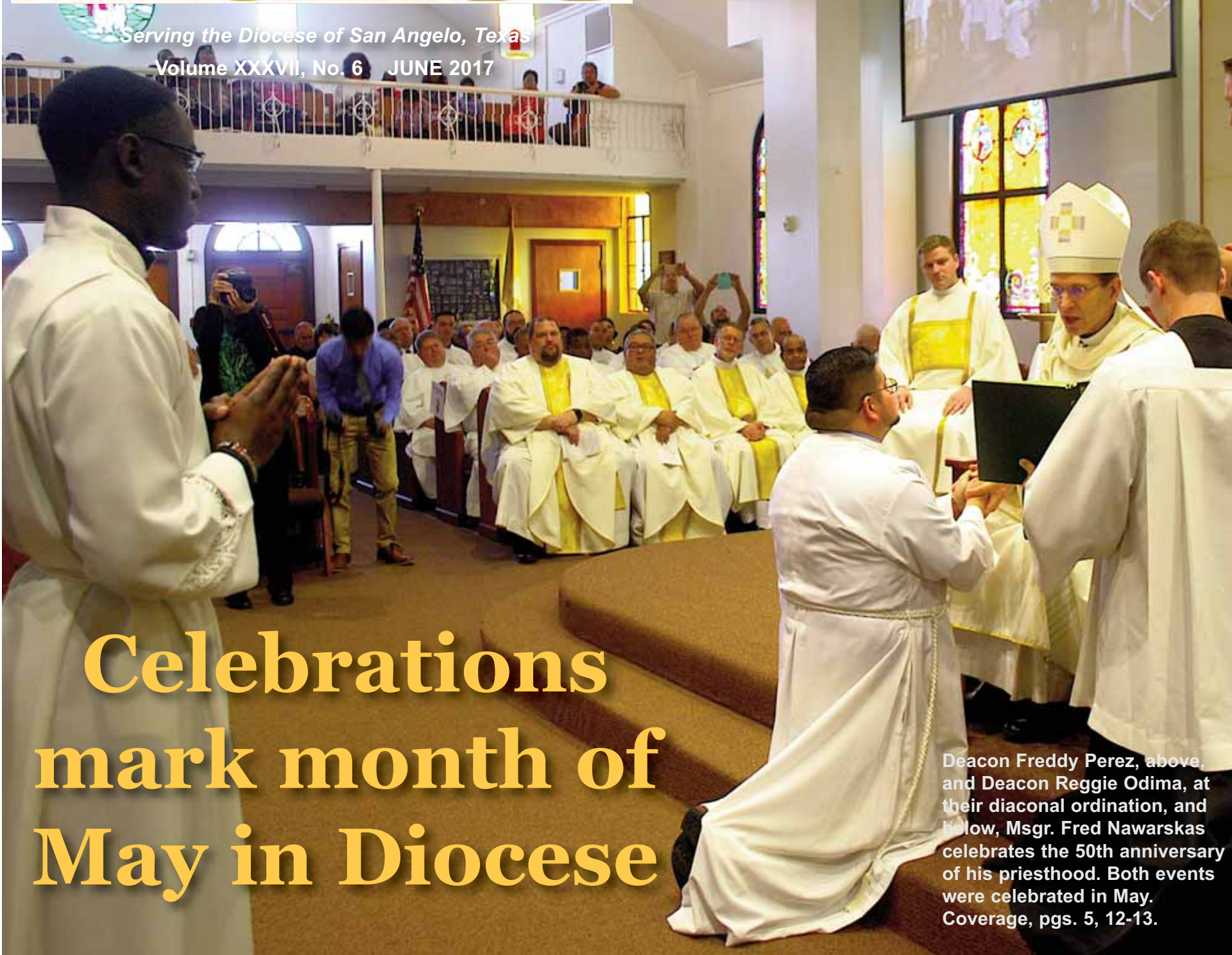


# West Texas ANGELUS

Serving the Diocese of San Angelo, Texas  
Volume XXXVII, No. 6 JUNE 2017



Deacon Freddy Perez, above, and Deacon Reggie Odima, at their diaconal ordination, and below, Msgr. Fred Nawarskas celebrates the 50th anniversary of his priesthood. Both events were celebrated in May. Coverage, pgs. 5, 12-13.

DIOCESE OF SAN ANGELO  
PO BOX 1829  
SAN ANGELO TX 76902-1829

NONPROFIT ORG.  
US POSTAGE PAID  
SAN ANGELO, TX  
PERMIT NO. 44





## The Inside Front

# Texas bishops affirm passage of foster care bill

*HB 3859 provides conscience protection for those wishing to serve children in system*

### West Texas Angelus

AUSTIN — The Texas Legislature has passed a bill providing people motivated by their religious beliefs the freedom to serve children in Texas' foster care system. Governor Greg Abbott is expected to sign the bill into law.

House bill 3859, authored by Rep. James Frank, Wichita Falls, allows organizations and individuals with sincerely-held religious beliefs to remove themselves from actions in direct violation of their faith. This includes declining to assist a child in obtaining an abortion or recruiting same sex couples in the foster care system.

The bill provides mechanisms for the state to ensure these services are provided to all who wish to participate. It is part of a reform effort by the Texas Legislature in response to a great need for more foster families.

Most Catholic Charities in the state had withdrawn from serving foster children. The new law removes a significant barrier to Catholics serving children in the system and will trigger greater recruitment efforts by

Catholic parishes and ministries.

"While there are no Catholic agencies in the Diocese of San Angelo planning to oversee placements for adoption or foster care, I do encourage Catholics to consider becoming adoptive parents or foster parents," San Angelo Bishop Michael J. Sis said. "There is a great need for more foster parents in West Texas. As of December 31, 2016, there were 28,600 children in the custody of the state, with 910 of those in the Diocese of San Angelo.

"Parishes can also take on the role of providing a support system for foster parents in the congregation. For example, in some churches, a meal is brought to the foster family once per week, and a number of families in the parish take turns providing that meal.

Jennifer Carr Allmon, executive director of the Texas Catholic Conference of Bishops, expressed gratitude to Rep. Frank, Sen. Charles Perry (District 28), and other legislators for their support of the legislation.

"Now Catholics can join other people of goodwill and serve Texas' children in good faith," Allmon said.

The TCCB will work with diocesan offices to launch a

public information campaign this fall encouraging Catholic families to be foster parents.

The Texas Catholic Conference of Bishops is the association of the Roman Catholic bishops of Texas. Through the TCCB, the bishops provide a moral and social public policy voice that includes monitoring all legislation pertaining to Catholic moral and social teaching; accredit the state's Catholic schools, and maintain records that reflect the work and the history of the Catholic Church in Texas.

Any individual or couple who would like more information on becoming a foster parent may contact Jessica Neader of the Texas Department of Family and Protective Services in San Angelo at 325-657-8944 or at [jessica.neader@dfps.state.tx.us](mailto:jessica.neader@dfps.state.tx.us)

"Catholic Charities of Odessa does not place children for foster care, but they are assisting some families with some of the material items needed in order to qualify for foster child placement," Bishop Sis noted. "This is a tremendous help for those who are seeking to become foster parents."



## Rural Life Mass

Bishop Michael Sis receives gifts at the Rural Life Mass, May 15 near Wall, far left. Near left, a basket of seed, fruits and vegetables presented at the Mass for a blessing. (Photos by Becca Sankey Nelson)

# Beautiful Mass stresses importance of the land

By Becca Nelson Sankey  
West Texas Angelus

WALL — On a breezy spring evening at Rocking Chair Ranch in Wall, Bishop Michael Sis wrapped up the Diocese of San Angelo's annual Rural Life Mass with a blessing of farm implements, seeds, produce, and animals. Just as the bishop uttered the word "animals" in his prayer, the ranch owners' dog, Buddy, darted in front of the altar, eliciting chuckles from the crowd gathered.

Buddy's perfectly timed appearance was one of several pieces comprising the flawless picture that was this year's Rural Life Mass. For the first time in years, the Mass was held on May 15, the Feast Day of St. Isidore, the patron saint of farmers. A group of about 50 people, including the bishop, clergy, a choir, and

ranchers and farmers, gathered under a canopy of pecan trees along a sprawling, spring-fed pond while mayflies bobbed overhead.

In his homily, Bishop Sis discussed Saint Isidore and his wife, Saint Maria, and the miracles surrounding the couple. Isidore and Maria always kept a pot of stew cooking because Isidore was known to bring home hungry people after a day of work plowing the fields. One day, Isidore brought home more people than usual, and Maria fretted that they had run out of stew. Isidore urged her to check the pot again, and when she did, she found enough stew to feed everyone.

Another time, Bishop Sis said, Isidore was on his way to the grinding mill with a sack of wheat. He took pity on the pigeons looking for food and fed them half of the wheat, despite the onlookers who

teased him for it. When Isidore arrived at the mill, his bag was inexplicably refilled and produced twice the flour it typically did.

"They were very generous in service to the poor," Sis said in his homily. "This couple had a deep spirituality, which many of you also have."

Bishop Sis said Isidore and Maria provided examples of how to live, among them: Human work has dignity; any of us can practice spiritual contemplation in our daily lives; and the simple life is conducive to happiness and holiness.

The bishop referenced Psalm 1:3 which states, "That person is like a tree planted near streams of water, which yields its fruit in season, and whose leaf does not wither — whatever he does prospers."

(Please See **SOIL/21**)

CALENDARS

BISHOP MICHAEL SIS  
JUNE 2017 SCHEDULE

3 — BROWNWOOD, St. Mary Queen of Peace, Confirmation Mass at 5:30 p.m.

4 — JUNCTION, St. Theresa, Confirmation Mass at 11:15 a.m.

6 — SAN ANGELO, Diocesan Pastoral Center, Joint Meeting of Finance Council and Presbyteral Council at 11:00 a.m., Presbyteral Council Meeting at 2:00 p.m.

7 — MIDLAND, Our Lady of Guadalupe, Confirmation Mass at 6:00 p.m.

8 — ODESSA, Holy Cross Catholic High School Board Meeting at 6:30 p.m.

10 — SAN ANGELO, Sacred Heart Cathedral, Priestly Ordination for Timothy Hayter and Josh Gray at 10:30 a.m.

11 — ANDREWS, Our Lady of Lourdes, Confirmation Mass at 10:30 a.m.

12-16 — WASHINGTON, DC, USCCB General Assembly

18 — ODESSA, Holy Redeemer, Mass at 12:30 p.m., followed by Eucharistic Procession for Solemnity of Corpus Christi

20 — SAN ANGELO, Diocesan Pastoral Center, Vocation Team Meeting at 1:00 p.m.

22 — OLFEN, St. Boniface, Fortnight for Freedom Mass at 6:00 p.m.

23-24 — IRVING, Irving Convention Center, Steubenville Lone Star Youth Conference

25 — COLORADO CITY, St. Ann, Confirmation Mass at 10:30 a.m.

27 — SAN ANGELO, Diocesan Pastoral Center, Liturgy Commission meeting at 10:00 a.m.

30-July 4 — ORLANDO, FL, National Convocation of Catholic Leaders

JULY 2017 SCHEDULE

1-4 — ORLANDO, FL, National Convocation of Catholic Leaders

6 — SAN ANGELO, Diocesan Pastoral Center, Priestly Life and Formation Committee meeting at 10:00 a.m.

8 — BIG SPRING, Holy Trinity, Convent Curious

8 — MIDLAND, Our Lady of Guadalupe, Mass at 5:00 p.m.

9 — MIDLAND, Our Lady of Guadalupe, Mass at 8:00 a.m., 10:00 a.m., 12:00 p.m. and 2:00 p.m.

18 — SAN ANGELO, Diocesan Pastoral Center, Presbyteral Council meeting at 11:00 a.m.

19 — SAN ANGELO, Christ the King Retreat

Center, Parish Staff Development Day at 9:30 a.m.

27-28 — AUSTIN, St. Dominic Savio High School, National Hispanic Pastoral Musicians' Conference

29 — SANDERSON, St. James, Mass and Blessing of Parish Hall at 11:00 a.m.

CHRIST THE KING  
RETREAT CENTER

JUNE 2017

1-2 — DOSA Annual Priest Retreat

2-3 — Heart of Mercy Prayer Retreat

5-9 — Diocese of Lubbock Annual Priest Retreat

9-11 — Deacon Formation

12 — Heart of Mercy

15-18 — Small Town ACTS Women's Retreat

19 — Heart of Mercy

22-25 — Girls Chrysalis Flight

26 — Heart of Mercy

29 — DOSA Staff Mass/Lunch

JULY 2017

3 — Heart of Mercy Prayer Group

4 — CKRC Closed in observance of Independence Day

8 — Deacon Formation

10 — Heart of Mercy Prayer Group

12-16 — Small Town Teen ACTS

17 — Heart of Mercy Prayer Group

19 — DOSA Staff Development Day

20-23 — Boys Chrysalis Flight

24 — Heart of Mercy Prayer Group

24 — Deacon Quarterly

26 — DOSA Staff Mass/Lunch

27-30 — Women's Walk to Emmaus

31 — Heart of Mercy

PRIEST ORDINATION  
DATES  
JUNE

1 — Fr. Joseph Uecker, CPPS (1968)

3 — Fr. Ruben Covos (2006)

3 — Fr. Ariel Lagunilla (2006)

4 — Fr. Patrick Akpanobong (2011)

4 — Fr. Prem Thumma (2011)

5 — Msgr. Robert Bush (1969)

5 — Fr. Mario Catungal (2004)

5 — Fr. Frank Chavez (1976)

5 — Fr. Steven Hicks (1982)

8 — Fr. Innocent Iziefule (2013)

8 — Fr. Lorenzo Hatch (2013)

8 — Fr. Sam Matthiesen (2013)

8 — Fr. Francis Onyekozuru (2013)

(Continued on 14)

From The Bishop's Desk

On the transfer of parish priests

By Bishop Michael J. Sis

The month of July will bring changes of assignment for about 20 of our priests in the Diocese of San Angelo. This presents an opportunity to reflect on the transition of priests. When a priest is moved, it has an impact on the parish he is leaving, the parish he is entering, and on the priest himself.



Bishop Sis

In many ways, a parish community is like a family system. Each member fits into the community in a certain way. There is some shifting of relationships when a new member comes into the community. Especially when there is a new leader, the system has to adjust.

When the community loses a member, there is a natural process of grieving. It takes time to grieve the departure of an important member of the family system. If your priest is leaving your parish, I encourage you to take the time to express appreciation to him for what he has meant to you personally, and to give thanks for the good things he has done for the com-

munity. He has planted seeds that will bear good fruit for generations.

Priests come in all sizes, shapes, colors and perspectives. Every priest who comes to a parish brings his own unique set of gifts and talents. He's not exactly the same as his predecessor. Therefore, we should not expect him to lead in exactly the same way. Each priest builds on the foundation of his predecessors and helps the parish to grow in new ways.

When a new priest comes to your parish, give him a chance. Get to know him. Support him. Pray for him. Be open to the talents, insights, and experience that he brings. Let him be himself, rather than constantly comparing him with his predecessor. Help him to learn names and to become familiar with the various parish ministries. If you have concerns, share them with him directly. Give him the opportunity to allow his words and actions to speak for themselves. Be open to the many ways God will use him in this, the next phase of the life of your parish.

He will baptize your children, absolve your sins, visit you when you are sick, console you when you are hurting, and rejoice with you in moments of celebration. He will teach you, train you, and encourage you. He will seek to earn your

respect by serving honorably.

Remember that a parish thrives when the priest and the parishioners work together in constructive collaboration, being patient with one another, listening to each other, and speaking with respect. Every member of the parish is called to contribute in an active way to build up the life of the Church. We all have gifts and talents to share as good stewards of God's manifold grace.

This is a good opportunity to review what our Church teaches about the role of a priest. A Catholic priest is ordained to serve the people of God by preaching the word of God, explaining the teachings of our faith, celebrating the sacraments, and exercising pastoral leadership by shepherding the community that has been entrusted to him.

In the ministry of an ordained priest, he acts "in the person of Christ." This means that the priest possesses the authority to act in the power and place of Christ in the sacraments of the Church. Through the priest's ecclesial ministry, Christ himself is actively present to his people as the teacher of truth, the high priest of the redemptive sacrifice, and the shepherd of his flock. That is an awe-

(Please See BISHOP/22)

Sobre Traslado de Sacerdotes

Por el Obispo Michael J. Sis

El mes de julio traerá cambios de asignación para unos veinte de nuestros sacerdotes en la Diócesis de San Ángel. Esto presenta una oportunidad para reflexionar sobre la transición de los sacerdotes. Cuando un sacerdote se mueve, esto impacta a la parroquia que deja, a la parroquia en la cual va a entrar, y al sacerdote mismo.



Obispo Sis

De varias maneras, una comunidad parroquial es como un sistema familiar. Cada miembro se encaja en la comunidad de una manera determinada. Hay un cierto cambio de las relaciones cuando un nuevo miembro entra en la comunidad. Especialmente cuando hay un nuevo líder, el sistema tiene que ajustarse.

Cuando la comunidad pierde un miembro, hay un proceso natural de duelo. Se necesita tiempo para lamentar la partida de un miembro importante del sistema familiar. Si su sacerdote está dejando su parroquia, yo le sugiero que usted tome el tiempo para expresar-le su agradecimiento por lo que él ha significado para usted personalmente, y para dar gracias por las cosas buenas que ha hecho para la comunidad. Él ha plantado semillas que darán buenos frutos por generaciones.

Los sacerdotes vienen en todos los

tamaños, formas, colores y perspectivas. Cada sacerdote que viene a una parroquia trae su propio conjunto único de dones y talentos. No es exactamente lo mismo que su predecesor. Por lo tanto, no debemos esperar que dirija la parroquia exactamente de la misma manera. Cada sacerdote construye sobre el fundamento de sus predecesores y ayuda a la parroquia a crecer en nuevas formas.

Cuando un sacerdote nuevo llega a su parroquia, denle una oportunidad. Conózcanlo. Sopórtelo. Oren por él. Estén abiertos a los talentos, conocimientos, y experiencia que él trae. Permitan que sea él mismo, en lugar de constantemente compararlo con su predecesor. Ayúdenle a aprender los nombres y a familiarizarse con los diversos ministerios de la parroquia. Si ustedes tienen alguna preocupación, compártanla directamente con él. Denle la oportunidad de permitir que sus palabras y acciones hablen por sí mismas. Estén abiertos a las muchas maneras en que Dios lo va a utilizar en esta, la siguiente fase de la vida de la parroquia.

Él bautizará a sus hijos, absolverá sus pecados, los visitará cuando estén enfermos, los consolará cuando ustedes estén sufriendo, y se regocijará con ustedes en momentos de celebración. Él les enseñará, entrenará, y los animará. Él tratará de merecer su respeto al servirles con honor.

Recuerden que una parroquia prospera cuando el sacerdote y los feligreses trabajan juntos en una colaboración

constructiva, siendo pacientes unos con otros, escuchando a los demás, y hablando con respeto. Todos los miembros de la parroquia son llamados a contribuir de manera activa para construir la vida de la Iglesia. Todos tenemos dones y talentos para compartir como buenos administradores de la gracia múltiple de Dios.

Esta es una buena oportunidad para revisar lo que nuestra Iglesia enseña sobre el papel de un sacerdote. Un sacerdote Católico es ordenado para servir al pueblo de Dios por medio de predicar la palabra de Dios, explicar las enseñanzas de nuestra fe, celebrar los sacramentos, y ejercer el liderazgo pastoral al apacentar la comunidad que le ha sido encomendada.

En el ministerio de un sacerdote ordenado, él actúa "en la persona de Cristo." Esto significa que el sacerdote posee la autoridad para actuar en el poder y el lugar de Cristo en los sacramentos de la Iglesia. A través del ministerio eclesial del sacerdote, Cristo mismo está presente de manera activa a su pueblo como el maestro de la verdad, el sumo sacerdote del sacrificio redentor, y el pastor de su rebaño. Esto es una responsabilidad formidable.

Debido a la cantidad de aquel a quien él representa, cada vez que las palabras de un sacerdote faltan la caridad, o su comportamiento es egoísta, o sus acciones son negligentes, o que se aprovecha de su posición para su propio beneficio personal, duele más.

(Please See OBISPO/21)

## DIOCESAN BRIEFS

### Festival Information

Please send all dates and information for your parish festival or family fair when the information becomes available for publication to [jpatterson@sanangelodiocese.org](mailto:jpatterson@sanangelodiocese.org).

### Priest Changes

**Most Reverend Michael J. Sis, Bishop of San Angelo, announces the following assignments of priests, effective July 2017:**

**Rev. Rodney White** as pastor of St. Stephen in Midland, effective July 1

**Rev. Mamachan Joseph** as pastor of Sacred Heart in Menard and St. Theresa in Junction, effective July 1

**Rev. Albert Ezeanya** as pastor of St. Charles in Eden, St. Phillip in Eloy, and Our Lady of Guadalupe in Millersview, effective July 1

**Rev. Hilary Ihedioha** as pastor of Our Lady of Perpetual Help in Ozona and Good Shepherd in Sheffield, effective July 15

**Rev. Bernardito Getigan** as pastor of St. Mary in Odessa, effective July 15

**Rev. Laurent Mvondo** as pastor of Sacred Heart in Coleman and Our Lady of Mt. Carmel in Winters, effective July 15

**Rev. Lorenzo Hatch** as parochial administrator of St. Vincent Pallotti in Abilene and Our Mother of Mercy in Merkel, effective July 1

**Rev. Kumar Jujjuvarapu** as parochial administrator of Good Shepherd in Crane, Sacred Heart in McCamey, St. Isidore in Coynosa, and Our Lady of Lourdes in Imperial, effective July 15

**Rev. Isidore Ochiabuto** as pastor of St. Francis of Assisi in Abilene, effective July 1

**Rev. Balachandra Nagipogu** as parochial vicar of Holy Angels in San Angelo, effective July 1

**Rev. Felix Archibong** as parochial vicar of St. Joseph in San Angelo, effective July 1

**Rev. Bala Anthony Govindu** as parochial vicar of St. Joseph and St. Anthony in Odessa, effective July 1

**Rev. Innocent Eziefule** as parochial vicar of St. Elizabeth Ann Seton in Odessa, effective July 15

**Rev. Chinna Pagidela** as parochial vicar of Sacred Heart in Abilene, effective July 15

**Rev. Josh Gray** as parochial vicar of Our Lady of Guadalupe in Midland, effective July 1

**Rev. Timothy Hayter** as parochial vicar of St. Stephen in Midland, effective July 1

**Rev. Patrick Akpanobong** as pastor of St. Joseph in Stanton and St. Isidore in Lenora, along with his duties as pastor of San Miguel in Midland, effective July 1

**Rev. Msgr. James Bridges** steps down as pastor of St. Stephen in Midland, effective July 1

**Rev. Bhaskar Morugudi** steps down as pastor of St. Francis of Assisi in Abilene, effective July 1

Please pray for our dedicated priests and for the parishes involved

in these changes of assignments.

### Women's Conference speakers, dates set

SAN ANTONIO — Registration is now open for the Pilgrim Center of Hope's Catholic Women's Conference happening July 28-29, 2017 at St. Mary's University in San Antonio.

The annual conference, regarded as a "spa for the woman's soul," is a two-day event attracting thousands of women from across South and Central Texas, and is in its 16th year. The conference fosters an appreciation for the personal dignity of women, encouraging them to know and love God, and inspiring them to use their feminine gifts for the transformation of family and society. The conference is an event for healing, spiritual direction, and receiving tools for everyday living and resources for education.

The Friday evening experience focuses on healing and renewal, with speakers and Eucharistic Adoration and Benediction. Saturday begins with Mass celebrated by newly-ordained Bishop Michael Boulette. Other aspects of the experience include vendor & ministry exhibitors, Reconciliation, a quiet Prayer Room, music, and more. American Sign Language interpretation will be provided.

Visit [CWCSanAntonio.com](http://CWCSanAntonio.com) for schedule, registration, and further details.

### Diocesan Women's Conference

SAN ANGELO — Registration for the Catholic Women's Conference for the Diocese of San Angelo, September 29-30, 2017, is open. Our theme this year is "Outrageous Love — Martha and Mary the Two Within Us!" Our exciting Speakers for 2017 include: Sister Miriam James Heidland, SOLT, [soltisters.blogspot.com](http://soltisters.blogspot.com); Sarah Swafford, [www.emotion-alvirtue.com](http://www.emotion-alvirtue.com), and Teresa Tomeo, [teresatomeo.com](http://teresatomeo.com). Bishop Sis will again preside at Mass on Saturday morning. The Catholic Women's Conference has moved this year to the McNease Center, 501 Rio Concho in San Angelo. It begins at 5:30 pm on Sept. 29, 2017, and concludes Sept. 30, at 4 pm. Registration begins ends September 1. Admission is \$50 with Saturday lunch and snacks provided. Register Online at: [heartjmj.org](http://heartjmj.org) (PayPal & major credit cards accepted). Please do not let price keep you from coming. We have generous groups that have donated so that we can give scholarships for those who want to come. More details coming in the July *West Texas Angelus*.

### Diaconate 'Come and See'

Below are the dates and locations of informational sessions on future Deacon Formation Classes. Anyone who wishes to find out about the diaconate and the joining requirements should attend:

#### Wednesday July 12, 2017

6:30 to 8:00 p.m.

Holy Family Parish

5410 Buffalo Gap Rd., Abilene

#### Saturday July 15, 2017

10:30 a.m. to 12:00 noon

Sacred Heart Cathedral

20 E. Beauregard

San Angelo

# S. Elsa Garcia, CDP, named Director of Women Religious for Diocese of San Angelo; succeeds retired 'Malachy'

## The West Texas Angelus

Sister Elsa Garcia, CDP, social ministries coordinator at St. Ann's Church in Midland, has been named Director of the Office of Religious in the Diocese of San Angelo. Sister Elsa replaces Sister Marie Malachy Griffin, OP, who retired late last year and has returned to the motherhouse of the Sinsinawa Dominicans in Wisconsin.

Sr. Elsa, a native of Corpus Christi, has served at St. Ann's for four years and will continue to do so concurrently with her new duties.

Sr. Elsa studied social work at Baylor University, explaining that she is the "most me" when helping others. During her time at Baylor, she experienced her call to religious life.

"In college, a friend asked me if I had ever considered becoming a sister," S. Elsa recalled. "I originally laughed it off because I was not 'the holy type that prays all the time.' But the question opened me to realize that my interests, my purpose and my growing relationship with Jesus pointed to the consecrated life. It is amazing that a call to Religious Life actually helps us be the most authentic self we can be. I worked for a few years after graduating from Baylor, and after going to several vocation related activities, I decided that I loved God enough to enter a community."

Sr. Elsa entered the Sisters of Divine Providence in 1980 and professed her final vows in 1989. As a Social Worker she has served in a number of capacities, mostly in direct service to the poor and in counseling settings. She has performed psychiatric social work as well as visiting economically disadvantaged pregnant women to help them access health care. She especially enjoyed her experience in the foster care system working with abused children, helping them experience safety and care. She was also quite gratified by her work with newly diagnosed HIV patients who lived in the streets, and those who found themselves in a hospice.

"One of the Scriptures I love is John 17 — the whole chapter — where Jesus shares his heart to his Father in prayer and he prays for us," she said "I just love when Jesus opens his heart and shares the Love of the Father and his love for all people. I want to give my life to this very love. This is why I am a sister and why I am at St. Ann's in Midland. Here I can help others in the parish understand and participate in the love that

### Victims Assistance Info

If you or someone you know has been sexually abused by anyone who serves the Church, and you need a place to talk with someone about your feelings of betrayal or hurt by the Church due to abuse, exploitation, or harassment, we are here to help you. To report sexual misconduct call Lori Hines, Victim Assistance Coordinator, 325-374-7609, or write Diocese of San Angelo Victim Assistance Ministry, PO Box 1829, San Angelo, TX 76902. If the sexual abuse occurred outside this diocese, the Victim Assistance Coordinator will assist in bringing the concern to the appropriate authorities.

### Convent Curious

Young ladies 8th grade and up to age 35, as well as parents and grandparents who have questions and want to learn about Religious Life are invited to attend Convent Curious, a question-answer presentation of Religious Life, from 9:30 a.m.-4:00 p.m., Saturday, July 8, 2017, Holy Trinity Catholic Church, 1009 Hearn St., in Big Spring.

A number of Religious Sisters will be available with information about their communities. Breakout sessions include:

1. The Life of Sisters — How They Live
2. Understanding the Vows
3. A Parent's Experience — Having a Daughter as a Sister
4. What Sisters Do — Ministry

#### Tentative Schedule for the Day

- 9:30–10:30 registration (lite breakfast and visit with sisters at booths)
- 10:00 Welcome — Introductions and Orientation to the day
- 10:30 Key note — What is Religious Life? (focus on various aspects and frequently asked questions)
- 10:45-Interest Session 1
- 11:15-Interest Session 2
- 11:45-Interest Session 3
- 12:30-Lunch in Gym — View video
- 2:00-Keynote — Promoting and Discerning Religious Life
- 3:30-Visit with Sisters in their booths
- 4:00-Closing prayer

For more information please contact Kristie in the Vocations Office at 325-651-7500, or [emailkgarcia@sanangelodiocese.org](mailto:emailkgarcia@sanangelodiocese.org)

God has for all humanity."

Sr. Elsa's new position as Director of the Office for Religious helps support and accompany other religious who serve the diocese.

"What a wonderful group of people," she said. "They have come from far and wide to the San Angelo diocese to serve people. They are accomplished professionals and truly live their 'profession' as consecrated people. Each community, each individual religious brings very special gifts to their parish and the Diocese. I hope to be of service to them and to the diocese for years to come."

## SEMINARIAN OF THE MONTH



### 3rd year Theology

St. Mary's Seminary, Houston

**Birthday:** July 12, 1989

**Hometown:** Abilene

**Favorite Food:**

Indian food and Rosa's Café

Likes:

Playing Video Games, running, making model miniatures, and practicing the harmonica

**PRAY FOR THOMAS!**

## Msgr. Fred Looks Back

# 'I would never have imagined I would use computers to write homilies'

By Brandon McAuliffe  
Special to the Angelus

ABILENE – Anytime you make it 50 years in a career, it's safe to say that you've been extremely successful in your career path.

During the month of May, Most Rev. Monsignor Frederick Nawarskas hit the golden anniversary of his ordination and was feted with a special Mass celebrated by Bishop Michael Sis and attended by nearly 20 priests from the diocese. Prior to the celebration, "Father Fred" as he is known to his parishioners at Holy Family in Abilene, sat down with *The Angelus* to take a stroll down the memory lane of his career.

**Q: First off, congratulations on 50 years. When you were ordained, did you ever think that you would make it this long?**

A: Time flies, isn't that amazing? Some people make it that long, but I never thought I would. Most of my class has already passed away and so I never thought I would make it this long.

**Q: Making it 50 years is not something that you see every day. How much gas do you have left in the tank?**

A: I thank God for giving me good health and I'm in better health than my brother and sister who are both younger than I (am). I figure if God has been this generous with me, then I need to utilize that for the good of the people to be there and help them, which I am very happy to do. I like ministry and I wouldn't be here if I didn't. I submitted my letter of resignation on my 75th birthday according to Canon Law. That happened two years ago, but Bishop Sis has decided to let this go on.



**Q: You look at all the changes that have taken place over not just the last 50 years, but the past 5-6 years. Do you ever feel like the only thing that is constant is change?**

A: Yes. There is a nice saying by a Jesuit priest that says, 'Jesus is the still point in the changing world.' So, He is the still point that we revolve around, but we get all our bearings from the Lord. In that sense, we are never overly distressed, but we may be stressed here and there. There is so much change and tremendous changes have come with cyberspace and electronics and smart-phones. I would have never imagined when I was ordained that I would use a computer to write homilies. Those are some major changes, as well as the involvement of the people who are more highly educated that bring greater gifts to the community.

**Q: When you look at the first half of your career, what was something that**

**you saw that you wanted to change going forward that you've been able to adapt and change?**

A: My first 5-10 years, I wanted to learn Spanish and only had two years in high school, so the bishop sent me to St. Joseph's in Odessa for 6½ years where they spoke more Spanish than English. I learned some Spanish there, but I really learned to love the people there. The first half (of my career) was getting accustomed to the Second Vatican Council, getting used to no more Latin and a lot more English. The music was different and a lot of the classic music wasn't being played as much. I made my living as a student playing Gregorian chant on the organ, and you just don't find that much today. That was a big change and something that I was very happy to see changed because the music we have today is very beautiful. We also have a lot more people involved and I don't have to direct the choir as I did for so many years in other places. Those were

some of the things that I was happy to see changed. One thing that I am disappointed in, is that we haven't had enough vocations, but that's always been a problem. On the other hand, I'm very happy that we have vocations from this parish. Out of the eight seminarians in the whole diocese, two are from Holy Family.

**Q: One thing that Holy Family has been blessed with since you have been here, with your knowledge, is having Fathers Innocent Eziefule, Tony Franco, Sam Matthiesen, Adam Droll and seminarians like Kevin Lenius and Thomas Shows. How important to you is it that the vocations seem to be what have defined your legacy at Holy Family?**

A: That's true. I can't take any credit for that as it is the gift of God. I have enjoyed having assistants here, but it's always hard getting used to having someone else in the house. I think I have learned more from them than they have from me because they bring a lot of new ideas and creative ways of spreading the Gospel in the way they homilize and approach the topics. They have had a tremendous impact on me all the way back to Father Ruben (Covos). They all have certain gifts and it has always been a privilege to have them, but they take some getting used to because their styles are all different."

**Q: You talked about the bishop sending you to St. Joseph's when you first started. When you see the different bishops that you have worked with, what has it been like during transitions because of their differing styles?**

A: It's very different because they approach the Gospel differently and they

(Please See NAWARSKAS/22)

## Fr. Covos returns to Abilene for Monsignor's 50th celebration

By Brandon McAuliffe  
Special to the Angelus

With a shortage of priests in many dioceses nationwide, it would be easy to overlook the need to have priests serving our military both at home and overseas.

The Diocese of San Angelo is in a fairly unique position as there are two United States Air Force bases situated in the middle of it with Dyess (Abilene) and Goodfellow (San Angelo), while also faced with a limited number of priests.

Father Ruben Covos started his ministry at Holy Family in Abilene before taking over at St. Ann's in Colorado City. After serving at St. Ann's, with the blessing of Bishop Michael Pfeifer, Fr. Covos joined the Air Force where he has spent the past eight years serving as a military chaplain.

"The first time I asked (to enlist), Bishop Pfeifer said 'Go ahead,'" Fr. Covos said. "We hear of priests that ask for years to go and never get to. With two bases in our diocese, he was very supportive of the military."

He has been stationed in places such as

Biloxi (Miss.), Grand Forks (N.D.), the Azores (Portugal) and is currently a chaplain at Dover Air Force Base in Delaware.

"I never asked to go to the Azores, but I've been there twice," said Fr. Covos. "It's a little corner of paradise and the Portuguese people are a beautiful people and it's very much like a Latino culture so I felt right at home."

He is currently a Captain in the Air Force and is due for a review for promotion to Major in the next year. He's served in the military for eight years and this fall will embark on his second deployment.

"I'm still in awe," he said of his service. "When I put on that uniform, it's the best of both worlds. I can still be a priest and I get to be a priest serving the military and that's been amazing."

Father Covos said that being deployed is a very high stress situation.

"It's because you're leaving your home and loved ones behind," he said. "But it's also a very rewarding ministry as troops get to receive the sacraments while deployed."

(Please See COVOS/21)



Above, Msgr. Fred Nawarskas, center, and Bishop Michael J. Sis, to monsignor's right, are joined by, left to right, seminarian Kevin Lenius, Fr. Terry Brenon (obstructed view), Fr. Innocent Eziefule, Bishop Michael Sis, Fr. Ruben Covos, Fr. Sam Matthiesen, Fr. Adam Droll, and seminarian Thomas Shows. All were assembled at Msgr. Nawarskas' 50th anniversary Mass at Holy Family in Abilene, May 19, 2017. Top photo, Msgr. Nawarskas is shown with parishioners at his reception. (Photos by Brandon McAuliffe)



## Confirmation-Big Lake



### St. Margaret of Cortona, Big Lake

Confirmation Class  
of 2016-2017

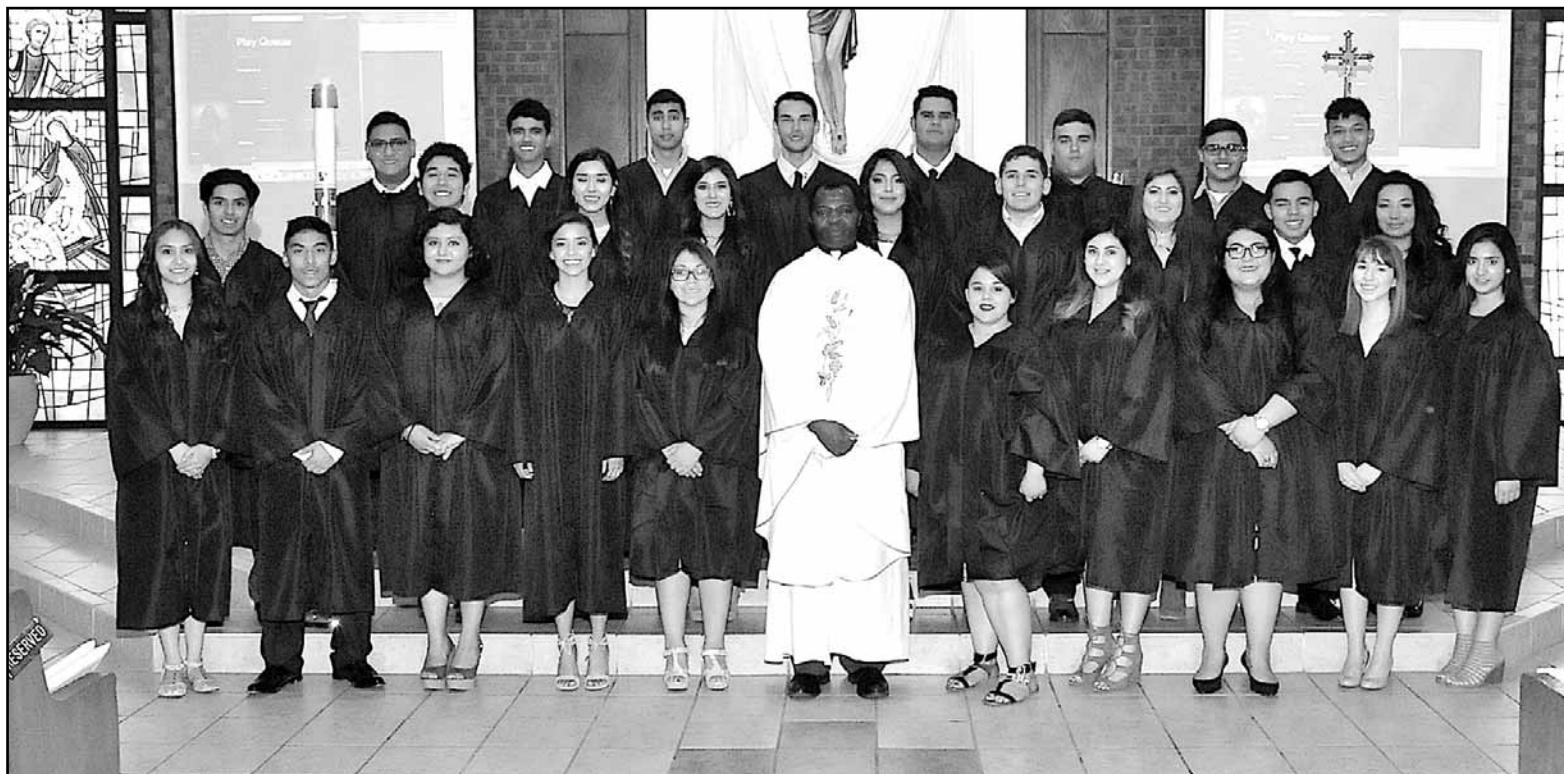
Top row, left to right: Bishop Michael Sis, Raul Rey, Joe Romero, Anthony Ybarra, Fr. Prem Thumma.

Middle row, left to right: Shayla Sosa, Jayslynn Reyes, Yulissa Perez, Christy Flores,

Bottom row, left to right: Jacob Chavez, Carissa Guerrero, Isaiah Rodriguez, Daisey Narvaez

## Graduation-Andrews

### Our Lady of Lourdes, Andrews 2017 Graduation Class



## Psychiatrist, monsignor team for 'The Catholic Guide to Depression'

### West Texas Angelus

#### THE CATHOLIC GUIDE TO DEPRESSION

How the Saints, the Sacraments, and Psychiatry can help  
You Break its Grip and Find Happiness Again

In their new book, *The Catholic Guide to Depression*, Catholic author and psychiatrist Aaron Kheriaty, and Msgr. John Cihak, STD, review the effective ways recently devised to deal with this grave affliction—ways both consistent with and rooted in the teachings of the Church.

Readers will learn about promising breakthroughs in pharmacological and other medical treatments, and will discover the critical place that spiritual direction, the Sacraments and the saints may have in healing.

For less frequent cases when the pain of depression can't be fully banished by the combined efforts of sci-

ence and spirituality, Dr. Kheriaty shows how pain—like the unavoidable sufferings of Jesus on the Cross—can be made redemptive.

Finally, *The Catholic Guide to Depression* contains prayers and even an address by St. John Paul II about depression.

You don't have to remain in the quicksand or dark pit of depression. Reach for this most powerful tool.

Some say depression feels like falling into a dark hole and forgetting what the sky looks like.

Some say it's like quicksand ... the more you try to escape on your own, the deeper you sink.

Some say it's like living without any of your senses.

The World Health Organization estimates 450 million people worldwide suffer from some form of depression. Major depression is the leading cause of disability for Americans between the ages of 15 and 44.

Why is depression considered to be a mark of dis-

grace? It's not a sin ... it's an illness. If someone is afflicted with cancer, he or she is flooded with sympathy from family and friends, and support from the local parish—perhaps with special mention in the general intercessions at Mass, and so on. If someone suffers from depression, there is rarely public mention of the problem due to the stigma of mental illness.

No one chooses depression any more than a cancer patient chooses to be sick. Depression is a debilitating illness—one so severe that it claims nearly a million lives a year worldwide.

Countless Christians—including scores of Saints—have suffered the profound sorrow that modern psychiatrists call "depression." (St. John Vianney and St. Elizabeth Ann Seton to name a few.)

Other prominent figures who suffered from depression include Abraham Lincoln, Michelangelo, Mozart and Beethoven.

## Work progressing at St. Elizabeth Ann Seton, Odessa



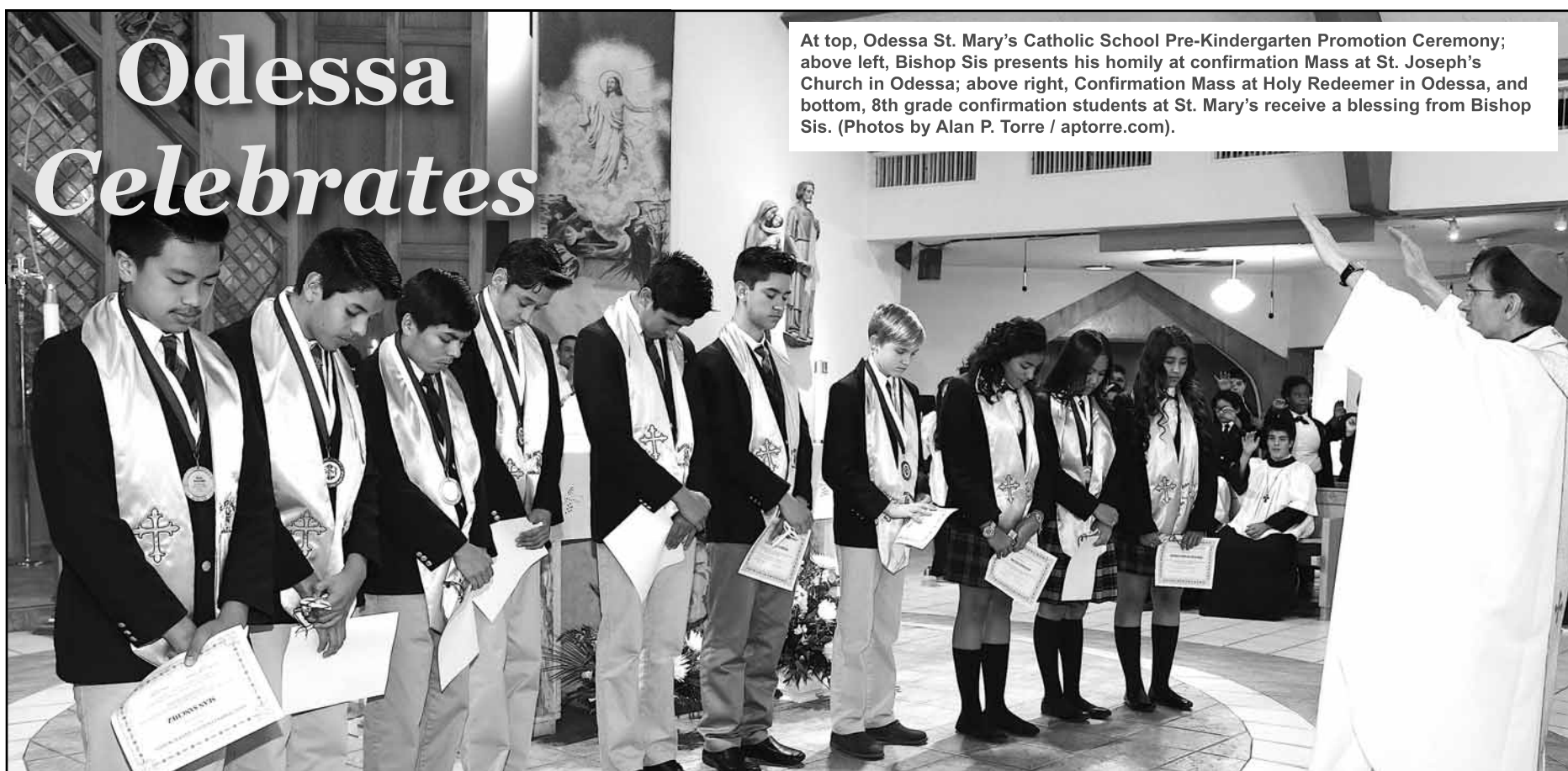
Scenes from Bishop Michael Sis' visit to Odessa, April 28, 2017. The bishop received a construction update from officials at St. Elizabeth Ann Seton, which is in the midst of a \$6 million church expansion. The targeted completion date for the project is October 2017.





# Odessa Celebrates

At top, Odessa St. Mary's Catholic School Pre-Kindergarten Promotion Ceremony; above left, Bishop Sis presents his homily at confirmation mass at St. Joseph's Church in Odessa; above right, Confirmation Mass at Holy Redeemer in Odessa, and bottom, 8th grade confirmation students at St. Mary's receive a blessing from Bishop Sis. (Photos by Alan P. Torre / aptorre.com).





## Recognizing Good Works at ACU



Members of ACU Lighthouse (the Catholic Student Organization on the Abilene Christian University campus in Abilene) recently gathered for a photo wearing their "Recognize Life" t-shirts given to them by Paula Matchen, President of West Texans for Life, to help them spread the Pro-Life message across the ACU Campus and beyond.

### Andrews 1st Holy Communion (8:30 a.m. Mass)



### Andrews 1st Holy Communion (10:30 a.m. Mass)



## Attending Mass led to my conversion to the Catholic faith

By Christopher White  
Catholic News Service

Blessed Cardinal John Henry Newman once wrote that "to be deep in history is to cease to be Protestant." Cardinal Newman, a notable convert to the faith, was commenting on the essential role the Catholic Church has played throughout civilization — and his belief that in order to take history seriously, one has to wrestle with the truth claims of the church.

As a former Protestant, much of Cardinal Newman's sentiments ring true to my experience. In some respects, it was my introduction to the Fathers of the Church that first steered me in the direction of Catholicism. But almost a decade later, I can also attest to the fact that the seeds of conversion require more than a mere history lesson.

In the spring semester of my sophomore year of college, I found myself studying abroad in Paris. Frustrated by the divisions within Protestantism and exploring the history and tradition of the Catholic faith, I decided to spend my Sundays in Paris bouncing to different Catholic parishes.

It was a convenient way to feed my love of art and architecture — but it also served as an unexpected introduction to another kind of beauty — the liturgy.

Attending my first Mass at the age of 19 was a peculiar experience. The bells and smells were all new to me, as were the collective prayers. But most striking were two other facets of the Mass: the centrality of the sacraments and the reverence in which the Mass was celebrated.

In Protestant churches, the peak of the service is the homily (or the sermon as most Protestants refer to it). And let's be clear: Good preaching matters when it comes to spiritual nourishment. But as I soon discovered, the pinnacle of the Mass is the consecration and reception of holy Communion.

As the Catechism of the Catholic Church teaches, the Eucharist allows us to "unite ourselves with the heavenly liturgy and anticipate eternal life, when God will be all in all." The discovery of ordinary things becoming extraordinary things forever shifted the way I thought about what it meant to attend a church.

And then there was the beauty of the reverence of the Mass. The rituals and rhythms of the liturgy served as a guide to enter into deeper communion with God. Outside, the streets were noisy and my life unfocused. Inside, the liturgy channeled my focus on higher things.

It's for that reason the preparatory document for the 2018 Synod of Bishops on "Young people, faith and vocational discernment" reminds us that "in an increasingly noisy society that offers a plethora of stimuli, one fundamental objective in the pastoral care of young people is to provide the young with opportunities to enjoy the value of silence and contemplation and to receive formation in understanding one's experiences and to listen to one's conscience."

After that semester in Paris, it would be another three years before I finally entered in full communion with the church. The history books and theology, they all mattered and were certainly formative in my experience. But I'll always remain most grateful for the discovery of the beauty of the Mass, where in the company of saints and sinners alike, I could focus on what mattered most.



White

## Catholic Charities Banquet



Honored at the 2017 Catholic Charities Banquet April 20, 2017, in Odessa are, from left, Fr. Mark Woodruff, recipient of the Sister Mary Thomas McNeela Award; Laura Hunt, Volunteer Of The Year; Minka Sibert, Pope Francis Spirit Of Charity Award, and Carolina Keith, Volunteer Of The Year. With the winners is, at right, Most Reverend Michael J. Sis, Bishop of San Angelo.

## From the Editor

## Keeping family traditions alive essential

By Jimmy Patterson  
Editor / West Texas Angelus

Karen and I were recently blessed to have our daughter and grand-daughter stay with us for an extended time. Having a 23-month old in the house for a long time is like trying to quell a tornado and turn it into a nice sunny day. There are no tools for a human to perform such a feat and even if there were, it would be altering God's plan that calls for children to be children.

Which can make for long days, short nights, tired bones and shaky psyches at day's end. It's hard to explain what motivates our grand-daughter (outside of her unending insatiable knowledge for whatever is in front of her at a particular moment). In spite of the adjustments to the daily empty nest routine that Karen and I have grown quite comfortable with, thank you, we ended up being just fine with the temporary changes in our life during their visit.

A couple of evenings after our grand-daughter had gone to bed, Karen, our daughter and I stayed up and talked about family memories, namely, my mom and dad, and Karen's mom and dad, and their impact on us and on our kids.

We talked about my mom a lot, and her serious devotion to loved ones. She made a life out of her love of family, and it is obvious that what she lived she also handed down. My dad has clearly been a driving force in our children's memories and lives in so many ways.

Our daughter will no doubt hand down what they have been taught by not only their parents, but by

their grandparents. And that puts a smile on my face.

When our kids were young and would spend time during their summers at my mom and dad's in Irving, in the house where I grew up, my dad would sometimes sneak out of the family room unnoticed. Moments later, the kids would hear what sounded like a train whistle. Without fail, the kids looked in all directions, wondering why they heard a train in the house. It mystified them, and delighted their mom and me, and no doubt their grandparents, for years.

Late last year, when our daughter and her family visited us in Midland, she gave me a gift unexpectedly. I opened it and inside found the same kind of train whistle that my dad had when our kids were young.

Later that evening I excused myself, went into my office undetected, and blew the whistle. What a wonderful sound it made. Reports from the living room indicated the mystification gene had been successfully passed from our daughter to our daughter's daughter. Our grand-daughter will of course figure it all out one day, but for now, the look on her face will be a memory that won't soon fade.

With her gift of that balsa wood train whistle, our family has what now amounts to a three-generation tradition. Our daughter's simple gesture, filled with love, really amounts to something so much more: something has been handed down.

In his provocative book, "The Benedict Option," author Rod Dreher writes, "All it takes is the failure of a single generation to hand down a tradition for that tradition to disappear from the life of a family."

Keeping positive, Christian traditions alive keeps families alive. For the sake of the future of the family, such a practice cannot be overemphasized.



Patterson

## Speaking of Saints Monk, saint brought us first copyright suit, trial in 6th century Ireland

By Mary Lou Gibson

St. Columba of Iona was a "larger than life" personality who lit up 6th century Ireland and Scotland with a major literary dispute that caused a war between feuding Irish families and led to his exile on a remote island of southwest Scotland.

He was born at Gartan (County Donegal) into the royal Irish clan of O'Neill in 521. He trained as a monk under Finnian of Moville. Paul Burns writes in *Butler's Lives of the Saints* that when he was ordained, his family gave him a fort at Daire Calgach, now Derry, and this became his first monastery.

His love of books and learning got him into big trouble when he took a rare copy of St. Jerome's Psalter and secretly made a copy of it, without the owner's permission. Finnian claimed the copy as his and took his case to King Diarmid. Sean Kelly and Rosemary Rogers write in *Saints Preserve Us!* that this led to history's first copyright lawsuit and trial.

When the King decided the case against Columba, all hell (quite literally) broke out. Columba's clan went to war with King Diarmid's followers and 3,000 died in battle. Burns wrote that Columba was held responsible and would have been excommunicated if St. Brendan had not interceded for him. So, why was this such a big deal? Well, the printing press had not yet been invented and all manuscripts and other documents had to be copied by hand which made them very valuable. Even making the ink took time.

And so began the next chapter in Columba's life. He and 12 relatives sailed for Scotland in 561 and landed on a small island off the southwest corner of Mull and built a monastery that became known as Iona. For the next 30 years, Columba worked to evangelize the Picts, Strathclyde Britons, Lothian Saxons and fellow Irish settlers converting many. Dom Basil Watkins writes in *The Book of Saints* that these four races made up the future kingdom of Scotland.

Columba continued to spend much of his time copying manuscripts, some of which are the earli-

est existing examples of Irish handwriting, according to editor Bernard Bangle writing in *Butler's Lives of the Saints*. Much of what we know of Columba's life was written decades later by Adomnán of Iona, his successor as abbot.

When he wasn't writing poetry or copying manuscripts, Columba was building monasteries, training its members and working with neighboring rulers to solve problems. David Farmer writes in the *Oxford Dictionary of Saints* that Columba converted Brude, King of the Picts, and consecrated the Irish King Aidan of Dalriada. Farmer describes him as a tall, striking figure of powerful build and impressive presence who combined the skills of a scholar, poet and ruler with a fervent commitment to God's cause.

His copy of the Cathach, a 6th century psalter became the battle book of the O'Neill clan. For centuries, they carried it with them on many victorious battles. It is now on display at the Royal Irish Academy.

While Iona remained Columba's headquarters, he returned to Ireland many times. Tom Cowan describes one event in *The Way of the Saints* when Columba argued successfully against a movement to strip Irish poets of some of their privileges. He believed that the poet played an important role in Celtic society, carrying on many of the spiritual and healing traditions of the druids.

When Columba died in 597, he had opened up a whole new field for the Christian faith. Columba's name is everywhere in Scotland. With the Gospel, his monks brought culture as well, books and learning, music and poetry.

His memory lived on in the approximately 27 monasteries and 40 churches he established. Even the name "Scotland" comes from Columba, for in those days, "Scoti" or "Scotus" meant "Irish."

Columba's monastic Rule was followed by many monasteries in western Europe until it was superseded by the less rigorous rule of St. Benedict.

Although Irish by birth, Columba is one of the most celebrated of the Scottish saints and there are many churches on the Scottish mainland dedicated to him. His feast day is June 9 and it is not on the General Roman Calendar. He is the patron of Ireland, Scotland, poets, and also of computer hackers and plagiarists.



Gibson



# Duty as a common virtue

By Fr. Knick and Sandie Knickerbocker

"There is one thing, Emma, which a man can always do, if he chooses, and that is his duty; not by maneuvering and finessing, but by vigor and resolution." So says Mr. Knightley in Jane Austen's novel, Emma (Ch. 18). Knightley is referring to the conduct of Frank Churchill, a young man who has not done his father the courtesy of a visit. Churchill's mother died when he was a child, and, since his mother's brother and his wife had no children, he was raised by them. His aunt and uncle provided him a life of luxury and made him their heir. Now that his father has recently remarried, Knightley sees it as Frank Churchill's duty to visit his father and his new wife. However, his formation in the household of his aunt and uncle has not prepared him to act dutifully. As Knightley says, "It is a great deal more natural than one could wish, that a young man, brought up by those who are proud, luxurious, and selfish, should be proud, luxurious, and selfish too."



Fr. Knick and Sandie Knickerbocker

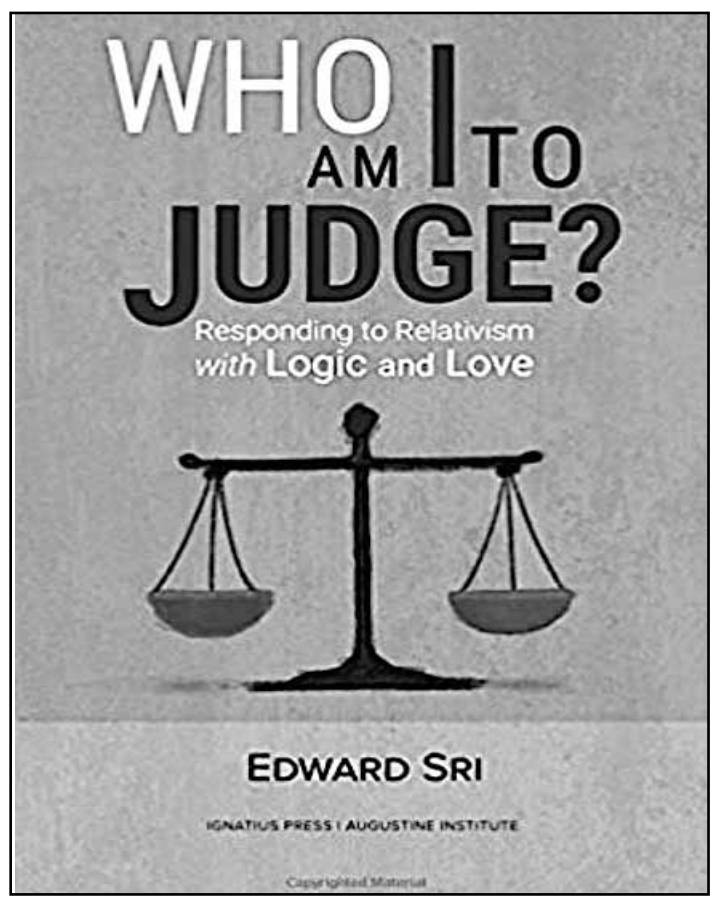
In this novel, published in 1816, Jane Austen presents us with a picture of the first stages of a transition from a proper understanding of duty to the present state of western culture in which the behavior of Frank Churchill is more common than it should be. It is not that most of us are raised in a state of material luxury, but pride and selfishness are certainly prevalent in our culture.

This decline in a desire to do our duty has been a gradual one. The British in World War II could understand duty when they said, "Keep Calm and Carry On." But, after the World War II generation the slide into an individualism characterized by narcissism became more evident. One example of this is our present emphasis on feeling. It is common for one person to ask another how they feel about something rather than what they believe or think about it. Our feelings become the basis for our actions rather than our beliefs or our reason.

Last month in America we celebrated "Mother's Day," and this month we celebrate "Father's Day." This is a good time for Christian fathers and mothers and grandfathers and grandmothers to examine our own families and ask ourselves how we are forming our children and grandchildren in the Christian faith. Are we teaching them by precept and example the behavior which duty requires? This is made more difficult in our time by our contemporary American culture that is not family-friendly. Divorce is rampant, and children are shuttled back and forth between parents who have married another spouse. Children, because of parental decisions, are denied a stable home and have to deal with complex relationships with stepparents, stepbrothers and stepsisters, and more than two sets of grandparents. Children suffer from the individualist, selfish, narcissistic choices of their parents. While we may not raise our children in material luxury, too often they are being raised to be as selfish as their parents are selfish. It is a good time for Catholic parents to consider again the duty they have to each other as husband and wife, the duty they have as parents to their children, and the duty of the children to honor their parents and grandparents.

Duty requires honesty about truth in the order of things in human relationships and in everything else. When one defines duty, it is first understood as obedient behavior to one's superiors. However, superiors have a duty to behave respectfully toward those over whom they have authority. At its basis, duty is behavior required by a moral obligation that acknowledges truth and is guided by that truth. Truth is not determined by or dependent upon our feelings, and

(Please See KNICKBEROCKERS/23)



Edward Sri's book, *Who Am I To Judge?*, published by Ignatius Press.)

## Sri's book encourages us to dare to be different for God's sake

By Brenda Lehr

### ► BOOK REVIEW

The United States Conference of Catholic Bishops states the following about mission: Where does the idea of mission come from? What exactly is mission? It consists of continuing Christ's own mission. Mission, is from the Latin word "to send," it means obeying Jesus' command to go out to all the nations, to baptize, and to teach the faith. We look to Christ himself as the model of the truly loving missionary.

Dr. Edward Sri, renowned Catholic theologian, author and professor at the Augustine Institute in Denver, said, "though people often say they want to make a difference in the world, we must realize that everyone is going to do that. Everyone is going to leave their mark and have an impact on other people's lives. The question is whether it will be a good or a bad impact."

Dr. Sri further explains, we all know that God, for some mysterious reason, has chosen to involve us human beings in the building up of his eternal Kingdom. Following God's call is not always easy, but somehow his grace manages to work wonders within our fallen human nature. The first thing to recognize is that we are called by God. Paul writes in Eph. 4:1, "I urge you to live a life worthy of the calling you have received."

Some may ask, "What is it that makes us different and gives us this power to transform the world?" What makes us different and powerful is not what we have or do; it is nothing but the message and power of the Cross of Christ.

The greatest moral evil of all time was the murder of God's Son, Jesus. Our faith gives us the certainty that God would not permit evil if he did not cause a good to come from that very evil. From this act of evil Christ won the Church for himself

at the price of his own blood and made the Church his co-worker in the salvation of the world. Therefore, Christ carries out His mission through the Church. Jesus dwells in us now and has made us belong to God. Our lives must be different because he empowers us to live for him and for no other. We must dare to be different for God's sake. That is why God worked so powerfully through St. Paul, because he was not afraid to be different as one belonging to God. Our world changes people; many are unwilling to be different, just so they can blend into the world, to be accepted, liked and to be just one of the crowd. People have to ask themselves whether they are willing to be different from others because they belong to God and to act differently because the Cross of Jesus makes a difference in their life.

Because our God is merciful, he meets people right where they are. We must never let our fear of being different from others cripple God's beautiful plan for us and our world. We must never stop striving to be all that God created us to be. Carrying out our missionary mandate faithfully demands patience and foresight, courage and humility, listening to God, and alert discernment of the "signs of the times".

In Dr. Sri's book *Who Am I to Judge*, he writes that the beauty of the Catholic moral vision makes sense out of life. It points to what makes us truly happy. It shows us the pathway to virtue, friendship, and lasting love. It also encourages us to face the truth about ourselves – our faults, our weaknesses, our sins – in light of the truth about God's unwavering love for us. Only by living the way

(Please See LEHR/22)



# Bienvenidos, Diáconos! *Welcome, Deacons!* Karibu, Shemasi!



Clockwise from top left, Reggie Odima and Freddie Perez prior to their diaconal ordination, May 27, 2017, at St. Mary Church in San Angelo. The two candidates lie prostrate on the floor; Bishop Michael J. Sis, presiding over the Ordination Mass, presents the Gospels to Deacon Odima; Deacon Perez is vested; Bishop Sis with the newly ordained deacons; Deacon Odima's family comes forward during the presentation of gifts; Deacon Perez at the altar; Bishop Sis with Deacons Josh Gray and Timothy Hayter, both of whom will be ordained priests in the diocese on June 10, 2017. Deacon Odima with family, and Deacon Perez with family. (Photos by Jimmy Patterson / The Angelus).



## Making Sense of Bioethics

# The Ethics of today's 'New Age Medicine'

By Fr. Tad Pacholczyk

Patients who face serious illnesses are sometimes attracted to alternative medicines, also referred to as "holistic" or "new-age" medicines. These can include treatments like homeopathy, hypnosis, "energy therapies" like Reiki, acupuncture, and herbal remedies, to name just a few.

These approaches raise various medical and ethical concerns. An important 1998 article in the New England



Pacholczyk

Journal of Medicine sums it up this way:

"What most sets alternative medicine apart, in our view, is that it has not been scientifically tested and its advocates largely deny the need for such testing. By testing, we mean the marshaling of rigorous evidence of safety and efficacy, as required by the Food and Drug Administration (FDA) for the approval of drugs and by the best peer-reviewed medical journals for the publication of research reports."

Beyond the fact that their clinical efficacy has not earned a passing grade using ordinary methods of scientific investigation, the basic premise behind some alternative medicines can also be highly suspect, raising concerns about superstitious viewpoints or misguided forms of spirituality motivating certain therapies.

If we consider acupuncture, this technique does appear to provide benefit in certain cases of pain control. Yet similar results have been reported using "sham" needles — tapping the skin in random places with a thin metal tube. Brain scans have demonstrated that treatment with genuine needles, as opposed to the sham needles, does cause detectable changes in the brain. But, when researchers ignored acupuncturists' recommended "meridian placement" of needles, and instead did random placement in the skin, the same brain effects were observed. Hence, it is unclear whether the results seen from acupuncture arise mostly from the well-known "placebo effect" or not. Further research should help resolve this question.

Even if the observed effects are not placebo-related, acupuncture's non-rational justification for its purported effectiveness remains a concern. It is based on energy principles that neither science nor faith affirm. Glenn Braunstein, M.D. described it critically in the following way:

"Ch'i, the invisible nutritive energy that flows from the universe into the body at any one of 500 acupuncture points, is conducted through the 12 main meridians [channels] in (ideally) an unbroken circle. Meridians conduct either Yin energy (from the sun) or Yang energy (from the earth). All maladies are caused by disharmony or disturbances in the flow of energy."

Clearly, then, some alternative therapies, beyond the basic issue about whether they work, raise serious spiritual concerns as well. Another new-age therapy known as Reiki,

developed in Japan in the late 1800s, claims that sickness can be caused by a disruption or imbalance in a patient's "Reiki" or "life energy." Reiki practitioners try to heal a patient by placing their hands in certain positions on the body in order to facilitate the flow of Reiki from the practitioner to the patient.

A 2009 document from the U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops stresses, "In terms of caring for one's spiritual health, there are important dangers" that can arise by turning to Reiki. The document notes that because Reiki therapy is not compatible with either Christian teaching or scientific evidence, it would be inappropriate for Catholics to put their trust in the method, because to do so would be to operate "in the realm of superstition, the no-man's-land that is neither faith nor science."

Scientific investigations of another new-age therapy, the popular herbal remedy known as echinacea (taken early to ward off a cold) have revealed no difference between echinacea and a placebo in controlled studies involving several hundred subjects. While some herbal remedies may be harmless and inert placebos, others may have more serious health consequences if ingested above certain dosages due to ingredients of unknown potency derived from natural substances.

Sometimes a remedy can be borrowed from Chinese, Indian or another medical tradition, but it should be chosen for its efficacy, safety, and reasonable mode of action, and not be in conflict with principles of sound medical science or Christian teaching.

Health improvements that arise from alternative remedies may be due not only to the placebo effect, but also to the fact that patients are usually given more time, attention and focused concern by alternative practitioners than by traditional physicians. This can translate into modified habits and changed lifestyles, leading to various health benefits.

Modern medicine can be legitimately faulted for downplaying this dimension, so that, in the memorable words of pediatrician Jay Perman, "Doctors tend to end up trained in silos of specialization," in which they are taught "to make a diagnosis, prescribe a therapy, and we're done. But we're not done."

The famous Greek physician Hippocrates once noted the same point: "It is more important to know what sort of person has a disease than to know what sort of disease a person has." Today's physicians-in-training, fortunately, are seeking to incorporate more and more of these "patient-centric" and "holistic" aspects into their own traditional medical practices to improve patient care and outcomes.

*Rev. Tadeusz Pacholczyk, Ph.D. earned his doctorate in neuroscience from Yale and did post-doctoral work at Harvard. He is a priest of the diocese of Fall River, MA, and serves as the Director of Education at The National Catholic Bioethics Center in Philadelphia. See [www.ncbcenter.org](http://www.ncbcenter.org)*

## CALENDARS (continued)

(From 3)

15 — Msgr. Larry Droll (1973)  
20 — Fr. Serafin Avenido (1977)  
24 — Msgr. Maurice Voity (1979)  
29 — Fr. Joseph Ogbonna (2002)  
29 — Fr. Richard Regan (1985)

### PRIEST ORDINATION DATES

JULY

8 — Fr. Romanus Akamike (1989)  
12 — Fr. Michael Udegbuma (1981)  
19 — Bishop Michael Sis (1986)  
27 — Fr. John Kuehner (2003)

### NECROLOGY—PRIESTS JUNE

7-Rev. Ray Corr, O.P. (2005)  
8-Rev. Felix Cubelo (2007)  
13-Rev. David Espitia (2003)  
17-Rev. Barry Mclean (2012)  
18-Rev. John Lucassen (1993)  
22-Rev. Msgr. Alvin Wilde (1996)  
28-Bishop Stephen Leven (1983)

### NECROLOGY—PRIESTS JULY

2-Rev. Bernard Degan, C.M. (2001)  
2-Deacon Floyd Frankson (1992)  
4-Rev. Msgr. Charles Dvorak (1963)

5-Rev. Ray Wilhelm, OMI (2006)  
10-Rev. Emil J. Gerlich (1969)  
19-Rev. Msgr. Andrew Marthaler (1984)  
22-Bishop Thomas J. Drury (1992)  
26-Deacon Jose Rosales (2000)  
26-Deacon Abel Campos (2002)

### NECROLOGY—DEACONS JUNE

20-Deacon William Smith (2003)

JULY

2-Deacon Lloyd Franksen (1992)  
26-Deacon Jose Rosales (2000)  
26-Deacon Abel Campos (2002)

## Mother and child in the Hispanic Catholic imagination

By Hosffman Ospino  
Catholic News Service

May is traditionally a month when Catholics turn our attention toward Mary more intentionally. Marian processions and crownings in parishes and schools remind us of our childhood. I love processions!

I remember the school processions in May growing up in Colombia, South America, holding candles and singing hymns as we followed an image or a beautifully decorated statue of the Virgin Mary. Parents and neighbors joined along. By the way, this was a public school. Different world.

There is something awe-inspiring about the love for Mary among U.S. Hispanic and Latin American



Ospino

Catholics. Countless souls in the continent have embraced and grown into the depths of the Christian faith moved by our love for Mary. The Marianist motto, "to Jesus through Mary," rings very much true in Hispanic/Latino cultures.

Not long ago, the most popular Marian devotion among U.S. Catholics was the Immaculate Conception. The devotion reminds us that God preserved Mary from the effects of original sin to be the mother of Jesus. Depictions of the Immaculate Conception present Mary as a lone woman radiating purity and holiness.

Today, the most popular Marian devotion in the U.S. is Our Lady of Guadalupe! One more sign of the profound cultural and demographic changes redefining the U.S. Catholic experience. More and more Marian devotions from Latin America -- and

(Please See IMAGINATION/23)

## Madre e hijo en el imaginario católico hispano

By Hosffman Ospino  
Catholic News Service

Mayo es tradicionalmente un mes en el que los católicos reflexionamos de manera más atenta sobre María. Las procesiones marianas y los ritos de coronación que ocurren en parroquias y escuelas nos recuerdan nuestra infancia. ¡Me encantan las procesiones!

Recuerdo que cuando era niño en Colombia, mi colegio organizaba procesiones en el mes de mayo en las cuales llevábamos velitas y entonábamos cantos mientras que seguíamos una imagen o una bella estatua de la Virgen María. Nuestros padres y vecinos caminaban con nosotros. Lo interesante es que éste era un colegio público. Definitivamente, otra realidad.

Hay algo profundamente inspirador en el amor que los católicos hispanos y latinoamericanos tenemos hacia María. Muchas almas en el continente nos hemos acercado a la fe y crecido en ella movidos por nuestro amor a María. El lema marianista, "a Jesús por María", realmente se hace realidad en las culturas hispanas/latinas.

No hace mucho, la devoción mariana más común entre los católicos estadounidenses era la Inmaculada Concepción. Esta devoción nos recuerda que Dios preservó a María de los efectos del pecado original para ser la madre de Jesús. Las imágenes de la Inmaculada Concepción nos presentan a María como una mujer radiando pureza y santidad.

(Mira OSPINO/23)

## Catholic Voices

# Strategies for keeping cradle Catholics in the church

By Elise Italiano  
Catholic News Service

In his book "The Four Loves," C.S. Lewis writes, "The typical expression of opening friendship would be something like, 'What? You too? I thought I was the only one.'"

I think this is the reason that a good number of my friends are Catholic converts. I have spent the better part of my adult life trying to communicate the church's teachings in various professions. The Gospel is good. I've always thought it worth sharing.

Conversion requires a "turning toward" the truth. Whenever I meet a convert, I think of the Gospel of Luke in which Jesus decisively "sets his face toward Jerusalem." There is a boldness to it that I admire. I never had a radical turn at any point: no conversion, no reversion. It's been rather unglamorous.

Each one of my friends who are converts has asked me how I managed to stay Catholic as an adult. The odds aren't great for those of us who start out in the faith. According to the Pew Research Center, nearly half of Catholics in the United States leave the church at some point in their lives. Four out of 10 of them don't



Italiano

return.

I suppose from a statistical standpoint, I "made it" through a cultural gauntlet and tepid catechesis (perhaps captured best as a soccer-playing Jesus who graced the cover of one of my CCD books). But asking me how I've stayed Catholic is like asking me how I've stayed female or stayed Italian-American.

In fact, growing up, I didn't realize there was a difference between being Catholic and being Italian. I thought that every child ate Sunday meals at their grandparents' house near the local parish, buried a statue of St. Joseph upside down to sell a house and prayed one Hail Mary before taking the pizzelle off the iron.

Cradle Catholics begin their lives standing "toward" Christ. But we do need a sturdy foundation under our feet. In my life, this foundation came from my parents and grandparents. Pope Francis has been telling youth for four years to pay attention to them. I always cheer him on.

I also needed people to help me stay on course. These were priests and campus ministers who counseled me in college.

They were the professors who helped me to see that what my grandmother had shared at her dinner table had coherent scriptural, theological and philosophical support behind it (maybe not how to sell a house, but other things).

That combination of pastoral care and intellectual clarity compelled me to choose to conform my moral life to the Gospel.

I needed people standing side by side with me, holding my hand in dark moments as I looked at the cross and thought, "Why?" These have been friends and mentors. It helped to meet strangers -- 1.5 million or so -- at World Youth Day, who traveled to Madrid to see and hear the pope like I did.

I also needed to encounter -- both in passing and very intimately -- people who didn't see the world through the same lens. Being challenged by them, asking them questions, loving them and being loved by them has been uniquely fortifying.

Pope Francis has said that "no one becomes a Christian on his or her own." No one stays a Christian on his or her own, either. If cradle Catholics, especially those at pivotal moments during their youth, have a shot at staying in the church, we need to help them experience, like C.S. Lewis says, that they are "not the only ones."

Grace doesn't need big moments through which to work -- only a little openness and some opportunity.

Join the conversation. Email: [inlightoffaith@catholic-news.com](mailto:inlightoffaith@catholic-news.com) Elise Italiano is executive director of communications at The Catholic University of America.

## Retaining the dignity of life important to the dying

By Greg Erlandson  
Catholic News Service

My father-in-law died this past month. He was a good, hard-working man, an immigrant, self-taught and self-reliant.

As is likely both the fear and the fate of many of us, he died in a hospital, tethered to a swarm of IVs. With various doctors weighing in on his various conditions, his family struggled to make the right decisions at a time of conflicting advice and great emotion. No one wanted him to go. No one wanted him to suffer.

All our lives, we've been trained to rely on doctors for advice. At this literally life-and-death moment, however, they often let us down. As Dr. Dhruv Khullar wrote in The New York Times recently, "For years the medical profession has largely fumbled the question of what we should do when there's nothing more we can do."

In his column, Khullar described a situation where "Medicare spending for patients in the last year of life ... accounts for quarter of the total Medicare budget." But all of this spending does not necessarily mean that the patient is living longer or is

more comfortable, or that the family is more informed. Indeed, there is some evidence that less aggressive care can lead to more time and less discomfort for the patient.

Proponents of palliative care (when treatment for symptoms can continue) and hospice (when treatments are discontinued but a patient's comfort in his final stage is paramount) are more vocal now, but one's access to such measures often depend on one's class and race as well as one's health care system.

There are many reasons for Catholics and Catholic institutions to support frank conversations about such alternatives. We do not hold that life is to be clung to at all costs, nor do we believe that extraordinary means must be taken to preserve life. We know that there is more to life than death.

Yet because of our belief in the dignity of human life, we are also sensitive to anything that smacks of coercion, that puts the vulnerable at risk or that masks itself as compassionate when it is simply a ruthless calculation.

"Death by doctor" is frequently offered up as an alternative to what many fear will be a long, expensive, painful decline. Often called "assisted suicide," it is a brilliant bit of marketing, as is the organization that sells it. Once named after a poison (the Hemlock Society), this organiza-

tion now calls itself Compassion & Choices. Its lobbyists have been relentlessly pursuing assisted suicide laws across the nation.

And they have had success, with some form of assisted suicide legal in six states and the District of Columbia. This year, nine states are considered vulnerable to this kind of legislation. The American Medical Association's Council on Ethical and Judicial Affairs is studying the doctor-assisted suicide issue and will submit a report in June.

What drives many voters to be open to death by doctor is the fear that at the end of their lives, they will lose control and suffer great pain. If my family's experience is any guide, this is where sensitive and humane caregivers can play a critical role, helping a family facing difficult decisions.

If doctors don't step in, the marketers of assisted suicide will. And the slope is both slippery and steep.

Belgium and the Netherlands both legalized end-of-life assisted suicide, promising strict safeguards. Now patients suffering from depression, schizophrenia, autism and other nonfatal diseases can opt for what increasingly looks like mercy killing.

The sting of death today is when cost controls and convenience masquerade as choice for those most vulnerable to coercion.



Erlandson

## Cartoon Corner



"SURPRISE! HAPPY MOTHER'S DAY! I LOVE YOU SO MUCH I BRAVED AN OVERBOOKED FLIGHT JUST TO SEE YOU TODAY!"





## Catholic Voices

**'The World Will Be Saved By Beauty' — an extraordinary book****By Fr. Ron Rolheiser**

Dorothy Day is alleged to have said: Don't call me a saint; I don't want to be dismissed that easily! A new biography on her by her granddaughter, Kate Hennessy, *Dorothy Day - The World will be saved by Beauty: An Intimate Portrait of my Grandmother*, will, I believe, go a long way in preventing anyone from turning Dorothy Day, soon to be officially canonized by the church, into what she feared, a plaster-saint who can be piously doted-upon and then not taken seriously.

We're all, I'm sure, familiar with who Dorothy Day was and what her life's work was about. Indeed, Pope Francis in addressing the US Congress, singled out four Americans who, he suggests, connected spirituality to a life of service in an extraordinary way: Abraham Lincoln, Martin Luther King, Thomas Merton, and Dorothy Day. This new biography gives us an honest picture of who this remarkable woman actually was.

This book is extraordinary for a number of reasons: Kate Hennessy is a very good writer, the book is the product of years of research, she's Dorothy's granddaughter

**Fr. Rolheiser**

and had a very close and special relationship with her, and she manages in telling Dorothy's story to keep both a healthy critical and aesthetic distance. Her insight is both privileged and rare, privileged because of her intimate relationship with Dorothy and rare because most authors who are that intimately tied to their subject cannot maintain a balanced critical distance. Hennessy admits that doing this was no easy task: "That is the danger of holiness on your own doorstep, in your own family. Either you cannot see it for the view is too close, or if you do, you feel you haven't a chance of being the person she was. You feel it is a sad mistake that you are related."

And that combination makes for an extraordinary book that lets us see a side of Dorothy Day we would never see otherwise. Beyond this being a close-up of Dorothy Day, Hennessy shares stories about some of the key people surrounding Dorothy: Her relationship to the man who fathered her child, Foster Battenham, with whom she maintained a life-long friendship. Hennessy's biography shatters the myth that upon her conversion Dorothy coldly and forever turned her back upon this man. Not true. They remained close their whole lives and Foster, until her death, remained an intimate companion and a faithful supporter.

Central too to this biography is the

story of Dorothy's daughter, Tamar, who, while vitally important in Dorothy's life, is unfairly absent in virtually everything that's known about Dorothy in the popular mind. Tamar's story, which holds its own richness and is not incidental to the history of the Catholic worker, is critical to understanding Dorothy Day. There's no understanding of Dorothy without understanding her daughter's story and that of her grandchildren. To understand Dorothy Day you also have to see her as a mother and grandmother.

Hennessy shares how, when her diaries were opened some years after Dorothy's death, Tamar initially was bitterly resistant to having them released for publication and how that resistance was only lifted when, thanks to the man who transcribed them, Robert Ellsberg, the family and Tamar herself realized that her resistance was rooted in the fact that Dorothy's diaries themselves were unfair in their neglect of Tamar's story and the role of her story within the bigger narrative of Dorothy's life, work, and legacy.

The book is a story too of some of the people who played key roles in founding the Catholic Worker: Peter Maurin, Stanley Vishnewski, and Ade Bethune.

This isn't a story that follows the classical genre for the lives of the saints, where form is often exaggerated to highlight essence and the result is an overidealization that paints the saint into an icon.

Hennessy highlights that Dorothy's faith wasn't a faith that never doubted and which walked on water. What Dorothy never doubted was what faith calls us to: hospitality, non-violence, and service to the poor. In these things, Dorothy was single-minded enough to be a saint and that manifested itself in her dogged perseverance so that at end she could say: "The older I get the more I feel that faithfulness and perseverance are the greatest virtues — accepting the sense of failure we all must have in our work, in the work of others around us, since Christ was the world's greatest failure."

That being said, her life was messy, many of her projects were often in crisis, she was forever over-extended, and, in her granddaughter's words: "She was fierce, dictatorial, controlling, judgmental, and often angry, and she knew it. It took the Catholic Worker, her own creation, to teach her her lessons."

This is hagiography as it should be written. It tells the story of how a very human person, caught-up in the foibles, weaknesses, and mess that beset us all, can, like St. Brigid, cast her cloak upon a sunbeam and see it spread until it brings abundance and beauty to the entire countryside.

*Oblate Father Ron Rolheiser, theologian, teacher, and award-winning author, is President of the Oblate School of Theology in San Antonio.*

**How to preach like Christ's Apostles****By Most Rev. Robert Barron**  
Auxiliary Bishop of Los Angeles

I have always loved the Acts of the Apostles and have often recommended it to those who are approaching the Bible for the first time. Filled with colorful narratives, adventure, martyrdom, persecution, journeys by sea, etc., it makes for stimulating reading indeed. But I love it especially because it shows us the excitement of being a follower of Jesus. Long before there were parishes and dioceses and the Vatican and other institutional structures, there was this band of brothers and sisters who were so overwhelmed and energized by the fact of the resurrection that they went careening around the world and to their deaths with the message of Jesus.

It also features some wonderful exemplifications of Christian preaching, for it relates to us some of the earliest kerygmatic proclamations of the apostles. If we attend carefully to these speeches, we can learn a lot about good preaching, but also a lot about the nature of Christianity. A particularly fine example is the sermon given by St. Peter on Pentecost morning and described in the second chapter of the Acts of the Apostles. We hear that Peter stood up with the Eleven and raised his voice. First lesson: all legitimate Christian teaching and proclamation is apostolic, which is to say, grounded in the witness of the first

**Bishop Barron**

intimate followers of Jesus. Bishops are entitled to preach precisely because they are successors of the apostles; priests and deacons are formally commissioned to preach by bishops. This is to assure that what preachers say is not just a matter of private opinion or the fruit of the present cultural consensus, but is rather rooted in the experience of those who knew Jesus personally.

So what does apostolic preaching sound like? Peter says, "Let the whole house of Israel know for certain that God has made him both Lord and Messiah, this Jesus whom you crucified." Notice, first, the strength, confidence, and edginess of this proclamation. There is nothing weak, vacillating, or unsure about it. This is not a preacher sharing his doubt with you or revealing in the complexity and multivalence and ambiguity of faith. This is a man speaking (in a loud voice) about his absolute conviction. And what is he convicted about? "That God has made him both Lord and Messiah, this Jesus whom you crucified." Christos, the Greek term for Messiah from which we derive the English word Christ, has the sense of anointed, which implies the new David, which means the fulfillment of the expectation of Israel. Good preaching always puts Jesus in relation to Israel, for he makes sense only kata ta grapha (according to the Scriptures). A Jesus abstracted from the history of Israel devolves in short order into a mere religious teacher or teacher of timeless spiritual truths.

And not only is he Christ; he is also Kyrios (Lord). This term had, at the time of Peter and Jesus, both a Jewish and a Roman sense. On the Jewish reading, it designated

Yahweh, the God of Israel, for Adonai (Lord, in Hebrew) was the typical substitute for the unpronounceable tetragrammaton, YHWH. Paul, who continually calls Jesus "Lord," says that Jesus was given the name above every other name, by which he means the name of God. Preaching that leaves the divinity of Jesus aside or in the shadows is, therefore, not Apostolic preaching. Now Kyrios also had a Roman sense, since Caesar was called kyrios, meaning the one to whom final allegiance is due. Do you see how edgy and subversive it was to declare that Jesus is Lord, and by implication, Caesar is not? And do you see why those who made that claim usually ended up imprisoned and/or put to death? A twentieth century Anglican bishop memorably expressed the insight as follows: "When Paul preached, there were riots; when I preach, they serve me tea."

Notice, next, that Peter is not tickling the ears of his hearers: "God has made both Lord and Christ this Jesus whom you crucified." He's not pulling any punches or trying to win friends and influence people. About as bluntly and clearly as he possibly can, he names the sin of his audience. And this is precisely what "cuts to the heart" of his hearers. Trust me when I tell you that abstract spiritual principles, tired bromides, and timeless moral truths don't cut people to the heart. And so they cry out, "What are we to do?" Peter's sermon continues: "Repent and be baptized for the forgiveness of your sins." Every truly evangelical sermon should be a call to repentance, to turn one's life around. If it doesn't lead to contrition and a conviction to change, it has not cut to the heart. Mind you, this doesn't entail moralizing in a

brow-beating way, but rather the presenting of the message of Jesus in such a clear and compelling way that people naturally see how they've fallen short and want to change.

Peter concludes: "Save yourselves from this corrupt generation." Followers of Jesus are a holy nation, a people set apart. We have renewed minds and wills; we should profile ourselves distinctly against the backdrop of the world. If we think and act like everyone else, we haven't taken in the Gospel. Relatedly, if all we hear from the pulpit is what can be heard on talk-shows and in discussion groups and in political conversations, we haven't heard the Gospel. Finally, we are told that, "Three thousand persons were added [to the Church] that day." I know that everyone and his brother tells us not to worry about numbers and there is indeed truth to that. For God wants us to be, not successful, but faithful, as Mother Teresa said. However, like it or not, the Bible is interested in numbers. And good preaching, if it is truly evangelical, is meant to draw people into the Church. That they are staying away from the Church in droves today says, I would suggest, something rather negative about the quality of our preaching.

To all preachers, I might recommend a careful consideration of the kerygmatic sermonizing in the Acts of the Apostles. If you preach like Peter, they might not serve you tea after every homily, but they will know that they've been cut to the heart.

*Bishop Robert Barron is an auxiliary bishop of the Archdiocese of Los Angeles and the founder of Word on Fire Catholic Ministries.*

# Virtue acquired by copying life's good examples

By John Garvey  
Catholic News Service

It's that time of year again — time to fight over commencement speakers. It happens every May. Some Catholic college will feature a speaker who has taken public positions at odds with the church's teaching.

This year the University of San Francisco's law school invited Xavier Becerra, California's pro-abortion attorney general. (USF didn't give him an honorary degree, an interesting wrinkle.)

Universities shouldn't cause scandal by honoring or giving public signals of agreement with people who promote grave injustice. As the American bishops have put it, Catholic institutions "should not honor those who act in defiance of our fundamental moral principles. They should not be given awards, honors or platforms which would suggest support for their actions."

It's hard to argue with that. But I wish we would view our annual commencement exercises as something more than an opportunity to avoid causing scandal. (I could accomplish that much by giving the commencement address myself, though I suspect that after a few years, parents and graduates would skip the exercise.)



Garvey

Ideally, our graduation rituals should have a positive purpose. I don't just mean getting good publicity by attaching ourselves to somebody famous and making the evening news on a slow day.

At The Catholic University of America, we try to invite people who offer our graduates examples of what they should aspire to in life, now that they have completed their studies. "You are finished now," we say. "Go and do as these people have done."

This was our practice long before I became president. The speakers and honorary degree recipients we have held up for our students' emulation over the years have included at least two saints: Mother Teresa of Kolkata (1971) and St. Katharine Drexel (1939). Venerable Archbishop Fulton J. Sheen, a member of our faculty for 23 years, spoke in 1975.

In recent years, we have given honorary degrees to the founders and leaders of influential lay movements in the church: Communion and Liberation, Focolare, the Neocatechumenal Way, Community of Sant'Egidio, Instituto Fe y Vida.

We have honored great thinkers (Etienne Gilson, Jean Piaget, Jaroslav Pelikan, John Hope Franklin, Dana Gioia); athletes (Roger Staubach, Philip Rivers); judges (John T. Noonan Jr., Antonin Scalia, Samuel Alito); comedians (Bob Newhart, Jim and Jeanne Gaffigan); and musicians (Mstislav Rostropovich, Manfred Honeck).

This year we invited Peggy Noonan of The Wall Street

Journal -- a public thinker, author, historian and journalist. Last month, she won a Pulitzer Prize in commentary for her far-sighted columns on the rise of President Donald Trump, an event that caught most Americans by surprise.

The commencement addresses we have heard from some of these people have been inspiring. But having attended far more graduations than the average person, I think I have learned two things that may help in the selection process.

The first is that nobody remembers what the speaker says. This is not because the talks are bad. Some are really good. It's because the graduates' minds, and their parents', are fixed on the life-changing events of the weekend, and it's hard to pay attention.

The second is that people do remember who the speaker was. Commencement speakers do communicate an important parting lesson. But the lesson is embodied in the life of the honoree. This should not be so surprising. Isn't this how we always learn the practice of virtue?

Virtue is a habit, not a bit of information. We acquire it by copying good examples. St. Bonaventure, in his little treatise "Bringing Forth Christ," advises, "Seek the company of good people. If you share their company, you will also share their virtue." If we keep that thought in mind, we are less likely to cause a stir by inviting someone unworthy of the honor.

Garvey is president of The Catholic University of America in Washington. Catholic University's website is [www.cua.edu](http://www.cua.edu).

## How often can deacons preach? / Adoption by same-sex couples

By Fr. Kenneth Doyle  
Catholic News Service

**Q. I read recently in the Catholic press that representatives of the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops (USCCB) had written a letter in support of the Child Welfare Provider Inclusion Act. That legislation would protect social service agencies who refuse, on religious grounds, to provide adoption services for same-sex couples. Does that mean that the Catholic Church is opposed to such adoptions? (Queensbury, New York)**



Doyle

A. In 2003, the Vatican's Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith said that permitting adoption by same-sex couples is "gravely immoral," and it highlighted in particular the rights of children that would be violated.

The statement explained that "the absence of sexual complementarity in these unions creates obstacles in the normal development of children. ... They would be deprived of the experience of either fatherhood or motherhood. Allowing children to be adopted by parents living in such unions would actually mean doing violence to these children."

The congregation added that such a placement would openly contradict the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child that had made the best interests of the child "the paramount consideration in every case." That position of the church has since been reiterated several times and remains unchanged.

In 2010, when Pope Francis was still Cardinal Jorge Mario Bergoglio in Argentina, he noted that adoption by same-sex couples would result in "depriving

(children) of the human growth that God wanted them given by a father and a mother."

In 2015, following a gay pride march in Rome, Pope Francis repeated his belief that children need a mother and a father. The identity of children, said the pope, "matures (when it is) confronted with the love their father and mother have, confronted with this difference."

The 2017 statement by the USCCB to which your question refers stemmed from the fact that in recent years Catholic Charities agencies in Massachusetts, Illinois, California and the District of Columbia had been forced by the government to shut down their adoption and foster care service because they refused, on religious grounds, to place children with same-sex couples.

The Child Welfare Provider Inclusion Act, now before both houses of Congress, would prohibit discrimination against such agencies and allow them to continue their work without being compelled to violate their consciences.

**Q. My question has to do with the role of a deacon. Our own parish deacon had been preaching at our weekend Masses once a month, but lately that has crept up to twice a month. Recently he preached the homily at Masses on Easter Sunday and also on the following Sunday, which happened to be first Communion in our parish.**

**Our priest-pastor is young and, as far as I know, healthy. Is it normal for a deacon to play such a large role so frequently, especially on such important occasions? (City of origin withheld)**

A. There is no exact guideline as to the frequency of a deacon's preaching. That having been said, I think that your concern stands on good ground. Deacons are authorized to preach by the church's Code of Canon Law; Canon 764 says that "pres-

byters (priests) and deacons possess the faculty of preaching everywhere."

And while that canon expresses no preference or priority, the General Instruction of the Roman Missal (which is the official liturgical "rule book" of the church) clearly does. Section 66 states that "the homily should ordinarily be given by the priest celebrant himself or be entrusted by him to a concelebrating priest, or from time to time and, if appropriate, to the deacon."

To your question, for a deacon to preach regularly two Sundays a month, in my mind, runs counter to this provision. (I also think, although there's no rule on this, that parishioners expect to hear from -- and deserve to hear from -- their pastor for such major celebrations as Easter and first Communion.)

**Q. Is it true that men born out of wedlock cannot enter the priesthood? (Philadelphia)**

A. No, that is not true. But your question does reflect a lengthy period in the church's history when illegitimacy was ruled a barrier.

The Council of Poitiers, under Pope Paschal II, determined in the late 11th century that being born out of wedlock constituted an impediment to the priesthood. That stipulation continued in force for many years and was, in fact, written into the church's Code of Canon Law published in 1917 (Canon 984). The current code (as revised in 1983) eliminates that impediment entirely.

(As I understand the historical background, the chief reason for the rule was this: During the Middle Ages, a wealthy man embarrassed by the existence of an illegitimate son would sometimes try to "hide" the boy in a monastery where he would later be ordained to sacred orders. To preclude this, the impediment of illegitimacy was put in place.)

Even in the years, though, when the

canonical prohibition was in force, a bishop who wanted to accept for ordination a man born out of wedlock could apply to the Vatican for a dispensation to do so.

Certainly, the fact of illegitimacy was not the fault of the aspiring seminarian; yet, because a priest is the visible representative of Christ and should illustrate all that is best about the church, some bishops were not keen on ordaining men known in the community to be illegitimate or to have been born in other than a Catholic-recognized marriage.

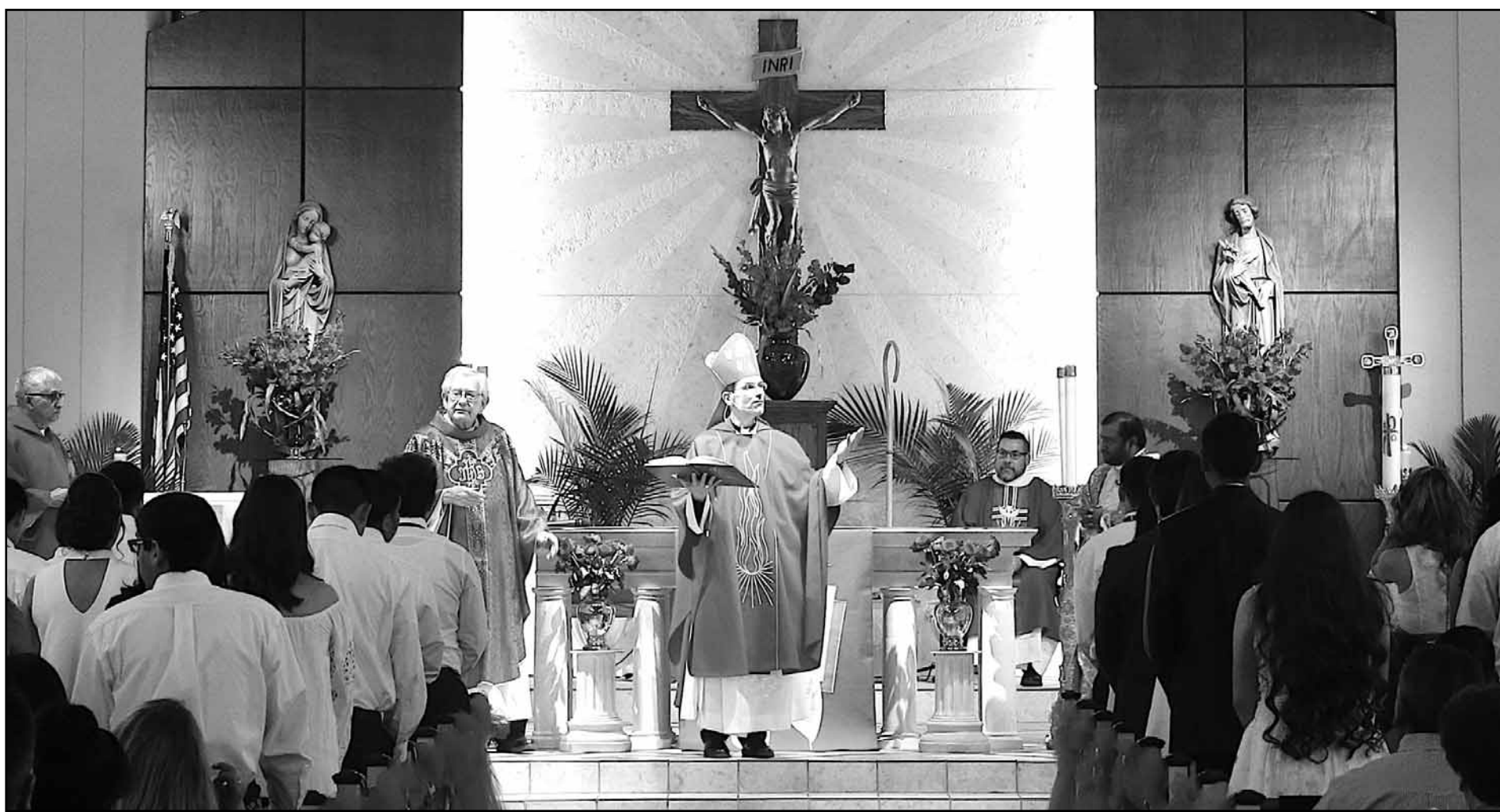
In the case of couple of friends of mine who fit that description and who wanted to enter the seminary in the 1950s and 60s (and I suspect this may have been a common practice then), these men were accepted for theological studies but were ordained to minister in a diocese different from their native ones.

**Q. As a baptized and confirmed Catholic and member of a parish, if I marry a non-Christian who does not want to convert to Christianity, can I be married in a Catholic church? And if we don't get married in a Catholic church, can my children be baptized as Catholics as long as I am a member and my spouse does not object? (We plan for me to bring up our children as Catholics.) (Iowa City, Iowa)**

A. By all means, you are welcome to be married in a Catholic church and are encouraged to do so. Or, with the proper permissions, you are also free to be married in a different place.

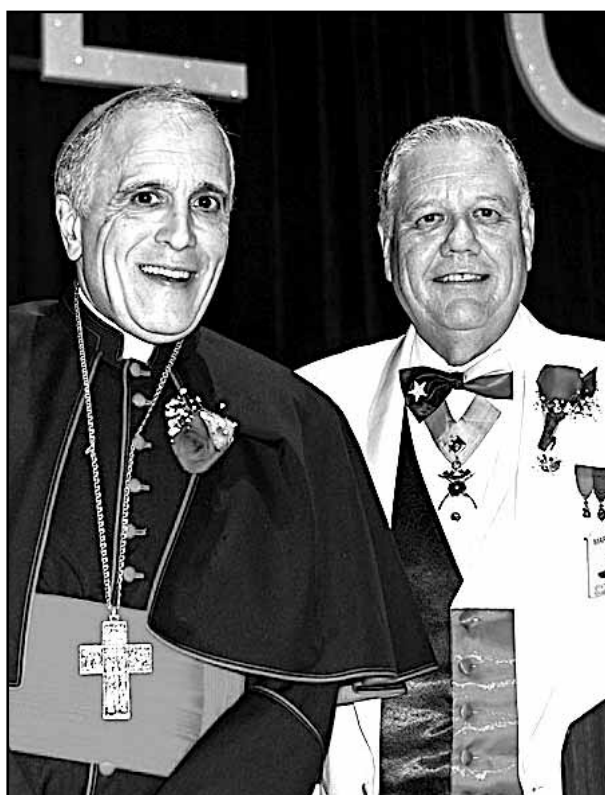
With the blessing of my diocese, I have officiated at many weddings between a Catholic and a non-Christian in a setting that was "neutral": Catholic-Jewish weddings, for example, at a hotel or country club or by a lakeside (sometimes assisted by a rabbi who offered some prayers or readings of his own); a Catholic-Muslim wedding on the lawn of the groom's parents, etc.

## Confirmation



Bishop Michael J. Sis presided over the Confirmation Mass at St. Stephen's Church in Midland, May 17, 2017. (Photo by Alan Torre / aptorre.com).

## Knights of Columbus State Council



At left, Cardinal Daniel DiNardo and State Secretary Mark Evans at the Texas State Council Knights of Columbus annual convention. At right, the 2017 Family of the Year, the Larry and Beth Odom family, from Hays. The Odoms are involved within their church community as lectors, altar servers, Extraordinary Ministers of Holy Communion, RCIA as sponsors of several people (including an entire family), catechists, and a liturgy coordinator. Their oldest son, Alex, joined the Knights when he turned 18. He graduated from Texas A&M, and in 2016 he entered the seminary at St. Joseph's in Covington, Louisiana. The other children have and continue to serve as altar servers. The older children graduate from being altar servers to Extraordinary Ministers of Holy Communion once they are confirmed. Several of them also serve as catechists, in the hospitality ministry, and in the parish youth group. (Photo courtesy Mark John, Knights of Columbus).



The Joy of the Gospel in America

# Convocation a ‘great opportunity for U.S.,’ sister says

Catholic News Service

WASHINGTON — Dominican Sister Marie Bernadette Thompson can't help but see things through a teacher's eyes after spending eight years teaching elementary and high school students and belonging to an order whose charism is education and the faith formation of young people.

But the 42-year-old sister, who has been council coordinator for the Council of Major Superiors of Women Religious since 2014, also is not opposed to being a student particularly when it comes to learning new ways to engage others in the faith and spread the Gospel message.

She hopes to pick up some pointers from other church leaders from around the country this summer at the "Convocation of Catholic Leaders: The Joy of the Gospel in America" July 1-4 in Orlando, Florida.

The convocation, sponsored by the U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops, is an invitation-only event meant to give the 3,000 participants expected to attend a better understanding of what it means to be missionary disciples in today's world through workshop presentations, keynote addresses and prayer.

Sister Marie Bernadette will attend the event as part of a Council of Major Superiors of Women Religious delegation with more than 20 major superiors representing orders, including the Little Sisters of the Poor, School Sisters of Christ the King, Franciscan Sisters of the Renewal and Sister Marie Bernadette's order, the Dominican Sisters of St. Cecilia. These women religious cover the spectrum of serving the poor and elderly, working in parish ministry and education or devotion to contemplative prayer and new evangelization.

She believes the council's delegates have a lot to bring to the table and also will have plenty they can take away from it.

She said the sisters' presence "will be a powerful expression of our union with the bishops and the daily commitment to



Dominican Sister Marie Bernadette Thompson, council coordinator for the Council of Major Superiors of Women Religious, prays before a statue of Mary May 16 outside of her Washington office. Sister Marie Bernadette has been chosen to be a delegate to the Convocation of Catholic Leaders being held in Orlando, Fla., July 1-4. (CNS photo/Chaz Muth)

the new evangelization," adding that these women religious are "on the peripheries of the new evangelization every day."

Personally, she said she's "delighted to be able to go" to the convocation, describing it as "an opportunity for the Holy Spirit to really bring us all together to share best practices, to share struggles, insights with others that we may not even know and may never have come in contact with."

She sees it as an important encouragement boost for faith leaders to continue the work they're already doing but she also views it as a challenge for all participants to take a responsible role leading the global church.

In a May 9 interview with Catholic News Service, she said the convocation delegates have a great opportunity with this event, noting that most countries don't have this chance to bring their Catholic leaders together. "I think we have a responsibility to take it seriously and to listen so we can not only help our own people but help the universal church in this worldwide mission of evangelization," she said.

Sister Marie Bernadette, who grew up in Long Island, New York, views evangelization as a key tool for the church moving forward and says the root of this missionary work needs to be based in prayer and listening and walking with others.

She knows a little bit about evangeliza-

tion from being on the other side of it when she was just out of college and wasn't sure of her next step. A newly ordained priest at her home parish was "on fire for the faith" and urged her never to be afraid to show her faith in public.

Sister Marie Bernadette certainly shows this faith now, wearing a full-length white habit and living in community with other sisters in Washington where together they begin and end each day with prayers.

She is convinced prayer is behind any success in drawing others to the church. As she put it: "The message we're bringing gives life to people and to us; we're best witnesses of that when we are spirit filled."

## Delegation of 10 from diocese to travel to Orlando for convocation

West Texas Angelus

The U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops have called the July 1-4 Convocation of Catholic Leaders in Orlando, Fla., to respond to the call of Pope Francis' encyclical *The Joy of the Gospel* and its message to live as missionary disciples.

The key outcomes sought by the convocation are to equip and energize Catholics to share the Gospel, to learn about effective communication strategies, to renew our commitment to missionary discipleship, and to open ourselves to move forward with the guidance of the Holy Spirit.

Delegates will review the teachings of the Catholic Church on the theme of evangelization from the Second Vatican Council until the current day, and will examine the connection between evangelization and pastoral planning.

"The first day of the Convocation will focus on nation-

al unity in the Church in the midst of diversity," said Bishop Michael J. Sis, one of 10 delegates attending from the Diocese of San Angelo. "We will be encouraged to take on a sense of personal responsibility to be true missionary disciples. On the second day we will study the landscape of the mission field in the United States. We will consider modern advances in technology and science. We will explore data from sociological researchers. We will affirm that all the baptized members of the Church are called to be agents of evangelization, regardless of their level of faith formation. We will focus on the connection between mercy and renewal. On the third day we will apply the information to our local needs. We will reflect as a diocesan team on practical strategies for our diocese beyond the convocation. We will process questions such as 'What are the peripheries in our area?' 'Who is missing from our churches?' 'Who are the ones who are unengaged with the life of the Church?' 'How do we share the Gospel with those who need to encounter

Christ?' We will consider practical strategies to revitalize our parishes and put into practice the social teachings of the Catholic Church. On the fourth day we will consider how to be Spirit-filled evangelizers equipped for excellence. As a diocesan team we will ask questions like 'How will what he have heard in this Convocation impact our ongoing efforts at evangelization?' 'What defines fruitfulness and effectiveness?' 'How can we inspire others to become missionary evangelizers?'"

From the Diocese of San Angelo, the following 10 people are planning to attend: Bishop Michael Sis, Father Bala Anthony Govindu, Sister Hilda Marotta, Sister Adelina Garcia, Sr. Elsa Garcia, Alison Pope, Jimmy and Karen Patterson, and Dave and Linda Erickson.

Some of the key presenters and facilitators include Cardinal Timothy Dolan, Cardinal Daniel DiNardo, Bishop Robert Barron, Curtis Martin, Dr. Hossfman Ospino, Sr. Helena Burns, FSP, Sr. Agnes Mary Donovan, SV, Sherry Weddell, and Dr. Carolyn Woo.

## Texas Conference of Catholic Bishops

# *Sine Die* Report on priority bills in the 85th legislative session

### By the Texas Catholic Conference of Bishops

This legislative session was marked by discord, but our priority bills fared better than average. While the legislative process is designed for bills to fail, a remarkably small percentage of bills (12 percent) passed this session -- the lowest percentage since 1891. However, 56 percent of our priority bills passed and only one bill (SB 4) we opposed passed. This results from the direct involvement of Texas Catholics and bishops, and the TCCB's legislative relationships. This report summarizes the impact of the Catholic church on Texas politics during the 85th Legislature.

### Pro-Life

**Win:** HB 35 / SB 258. We supported this bill to require the burial of the victims of abortion and remove the option of disposing victims in a landfill or grinding and flushing them into the sewer. It was included in SB 8, a large pro-life bill, which passed both the Senate and House.

**Win:** HB 3771. We supported this bill to provide a uniform definition of abortion in state law so treatment for ectopic pregnancies is not included in the legal definition of abortion. It was included in SB 8, a large pro-life bill, which passed both the Senate and House.

**Win:** SB 8 / HB 200. We supported this bill to ban partial-birth abortion in state law and ban the research or sale of victims of abortion. At final passage, it included HB 35 / SB 258 and HB 3771 and measures to ban dismemberment abortions. Both the Senate and House passed this bill.

**Win:** HB 2858 / SB 1377. We supported this bill to increase punishment for coerced abortions in the course of human trafficking, and require human trafficking hotline signs be posted in abortion facilities. This bill was included in HB

2552, and passed both the House and Senate.

**Loss:** SB 25 / HB 434. We supported this bill which prohibited wrongful birth lawsuits against doctors, through which people can allege they would have had an abortion if they had known the unborn child was disabled. The Senate passed this bill; the House did not.

**Loss:** HB 2962 / SB 1602. We supported this bill requiring accurate reporting for abortion complications to provide critical information for future policymaking. Both the House and the Senate passed this bill, but it died on a technicality during the final days of session.

### Children and Families

**Win:** HB 4. We supported this bill to increase funding for kinship foster care. Both the House and Senate passed this bill, and the Governor signed it.

**Win:** HB 5. We supported this bill to establish the Department of Family and Protective Services (DFPS) as its own agency. The House and Senate passed this bill, and the Governor signed it.

**Win:** SB 11 / HB 6. We supported this bill to establish community-based foster care, which will allow for local organizations and faith-based groups to take a more active role in recruiting foster families and providing temporary homes for foster children. Both the Senate and House passed this bill, and the Governor signed it.

**Win:** HB 3859 / SB 892. We supported this bill to protect religious liberty for faith-based organizations who provide direct services to foster children. Both the Senate and the House passed this bill.

**Loss:** SB 542 / HB 1184. We supported this bill to establish parental choice for low-income public-school students through a tax credit scholarship. Neither the Senate nor the House passed this bill.

**Loss:** HB 21. As written and passed by the House, this bill reformed school finance; as amended and passed by the

Senate, it also established parental choice through an ESA for special needs students. We supported the bill as amended but the House and Senate could not come to agreement on the final content of the bill, and it died.

### Health and Human Services

**Win:** HB 10. We supported this bill to establish greater access to mental health-care and substance abuse treatment. Both the House and the Senate passed the bill.

**Win:** HB 13. We supported this bill to establish a grant to match donations to mental health programs. Both the House and the Senate passed this bill.

### Immigration

**Loss:** SB 4. We opposed this bill to increase cooperation between federal ICE agents and local police. SB 4 requires police honor ICE detainer requests for arrested persons, and it allows police to work with ICE to enforce immigration law. Both the House and Senate passed this bill, and the Governor signed it.

**Loss:** SB 1054. We supported this bill to increase punishment for undocumented migrants committing violent crimes in a way that maintained targeted enforcement of immigration law. Neither the House nor the Senate passed this bill.

**Win:** SB 1018 / HB 2225. We opposed this bill to waive state licensing requirements for migrant family detention centers, which would have allowed them to increase the number of detainees. The Senate passed this bill, but the House did not.

### Poor and Vulnerable

**Win:** HB 2008. We supported this bill to ensure the state has the ability to enforce the federal military lending act of 2006 so members of the military are not targeted by payday lenders. Both the House and the Senate passed this bill.

**Win:** Floor Amendments. We opposed

several amendments proposed on the House floor, which could have been quickly attached to bills at the last minute, and would have voided the 42 payday ordinances we have worked so hard to establish. We stopped these through timely advocacy.

**Loss:** HB 1134. We supported this bill to establish regulations upon predatory payday lending throughout Texas. Neither the House, nor the Senate passed this bill.

**Win:** HB 31. We opposed this bill to speed up an individual property owner's timeframe to obtain a groundwater permit because it also impeded a local community's control over groundwater exports. The House passed this bill, but the Senate did not.

**Win:** SB 1628. We opposed this bill to repeal the hearing process for environmental quality permits because it limited public participation in environmental decisions. Neither the House nor the Senate passed this bill.

### Criminal Justice

**Win:** HB 2552. We supported this bill to combat the establishment of massage parlors, which front for prostitution and human trafficking. This bill was also amended with pro-life bill HB 2858. Both the House and Senate passed this bill.

**Loss:** HB 3054 / SB 1616. We supported this bill to allow a judge to give more accurate instructions to sentencing juries. Neither the House nor the Senate passed this bill.

**Loss:** SB 1859. We supported this bill to establish a human-trafficking team in the Department of Public Safety. Neither the Senate nor the House passed this bill.

**Loss:** HB 147 / HB 316. We supported these bills to repeal the law of parties for capital offenses. Neither the House nor the Senate passed these bills

## USCCB communications restructures, shifts focus from digital to print

### By Chaz Muth Catholic News Service

WASHINGTON (CNS) — The chief communications officer for the U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops' Department of Communications announced a restructuring that will shift the focus of its operation from a traditional print structure to a digital model.

"It's an exercise in enculturation," said James Rogers, USCCB chief communications officer. "If you're going to evangelize, you need to reach people where they are."

The communications department was built when print and newspapers were the dominant force in media. The landscape has been dramatically transitioning in recent years to a digital platform, where information is frequently sought and shared in real time, Rogers told Catholic

News Service May 8.

Though print content will continue to be generated, more resources will be directed toward visual media, digital content and social media dissemination, Rogers said.

The restructuring involves the elimination of 12 jobs and the creation of 10 new positions.

Employees whose jobs were eliminated will be considered for the newly created positions if they have the required skills to do the work, Rogers said.

Planning for the restructuring began in 2014 with the commission of two different studies from independent communications consulting groups.

The consultants were charged with examining the department's operation and recommending how to best reach the USCCB's targeted audiences.

The only area not directly impacted by the communications restructuring was

Catholic News Service, which will retain its current staff and remain editorially independent of the USCCB.

"A part of the review was to look at the position of Catholic News Service within, for the lack of a better word, the space of the dialogue that takes place," Rogers said. "Catholic News Service is very well-respected. When we did the survey of clients and customers, we found its position of trust is on par with, or higher than that of any other Catholic news outlet that you could compare CNS to."

"The reason you are not seeing change, in terms of the core structure of Catholic News Service, is because of the tremendous content creation capacity that is there," he said. "It's a well-respected, well-known brand."

The challenge for CNS is that "people tie it to channels and since it was born as a print wire service," they don't necessarily

associate it with the digital content it produces, such as video, its multimedia offerings, or its social media endeavors in breaking Catholic news, Rogers said.

"So, we're making changes to the marketing structure of CNS," he said, "because the content is there. The key is raising the awareness among those who would be interested in that content."

In addition to retooling how the communications department markets CNS, the reorganization also will build a dedicated digital team and provide episcopal resources to help bishops throughout the U.S. share national and international news of the church to their audiences.

The marketing team is being renamed Marketing and Episcopal Resources with specialists who will focus on web development, digital media, graphic design, marketing, sales, distribution and content coordination.

# COVOS

(From 5)

He added that during deployments, priests will always be able to celebrate either Easter or Christmas with the troops. During his first deployment, he greeted troops coming off the transport plane on Easter Sunday. For that Easter Mass, lilies were imported from Holland.

His next deployment is this fall and will be in the Middle East and will encompass Christmas.

One of the things that has stuck out to Fr. Covos during his service is that he has been stationed with military members with ties to the diocese, which is no small feat with 1.8 million Catholics serving in the military.

“I was actually ministering to people from the diocese, even though I wasn’t in the diocese,” he said. “That gave me a nice vision of it being a global ministry.” Last summer, he even gave the invocation prior to the NASCAR Xfinity Series race

at Dover International Speedway after the track asked for a chaplain volunteer. He said that it took some prodding from his nephew who is a huge NASCAR fan to get him to volunteer.

Father Covos is on loan from our diocese to what’s officially called the Archdiocese for the Military Services, USA and the work that he’s doing for our military has not gone unnoticed by Bishop Michael Sis.

“There is a great need for priestly ministry everywhere, including in our diocese,” Bishop Sis said. “For us, it’s an extra sacrifice to have one of our priests serving in the Archdiocese for the Military. It’s a sacrifice that is worthwhile because of the shortage of Catholic priests to serve them in the military.”

Bishop Sis added that he has known many service members who have benefited from having a priest there while they were active duty.

“I believe that any diocese should be

willing to consider allowing a priest to go and serve the military if they have a priest to give,” he said. “Even if (Fr. Covos) were not serving anyone from our diocese, he still is doing valuable ministry because he is serving the universal Church.”

Bishop Sis also said that priests with military background come back to the diocese with valuable experience that helps them in their parish ministry.

With Fr. Covos not having not been stationed anywhere near the diocese since Bishop Sis was installed 3 1/2 years ago, the pair met for just the second time in late May when both were in Abilene for the golden anniversary Mass celebrating Monsignor Fred Nawarskas’ ordination and assignment to the Diocese of San Angelo in 1967.

“Bishop Sis has been very supportive of me serving and doing my job,” Fr. Covos said. “In our communication, he’s told me to keep doing what I’m doing.”

# SOIL

(From 2)

“We sit here near this beautiful spring-fed lake with these majestic pecan trees,” he said, looking around him. “Like the trees, which draw up nourishment from the water, we too can flourish if we sink our roots into God,” Sis said, adding, “These trees are an example for us of how we need to live our lives.”

Following the Mass, as parishioners dug into a hamburger supper, Sis explained the importance of the annual event, which marked its 16th year. “Agriculture is a part of our way of life in our diocese, and agriculture sustains human life, and our farmers and ranchers acknowledge their dependence on God when they come together for the celebration,” he said.

The bishop said the Rural Life Mass moves each year from East to West within the Diocese’s 29 counties. Last year’s Mass was held at the Tom Ranch outside Stanton. Next year, Sis said, he hopes to have it at a vine-

yard near Fort Stockton.

“By moving it around, different churches get to host it so the leadership changes and no one gets burned out, and it gives our parishioners an opportunity to visit a beautiful variety of changing venues,” he said.

Lloyd and Carol Whitehead, members of St. Ambrose, hosted the event this year at their ranch in Wall.

“It’s humbling,” Carol said. “It’s wonderful to have the bishop here and offer it up and have it blessed. Having an outdoor Mass is a wonderful thing. It’s inspirational.”

Johnnie Mae Stice, music director at St. Ambrose, said the Rural Life Mass gives the diocese’s ranching and farming community an opportunity to pray for God’s blessings upon their livelihood.

“We’re asking God’s blessings for rain and a fruitful harvest, and also (the Mass is) thanksgiving for all the many blessings God has bestowed on our land,” Stice said.

‘Like the trees, which draw up nourishment from the water, we too can flourish if we sink our roots into God.’  
— Bishop Michael Sis

# OBISPO

(From 3)

Debido a la santidad de su ministerio, el sacerdote está llamado a crecer en la santidad personal, llevando a cabo sus funciones con generosidad y entusiasmo.

El sacerdote no es sólo un burócrata de nivel medio o un director general. Es un padre espiritual, un “médico de las almas,” aplicando los recursos espirituales de la Iglesia de Cristo para traer sanación y esperanza, y para ayudar a la gente llegar al Cielo.

El sacerdote no es Dios. A veces los niños pequeños se confunden acerca de esto. Ven el sacerdote que preside al altar en la Misa, donde el pan y el vino se convierten en el Cuerpo y la Sangre de Jesucristo. Luego, después de la Misa, al saludar al sacerdote a la puerta de la iglesia, algunos niños le dicen: “Hola Jesús.” Es lindo, pero no es exacto.

El sacerdote es un ser humano. Él es un

pastor, no un mesías. Él no es perfecto. Él comete errores. Él peca y tiene que ir a la Confesión. Él trata de crecer en santidad a través de su ministerio.

El sacerdote no es un robot. Él tiene sentimientos. Su corazón se puede romper. Él llora y sufre sus pérdidas. A veces resulta herido, cansado, o desanimado. A veces no puede cumplir con las expectativas de las personas.

En su quebrantamiento humano, el sacerdote se convierte en un “sanador herido.” Debido a que ha sufrido, él puede relacionarse con otras personas en su sufrimiento y ayudarles a seguir adelante. Cuando él une sus propias dificultades a la Cruz de Cristo, esto ayuda a que se convierta en un instrumento más compasivo del amor de Cristo.

Un sacerdote tiene esperanzas y sueños. Él tiene alegrías y amigos, aficiones y pasatiempos. Un sacerdote tiene una familia. Hay momentos en que los extraña,

y él necesita tener la oportunidad de verlos de vez en cuando.

Un sacerdote proviene de una cultura, una generación, y un fondo particular, y todo eso contribuye a formar la persona maravillosa que es. Pero la Iglesia a menudo le llama a ir más allá de sus raíces personales, para amar y servir donde sea necesario. Esto significa que un sacerdote a veces tiene que aprender idiomas y costumbres que lo hacen extenderse más allá de su zona de confort natural. Él busca florecer donde ha sido plantado, con el fin de dar buenos frutos para el Reino de Dios.

En este momento de cambios de asignación de verano, alcemos a todos nuestros sacerdotes en oración, pidiéndole al Señor que los guíe, los sostenga, y los acerque cada vez más a su corazón amoroso.

Member

Catholic News Service  
Catholic Press Association  
Texas Catholic News

Published the first Monday following the 1st Saturday of each month and delivered to all registered parishioners in the San Angelo Diocese.

Subscription rate for all others: \$10 per year

THIRD CLASS POSTAGE PAID  
AT SAN ANGELO, TEXAS

Printed by the  
San Angelo Standard Times  
A Scripps-Howard Company

Submissions:

Story suggestions, calendar items, parish briefs and all other submissions should be emailed to  
Jpatterson@sanangelodiocese.org

COPY, PHOTO DEADLINE:

Third Friday of every month.  
Photos should be in jpeg format.

Letters to the editor are welcome, and should be emailed to  
Jpatterson@sanangelodiocese.org.

Letters to the editor are printed at the discretion of the editor and identities of the writer are subject to verification. Please include name, address and phone number when submitting letters.

Bishop Michael J. Sis  
Publisher

Jimmy Patterson  
Editor  
Media Relations Director

The West Texas Angelus  
Official Newspaper of the  
Diocese of San Angelo, Texas

POSTMASTER: Send all address changes to:  
WEST TEXAS ANGELUS  
P.O. Box 1829  
SAN ANGELO, TX  
76902-1829



## GRN RADIO PROGRAM SCHEDULE

The **Guadalupe Radio Network (GRN)** operates 3 English & 1 Spanish language Catholic radio stations in the Diocese of San Angelo:

- Abilene - **91.7 FM**, KQOS
- Midland/Odessa - **1180 AM**-English
- Midland/Odessa - **90.9 FM** (Español)
- San Angelo - **91.5 FM**, KPDE

The GRN (*Radio for Your Soul*) is an EWTN Affiliate.

The Top 10 weekday programs (most are "live" call-in shows) are:

- 7 AM - Mass (EWTN Chapel)
- 8 AM - *Catholic Connection* (Mon./Tues./Wed./Thurs.)
- 9 AM - *More to Life* with Greg & Lisa
- 10 AM - *Women of Grace* with Johnnette Benkovic
- 11 AM - *Take 2* with Jerry and Debbie
- 12 PM - *The Doctor Is In* with Dr. Ray
- 1 PM - *Called to Communion* (Mon./Tues./Thurs./Fri.)
- 2 PM - *EWTN Open Line*
- 3 PM - Divine Mercy Chaplet; *Kresta in the Afternoon*
- 5 PM - Catholic Answers Live

### Schedule Exceptions

The GRN produces 3 other shows:

- Wed., 1 PM - *A Good Habit*
- Fri., 8 AM - *GRN Alive*
- Sat., 11 AM - *We Sing our Faith*

For a complete schedule, or to listen live, please go to:

[www.grnonline.com](http://www.grnonline.com)



## BISHOP

(From 3)

some responsibility.

Because of the sanctity of the one whom he represents, whenever a priest's words are uncharitable, or his behavior is selfish, or his actions are neglectful, or he takes advantage of his position for his own personal gain, it hurts more.

Because of the sacredness of his ministry, the priest is called to grow in personal holiness by carrying out his duties with generosity and enthusiasm.

The priest is not just a mid-level bureaucrat or a CEO. He is a spiritual father, a "doctor of souls," applying the spiritual resources of Christ's Church to bring healing and hope, and to help people get to Heaven.

The priest is not God. Sometimes little children get confused about this. They see the priest presiding at the altar in the Mass, where the bread and wine become

the Body and Blood of Jesus Christ.

Then, after Mass, as they greet the priest at the door of the church, some of them will say, "Hi, Jesus." It's cute, but it's not accurate.

The priest is a human being. He is a shepherd, not a messiah. He's not perfect. He makes mistakes. He sins and needs to go to Confession. He seeks to grow in holiness through his ministry.

The priest is not a robot. He has feelings. His heart can be broken. He mourns and grieves his losses. He sometimes gets hurt, tired, or discouraged. Sometimes he cannot live up to people's expectations.

In his human brokenness, the priest becomes a "wounded healer." Because he has suffered, he can relate to other people in their suffering and help them get through it. When he joins his own hardships to the Cross of Christ, it helps him to become a more compassionate

## LEHR

(From 11)

God intended, by living in union with Christ, can our hearts' deepest desires be fulfilled.

But this is not the average person's impression of Catholic morality and certainly not that of the majority of young people, most of which has been shaped by the culture's individualistic outlook on life.

Dr. Sri addresses the fact that every age has had its bullies who shame or oppress people because of race, religion, color, or gender. We should always fight against bigotry of this sort and treat all people with dignity. Today we experience a new kind of bullying. It's what Pope Emeritus Benedict XVI calls the "dictatorship of relativism." Pope Benedict said, "We are building a dictatorship of relativism that does not recognize anything as definitive and whose ultimate goal consists solely of one's own ego and desires."

Relativism is the idea that there is no truth, that each individual decides for himself what is true and what is right and wrong. A relativist would say that all truth claims are subjective, merely reflecting one's personal feelings, opinions, or desires. You can have your truth, and I can have my truth, but there is no the truth to which we are all accountable. The person who is not a relativist is often not tolerated in society. The pro-life woman, for example, who says that abortion

is wrong is likely to be called "judgmental"; someone who says that marriage is between a man and woman will be labeled "intolerant"; the Christian college student who says that premarital sex is wrong will be mocked and brushed aside as being "rigid" or "out-of-touch."

In this way, the relativistic culture tends to marginalize those who hold traditional moral convictions, since these views do not fit into their relativistic worldview.

In this environment, many good people feel paralyzed. They sense that there are real rights and wrongs in the universe – that some things are immoral for anyone to do – but they are not sure what to say or are afraid to voice their convictions. They are afraid they will be misunderstood or rejected by their coworkers, family and friends, so they keep silent, hiding their convictions – which is exactly what the relativistic culture wants.

How do we talk about morality in an age that no longer believes in objective moral truth?

In his book, Dr. Sri helps us to rise above the mainstream "anything goes" attitudes around us and gives us greater clarity and confidence in talking about morality with relativistic friends – greater clarity about how to think with a classical moral worldview and greater confidence in sharing that beautiful vision with others. Please add this insightful book to your reading list.

## NAWARSKAS

(From 5)

all have different priorities and certain things that they want to emphasize. We just have to say that the bishop is the head liturgist, teacher and theologian in the diocese and we have to support him and make sure that his message gets through. My first four years were spent at the Cathedral in San Angelo, but they had a good sized Catholic school with seven or eight nuns. When I first came, we had 11 different Catholic schools in the diocese and now we are down to three. We had a large number of nuns

when I first came down here and now we are down to one in Abilene. That has changed a lot and a priest has to make up for the ministry that they brought in a certain way.

**Q: When you see how many priests from the diocese came out to your Golden Anniversary Mass, what does that mean to you?**

A: I'm very touched by it. Our diocese is about the size of Indiana and we thought that by having the Mass on a Friday, more people would be able to attend and it would symbolize presbyteral unity and also unity among the people. It

instrument of Christ's love.

A priest has hopes and dreams. He has joys and friends, hobbies and pastimes. A priest has a family. There are times when he misses them, and he needs to have a chance to see them sometimes.

A priest comes from a particular background, culture, and generation, and all of that helps to make him the wonderful person that he is. But the Church often calls him to go beyond his personal roots, to love and serve wherever he is needed. This means a priest sometimes has to learn languages and customs that stretch him beyond his natural comfort zone. He seeks to bloom where he's planted, in order to bear good fruit for the Kingdom of God.

In this time of summer assignment changes, let us lift up all of our priests in prayer, asking the Lord to guide them, sustain them, and draw them ever closer to his loving heart.

## *Pope: Pentecost a celebration of unity, diversity*

VATICAN CITY (CNS) -- The Holy Spirit continues to give Christians different gifts and to call them to share those gifts with each other in a community marked by forgiveness and "unity in diversity," Pope Francis said on Pentecost.

"In a way both creative and unexpected," the pope said, the Holy Spirit "generates diversity, for in every age he causes new and varied charisms to blossom. Then he brings about unity: he joins together, gathers and restores harmony."

With tens of thousands of Catholic charismatics from around the world and with dozens of Pentecostal and evangelical leaders present, Pope Francis celebrated Pentecost Mass June 4 in St. Peter's Square and concluded a five-day celebration of the 50th anniversary of the Catholic charismatic renewal.

In his homily at the Mass, the pope said Christians can block the unity in diversity desired by the Holy Spirit by focusing on their differences rather than on what they share.

took a little while to come up with the date and I called every parish in the diocese to make sure we were not competing with any (high school or college) graduations. You can't compete with that!

**Q: Is there anything that you would like to say to the parishioners that you have known throughout your career?**

A: Thank you for all that you have done for me and let us keep working together as we have. We get a lot of cooperation and they do so many things around here. Everybody has a job to do and they do it very well and that makes Holy Family very unique.

# KNICKERBOCKER

(From 11)

neither is duty.

Duty requires an honest recognition of the truth of "what is." Wishful thinking does not lead to acting dutifully. As Catholic Christians we have a duty to speak and act according to the truth. The Catholic Church has always proclaimed the truth about marriage and the family. Sacramental Marriage is an indissoluble covenantal union of a man and woman that is an image of the union of Christ and His Church (See Eph. 5:32, Catechism, #'s 1601-1617). The Second Vatican Council and the Catechism ( #'s 1665,1666,1667) call the family the *Ecclesia domestica*, the domestic Church. As the Catechism states, "In our own time, in a world often alien and even hostile to faith, believing families are of primary importance as centers of living, radiant faith ... It is in the bosom of the family that parents are by word and example ... the first heralds of the faith with regard to their children. They should encourage them in the vocation which is proper to each child ... " Moreover, "It is here that the father of the family, the mother, children, and all members of the family exercise the priesthood of the baptized in a privileged way by the

reception of the sacraments, prayer and thanksgiving, the witness of a holy life, and self-denial and active charity. Thus the home is the first school of Christian life ... Here one learns endurance and the joy of work, fraternal love, generous — even repeated — forgiveness, and above all divine worship in prayer and the offering of one's life."

Unfortunately, this truth proclaimed by the Catholic Church throughout her history is under attack now not only from people outside the Church but also from some within the Church. In the wake of *Amoris Laetitia*, the Apostolic Exhortation of Pope Francis published following the two Synods on the Family, questions have been raised about whether or not Catholics who are in a sacramental marriage and have been civilly divorced and remarried should be allowed to receive Holy Communion without an annulment of their first marriage. Those who stand by the truth taught traditionally by the Church see this issue as having broader implications about the permanent character of sacramental marriage, the sacredness of family life, and the nature of the Eucharist itself, which, as the Catechism teaches, is the "source and summit of the Christian life," (#1324) inseparably connected to the Incarnation,

Atoning Death, Resurrection, Ascension, High-Priesthood, and Second Coming of Jesus Christ, who is the Second Person of the Holy Trinity.

It is the duty of all Catholics, lay and clerical, to proclaim the truth about the permanent character of sacramental marriage and the attendant sanctity of family life. Those who proclaim this truth are sometimes referred to as Pharisees who have no understanding of mercy. In Mk. 10:2-9, Pharisees, in order to test Jesus, ask him, "Is it lawful for a man to divorce his wife?" Jesus answers a question with a question and says, "What did Moses command you?" They reply, "Moses allowed a man to write a certificate of divorce, and to put her away." Jesus then speaks the definitive teaching about marriage and divorce: "For your hardness of heart he wrote you this commandment. But from the beginning of creation 'God made them male and female.' 'For this reason a man shall leave his father and mother and be joined to his wife, and the two shall become one.' So they are no longer two but one. What therefore God has joined together, let no man put asunder." In other words, in this encounter it is the Pharisees who are lax in their teaching about marriage and divorce, not Jesus. What does this have to do with

duty? Simply this. It is the duty of all Catholics, lay and clerical, to proclaim the truth of "what is" as Jesus taught it. Among some, especially the academic and media elite, this will not be popular. This will "hurt their feelings." But truth is not determined by nor dependent upon our feelings and neither is duty. It is not merciful to deny truth to any one. Truth and mercy always are together.

To end where we began with Jane Austen's novel, *Emma*, toward the end of the story Mr. Knightly and Emma are together in the garden outside her house. Knightly says, "I cannot make speeches Emma....If I loved you less, I might be able to talk about it more. But you know what I am. You hear nothing but truth from me. I have blamed you, and lectured you, and you have borne it as no other woman in England would have borne it" (Ch. 49). Knightley has done his duty by doing what St. Paul admonishes all of us to do, that is to "speak the truth in love" (Eph. 4:15). It is our duty to speak the truth in love and to act accordingly. As Knightley says, "There is one thing, Emma, which a man can always do, if he chooses, and that is his duty; not by maneuvering and finessing, but by vigor and resolution" (Ch. 18).

# OSPINO

(Para 14)

¡Hoy en día la devoción mariana más popular en los Estados Unidos es Nuestra Señora de Guadalupe! Una muestra más de los cambios culturales y demográficos que están redefiniendo la experiencia católica estadounidense. Cada vez son más las devociones marianas latinoamericanas -- al igual que de otras partes del mundo -- que han sido acogidas en miles de nuestras comunidades de fe.

Las narrativas que dan vida a estas devociones son cautivadoras. Por lo general hacen referencia a imágenes o estatuas que se descubrieron en un momento específico de la historia cuando grupos de personas que luchaban por alguna causa buscaban señales de esperanza en la tradición cristiana.

Relacionarse con María se dio natural-

mente. Ella era la mujer valiente que había aceptado la invitación de Dios a ser parte del plan divino, la madre que sabía lo que significaba dar vida y el dolor de perder un hijo.

Estas devociones se convirtieron en un aspecto esencial de la identidad de pueblos enteros en el continente, y lo siguen siendo hoy en día.

Muchas imágenes marianas tanto hispanas como latinoamericanas, nos muestran a María en compañía del niño Jesús. El mensaje es profundamente relacional.

Por ejemplo, Nuestra Señora de la Caridad del Cobre, una devoción cubana, carga al niño Jesús mientras que éste bendice al mundo. Algo similar ocurre con Nuestra Señora de la Paz, de El Salvador, Nuestra Señora de Chiquinquirá de Colombia, y Nuestra Señora de Coromoto, venerada por los venezolanos.

Pero estas representaciones no se limitan sólo a mostrarnos una madre cargando a su hijo. Nuestra Señora de la Divina Providencia, una devoción puertorriqueña, pone a María con los ojos fijos en su niño que duerme plácidamente en su regazo. El ícono de Nuestra Señora del Rosario, de Guatemala, también nos muestra a un niño durmiendo en los brazos de su madre. No hay duda que cuando contemplamos a un niño durmiendo nos encontramos ante un momento sagrado.

El ícono de Nuestra Señora de la Altagracia, una devoción popular entre los católicos dominicanos, nos presenta a María embelesada mirando al niño que está frente a ella. Nuestra Señora de La Leche y Buen Parto muestra a María dándole pecho a su hijo. Una capilla en su honor se construyó en la primera misión hispana en el territorio estadounidense en

San Agustín, Florida.

La imagen milagrosa de Nuestra Señora de Guadalupe nos muestra a una hermosa mujer mestiza que está embarazada. Sus apariciones marcaron el comienzo de una nueva creación. Sí, madre e hijo juntos al despuntarse algo nuevo.

Estos ejemplos nos dan una idea de cómo en el imaginario católico hispano, María y Jesús caminan juntos. Nosotros caminamos con la madre y su hijo. Nos deleitamos en su relación. Aprendemos a ser comunidad con ellos. Mayo es un mes fabuloso para ser católicos.

*Ospino es profesor de teología y educación religiosa en Boston College. Es miembro del equipo de liderazgo del Quinto Encuentro Nacional de Pastoral Hispana/Latina*

# IMAGINATION

(From 14)

from other parts of the world, to be fair -- have found a home in thousands of our faith communities.

The stories behind these devotions are captivating. They often relate to images or statues found at a particular time when people who struggled searched for hope within their own faith tradition.

Relating to Mary, the courageous woman who accepted God's invitation to be part of the divine plan, the mother who understands what it means to give life and the pain of losing a son, seemed rather natural.

These devotions became an essential aspect of the identity of entire peoples in

the continent. They continue to do so today.

Many Hispanic and Latin American Marian images depict Mary together with the child Jesus. The message is profoundly relational.

For instance, Our Lady of Caridad del Cobre (Our Lady of Charity), a Cuban devotion, holds the child Jesus while he blesses the world. That is also the case of Our Lady of Peace from El Salvador, Our Lady of Chiquinquirá from Colombia, and Our Lady of Coromoto, venerated by Venezuelans.

Yet, these portrayals are not limited to a mother holding her child. Our Lady of the Divine Providence, a Puerto Rican devotion, places Mary staring at the child

sleeping peacefully on her lap. The icon of Our Lady of the Holy Rosary, from Guatemala, also shows a child sleeping in his mother's arms. There is something sacred about contemplating a child sleeping.

The icon of Our Lady of Altagracia, popular among Dominican Catholics, shows Mary looking at the child Jesus laying before her. Nuestra Señora de La Leche y Buen Parto (Our Lady of the Milk and Happy Delivery) portrays Mary breastfeeding the child. A chapel in her honor was built at the first Hispanic mission in the U.S. territory in St. Augustine, Florida.

The miraculous image of Our Lady of Guadalupe portrays a beautiful mestizo

woman who is pregnant. Her apparitions signaled the birth of a new creation. Yes, mother and child at the verge of something new.

These examples give us a taste of how in the Hispanic Catholic imagination Mary and Jesus journey together. We journey alongside mother and child. We delight in their relationship. We learn to be community with them. May is a beautiful month to be Catholic.

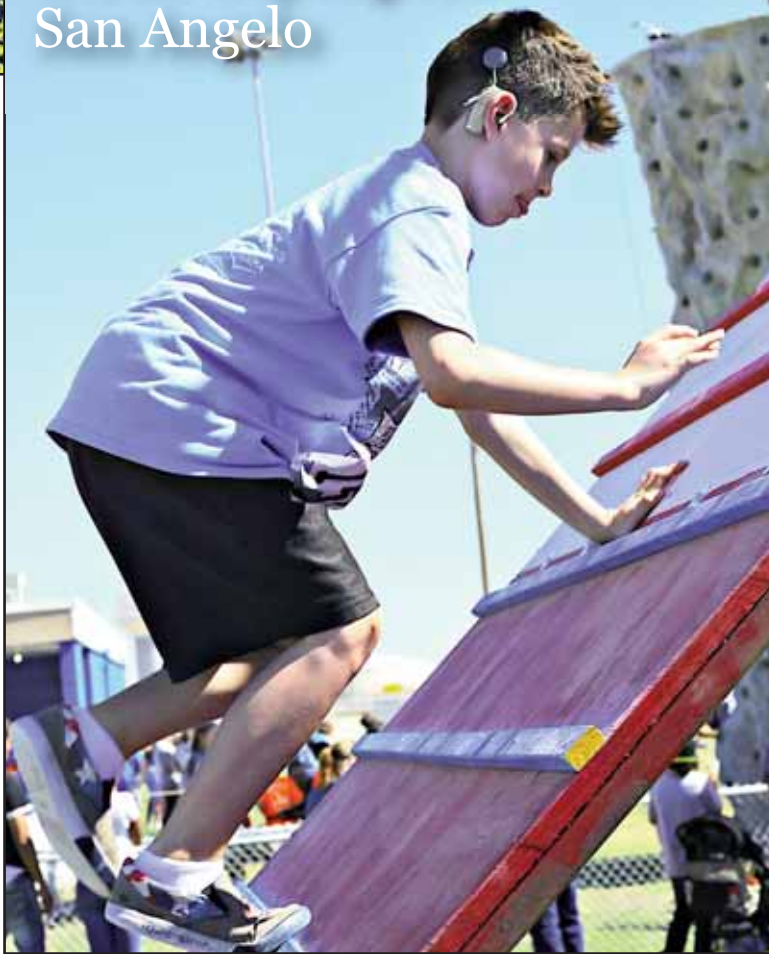
*Ospino is professor of theology and religious education at Boston College. He is a member of the leadership team for the Fifth National Encuentro of Hispanic/Latino Ministry.*



Abilene Christian University ASL students sign the National Anthem at the 13th annual West Texas Deaf Olympics, May 5, 2017, at Lake View Stadium in San Angelo.



## Deaf Olympics San Angelo



Bishop Michael Sis delivers the invocation prior to the start of the 13th annual West Texas Deaf Olympics on May 5, 2017, in San Angelo. "When we take care of our bodies, we're showing gratitude to you," he said during the prayer. "Help them to remember that whether they win or lose, you still love them completely." Approximately 113 athletes competed in the event, hosted by San Angelo Independent School District Special Education and Region 15 Education Service Center.

At left, Colton Boyles, 9, of Lubbock participates in the 13th annual West Texas Deaf Olympics on May 5, 2017, in San Angelo. Below left, Laura Cunningham, a teacher with Abilene ISD, points to a bell students are to ring at the top of a rope. Cunningham and Meghan Martin, also of Abilene ISD, helped their students participate in the West Texas Deaf Olympics in San Angelo May 5, 2017. Below, Jaidandale Castleman, 4, is helped climbing down a rope from Abilene ISD teacher Laura Cunningham. Manuel Salas, 9, a Bradford Elementary student, rappels off a rock wall.

