family, which gave the U.S. church its first bishop and Georgetown its first black Catholic nun, nor the only Catholic sign of the Declaration of Independence.

However, the first published history of the African Methodist Episcopal Church, written by Bishop Daniel Payne (who married Anne’s sister Julia in 1847), documents that William was in fact Charles Carroll’s “natural son,” making Anne his granddaughter.

Although Becraft is not the only African American nun with blood ties to the nation’s founding European Catholic families, she is the only American nun, black or white, known to possess a birthright to the early U.S. church and nation.

When Becraft established her school in the midst of the nation’s and the church’s slaveholding elite, she powerfully declared that the lives of black people, especially women and girls, mattered. Even more miraculous, Becraft’s documented “uncommon intelligence” and “extraordinary piety” forced members of the slaveholding church to take notice and offer support.

As we celebrate women’s history month this March, I encourage every person to commit the name of Anne Marie Becraft and her revolutionary fight against slavery and racism in the American Catholic Church and nation at large to memory.

Becraft’s life not only demonstrates that black people have never been marginal to the story of U.S. Catholicism, but also reveals that black women and girls were the first of the faithful to forge a formal tradition of Catholicism free from the evils of white supremacy and racial exclusion.

If we are to ever overcome the sin of racism and the enduring legacies of slavery and segregation within church boundaries, it is to the largely unsung history of black Catholic women and girls and their emancipatory traditions of the faith that we must finally look.

Shannen Dee Williams is the Albert Lepage Assistant Professor of History at Villanova University. She is completing her first book, Subversive Habits: Black Catholic Nuns in the Long African American Freedom Struggle, under contract with Duke University Press.

The black Catholic nun every American should know

Shannen Dee Williams

Catholic News Service

The writer Annie Dillard said, “You catch grace as a man fills his cup under a waterfall.” Am I stinging about receiving grace, I was pondering after a shopping trip.

On Valentine’s Day, the store was packed. I had a long grocery list in preparation for a houseful of company.

Parking spots were scarce, the wind chill was below zero, and when I arrived, a coupon I’d been carrying was apparently lost in the wind.

My first stop was the meat section where I found chicken on sale, the packaging of which left a slimy trail of chicken juice all over my hand. I searched for the paper towels that usually hang in the meat department, and as I wished I could have a dollar for every guy I saw walking around with flowers.

“Oh, my gosh,” he said, “It’s too early to save 5%. I admired the crowd and wished I could have a dollar for every guy I saw walking around with flowers.”

At home, as I washed chicken slime off with soap and water, I chuckled about senior citizens buying their bouquets two days early to save 5%. I admired the roses my husband had given me. I gave him chocolates in a heart-shaped box. After 40 years, we may not score very high for creativity or imagination, but we get the point across.

And I thought of how grace enters a day and offers itself to us. We make choices, we invite God in or we close the door. We choose our focus.

Chicken slime or cheerfulness. Thoughtlessness encountered, or the cheery chattiness of a stranger. Where do we find God in all this? It’s our choice to search. If you didn’t celebrate Valentine’s Day, no problem. Tomorrow is another day. Celebrate every day.

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rious illness outbreaks or when you or someone in your household has been sick. Nevertheless, it is ultimately the choice of the communicant whether to receive the Body of Christ on the hand or on the tongue. No one is to be denied the Eucharist over this means.

All ministers of Holy Communion, both ordinary and extraordinary, should wash their hands with soap and water before and after Mass. Then, if Communion ministers have practiced good hygiene during the Mass, there is no obligation for them to wash their hands again during Mass. But if Extraordinary Ministers of Holy Communion need to wash their hands during Mass, the best way is to clean their hands in their pew, using a sanitizing gel or antibacterial wipe, after the Sign of Peace and just before they come to the sanctuary. The action of sanitizing their hands should be done in such a way as not to delay the Communion Rite or distract from the focus at the altar.

What if the priest is sick?
If the priest is sick, it is best that he not preside at the Mass. However, if this is not possible and he must preside while he is sick, the duty of distributing Communion to the assembly can be done by other ordinary ministers: assisting deacons and concelebrants at the Mass. If these are not available, the presiding priest may temporarily refrain from distributing Communion to the assembly in order to prevent the spread of disease, allowing the extraordinary ministers to the ones to distribute Communion to the assembly.

Disinfecting:
In our church facilities, surfaces touched by the public should be disinfected frequently. Hand sanitizer dispensers should be made available in church facilities.

Pray:
Finally, the Diocese of San Angelo asks that the faithful pray for the sick, especially during cold and flu season or during wider outbreaks of illness. No amount of precautionary measures can completely prevent the spread of disease, and we should always remember those who suffer and those who care for them.

PRECAUTIONS
Continued from Page 5
in Iran, where at least 77 people died and more than 2,300 people were infected. But while holy shrines were disinfected, the sites did not close. Millions of people visit the shrines every year, with many kissing and touching them.

Two men in Iran who defined health warnings could be jailed after videos circulated of them licking holy shrines. In one of the videos, a man is seen at the Masumeh shrine in Qom, saying, “I’m not afraid of coronavirus,” before licking and kissing the gates.

In their guidelines, Haiti’s bishops called for the normal sanitary precautions, but also told people to count on conducting Holy Week and Easter service outside.

Catholics in the Philippines have been asked not to kiss or touch the cross when they venerate it on Good Friday, April 10.

Instead, they should “genuflect or make a profound bow” before the cross during the veneration of the cross, according to guidelines issued Feb. 20 by the Philippine bishops’ conference. Three cases of the coronavirus have been documented in the Philippines, with one resulting in death.

The Chinese government temporarily closed all places of worship and banned all group religious activities in efforts to contain the virus’ spread.

In mainland China, more than 80,000 people had been infected with the virus, and more than 2,900 had died, according to China’s national health commission.

Only three cases of infection have been recorded in Africa — one in Nigeria, one in Egypt and one in Algeria — with no deaths. In Mombasa, Kenya, Catholic Archbishop Michael Kivuva led other religious leaders in urging the Kenyan government to begin a citizen training program on prevention and management of the COVID-19.

Ghana’s bishops directed all Catholics to receive Communion only in the hand. In a March 2 statement, Archbishop Philip Naameh of Tamale, president of the Ghanaian bishops’ conference, encouraged ministers of the Eucharist to wash their hands or use sanitizer before and after distributing Communion.

The bishops also urged parishioners to “avoid handshakes and embracing one another” during the sign of peace.

Caribbean countries are increasingly closing their borders to visitors from areas affected by the coronavirus. The Caribbean has one confirmed case in the Dominican Republic and three in the French overseas territories of St. Barthélemy and St. Martin.

“There is no change to the church’s liturgical celebrations” yet, the Archdiocese of Port of Spain said in a March 3 statement from Trinidad, noting that it would provide any assistance needed if an outbreak occurred.

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Contributing to this story were Judith Sudilovsky in Jerusalem and Damian Avevor in Accra, Ghana.

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Public Masses suspended in Italy
By Junno Arocho Esteves
Catholic News Service

VATICAN CITY (CNS) — The suspension of public Masses in Italy is a painful yet necessary measure to protect people’s health, the country’s bishops said.

“This is a very restrictive step, the acceptance of which causes suffering and difficulty for pastors, priests and the faithful,” the Italian bishops’ conference said in a statement March 8.

After the Italian government issued a decree barring the celebration of all “civil and religious ceremonies, including funerals,” the bishops announced the suspension of public Masses until April 3.

“The acceptance of the decree is only mediated by the desire to do one’s part, even in this situation, to contribute to the protection of public health,” the bishops said.

As of March 9, the health and safety precautions published by the Vatican did not include a ban on public celebrations of the Mass, but they did insist that everything possible be done to ensure that people stay one meter (a yard) apart.

Cardinal Angelo De Donatis, papal vicar of the Diocese of Rome, said that while all public Masses are suspended, churches “will remain open, as usual, for personal prayer.”

The Diocese of Rome, he said, “will assume an attitude of full responsibility toward the community in the knowledge that protection from infection requires even drastic measures, especially in interpersonal contact.”

“May this time of Lent help us to live this great test evangelically,” Cardinal De Donatis said.

Bishops throughout the country have sent letters not only to inform their dioceses about the suspensions but to also address concerns by some that such measures are too drastic.

Suspending the public celebration of Mass, “may seem exaggerated in our region, especially after we have committed to organizing participation according to the rules of amplified distance and hygiene precautions that should keep us safe from the risks of spreading the virus,” said Archbishop Domenico Sorrentino of Assisi in a March 9 letter to his diocese.

Nevertheless, “the virus is spreading in Italy and around the world, causing suffering and death,” he wrote. “If we don’t contain it, hospital infrastructures will collapse with inevitable repercussions not only for the infected but also for all other sick people.”
**SANDOVAL**

Continúa de Página 22

Mateo (Capítulo 25): “Tuve hambre y me diste de comer”.

Vivimos una época en la que necesitamos píldoras para todo. Y, además, disfrutamos de drogas, licitas y no, para ayudarnos a bregar con nuestras ansiedades, depresión y un sinnúmero de problemas. Si no podemos dormir, hay píldoras para eso. Si nos sentimos deprimidos, hay medicaciones. Uno va al médico, y regresa a casa con más recetas.

Lo maravilloso es que muchos de los rituales y costumbres que hemos heredado tienen los remedios que necesitamos sin los efectos secundarios de las drogas. Porque yo despierto en la noche y veo que no puedo recuperar el sueño, le pregunté a mi Madra una vez a mi Madra cómo hacía ella cuando sufría insomnio.

Me contestó: “Rezo mi rosario”. Hice lo mismo y, para mi sorpresa, pude dormirme de nuevo, y eso es lo que hago décadas después. Simplemente, la cura de muchas de nuestras ansiedades reside en la meditación y en la oración.

El filósofo Henry David Thoreau escribió de sus meditaciones: “Por la mayor parte, no me preocupo de cómo pasaron las horas. El día avanzó como si iluminaba algún hecho mío. .. Me sentía de mi buena fortuna incesante.”

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**OSPINO**

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than a mere transaction or a sporadic action.

As we pray during Lent and prepare our hearts as a community of believers to contemplate the mystery of Jesus’ death and resurrection, we arrive at an understanding of Christian solidarity that is grounded in the conviction that Christ is present in the other, without exception.

Christian solidarity, therefore, is an invitation to see the face of Christ in the other person, especially the poor, the suffering, the vulnerable. When we have such an encounter, we are compelled to do something. Solidarity, says Pope Francis in the same exhortation, “must be lived as the decision to restore to the poor what belongs to them” (No. 189).

Solidarity demands that we take our time and listen to the cries of our sisters and brothers. God does. It is tempting to prescribe what others need or judge their condition in light of our own particular experience. We often do this with the person who is poor, or disabled, or immigrant, or minoritized, or broken, or suffering from an addiction.

Yet, we must listen. When we listen, we affirm our sister’s agency, our brother’s right to name reality. Listening empowers the other. When we listen, we learn and grow in compassion.

What am I going to do this Lent? Listen attentively as a way of living to practice solidarity the way God does. What about you?

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Ospino is professor of theology and religious education at Boston College.

**EDICTAL SUMMONS**

March 2, 2020

CASE: JOHNSON — NEILL

NO.: SO/20/02

The Tribunal Office of the Catholic Diocese of San Angelo is seeking MELISSA ANN NEILL.

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 March, 2020, to answer to the Petition of Nathan Joseph Raboin Johnson, now introduced before the Diocesan Tribunal in an action styled, “Nathan Johnson and Melissa Neill, Petition for Declaration of Invalidity of Marriage.” Said Petition is identified as Case: JOHNSON — NEILL; Protocol No.: SO/20/02, 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 this 2nd day of March 2020.

Judicial Vicar

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

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EDICTAL SUMMONS

March 2, 2020

CASE: RACASCO — CORDOVA

NO.: SO/20/10

The Tribunal Office of the Catholic Diocese of San Angelo is seeking KAREN CORDOVA.

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 March, 2020, to answer to the Petition of Adrian Carrasco, now introduced before the Diocesan Tribunal in an action styled, “Adrian Carrasco and Karen Cordova, Petition for Declaration of Invalidity of Marriage.” Said Petition is identified as Case: RACASCO — CORDOVA; Protocol No.: SO/20/10 Ed. Sum. MARCH, 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 this 2nd day of March 2020.

Judicial Vicar

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

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EDICTAL SUMMONS

March 2, 2020

CASE: ARMSTRONG — RAULSTON

NO.: SO/20/12

The Tribunal Office of the Catholic Diocese of San Angelo is seeking KRISTY NICOLE RAULSTON.

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 March, 2020, to answer to the Petition of ERIC NATHANIEL ARMSTRONG, now introduced before the Diocesan Tribunal in an action styled, “Eric Armstrong and Kristy Raulston, Petition for Declaration of Invalidity of Marriage.” Said Petition is identified as Case: ARMSTRONG — RAULSTON; Protocol No.: SO/20/12, 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 this 2nd day of March 2020.

Judicial Vicar

Reverend Tom Barley, MSW, MBA, M. Div., JCL
KNICKERBOCKERS

Continued from Page 8

our eternal soul and that of our brother and sister. “Let him know that whoever brings back a sinner from the error of his way will save his soul from death and will cover a multitude of sins” (Jas 5:20). The implications of sinning and the implications of holy living are eternal. “For God has not destined us for wrath, but to obtain salvation through our Lord Jesus Christ, who died for us so that whether we wake or sleep we might live with him” (1 Thes 5:9-10). “The wages of sin is death, but the free gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord” (Rom 6:23).

In Seeds of the Word, Bishop Robert Baron says, “May God save us all from non-judgmentalism, lest mankind must answer to ‘no’ to a question that Jesus asked long ago, ‘when the Son of Man comes, will he find faith on earth?’ (Luke 18:8).” In our desire to be “politically correct” or because of our indifference, have we become “non-judgmental?” “Do not be conformed to this world but be transformed by the renewing of your mind, that you may prove what is the will of God, what is good and acceptable and perfect” (Rom 12:2).

Recognition of sin in others and in ourselves has a corollary, i.e., recognition of goodness in others and in ourselves — a goodness not of ourselves but of the indwelling Holy Spirit (See Gal 5:22, Fruit of the Spirit). We are to see with redeemed eyes, eyes that recognize goodness. We are to look with God’s eyes. We are to see Christ in our brothers and sisters and bring them to Christ.

C. S. Lewis reminds us, “There are no ordinary people. You have never talked to a mere mortal. Nations, cultures, arts, civilizations — these are mortal, and their life is to ours as the life of a gnat. But it is immortals whom we joke with, work with, marry, snub and exploit — immortal horrors or everlasting splendors. This does not mean that we are to be perpetually solemn. We must play. But our merriment must be of that kind (and it is, in fact, the merriest kind) which exists between people who have, from the outset, taken each other seriously — no flippancy, no superiority, no presumption. And our charity must be real and costly love, with deep feeling for the sins in spite of which we love the sinner — no mere tolerance, or indulgence which parodies love” (Sermon, “The Weight of Glory”).

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Father Knick Knickerbocker is a retired priest of the Diocese of San Angelo. He and his wife, Sandie, write a monthly column for the West Texas Angelus.

DOERFLINGER

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from abortion mandates should belong only to religious organizations that primarily hire people of their own faith, primarily serve people of their own faith and focus on inculcating specifically religious values.

The ACLU’s prime example of an organization that could qualify for such an exemption is a Christian Science Church healing center, where illness is addressed solely by prayer.

The ACLU has boasted that it wrote the religious exemption clause of California’s state contraceptive mandate using these criteria. Later, the Obama administration also endorsed this approach, insisting that religious orders like the Little Sisters of the Poor must comply with a federal contraceptive mandate because they hire and serve non-Catholics. The sisters had to struggle all morally religious values.

This Catch-22 is very clever, but it has nothing to do with respecting what our nation’s founders saw as our first and most precious freedom.

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Doerflinger worked for 36 years in the Secretariat for Pro-Life Activities of the U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops. He writes from Washington state.

CHRISTUS VIVIT

Continued from Page 9

paralyze you, so that you don’t become young mummies. Live! Give yourselves over to the best of life! Open the doors of the cage, go out and fly! Please, don’t take early retirement” (143).

In speaking about vocation, Pope Francis reminds us that at its root, our vocation is about how we are called to serve others: “Your own personal vocation does not consist only in the work you do, though that is an expression of it. Your vocation is something more: it is a path guiding your many efforts and actions towards service to others” (255).

He also reminds us that vocation is about our response to God in all areas of our life: “The word ‘vocation’ can be understood in a broad sense as a calling from God, including the call to life, the call to friendship with him, the call to holiness, and so forth. This is helpful, since it situates our whole life in relation to the God who loves us. It makes us realize that nothing is the result of pure chance but that everything in our lives can become a way of responding to the Lord, who has a wonderful plan for us” (248).

When we discover our calling in life, it will make all we do more meaningful. “When we discover that God is calling us to something, that this or that is what we were made for — whether it be nursing, carpentry, communication, engineering, teaching, art or any other kind of work — then we will be able to summon up our best capacities for sacrifice, generosity and dedication. Knowing that we don’t do things just for the sake of doing them, but rather we endow them with meaning, as a response to a call that reaches down to the very depths of our being to offer something to others: that is what makes these occupations bring a sense of deep fulfillment” (273).

This document reminds us that we made a promise to the young people when they were baptized to support them in their faith. How that is done will vary based on the individual young people and the communities to which they belong. Yet our support is not contingent on anything other than the fact that they are members of our faith community through their baptism.

It also reminds me that how we live out our faith in our daily lives will speak more loudly than any lectures or classes. Ministry is about more than just words; it matters that we develop a relationship and show that we care about and love them and what is happening in their lives. Pope Francis tells us, “Young people need to be approached with the grammar of love, not by being preached at. The language that young people understand is spoken by those who radiate life, by those who are there for them and with them. And those who, for all their limitations and weakness, try to live their faith with integrity” (211).

This closes with a reminder to young people that the Church needs them, and that they may have to pave the way and wait for the rest of us to catch up: “Dear young people, my joyful hope is to see you keep running the race before you, outstripping all those who are slow or fearful. Keep running, ‘attracted by the face of Christ, whom we love so much, whom we adore in the Holy Eucharist and acknowledge in the flesh of our suffering brothers and sisters. May the Holy Spirit urge you on as you run this race. The Church needs your momentum, your intuitions, your faith. We need them! And when you arrive where we have not yet reached, have the patience to wait for us” (299, emphasis added).

Side note: There has been no shortage of resources developed in this last year around Christus Vivit. The National Federation for Catholic Youth Ministry has compiled their own resources, as well as some from other trusted sources, at https://nfycym.org/resources/topics/christus-vivit-resources/. NFCYM is also continuing to develop more resources. Later this month they will release a study guide, and they continue work on training resources.

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Alison Pope is an associate director of the Diocese of San Angelo’s Office of Evangelization and Catechesis
The basketball teams from St. Mary’s Central Catholic School of Odessa took on the boys and girls from Angelo Catholic School in early February.

The St. Mary’s Central Catholic School team was back in action for another intra-diocesan game when they faced the team from St. Ann’s School in Midland Feb. 10.