



It was a busy -- and controversial -- year in the Catholic faith. For a rundown, see our Year in Review/Pgs. 12-13

West Texas ANGELUS

Serving the Diocese of San Angelo, Texas
Volume XXX, No. 1 JANUARY 2010

IN THIS MONTH'S ANGELUS:

All Human Life Sacred

All human life sacred, unique, worthy of protection: The death decision of Roe v. Wade gave legal permission to kill the unborn at any stage of pregnancy. /

Pg. 2



JANUARY 2010 CALENDAR

Jan. 1 -- Mary, Mother of God

Jan. 3 -- 2nd Sunday of Christmas

Jan. 6 -- The Epiphany of the Lord

Jan. 10 -- The Baptism of the Lord

Jan. 17 -- Second Sunday in Ordinary time

Jan. 24 -- Third Sunday in Ordinary Time

Jan. 25 -- The conversion of St. Paul The Apostle.

Jan. 31 -- 4th Sunday in Ordinary Time



Just 4 Kids

Peter is told in a vision to visit Cornelius/ Pg. 16

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Fr. Romanus Akamike

Coleman pastor recovering after serious car accident

The Angelus

COLEMAN -- Rev. Romanus Akamike, pastor of Coleman's Sacred Heart Catholic Church, was seriously injured December 15 when the accelerator pedal on the 2007 Toyota Camry he was driving

became stuck, causing the vehicle to speed up, leave the road and subsequently roll numerous times.

Fr. Romanus was initially treated and released but the next day suffered severe headaches and was rushed to a San Angelo hospital where doctors performed surgery to

relieve pressure in his brain.

In the weeks that have passed, Fr. Romanus has made a recovery and appears to be out of danger.

In the wake of the accident,

(Please See **ACCIDENT/3**)

World Marriage Day:

February's second Sunday to celebrate marriage sacrament

By Tom and Jeanie Van Vranken

World Marriage Day is celebrated on the 2nd Sunday in February and, in 2010, falls on Valentine's Day, February 14th. This Day is sponsored by Worldwide Marriage Encounter

(WWME) and has been celebrated for each of the past 28 years. It is a belief of the WWME Organization that faith-filled marriages will build strong families and that children of strong families will be better prepared to answer the call of God to live the vocations of Matrimony or Holy Orders.

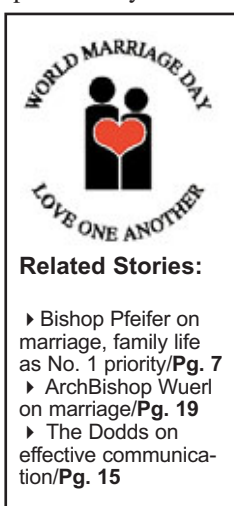
The World Marriage Day symbol (above) depicts the role and values of any married

couple. A husband and wife are symbolically seen as two candle-like figures reminding us that marital love helps to enlighten the world. The couple is joined by a heart, focusing on love as the power that fosters unity within the (Please See **MARRIAGE/21**)



50 and Counting

Rev. Msgr. Larry Droll, Pastor of St. Ann's Church in Midland, leads a capacity congregation in celebration of the 50th anniversary of the dedication of the church in Midland. Coverage, Pg. 4.



Related Stories:

- Bishop Pfeifer on marriage, family life as No. 1 priority/Pg. 7
- Archbishop Wuerl on marriage/Pg. 19
- The Dodds on effective communication/Pg. 15

From the Bishop's Desk

All human life is sacred, unique, worthy of protection



Pfeifer

► The death decision of Roe v. Wade gave legal permission to kill the unborn at any stage of pregnancy.

By Bishop Michael Pfeifer, OMI

Since the deadly Roe v. Wade decision of the Supreme Court on January 22, 1973, more than 52 million precious unborn have been destroyed through legalized abortion on demand during all nine months of pregnancy. More unborn children die each year to abor-

tion than all the Americans who have died in all the nation's wars combined. The precious little ones, now living and growing in their mothers' wombs happens to be in a place that has become more dangerous than any battlefield or terrorist target. The lives of these precious unborn hang in the balance every moment. The latest deplorable decision of the U.S. Senate to include federal funding to cover abortion in the health care plan will provide funding for abortionists to kill even more unborn babies.

As we recall the deadly decision of our Supreme

Court, we must pledge ourselves to be the voice and advocate for all unborn children and proclaim that all human life, unborn and born, from the moment of conception to a natural death, is sacred and precious in the eyes of God as all human life has been made in the very image and likeness of God.

All human life is a gift from our loving Father and Creator and is sacred, unique and worthy of protection. Each person born and unborn has a special place

(Please See **BISHOP/22**)

DIOCESAN BRIEFS

CJM Day of Reflection

SAN ANGELO -- Come and experience a day of spiritual renewal with fellow criminal justice ministers from the Diocese of San Angelo, January 23, at Christ the King Retreat Center in San Angelo. The day of retreat offers the opportunity to be attentive to God's personal concern for you through guided prayer, sacred silence, and presentations designed to affirm your challenging dynamic ministry. It will provide nourishment for both your body and spirit as you deepen your relationship with God! Please contact Sr. Estela Tovar at 432-207-0975 for more info.

Holy Family-Abilene Mission

ABILENE -- Fr. Cedric Pisegna, C.P. will lead Abilene Holy Family Parish Mission. Feb. 6-7. Fr. Pisegna will celebrate the weekend masses, Feb. 6-7, and will celebrate Mass with talks at 10 a.m. and different talks at 7 p.m., Mon - Wed, Feb. 8-10. Subjects of morning talks will be: "Coping With Our Losses in Life," "Improving Relationships" and "The Power of Positive Thinking." Evening subjects include "The Holy Spirit and Healing," "Change and God's Mercy, Living Hope." All are invited. Childcare will be provided.

Souper Bowl of Caring

On Super Bowl weekend, February 7, parishioners who attend Mass are invited to donate \$1 each to THE SOUPER BOWL OF CARING as they depart from Mass. Young people from each church stand at the entrance of the church and receive the donations in large soup pots. Best of all, each group then sends every dollar they collect directly to the soup kitchen, the food bank, St. Vincent de Paul, Catholic Charities, Catholic Outreach, or other charity of their choice. The amount collected should be recorded with the local church, and then be turned over to the agency or agencies that have been selected in advance.

The SOUPER BOWL is the fruit of a single line of a prayer, "Lord, even as we enjoy the Super Bowl football game, help us to be mindful of those who are without a bowl of soup to eat." From the seed of that prayer grew this beautiful program of help for the poor and needy. Begun in 1993, this national youth effort has already raised more than \$20 million.

With roughly 130 million people watching the game, Super Bowl weekend is the largest planned event in the life of our country. Hopefully those viewers would be willing to donate \$1 for charity.

Lenten Life In the Spirit Seminar

February 18 - March 25, 2010

Thursday Evenings 7:00 - 8:45 p.m.

Abilene Holy Family Parish Center

5410 Buffalo Gap. Rd.

Contemporary Praise & Worship

Catholic & Ecumenical All are Invited!

The Life In the Spirit Seminar is an introduction to a life lived

The National Black and Indian Mission Collection 2010

My dear sisters and brothers in Christ:

The Catholic church has a rich history. Today, we continue to build the Church.

Soon you will be asked at your parish to participate in the Annual National Collection for the Black and Indian Missions. Your contributions support missionaries here in the United States who are evangelizing in the Black and Indigenous Catholic community. I ask you to give generously to this appeal.

It is only through the constant generosity of Church members that evangelization efforts among Black and Native American, Eskimo and Aleut communities have been possible for more than 125 years. Churches and schools in African American and Indigenous communities depend on the annual evangelization grants to continue their programs and pastoral activities.

On February 21, all will be asked to participate in the Black and Indian Mission Collection. You evangelize by strengthening the faith, continuing the legacy and sharing the mission.

I ask everyone in the Diocese to make a sacrificial gift to the 2010 National Black and Indian Collection. Thank you for your past support, and let us ask God's blessings upon this good endeavor.

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

in the power and joy of the Holy Spirit. It is designed to deepen our prayer life and bring us into a closer relationship with Jesus and God the Father. Each session gives us greater awareness of the presence and working of the Holy Spirit in our lives--the grace and gifts of the Holy Spirit. It is a beautiful way to honor the Lord's gift of the Holy Spirit during Lent.

Seminar registration fee is \$5 per person. Fill out one form per person. It is important to attend all six sessions. For more information or if you will need childcare call Mike or Buffy Awtry at 665-8985.

Holy Land Pilgrimage

Barbara and Deacon Jerry Schwalb of Holy Family Catholic Church in Abilene are organizing a Pilgrimage to the Holy Land from **February 18-27**. Father Michael Rodriguez of Holy Family Catholic Church in Sweetwater, will be the Spiritual Director. Places to be visited on our spiritual journey include: Galilee, Nazareth, Bethlehem, the birthplace of Jesus, Jerusalem, Cana (couples may renew their wedding vows at Cana), Jesus's Stations of the Cross (The Via Dolorosa), the Garden of

Gethsemane, the Rock of Agony, the Church of the Holy Sepulchre, and many other religious shrines. There will be Holy Mass, Liturgy of the Hours, Rosary and Prayer daily. Please call Barbara Schwalb at 325-692-0515 or email TXSMARTMOM@AOL.COM

Cathedral parish to sponsor pilgrimage to Ireland

SAN ANGELO -- Sacred Heart Cathedral will be sponsoring a pilgrimage to Ireland from **August 4-13, 2010**, under the leadership of Msgr. Maurice J. Voity, Cathedral Rector.

The trip will visit many sights in the Republic of Ireland, including Dublin, Glendalough, Blarney Castle, Waterford, Killarney, the Ring of Kerry, Cliffs of Moher, Galway and Knock.

Masses will be celebrated at several sites along the way, including the Basilica of Our Lady of Knock, where Mary appeared to many of the people in that town.

"While we will certainly be visiting many of the sites of Ireland's religious and political history, we will also be sure to have time to experience some Irish fun," said Msgr. Voity. "Almost 40 people went on this pilgrimage last year, and everyone had a wonderful time," according to the Monsignor. "I am very much looking forward to this year's trip."

It is also hoped that the group will have some time to visit with Father Stephen Kennelly, a retired priest of our diocese, who lives with his family in County Kerry.

Current cost (subject to slight changes) is \$3,195 per person in double occupancy. This includes airfare from San Angelo, with a limited number of flights also available from Midland and Abilene at the same cost.

For more information, contact Msgr. Voity at Sacred Heart Cathedral, (325) 658-6567, or e-mail him at mjvoity@hotmail.com. The deadline for signing up is March 7. A deposit of \$350 is required.

Scheduled Executions

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

Offender/Scheduled Execution Date:

Kenneth Mosley/January 7

Gary Johnson/January 12

Henry Skinner/February 24

Michael Sigala/March 2

Adoption options in West Texas

Abilene: The Gladney Center (800) 452-3639

<http://abilene-tx.adoption.com/>

Lubbock: Children's Connection: 800.456.4862

www.childrensconnections.org

(More briefs, Pg. 3)

DIOCESAN DATES

Bishop's Calendar

JANUARY 2010

9 -- SAN ANGELO, Diocesan School Commission Meeting at 9 am
11-12 -- CORPUS CHRISTI, Kennedy Memorial Foundation Board Meeting

14 -- MIDLAND, St. Ann -- Mass for Limex at 5:30 p.m.

15 -- SAN ANGELO, Mass for Staff at 8:30 a.m.; Staff Mtg, 11 a.m.

17 -- OZONA, Our Lady of Perpetual Help -- Mass at 11 a.m.

18 -- SAN ANGELO -- Sacred Heart Cathedral, ecumenical service to honor Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr., Noon.

18 -- COLORADO CITY, Mass at Wallace Unit at 6:30 p.m.

19 -- SAN ANGELO, Diocesan Pastoral Center -- Presbyteral Council 11 a.m.-2 p.m.

SAISD Board Meeting -- Give Invocation at 5:30 p.m.

22- SAN ANGELO, Sacred Heart Cathedral,, Pro-Life Mass with Rosary to follow at Planned Parenthood Center, Noon.

23 -- SAN ANGELO, Christ the King Retreat Center - Criminal Justice Retreat

24 -- OZONA, Our Lady of Perpetual Help -- Mass at 11 a.m.

25 -- BIG SPRING, Mass at Cornell Unit at 1:30 p.m.

26 -- SAN ANGELO, Holy Angels -- Presentation to RCIA at 6:30 p.m.

27 -- SAN ANGELO, Newman Center -- Mass at Noon

27 -- SAN ANGELO Visitors' Center -- Ecumenical Prayer Service for the Feast of Santa Angela at 5:30 p.m.

28-30 -- Rest and Prayer

FEBRUARY

2 -- BROWNSVILLE, Installation of New Bishop, Most Rev. Daniel Flores.

5 -- SAN ANGELO, NAACP Banquet at 7:00 p.m.

8-9 -- CORPUS CHRISTI, Kennedy Foundation Meeting

11 -- MIDLAND, Drug Meeting, 11 a.m.

13 -- SAN ANGELO, San Angelo Convention Center -- Diocesan Conference Day

14-16 -- SAN ANTONIO, Oblate Associates at 6:00 pm.

17 -- SAN ANGELO, Sacred Heart Cathedral -- Ash Wednesday Mass at noon

19-20 -- ROMA, TX., Youth Rally

23 -- SAN ANGELO, Diocesan Pastoral Center -- Personnel Board Meeting at 11:00 a.m.,

24 -- SAN ANGELO, Diocesan Pastoral Center -- Staff Mass at 8:30 a.m. and Staff meeting at 11:00 a.m.

CHRIST THE KING Retreat Center JANUARY 2010

11-15 -- Buffalo Trail Boy Scouts

11 -- Heart of Mercy Prayer Grp
12 -- Adoration

15-17 -- Engaged Encounter
17 -- Natural Family Planning

Class 2-4

18 -- Heart of Mercy Prayer Grp
19 -- Adoration

23 -- Criminal Justice Ministry - Spiritual Retreat

25 -- Heart of Mercy Prayer Grp
26 -- Adoration

29-31 -- Encounter the Cross
31 -- First United Methodist Staff Retreat

FEBRUARY

1 -- First United Methodist Staff Retreat

Heart of Mercy Prayer Group
2 -- Adoration of the Blessed Sacrament

5-6 -- First Central Presbyterian Women's Retreat

7 -- CKRC Confirmation Retreat
8 -- Heart of Mercy Prayer Grp

9 -- Adoration of the Blessed Sacrament

12 -- Deacon Training Program
15 -- Heart of Mercy Prayer Grp

16 -- Adoration of the Blessed Sacrament

19-21 -- Engaged Encounter
22 -- Heart of Mercy Prayer Grp

23 -- Adoration of the Blessed Sacrament

25-28 -- Rowena Men's ACTS Retreat

28 -- St. Ambrose Wall

NECROLOGY FEBRUARY

5 -- Deacon David King (2006)
9 -- Rev. Albert Fuytinck,

C.S.S.R. (1997)
10 -- Rev. Leo E. Lavoie (1978)

15 -- Rev. Frank Colacicco (2006)

20 -- Deacon Mark Reeh (2005)
21 -- Rev. Tom Kelley (2005)

22 -- Rev. Francisco Lopez (1994)

DIOCESAN BRIEFS (continued)

Natural Family Planning

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

SAN ANGELO, Christ the King Retreat Center, (325) 651-5352, 2-4 p.m. **2010 Dates:** January 17, March 7, May 23, September 19. Contact Amy at amdg@wcc.net.

MIDLAND-ODESSA, Our Lady of Guadalupe, call Christina Nevarez,

(432) 682-2581;

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

SW Liturgical Conference in Houston

HOUSTON -- You're invited to join us, **January 13-16, 2010**, for the 48th annual Southwest Liturgical Conference study week at the George R. Brown Convention Center in Houston.

Please take a moment to download the brochure at www.swlc.org and then proceed to the registration page to reserve your spot at the conference and your hotel room at the fabulous four-star Hilton of the Americas adjoining the conference center. (Four-star at a two star price!)

The keynote address will be delivered by Cardinal DiNardo, Archbishop of Galveston-Houston and you will find the general sessions to be equally thought provoking and informative. The workshop sessions are certain to meet the needs of any liturgical minister.

Additionally, there are two specialized tracks within the conference:

■ **Clergy:** Thursday addressing homiletic preaching in a multicultural community. Friday addresses the upcoming revised translation of the Roman Missal.

■ **Catechists and Teachers:** On Friday, we have incorporated workshops which will benefit catechists and teachers as well as liturgical ministers. (See session 3B, 3E, 3F, 3G and 4B, 4C, 4D, 4E)

ACCIDENT: Camry pastor was driving subject of recall

(From 1)

which occurred on U.S. Hwy. 84 between Colorado City and Abilene, it was determined that the 2007 Camry Fr. Romanus was driving was the subject of a recall. According to an advisory posted

on Toyota's web site, "The National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA) is warning drivers about the potential for drivers-side floor mats to cause the accelerator (gas pedal) to stick."

If you or someone you know drives a Toyota, please visit toy-

ota.com and enter "recalls" in the search field to read the article entitled "Toyota Announces Details of Remedy to Address Potential Accelerator Pedal Entrapment."

Fr. Romanus is expected to make a full recovery from injuries received in the accident.

Del Escritorio del Obispo

Todo vida humana, un don de dios, es sagrada unica y digna de proteccion



Obispo
Miguel Pfeifer
OMI

► **La decisión mortal de Roe v. Wade dio permiso legal de matar al no nacido en cualquier etapa de embarazo.**

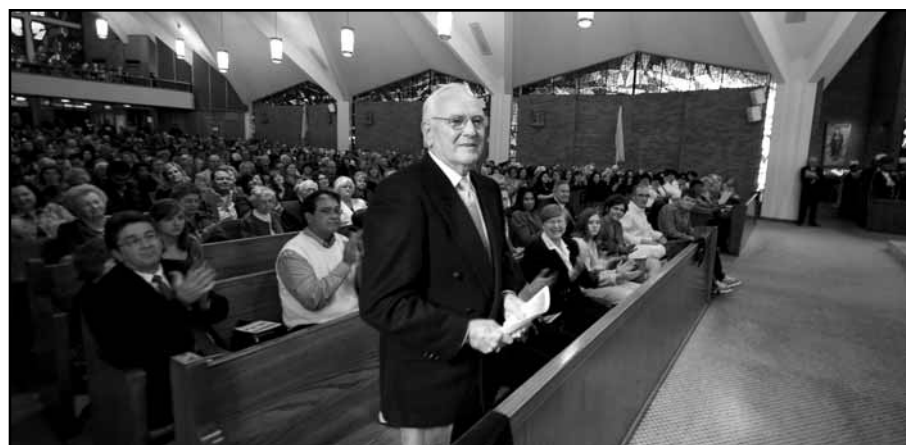
Por el Obispo Miguel Pfeifer, OMI

Desde la decisión mortal de Roe v. Wade de la Corte Suprema el 22 de enero de 1973, más de 52 millones de preciosos no nacidos han sido destruidos por medio del aborto legalizado en demanda durante todos los 9 meses de embarazo. Más niños no nacidos mueren cada año al aborto que todos los americanos que han muerto en todas las guerras nacionales combinadas. Los preciosos pequeños, ahora viviendo y creciendo en los senos de sus madres, están en el lugar más peligroso que cualquier campo de batalla o blanco terrorístico. Las vidas de estos no nacidos preciosos cuelgan en la balanza cada momento. La más reciente decisión deplorable del Senado de

los Estados Unidos de incluir fondos federales para cubrir abortos en el plan de cuidado de salud proveerá fondos para abortistas de matar aún más niños no nacidos.

Al recordar la decisión mortal de nuestra Corte Suprema, debemos prometernos de ser la voz y el defensor para todos los niños no nacidos y proclamar que toda vida humana, nacida o no nacida, desde el momento de concepción hasta la muerte natural, es sagrada y preciosa en los ojos de Dios ya que toda vida humana ha sido hecha en la misma imagen y semejanza a Dios. Toda vida humana es un don de nuestro Padre y Creador amoroso y es sagrada, única y digna de protección. Cada persona nacida y no nacida tiene un lugar especial y propósito en este mundo. Esos que apoyan el aborto y erróneamente dicen que es el derecho de la madre o los padres de familia el escoger, olvidan el hecho esencial que en

(Mira HUMANA/21)



Midland's St. Ann's celebrates 50 years

The Angelus

Bishop joins Tom Craddick, city's mayor, 750 others at anniversary of church

"Rejoice!" took on added meaning on the Third Sunday of Advent at St. Ann's Church in Midland. On December 13, 2009, the parish celebrated the Golden Anniversary of the dedication of the church building.

Bishop Michael Pfeifer presided at the Eucharist of Thanksgiving, beginning with a blessing of the 1959 cornerstone. The project architect was in attendance, Bob Zentner, who exclaimed how great it was to be present to celebrate this anniversary.

A great liturgical procession set the tone of praise and rejoicing for the congregation. Representatives of the parish included children from the Parish School of Religion and St. Ann's Catholic School, as well as the Parish Pastoral Council and St. Ann's Altar Society. The 4th Degree Knights of Columbus provided an honor guard. Midland's Knights and Ladies of the Holy Sepulchre and the clergy completed the procession.

In his homily, Msgr. Larry Droll, St. Ann's pastor for almost six years, recalled the history of the parish, more than 110 years old, and the contribution of the parish to the growth of the Catholic Church in Midland, as well as the church building's being a symbol of God's presence in the downtown civic, medical and economic heart of Midland. He proclaimed God's blessings through this church building, the presence of Christ in the Masses offered and the poignant family celebrations of the sacraments. Echoing the prophet Zephaniah from the Sunday scriptures, he called on the congregation to "shout

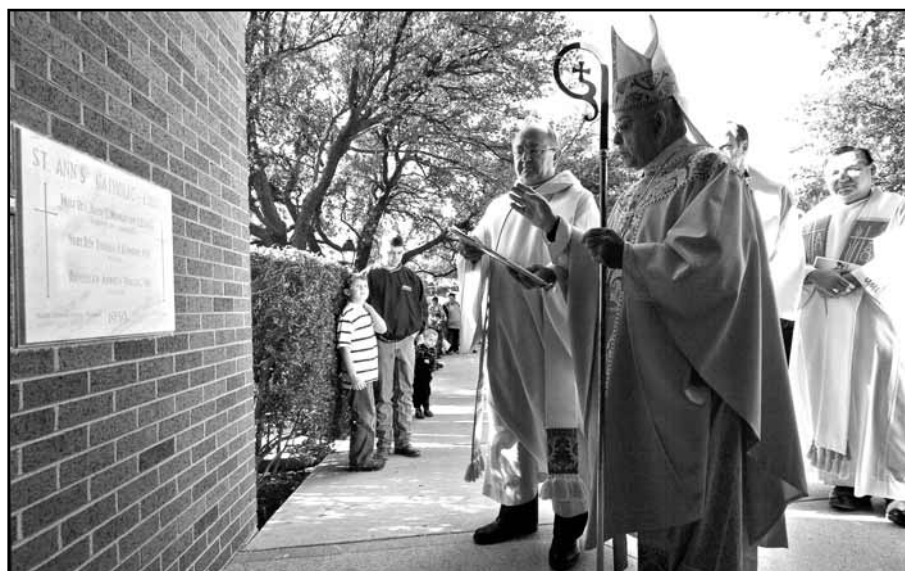
for joy, sing joyfully, be glad and exult with all your heart; the Lord, your God is in your midst, a mighty savior."

Some elements of the 1959 dedication were used in the ceremony, including the processional cross and musical selections. The original presider's chair was returned to the sanctuary.

Father Jack Franco, OMI, of Alvin, Texas, who was stationed at St. Ann's from 1968 to 1971, returned to attend the 50th anniversary, as did Sister Carolyn Pelzel, CDP, of Austin, who served as a Pastoral Associate at the parish. Father Warren Brown, OMI, native son of the parish, who was ordained a priest at St. Ann's, represented those from the parish who have become priests.

After the liturgy, parishioners and guests were treated to lunch at the Midland Center. Some 750 people shared in the festivities, including Midland's mayor, Wes Perry.

Msgr. Droll mentioned that an anniversary is an opportunity to look back to the past and thank God for 50 years of blessings in St. Ann's Church. But it is also a moment to look forward to the future. St. Ann's is planning to add a chapel for daily Mass and a large commons or gathering space, to the front of the church. Msgr. Droll announced that the architect had just been hired for doing the construction drawings and Bishop Pfeifer urged the congregation to support the project.



PHOTOS: Clockwise from top left, Bob Zentner, original architect of St. Ann's, is recognized during Mass; Bishop Pfeifer with concelebrants of the Mass, including Fr. Emilio Sosa, Fr. Ed deLeon (Our Lady of Guadalupe), Msgr. Jim Plagens, Fr. Warren Brown and Fr. Jack Franco; 4th degree Knights of Columbus and others line up outside the church prior to Mass, and Bishop Pfeifer blesses the church's original cornerstone.

'Christ in families, hearts and world' theme of Feb. Conference Day

The Angelus

The annual Conference Day will be February 13, at the San Angelo Convention Center. The theme of the Conference is "CHRIST ... In Our Families ... In Our Hearts ... In Our World."

The focus of the day will be on family as domestic church and the impact family makes on the church community and the world. The hope is to make us more effective parents, catechists and disciples.

The General Directory for Catechesis states, "The family is defined as a 'domestic church,' that is, in every Christian family the different aspects and functions of the life of the entire church



Dobie

may be reflected: mission; catechesis; witness, prayer, etc. Indeed in the same way as the Church, the family 'is a place in which the Gospel is transmitted and from which it extends.' The family as a locus of catechesis has a unique privilege: transmitting the Gospel by rooting it in the context of profound human values...It is, indeed, a Christian education more witnessed to than taught, more occasional than systematic, more ongoing and daily than structured into periods." (#255)

The featured speaker is Greg "Dobie" Moser, the Executive Director of Youth and Young Adult Ministry and CYO for the Diocese of Cleveland, Ohio. He has worked in parish and diocesan ministry. Dobie has given keynotes and done training and consultation in over 90 dioceses. He is a writer, trainer, and leader in adolescent catechesis and family faith formation.

Dobie has a MA in Family Systems

counseling from Mt. St. Joseph College in Cincinnati, and a D. Ministry from the Graduate Theological Foundation in South bend with a focus on leadership development and the human family.

He and his wife Lisa enjoy (mostly) the joys and struggles of parenting their 7 children. Together they volunteer in high school and junior high ministry and catechesis at St. Joseph Parish in Strongsville, Ohio.

Registration begins at 7:45 AM. Displays of catechetical resources for exhibitors offer a good opportunity to interact with the publishers and also a chance to review available resources. The opening session is at 9:00 AM. Lunch, included in the registration is at 12:30 PM. A Sunday Liturgy, with Bishop Michael D. Pfeifer, OMI presiding is at 3:00 PM. The day concludes at 4:00 PM. Early registration (postmarked before Jan 28, 2010) will be \$20.

Diocesan Conference Day
Saturday, February 13, 2010
 San Angelo Convention Center
**"Christ in Our Families ...
 Our Hearts ... In Our World"**

Schedule of the Day
7:45 AM -- Registration Begins
9:00 AM -- Welcome, Morning Prayer
9:30 AM -- Presentation -- Christ in Our Families
11:00 AM -- Break
11:30 AM -- Presentation - Christ In Our Hearts
12:30 PM -- Lunch (Included)
1:15 PM -- Presentation - Christ In Our World
2:30 PM -- Break
3:00 PM -- Mass
4:00 PM -- Departure

'Why Catholic?' Take a journey through the Catechism

By Bishop Michael Pfeifer, OMI

Our diocese continues the journey of faith sharing in small Christian communities through the latest RENEW International process, "Why Catholic? Journey through the Catechism ¿Por que ser catolico? El Catecismo como Camino" The focus this year is the fourth pillar of the Catechism, "Christian Prayer Truly Deepening my Experience with God." Why Catholic? is a process to truly deepen one's relationship with Christ.

Since the beginning of the process, "Why Catholic? Journey through the Catechism ¿Por que ser catolico?" has impacted family life in our diocese in many positive ways. Hundreds of families have benefited from the opportunities to learn and practice their personal faith with a small community who supports and challenges them to grow. This learning experience continues to be done in familiar and simple settings like family homes or at parishes where people meet and share their experiences of God through the joys and struggles of their life.

A tremendous benefit of "Why Catholic? Journey through the Catechism ¿Por que ser catolico?" is that so many people have come to own as adults the faith they leaned as children. Many have told us of how they were unable to articulate their beliefs or their experiences with the Church to their children or friends. Now they feel confident in sharing what



'Why Catholic' participants take a journey through the Catechism.

PICTURED:
Seminarians kneel before a Nativity Scene in a CNS File Photo.

involved in the process with the people. Some pastors have reported that they sense their

and why they believe. "Why Catholic? Journey through the Catechism ¿Por que ser catolico?" has strengthened the understanding that they belong to a world-wide Church that is alive and growing. Small community members report back that they are more involved with their parish and surrounding community because they feel more connected and have a deeper feeling of ownership and pride.

Many groups, especially in Latino communities, meet year-round because they see the many benefits it offers them. In the experience of participating in a small Christian community, they recognize an increased sense of belonging to a church that is nurturing them and their families, an increase in their knowledge of the faith and the Church, mutual support and spiritual enrichment. This happens most intensely where pastors are directly

homilies have improved because of the faith sharing in their small Christian community.

Ultimately, faith sharing unites communities and families. It enables people to grow, learn and live their faith and move it to action. Why not start your own small Christian community and

make that difference in your own family. There are many parishes still participating this year. Just email dosaoef@aol.com or call (325) 651-7500 and ask to speak with the Office of Education and Formation.

RENEW International, the diocese's partner in bringing "Why Catholic? Journey through the Catechism ¿Por que ser catolico?" to parishes, is a Catholic ministry organization that fosters spiritual renewal in the Catholic tradition by empowering individuals and communities to encounter God in everyday life, deepen and share faith, and connect faith with action. Their website can be found at www.renewintl.org. To know how to truly be an active, loving Catholic, take part in Why Catholic?

Por que ser catolico?

Loved One In Jail / Prison?
"Let us help you"

Criminal Justice Ministry
Diocesan Office
325-651-7500

www.san-angelo-diocese.org/cjm.html



Year for Priests

Priests' patron, St. John Vianney, also patron of seminarians

Publisher's Note: To commemorate the Year for Priests, I have sent the following letter to each seminarian of our Diocese. – Bishop Michael Pfeifer, OMI.

September 30, 2009

Dear (Seminarian):

I once again want to let you know how happy I am that you are a seminarian for the Diocese of San Angelo. I assure you of my prayers and I remember you each day in my Mass. I especially encourage you to give primary emphasis to your spiritual life and your studies. Make every effort to be present for daily Mass, and I also encourage you to have a spiritual director who will help guide you on your priestly journey.

As you perhaps recall when I met with you before you went to the seminary, I shared some reflections about the "Year for Priests" that was proclaimed by Pope Benedict XVI.

I also mentioned when I met with you that our Holy Father proclaimed the Year for Priests to remember the 150th anniversary of the death of St. John Vianney, who is the patron Saint of all parish priests around the world. He is also proposed to all seminarians as an ideal for their lives, especially during their formation. St. John Vianney is indeed a model for all priests, and for all those who are preparing for priesthood. Hence in this letter, I want to share with you a few reflections about the life and ministry of St. John Vianney that will hopefully inspire you to continue on the road to priesthood.

The primary quality of St. John Vianney's life was his holiness. When considered in its deepest dynamics, holiness consists in recognizing God as the central and unique reality of one's life. St. Vianney chose God and gave his life totally to God, who he knew would be his light and his truth and would guide him. St. Vianney

realized that holiness was a gift from God, but that for his part, he had to provide an open heart to receive the grace and love that God offered him, primarily by taking time for prayer and meditation. St. Vianney's goal was to bring God into the lives of all the people he ministered to. He fully realized that the priest is entrusted with the responsibility to make God triumph in man's heart.

Central to the entire life of St. Vianney was the Eucharist, the Mass. St. John Vianney said this about the Eucharist: "All good works put together cannot equal the sacrifice of the Mass because they are men's work, whereas the Holy Mass is God's work. Martyrdom itself is nothing in comparison to the Mass: it is the sacrifice man makes of his life to God, but Mass is the sacrifice God makes for man, the sacrifice of his own Body and Blood."

St. John Vianney was known to be an outstanding confessor, and he spent hours each day celebrating the Sacrament of Reconciliation with sinners seeking God's mercy. Concerning the Sacrament of Reconciliation—Penance—Vianney said: "It is not the sinner who returns to God to ask His forgiveness; on the contrary, it is God Himself who runs after the sinner and brings him back to God."

St. John Vianney is considered to be a model confessor, and on July 29, 1859, five days before he died, he was still sitting in his confessional box. On the very day he died, as he lay on his death bed, only a few hours before he breathed his last, there were still penitents begging the dying priest for absolution. St. Vianney's witness helps us to see how we are simply called to be instruments of Christ's grace for others.

To become a priest, John Vianney struggled very much, especially with Latin. He was not a great student, and he indeed had to spend many extra hours to make the grade. As John Vianney was not considered to be a great student, when he was ordained, he was at first denied the

permission to hear Confessions. However, because of his dedication to Christ and his unique understanding of how a priest should share God's mercy and compassion with others, especially sinners, he proved himself to be the greatest confessor ever known in the history of the Church.

St. John Vianney realized that with God's grace great things would happen in his life and in the lives of others. He said: "The priest is not a priest for himself. He is not there for himself; he is there for you..." for all people who need God's mercy, light, and wisdom.

As you go through this year of studies, focusing mainly on your spiritual life, I ask you to meditate often on this letter about the life of St. John Vianney who can help you to become a priest of Jesus Christ for our Church in our Diocese. You will encounter many difficulties, and at times perhaps you may feel discouraged. Think about how John Vianney had to struggle with his studies, but how he achieved great things by being totally open to the grace of God that was offered to him. Remember that you have Christ our Good Shepherd leading you, that you have our Blessed Mother watching over you, and you have the help of

In closing, let me remind you that the secret of St. John Vianney's generosity in serving God's people lies in his love for God, a love lived beyond all bounds. When his life came to a close, he said "O my God, I have preferred to die in love with you rather than to live one single instant without you."

Finally, I leave with you this quote from St. John Vianney: "The priesthood is the love of the heart of Jesus. When you see a priest, think of our Lord Jesus Christ."

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

Youngsters from Holy Angels prepare party

Publisher's Note: To honor our priests during the Year for Priests, I have asked the young people of the diocese to express their thoughts on priesthood and especially to express their thoughts on how much they appreciate the good priests who serve them. I share here two letters that have come to me from the children and youth of Holy Angels Parish in San Angelo -- Bishop Michael Pfeifer, OMI.

By Holy Angels Youth (Grades K-6):

We are very excited to hear that we are going to celebrate the Year of Priests this year. We know that if we did not have priests we would not be able to celebrate Mass. Priests are the only people who can change bread and wine into the Body and Blood of Christ. Priests have been called by God to help us.

Priests are important because they teach us about Jesus and how we can be more like Jesus. Our pastor is very important to us because he teaches us about God, leads us, cares for us, encourages us, leads us in prayer, blesses us and gives us our sacraments.

We have some ideas on how we should show our priests that we support them and appreciate them. We can draw pictures and make cards for them, give them food, pray for them, thank them for being a priest and let them know how much they are appreciated. We can pray for more priests to help them. We can go to Mass and help them by becoming altar servers or by bringing the gifts to them at the offertory. We can listen to their homilies and not fall asleep.

To celebrate the Year for Priests, we think it would be a good idea to have a party. We would prepare food, have balloons and decorations and make or give him presents. It would also be good to have a birthday party for our priests and maybe a picnic. Some suggested gifts are a cross, a pony or a fish.

To promote vocations we have to talk to our friends about becoming priests and we can pray that we (boys) are called to the priesthood. We can make
(Please See **YOUTH/18**)

(From Holy Family Youth, Grades 7-12)

Priests help us celebrate our greatest sacrament: Eucharist

Without our priests we would not be able to celebrate our greatest sacrament, the Eucharist. Priests have the power to call upon the Holy Spirit to change ordinary bread and wine into the Body and Blood of Christ so that we can receive Jesus into us every time we go to Mass. Our priests have been called by God to further His kingdom here on earth. Priests bring health and wellness to our souls. They share the Gospel with us and help us to come to know God.

We are lucky to have an awesome pastor at Holy Angels, Fr. Charles. He is funny, smart, helpful, intelligent, easy to talk to and a fun person to be around. His

(Please See **PRIESTS/18**)

Our No. 1 priority: Family life and marriage

By Bishop Michael Pfeifer, OMI

To prepare us to celebrate the 50th anniversary of our Diocese in October, 2011, I formed a committee in 2006, made up of representatives of the leadership of the Diocese to discuss the pastoral care of our people as we celebrate this great milestone in the life of our Diocese. After months of study and review, the Presbyteral Council of the Diocese recommended to me to adopt a special document, prepared by the 2011 committee called, Family Life and Marriage: The Priority for Ministry. After much review and study, I gladly approved this document, and with its adoption, established this to be the main priority for ministry.

To carry out this important ministry, various options were considered, and it was decided that this new Office for Family Life and Marriage would be placed under the umbrella of the Office of Education and Formation that is headed by two fine Franciscan sisters—Sister Hilda Marotta and Sister Adelina Garcia. The sisters, after much consideration, proposed that the new position be part of their Office, and I am happy to announce that Mary Ann Lewis has been hired to be an associate in this Office, whose main responsibility will be for Family Life and Marriage. She will work closely with the Sisters and their staff in the

Office of Education and Formation, as there is much interfacing of this new priority with many other present efforts in ministry of religious education and formation.

Mary Ann holds a Masters of Pastoral Studies Degree from Loyola University of New Orleans through LIMEX and a Bachelor of Business Administration from Texas Tech University. She also brings to the position a wealth of experience and a faith lived over many years. For several years, she was involved with the leadership of our beautiful Retreat Center.

Establishing Family Life and Marriage as the number one priority in ministry for our Diocese is in accord with various documents of the Church, both from Rome and from the U.S. Catholic Bishops. The General Directory for Catechesis states, "The family is defined as a 'domestic church,' that is, in every Christian family the different aspects and functions of the life of the entire Church may be reflected: mission; catechesis; witness; prayer, etc.. Indeed in the same way as the Church, the family is a place in which the Gospel is transmitted and from which it extends.' The family as a focus of catechesis has a unique privilege: transmitting the Gospel by rooting it in the context of profound human values... It is indeed, a Christian education more witnessed to than taught, more

occasional than systematic, more ongoing and daily than structured into periods." (255) This priority also corresponds to the recent document of the U.S. Catholic Bishops that was approved at their November 2009 meeting which points out the necessity of giving greater focus to family life and marriage-- Marriage: Love and Life in the Divine Plan.

We stress the priority of family life and marriage in accord with the call that Pope Benedict XVI made to the U.S. Catholic Bishops when he was in the United States in April 2008. Pope Benedict stated, "We will include the strengthening of marriage and family life among the priorities for your attention over the next few years. In this year's World Day of Peace message, I spoke about the essential contribution that healthy family life makes to peace within and between nations. In the family and home, we experience some of the fundamental elements of peace: justice and love between brothers and sisters, the role of authority expressed by parents, loving concern for the members who are weaker because of youth, sickness or old age, mutual help in the necessities of life, readiness to accept others, and if necessary to forgive them. A family is also the primary place for evangelization, for fostering the faith, for helping young people to appreciate the importance of

religious practice and Sunday worship. How can we not be dismayed as we observe the sharp decline of family as a basic element of church and society? Divorce and infidelity have increased, and many young men and women are choosing to postpone marriage or to forego it altogether—as we have an alarming decrease in the number of Catholic marriages in the United States, together with an increase of co-habitation in which Christ-like mutual self-giving of spouses, sealed by public promise to live out the demands of an indissoluble lifetime commitment is simply absent. In such circumstances, children are denied a secure environment that they need in order to truly flourish as human beings, and society has denied the stable building blocks which it requires if the cohesion and moral focus of community are to be maintained."

In accord with Pope Benedict's statement to give more emphasis to family life and marriage, and in accord with the recent major document published by the U.S. Catholic Bishops on marriage and family life, we pledge ourselves as a Diocese, as we prepare for our golden anniversary, to make every effort to strengthen the sacred bond of matrimony, and to prepare people better for this holy Sacrament that brings husbands and

(Please See **PRIORITY/19**)

Holy Trinity Parish--Big Spring

Our goals in our faith walk: encourage students in vocations

[After the Confirmation celebrations this past year, I wrote a letter to the parish asking that the Pastor and pastoral leaders outline for me how they will help our newly confirmed to continue to live the loving presence of the Holy Spirit in their lives, as they use their gifts in service for the community. In this regard, below is a letter I have received from the 11th & 12th grade teachers of Holy Trinity Parish. – Bishop Michael Pfeifer, OMI]

**By the Confirmation/CCE teachers
Grades 11 and 12
Holy Trinity Parish, Big Spring**

Dear Bishop Pfeifer:

The confirmation class of 2008-2009 wanted to express where we go now and

what are our goals in our faith walk.

We celebrated confirmation October 15 and it was a beautiful ceremony. The Wednesday after the Confirmation Rite half of the 2008-2009 confirmation class returned to CCE. We plan to invite all students and parents within a month for a reception and present their certificates and invite them to share what being confirmed means to them now. We would like to share some of the plans of the returning students.

Many of the returning students have attended Search Retreats in the Diocese. Their excitement is felt as they recall their weekends. We have had many of the students join the Youth Group and plan on participating in the various events. We spoke of volunteering with the activi-

ties that are happening at the parish and many of the students have mentioned that they have aided in the past and will continue serving in the future.

We speak a lot about vocations and it is our hope to get one person from each of the Church ministries to come and speak to the class. It is one thing to speak about it, but is an entire different experience to have someone come and speak of his or her love for his or her ministry. We will also challenge the students to participate in the "behind the scene work" of the parish for setting up the Church for the upcoming Holiday season.

As teachers, it is our hope to give as much exposure to vocations from a first hand experience as possible over the

coming months. We feel if we challenge the students we will inspire them to not only enjoy their faith, but also be moved to vocations within the Church.

Thanks for your support through out the year and we hope to bring more good news on the growth of the students throughout this year (2009-2010). We pray that Confirmation, for our students, moves them to a deeper walk with God.

*God bless you, and pray for the
Confirmation Class of 2008-2009
Confirmation/CCE 11th & 12th Grade
Teachers
Holy Trinity Parish
Big Spring, Texas*

THIRD EDITION **ROMAN MISSAL**
LEARN MORE AT USCCB.ORG/ROMANMISSAL

Prepare for changes in the prayers of the Mass

By Bishop Michael Pfeifer, OMI

We all need to be prepared for some changes that are coming in the prayers of the Mass, and it is important that we all educate ourselves about these changes in the Mass that are coming with the new Roman Missal translation. The Roman Missal contains the standard and proper prayers that are prayed each day in the Mass throughout the entire year. During the past several years, the U.S. Catholic Bishops have been working on a new English translation of the prayers of the Mass that is based on the new version of the Roman Missal that was issued in Latin by Pope John Paul II during the Jubilee Year 2000.

At their meeting in November, the U.S. Catholic Bishops reviewed and voted on the last sections of the changes in the prayers of the Mass. These have been sent to the Vatican for authoritative approval and permission to use. Probably these new changes will come into effect about a year from now when new liturgical books will be printed. Hence, it is important that we all prepare ourselves now for some changes in the prayers that we have been accustomed to pray in the Mass.

Beginning several months ago, I encourage the priests of our parishes to already begin instructing our people about these changes that are coming, and help all of our people prepare for the new English translations so as to minimize the discomfort that might be caused by changes in the prayers of the Mass. With proper preparation and education, my hope is that when the time comes to use the revised texts in the celebration of the Mass, our priests will be properly trained, and that all the faithful will have an understanding and appreciation of what is being prayed, and become accustomed to some of the new musical settings and arrangements of the liturgical books.

Besides asking the priests of our parishes to be prepared for these changes, there will be some liturgical aids from the National Office of the Bishops that will be sent out to our parishes to help all of us prepare for the changes in some parts of the prayers of the Mass. It is important that we all take time to understand the reason for these changes, and most importantly that we learn how to participate and share in a full way in the changes of the prayers that are coming.

To help our priests and other liturgical leaders prepare for the changes in words, the U.S. Bishops have offered a side-by-side comparison chart of the liturgical changes—the ones we are used to, and the changes that are coming.

The U.S. Catholic Bishops, especially through the Conference's Committee on Divine Worship, expressed the hope that we will all make every effort to prepare for these new changes. To help bring about understanding of these changes, the U.S. Bishops' Conference has established a website that aims to educate Catholics about the changes in the Mass that are coming with the new Roman Missal translation. The Web site is at <http://www.usccb.org/romanmissal>.

The Chairman of the Bishops' Committee on Divine Worship, Bishop Arthur Serratelli, has said in reference to the new changes: "In the years since Vatican II, we have learned a lot about the use of the vernacular [English] in the liturgy, and the new texts reflect this new understanding. The new texts are understandable, dignified and accurate. They not only strive to make the meaning of texts

accessible for the listener, but they also strive to unearth the biblical and theological richness of the Latin texts." Bishop Serratelli also stated, "We have a great opportunity during this period not only to learn about the changes, but also to learn about the revised texts, not only to deepen our understanding of the liturgy itself. We encourage priests, deacons, religious, liturgical ministers, and all the faithful to avail themselves of the information that we are making available."

I strongly encourage all the priests and pastoral leaders of our parishes to discuss these changes with the Pastoral Councils and pastoral leaders and people in religious education of our parishes and missions, and already to begin teaching and preaching about these changes so that there will be a smooth transition. I especially encourage our priests to acquire the aids that will be available to help our people understand these changes, and more importantly to help our people to become accustomed to the new way to participate in the prayers of our greatest prayer, which is the Mass.

Odessa forms new chapter against death penalty

A new Chapter of the Texas Coalition Against the Death Penalty has been established in Odessa. On December 6, 2009 the members gathered to elect the officers of the Chapter for this year. The officers are: Fr. Mark Miller, Chapter Leader; Ms. Marcia Cleaver, Treasurer; Rev. Gene Collins, Outreach Coordinator; Ms. Gabriella Botello and Ms. Veronica Ortega, Ms. Maria Tavarez, Event Organizers and Media coordinators; Ms. Lorina Martinez, New Member Coordinator.

This chapter is ecumenical in nature and is open to any person who is willing to help change the law and practice in Texas so that there will be no more death sentences for those who commit violent crimes but rather, life imprisonment without parole so as to safeguard society from further violence. The work of the chapter will be to offer information, educate the public, lift up both victim and perpetrator and their families in prayer, and influence our legislation to change the law and practice.

In 1980, the United States Bishops published a Statement on Capital Punishment in which they state: "Abolition of the death penalty would promote

values that are important to us as citizens and as Christians...It is a manifestation of our freedom as moral persons striving for a just society. It is also a challenge to us as a people to find ways of dealing with criminals that manifest intelligence and compassion rather than power and vengeance...We urge our brothers and sisters in Christ to remember the teaching of Jesus who called us to be reconciled with those who have injured us (Mt. 5:43-45) and pray for forgiveness for our sins 'as we forgive those who have sinned against us' (Mt. 6:12). We call on you to contemplate the crucified Christ who set us the supreme example of forgiveness and of the triumph of compassionate love."

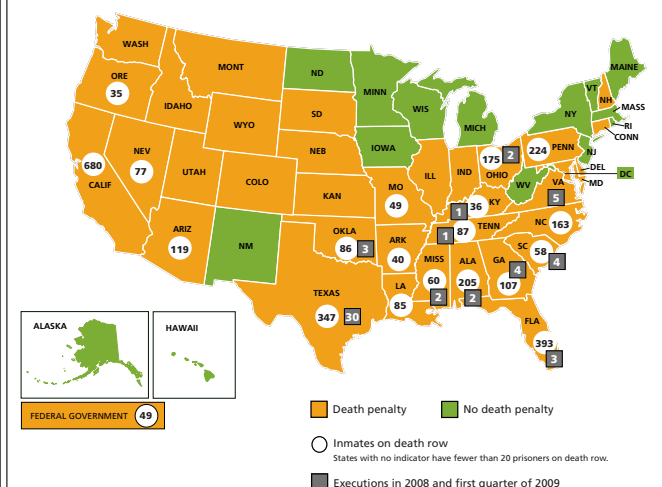
Thirty years later, we, Catholics, have not all embraced this belief. Those who belong to the Texas Coalition against the Death Penalty believe the time is now to stop the state-sanctioned death machine. Join us in changing the law in the State of Texas and hopefully within the United States.

-- Rev. Mark Miller, C.P.P.S

Parochial Vicar of Catholic Churches of South Odessa

Death Penalty Review

Fifteen states and the District of Columbia do not have a death penalty. Of the states with capital punishment, 19 have more than 20 inmates on death row.



Sources: Death Penalty Information Center, state departments of corrections, Federal Bureau of Prisons

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2008-2009 Audit Diocese of San Angelo



DIocese of SAN ANGELO
BOX 1829
SAN ANGELO, TEXAS 76902-1829

Office of the Bishop

Phone 325 / 651-7500
FAX 325 / 651-6688

December 9, 2009

Dear Sisters and Brothers in Christ:

I am happy to present to you in an abbreviated form the Diocese of San Angelo's financial report for the most recent year ending June 30, 2009 as prepared by our outside auditors, Carneiro, Chumney & Co., L.C. This audit, which has been carefully studied by the Presbyteral Council, the Diocesan Finance Council, the Diocesan Finance Officer and myself, has been accepted by me as bishop.

You will want to note that this year the diocese had a profit of \$1,159,163 which was largely attributable to a one-time gift to the diocese from the estate of a deceased. Due to the blessing of the recent increase in the number of seminarians for the diocese (and the related increase in the cost of educating them), the extraordinary gift from the estate is a timely answer to a great need. Other revenues and expenses of the diocese for the year are in line with prior years' revenues and expenses and as expected.

I want to express my sincere appreciation for your generous financial support upon which our church ministries depend. Your material generosity helps me and those who serve with me to fulfill our mission of serving Christ's people. I point out once again that to help our parishes during these difficult financial times, I have lowered the assessment figure by 1% for the second year in a row.

I invite any of you who would like to receive the full audited financials to contact our Diocesan Finance Officer, Regina Bodiford, who will be happy to provide a copy to you.

Your servant in Christ and Mary,

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

THE ADMINISTRATIVE AND PROGRAM OFFICES OF THE ROMAN CATHOLIC DIOCESE OF SAN ANGELO

STATEMENT OF ACTIVITIES

YEAR ENDED JUNE 30, 2009

	Unrestricted	Temporarily Restricted	Permanently Restricted	Total
Revenue, Gains and Other Support:				
Contributions	422,665	111,462	149,014	683,141
Parish assessments	2,240,001	--	--	2,240,001
Interest and dividends	183,878	34,911	--	218,789
Grants	--	147,950	--	147,950
Trust revenue	1,538,053	419,189	--	1,957,242
Other income and fees	583,865	--	--	583,865
Insurance premiums	9,950	--	--	9,950
Realized/unrealized gain on investments	106,971	--	--	106,971
Amounts released from restriction	526,052	(526,052)	--	--
Total Revenue, Gains, and Other Support	5,611,435	187,460	149,014	5,947,909
Expenses:				
Program:				
Seminarians education	440,537	--	--	440,537
Vocations	119,865	--	--	119,865
Clergy medical and assistance	765,912	--	--	765,912
Continuing education of clergy	126,622	--	--	126,622
Permanent diaconate	110,232	--	--	110,232
Women religious	1,016	--	--	1,016
Christ the King Retreat Center	457,495	--	--	457,495
Religious Education and Formation	285,406	--	--	285,406
Communications and paper	145,089	--	--	145,089
Contributions and assessments	635,099	--	--	635,099
Tribunal	165,614	--	--	165,614
University Apostolate (Newman Center)	103,136	--	--	103,136
LIMEEX	8,154	--	--	8,154
Liturgy office	18,559	--	--	18,559
Superintendent of schools	17,586	--	--	17,586
Criminal Justice Ministry	41,894	--	--	41,894
Victims assistance	50,946	--	--	50,946
Parish insurance	8,367	--	--	8,367
General and Administrative:				
Administrative office	571,247	--	--	571,247
Business services	466,613	--	--	466,613
Bishop's residence	29,296	--	--	29,296
Capital renewal and replacement	28,583	--	--	28,583
Interest	191,478	--	--	191,478
Total Expenses	4,788,746	--	--	4,788,746
Change in net assets before pension related changes other than net periodic pension cost	822,689	187,460	149,014	1,159,163
Pension-related changes other than net periodic pension costs	802,908	--	--	802,908
Change in Net Assets	1,625,597	187,460	149,014	1,962,071
Net assets, beginning of year	2,781,188	417,179	1,498,214	4,696,581
NET ASSETS, END OF YEAR	4,406,785	604,639	1,647,228	6,658,652

The accompanying notes are an integral part of these financial statements.

-3-

THE ADMINISTRATIVE AND PROGRAM OFFICES OF THE ROMAN CATHOLIC DIOCESE OF SAN ANGELO

STATEMENTS OF FINANCIAL POSITION

JUNE 30, 2009 AND 2008

	2009	2008
ASSETS		
Assets:		
Cash and cash equivalents	340,280	7,533,214
Certificates of deposit	9,852,772	--
Cash and investments restricted for Seminary Bursar Endowment Fund	1,647,228	1,498,214
Accounts receivable	581,294	573,823
Grants receivable	31,250	162,500
Prepaid benefit costs	--	7,132
Other prepaid assets	660,279	546,386
Parish notes receivable	376,163	953,674
Investments	1,055,066	--
Coin collection	13,699	--
Land not used in operations	116,600	--
Property and equipment, net	3,292,646	3,260,850
TOTAL ASSETS	17,967,277	14,535,793
LIABILITIES AND NET ASSETS		
Liabilities:		
Accounts payable and accrued liabilities	390,485	269,194
Accrued pension plan liabilities	1,278,252	1,726,196
Held for cemetery	494,374	429,593
Parish collections for designated purposes	16,285	16,990
Parish savings deposits	9,129,229	7,397,239
Total Liabilities	11,308,625	9,839,212
Net Assets:		
Unrestricted	4,406,785	2,781,188
Temporarily restricted	604,639	417,179
Permanently restricted	1,647,228	1,498,214
Total Net Assets	6,658,652	4,696,581
TOTAL LIABILITIES AND NET ASSETS	17,967,277	14,535,793

The accompanying notes are an integral part of these financial statements.

-2-

Making Sense of Bioethics

Stem cell ethics and the things we refuse to do

By Rev. Tad Pacholczyk

Many well-intentioned pro-lifers have inadvertently adopted flawed or incomplete arguments while trying to defend the noblest of causes: the plight of the vulnerable and the unborn.



Pacholczyk

In the debate over stem cells, for example, a common argument runs like this:

Human embryonic stem cell research is wrong because we are witnessing new medical treatments for sick patients exclusively with adult, not embryonic stem cells. Every disease that has been successfully treated thus far with stem cells has relied on adult stem cells, while embryonic stem cells haven't produced any cures yet. Adult stem cells work, while embryonic don't, and it's basically a waste of resources to pursue something that is not working. Therefore scientists should stop beating their drums about human embryonic stem cells since all the real-life treatments for patients are occurring exclusively with adult stem cells.

This argument, often employed by those of a pro-life persuasion, is flawed on a number of counts.

First, it seems to presume that the only yardstick for determining embryonic stem cell "success" will be in terms of benefits to patients who are struggling with various ailments and diseases. Yet researchers themselves would argue that there are

many other reasons to pursue embryonic stem cell research. For example, such research is sure to be valuable for gaining further insight into the cellular mechanisms underlying the development of an organism and is already providing important clues about how an animal builds itself up from a single starting cell called the zygote. Scientific research using non-human (e.g. mouse, rat, or monkey) embryonic stem cells can address these kinds of questions in a responsible way and clearly deserves to be funded and promoted. Such non-human embryonic stem cell research is, in fact, a praiseworthy and ethically uncontentious kind of scientific investigation.

Second, the argument that adult stem cells are helping sick patients while embryonic are not — and thus the adult stem cells are "more ethical" — seems to reduce the stem cell ethics debate to a discussion about what works best, or what is most effective. In fact, however, the ethical concerns have very little to do with scientific efficiency and everything to do with the fact that researchers violate and destroy young humans (who are still embryos) in order to acquire their stem cells.

Furthermore, it may be strictly a matter of time before the embryonic stem cells begin providing cures for human patients. At any point in the future, we could be greeted by a front page news story announcing a dramatic "success," perhaps an embryonic stem cell transplant allowing childhood diabetics to give up their insulin injections or paralyzed patients

to walk. That "success," however, would not change the ethical objections to embryo destruction or make an evil act a morally acceptable one — though it might increase the temptation for some to cross the objective ethical line.

To put it more simply: even if it were possible to cure all diseases known to mankind by harvesting (and therefore killing) a single human embryo, it would never become ethical to do so. We cannot choose evil that good might come, nor can we ever afford to pay the steep ethical price of ignoring the sacrosanct humanity of the embryo, that tiny creature that each of us once was ourselves. Treating a fellow human being, albeit a very small one, as a means rather than an end, violates his or her most basic human rights.

In fact, the direct killing of other humans, whether young and embryonic or old and in their dotage, is properly referred to as an intrinsic evil, meaning it is in every instance wrong, and ought never be chosen as a human act. Intrinsic evils do not admit of any legitimate exceptions. Once we concretely recognize the immoral character of an action prohibited by an exceptionless norm, the only ethically acceptable act is to follow the requirements of the moral law and turn away from the action which it forbids.

Bioethicist Paul Ramsey put it well in suggesting that any man of serious conscience, when discussing ethics, will have to conclude that, "there may be some things that men should never do. The good things that men do can be made complete only by the things they refuse

to do."

Refusing to destroy human embryos as a scientist does not imply any opposition to science itself, but only to unethical science, which, like unethical investment practices or unethical medicine, is invariably harmful to society. Good science is necessarily ethical science; it cannot ever be reduced merely to "efficient" science, that which might work or "solve my problems" at the expense of others. In arguing for ethical science, those of us working to safeguard human life would do well to examine our premises carefully, so as to avoid weak or questionable assumptions that could undermine the thrust of our arguments.

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

Eutanasia: destruyendo recuerdos, rompiendo lazos

Padre Thad Pacholczyk

(De la serie "Making Sense Out of Bioethics")

La mayoría de las personas tiene miedo a la fase terminal de una enfermedad pues esta implica una dependencia radical, un sentimiento de impotencia y algunas veces también dolor. Controlar el dolor es una obligación seria, si no central, de los profesionales de la salud y de todos los que cuidan de los moribundos. Si bien es cierto que no se deben administrar dosis altas de analgésicos con el objetivo de causar directamente la muerte, sí es posible darlas a los pacientes terminales aun y cuando de manera indirecta las dosis cada vez más altas necesarias para aliviar el dolor puedan acortar su vida. Una atención médica paliativa o terminal de calidad se esmera en proporcionar medicamentos efectivos, aunque no excesivos, para controlar el dolor.

Algunos pacientes, sin embargo, al verse ante la perspectiva del dolor y la enfermedad al final de la vida, y aún estando en pleno uso de sus facultades, optan por la eutanasia activa más bien que por la atención médica paliativa. Durante el verano de 2009, el británico Sir Edward Downes —conocido como el mejor director musical de las obras de Verdi— y su esposa Joan, tomaron la decisión de viajar a Zurich, a la clínica de suicidio asistido Dignitas y acabar con sus vidas. A Joan se le había diagnosticado cáncer terminal; Sir Edward, de 85 años, no tenía enfermedad terminal sino deficiencia visual y sordera progresiva. En la clínica Dignitas, ubicada en un parque industrial, permanecieron en cama y se les permitió tomar una dosis letal de barbitúricos. Suiza permite a los extranjeros ingresar al país para suicidarse, con muy pocas restricciones en el proceso. Los médicos están prestos a administrar a los pacientes un medicamento de uso veterinario, así que unos cuantos minutos después de beber un vaso de agua mezclada con pentobarbital sódico quedan inconscientes y en menos de una hora mueren.

(Mira PADRE THAD/23)

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Catholic Voices

Juan Melendez: A real 'miracle' on death row

By Antoinette Bosco
Catholic News Service

Juan Melendez has been called "a living testament to the injustice of capital punishment." Before he was exonerated for a crime he did not commit, he spent nearly 18 years on Florida's death row.

I see this as a miracle story.

I had the good fortune to have this spiritual man visit my home, thanks to Ben Jones, a young man formerly of Yale Divinity School who now heads the anti-death penalty organization in my state.

Juan spoke to me about his faith. Then we all left for Western Connecticut State University where he would tell faculty and students about his mission: to end the injustice of capital punishment.

His story is one I have heard before, how an innocent person is arrested and



Bosco

then convicted of a crime. Juan's life work now is to tell Americans "how mistakes occur that can cause innocent people to die." His goal is to "bring us back to civility."

Juan was young and at work in Florida on May 2, 1984, when police descended upon him, arresting him for murder. He said he had witnesses who could vouch for his innocence, "but I had a problem. I was Hispanic."

I could see the shock on the faces of the students as they heard Juan talk about his years in a 9 feet by 6 feet roach- and rat-infested cell, often chained and handcuffed.

Before the talk, I had the privilege of having dinner with Ben, several of the faculty members and Juan, who sat next to me. He told me that he had thought about killing himself, but then he had a dream of his mother in Puerto Rico, who prayed continuously for him to be freed.

Then one day he got a letter from his

mother. She had "found" a statue of Our Lady of Guadalupe and gotten a message. She told him, "Pray for a miracle and you will have it."

That message was repeated to him in a dream of his mother, and "that ended my suicide thoughts," he said. From then on, he read, wrote, learned English and began to appreciate the importance of "love and understanding."

"I served 17 years and eight months for a crime I didn't commit," Juan said, "but in that time I learned there is something more powerful than the system: God!"

"I had to go back to my Catholic roots which taught me love, compassion and forgiveness. I was saved in spite of the system -- by the grace of God."

Even how the story surfaced proving his innocence has a remarkable side to it. The real murderer, killed by police two years after Juan was convicted, had left a taped confession. Had it not been found 16 years after Juan's imprisonment, this innocent man would no doubt have been

executed.

Now Juan and many others are calling themselves Voices United for Justice. They are providing educational services nationwide, addressing the controversial and divisive issue of the death penalty. Their mission is to abolish the death penalty in the United States, where 35 states still allow executions. Tax-deductible donations may be sent to the project at 4205 Rancho Grande Pl. NW, Albuquerque, NM 87120. You can find out more about the group and contact Juan by visiting www.voicesunited4justice.com.

"How many people know that 137 people on death row have been released because of evidence of their innocence?" Juan asked me, fingering his religious medal.

Being with Juan Melendez, I clearly saw that his mother had gotten more than her one "miracle," for her son is not only free but is inspiring and energizing others, in his words, "to work for life!"

Living Oprah: The effects of media influence

By Therese J. Borchard
Catholic News Service

According to a "Working Psychology" piece by Kelton Rhoads, it is estimated that each year the average American spends 1,550 hours watching TV, listens to 1,160 hours of radio and spends 290 hours reading newspapers and magazines. If you watch the normal amount of TV, each day you will have seen 100 TV ads.



Borchard

Explains Rhoads, "If your job were to simply do the average amount of watching, listening and reading of the mass media, you'd be at it eight hours a day, seven days a week, 375 days a year! (No, that's not a misprint -- you couldn't get it done in a year at this pace. You'd have to work overtime.)"

Now let's look at a woman who took these statistics a step further. Robyn Okrant, a soul sister of mine living in Chicago, decided to watch every episode of "The Oprah Winfrey Show," read every "O" magazine

cover to cover and refer regularly to www.Oprah.com for an entire year to see if her life would improve.

In her entertaining book, "Living Oprah," Robyn chronicles her experiment month by month as she tests out Oprah's many equations for "living the best life."

I don't want to give away the ending and spoil the surprise. Besides, Robyn's response is so nuanced and sophisticated that I can't do her book justice by telling you what gets a plus and what gets a minus. But let me quote one of my favorite passages:

"I know that I will never truly believe I am beautiful if I allow someone else's definition of beauty to impact my self-esteem. I know I will never have a truthful, honest relationship with Jim if I judge my own marriage against others' unions. The same goes for my friendships and my connection with my family. It is futile and exhausting for me to shape my life to meet anyone else's standards. And I know there is a hazardous divide between being inspired by others and being dependent on their guidance and approval."

Media influence is so subtle today.

We don't even know it's happening. What if, as Rhoads suggested, each attempt at media persuasion was a kind of prick or physical assault? He writes, "Imagine if each influence attempt were replaced with coercion -- the store owner whacking you across the knees if you didn't purchase that shirt, your boss punching you in the stomach to make you work harder, the policeman simply shooting you in the back for doing 45 mph in a 35 mph zone. After the typical day, you'd be a physical wreck."

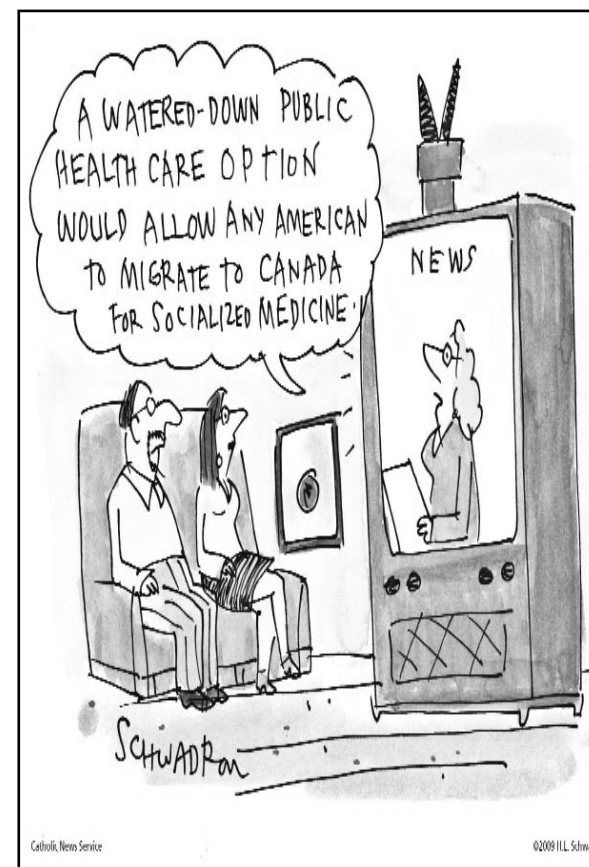
Of course, you would also know why you were in a foul mood and a physical mess. I suspect you'd want to stop the assaults.

However, with the media, we second-guess ourselves, bashing ourselves for not being pretty enough, rich enough or popular enough. There's no registration between the message and the emotion.

That's why I think we should get a pinching device every time we scan a headline that our psyche may shortly be experiencing pain if we don't protect our beliefs and philosophies.

Or, heck, maybe we should follow Robyn's lead and turn the tube off.

Migrating to Canada



2009

YEAR IN REVIEW

Images from 2009 include, clockwise from top left, women religious pray before receiving news of an Apostolic Visitation; health care, both those for and against; President Barack Obama was conferred with an honorary doctorate degree during a controversial visit to Notre Dame, and the economy led to both protests and long lines at job fairs around the country.



Religion, politics meet head-on in 2009 over abortion, other issues

By Carol Zimmermann
Catholic News Service

WASHINGTON -- Religion and politics met head-on this year, with abortion often at the center of the debate, but church-state tensions also arose over public displays of religious symbols, threats to the free exercise of religion and concerns about protecting the conscience rights of health care providers.

Abortion was a key issue in the debate about health care reform and sparked an exchange of remarks between at least one Catholic politician and his bishop.

During the House debate, Rep. Patrick Kennedy, D-R.I., criticized the U.S. bishops for threatening to oppose health reform unless the legislation banned the use of federal funds to cover abortion. He said their stance was "fanning the flames of dissent and discord."

The House, unlike the Senate, ultimately passed an amendment to ban abortion funding in the final health care bill its members approved, but Kennedy's remarks, and his vote against the amendment, drew reaction from Bishop Thomas J. Tobin of Providence, R.I., who demanded Kennedy apologize for his comments.

In an interview with The Providence Journal daily newspaper, Kennedy made public a private request from the bishop in 2007 that he not receive Communion because of his stand on abortion. Bishop Tobin told The Rhode Island Catholic, diocesan newspaper, saying he made the request based on the congressman's "consistent actions," but did it confidentially and had no intention of making it public.

The exchange between Kennedy and Bishop Tobin took place just two months after the death of the congressman's famous father, Sen. Edward M. "Ted" Kennedy, D-Mass.

Even in death, the senator represented the tensions between Catholic politicians and the church over the abortion issue. He stood with the church on a wide range of issues from immigration reform to the minimum wage during his lengthy Senate tenure, but his legislative support of legal abortion prompted some critics to say that giving him a Catholic funeral was a scandal to the church.

Abortion also was at the center of criticism of the University of Notre Dame for inviting President Barack Obama, who supports legal abortion and embryonic stem-cell research, to deliver the commencement address and receive an honorary degree.

After his speech, Cardinal Francis E. George of Chicago, president of the U.S. bishops, and two members of

Congress urged Obama to make good on a point he made, namely that he wished to "honor the conscience of those who disagree with abortion."

Cardinal George said health care professionals and institutions "should know that their deeply held religious or moral convictions will be respected as they exercise their right to serve patients in need."

He also said that among their other concerns about health reform, the bishops would continue to insist that reform could not include abortion funding and would protect conscience rights.

Belmont Abbey College in Belmont, N.C., was one Catholic institution that found its religious beliefs challenged this year when the U.S. Equal Employment Opportunity Commission said the institution's failure to offer employees coverage of prescription contraceptives discriminated against women.

William Thierfelder, college president, said Belmont Abbey was adhering to Catholic teaching against artificial contraception and exercising the freedom of religion guaranteed by the U.S. Constitution. The college, which hopes the EEOC will change its ruling, changed its health care coverage in 2007 to exclude oral contraceptives, abortions, vasectomies and tubal ligations.

The controversy at Belmont Abbey was just one of the issues mentioned in a November press conference in Washington announcing the Manhattan Declaration -- a joint statement signed by more than 140 Christian leaders pledging renewed zeal in defending the unborn, defining marriage as a union between a man and a woman and protecting religious freedom. The document also mentioned the possibility of civil disobedience, if necessary, to defend beliefs.

Washington Archbishop Donald W. Wuerl, one of signers, said he hoped that step would not be necessary.

The marriage issue in particular was a focus in the District of Columbia, as the City Council approved a bill Dec. 15 to make same-sex legal. It will be sent to Mayor Adrian Fenty, who was expected to sign it before Christmas. The bill will become law next spring if it survives a 30-day congressional review process.

The Washington Archdiocese opposed any effort to redefine marriage as other than that between a man and a woman. The Catholic Church teaches that marriage is a permanent union between one man and one woman.

Archdiocesan officials also argued that the bill would restrict the free exercise of religion and would affect the ability of its agency Catholic Charities to work with the city in serving the poor.

2009

YEAR IN REVIEW

TOP STORIES

1. Health Reform

The role of the U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops in the debate over health care reform drew criticism and praise, depending primarily on where the commentators stood on the abortion issue.

2. Recession/Economy

3. Notre Dame Controversy

4. Encyclical "Caritas in Veritate"

5. Visitation of U.S. Women Religious

TOP NEWSMAKERS

1. Pope Benedict XVI

In his fourth year as pope, Benedict XVI traveled to the Middle East and Africa, released an encyclical and proclaimed a Year for Priests.

2. President Barack Obama

3. Sen. Ted Kennedy

4. Justice Sonia Sotomayor

5. Archbishop Timothy M. Dolan

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CNS photos

The year's church-state tensions started with the New York City Council being urged to revise a policy that bans Nativity scenes in city public schools, while allowing holiday displays of Jewish and Muslim religious symbols. But other discussions about public displays of religious symbols found their way to the U.S. Supreme Court.

In February the high court ruled that a public park in Utah that displays a Ten Commandments monument was not legally required to accept another religious monument under the free speech clause of the First Amendment. In October, the court heard oral arguments about whether a cross could be displayed on a war memorial on federal land in a remote California desert.

The Supreme Court declined to hear a petition by the Diocese of Bridgeport, Conn., asking the court to overturn a ruling by the Connecticut Supreme Court requiring the diocese to release documents from long-settled abuse cases.

The diocese had argued in part that constitutional issues involved in the case, "including the First Amendment rights of religious organizations and the privacy rights of all citizens, are significant and important for the court to consider."

The issue of religious freedom also came to the fore in the same diocese during the summer when Connecticut ethics officials were investigating whether the diocese violated state lobbying laws with its efforts to rally Catholics against legislation that would have given laypeople financial control of their parishes.

The state officials decided to stop the investigation, which the diocese called "welcome news, not only for the diocese but for all citizens who cherish the fundamental rights guaranteed by the First Amendment."

Vatican

Vatican to decide fate of young woman who knocked pope down at Christmas Eve Mass

By Carol Glatz
Catholic News Service

VATICAN CITY -- The Vatican will decide how to proceed with the young woman responsible for knocking down the pope during Christmas Eve Mass only after it reviews medical and Vatican security reports, the Vatican spokesman said.



Maiolo

Susanna Maiolo, 25, jumped a security barrier at the start of the Dec. 24 liturgy as Pope Benedict XVI processed into St. Peter's Basilica. As Vatican security guards tackled her to the ground, she was able to pull on the pope's vestments, causing him to lose his balance and tumble to the marble floor.

The woman, who has Italian and Swiss citizenship, was taken away by papal guards.

She was not armed but she showed signs of mental instability, according to a Vatican statement Dec. 25.

Immediately after the incident the pope was back on his feet and appeared unharmed. The Mass and other papal events took place as scheduled.

Maiolo was transferred Dec. 25 to a psychiatric hospital in Subiaco, about 45 miles outside of Rome, for what the Vatican called "mandatory clinical treatment."

Maiolo "remains under compulsory clinical treatment and the case remains under the jurisdiction of the Vatican judiciary," said Jesuit Father Federico Lombardi, Vatican spokesman, in a written statement Dec. 26. Because the incident occurred on Vatican territory, it is up to the Vatican's judicial system to determine whether or not to initiate legal proceedings. The Vatican can turn the case over to Italy for

prosecution.

The Vatican statement said that in the next few days, its prosecuting attorney "will have to take into consideration the reports from doctors and Vatican security personnel, and, in light of these, evaluate possible further steps to take."

Critical to the prosecutor's decision will be the doctors' evaluation concerning Maiolo's mental state and whether or not she was "of sound mind," Father Ciro Benedettini, vice director of the Vatican press office, told Catholic News Service Dec. 28. The prosecutor will also take into consideration eyewitness accounts, he said.

When the Vatican prosecutor has all the information, including Maiolo's medical evaluation, he can recommend acquitting her of any crime, handing her over to Italian or Swiss authorities, or handing down a sentence, Father Benedettini said.



Pope Benedict looks out on an overflow crowd before delivering his Christmas Message in St. Peter's Square.

Pope Benedict's Christmas Message

Jesus came to conquer pride, violence, greed

By Carol Glatz
Catholic News Service

VATICAN CITY — With the birth of Jesus, God came to the world as a defenseless child to conquer human pride, violence and greed with his love, Pope Benedict XVI said.

"God conquers our hearts not by force, but by love, and thus teaches us the way to authentic freedom, peace and fulfillment," he said during his general audience in the Vatican's Paul VI hall Dec. 23.

The pope dedicated his audience talk to the importance of the mystery of Christ's birth and the tradition of the Nativity scene.

St. Francis of Assisi was particularly devoted to the incarnation and "the God among us," the pope said. The 13th-century saint wanted to recreate "the humble grandeur of the event of Jesus' birth in a concrete, living and topical way and to communicate this joy to everyone," he said.

During a visit in 1223 to the Italian town of Greccio to celebrate Christmas, St. Francis preached to the local residents at a mountainside grotto where he assembled a hay-filled manger and an ox and ass to represent the scene of Christ's birth.

The people were so moved by the ceremony they went home with hearts "filled with ineffable joy," the pope said.

Soon the tradition of recreating a Nativity scene representing the mystery of the Incarnation spread and became one of the most beautiful and intense parts of Christmas celebrations, he said.

The Nativity teaches believers to warmly welcome God's message "and to love and adore Christ's humanity," he said.

While Easter celebrations focus on "the power of God which conquers death, ushers in a new life and teaches hope in the world to come," the pope said, the Christmas creche helped give the Christian faith "a new dimension."

St. Francis and his creche highlighted "the defenseless love of God, his humility and his harmlessness," showing humanity that there is a new way to live one's life and to love, he said.

Sainthood causes advance for popes

VATICAN CITY (CNS) — Pope Benedict XVI advanced the sainthood causes of Pope John Paul II and Pope Pius XII, declaring that both had lived lives of "heroic virtues."

In signing the decrees Dec. 19, the pope confirmed the recommendations of Vatican officials who have studied the causes for several years. Both popes can be beatified once a miracle is attributed to their intercession.

The decree on Pope John Paul was expected, and it fueled hopes for a beatification ceremony sometime next year. Church experts are already studying a possible miracle, the cure of a French nun from Parkinson's disease, the same disease from which Pope John Paul suffered.

The decree on Pope Pius came as a surprise. His sainthood cause has been a point of contention with some Jewish groups and others who say he

failed to do enough to protect Jews during World War II — an accusation strongly rejected by Vatican historians.

After the Congregation for Saints' Causes unanimously recommended the heroic virtues decree for Pope Pius in 2007, Pope Benedict put the cause on hold and put out the word that both critics and supporters should stop pressing the issue.

In the end, Pope Benedict paired the announcement of Pope Pius' "heroic virtues" with that of Pope John Paul, who is remembered for his acts of friendship and bridge-building with the Jewish community.

That does not mean, however, that both popes would be beatified together. There is no Vatican timetable for verification of a miracle, and in some cases sainthood causes have waited many years for that step.

In 2005, Pope Benedict set

Pope John Paul on the fast track to beatification by waiving the normal five-year waiting period for the introduction of his sainthood cause. That seemed to respond to the "Santo subito!" ("Sainthood now!") banners that were held aloft at Pope John Paul's funeral.

In April, the church will mark the fifth anniversary of Pope John Paul's death. The initial diocesan phase of his sainthood cause was completed in April 2007.

In November 2008, a team of theological consultants to the Congregation for Saints' Causes began studying the 2,000-page "positio," the document that made the case for Pope John Paul's beatification. After their favorable judgment, the cardinal and bishop members of the sainthood congregation met last month and gave their go-ahead for the decree of heroic virtues.

Our Faith

What good are resolutions (if we don't keep them)?

By Father John Catoir
Catholic News Service

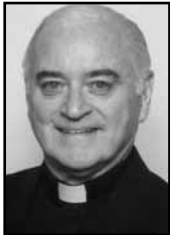
Dare we make any new resolutions this year?

Some of us have only a little confidence in our own ability to keep our promises. We don't understand ourselves very well.

In the movie "Anna and the King of Siam," we hear the king repeat the phrase "'Tis a puzzlement."

And so it is.

Before you give up on yourself in making a New Year's resolution, consider the apostles James and John. In the Gospel of Mark (10:35-45), we are reminded of how they failed to live up to the high ideals of an apostle. They quarreled over their seniority in the kingdom to come.



Catoir

These brothers who had been allowed to hear the actual Sermon on the Mount, and who were with Jesus constantly for the three years of his public ministry, and who were even eyewitnesses of the triumph of the transfiguration, gave in to their ambitions rather shamelessly.

In today's parlance, it would be like seeing them argue over who would be a cardinal and who would be a priest in the next kingdom.

Jesus gently reproached James and John. Jesus was kind. He always had a way of hoping for the best while being ready for the worst.

The Lord knew that even the great heroes of the Bible were just human beings. These heroes have been "so sanitized by homilists, that we forget how often they yielded to temptations far more monstrous than most of us would even dare to consider," wrote Jesuit Father William O'Malley.

He elaborates: "The great Abraham, our

father in faith, pimped his wife Sarah into rich men's harems to save his own skin (Gn 12:10-20). And Moses, the greatest figure in Hebrew Scripture, tried to stammer his way out of his mission. Even King David, the reputed writer of the psalms, became an adulterer and a murderer."

In light of such hypocrisies, who are you to get down on yourself for your imperfections and weak resolve?

As Blessed Mother Teresa once said, "God doesn't expect us to be perfect, he just wants us to be faithful."

The impact of original sin on all of us is mind-blowing. That's why making New Year's resolutions can be so worrisome.

Why not forget all of that and just begin again? Don't spend any time on the past and what went wrong. Just step up to the plate and hit the ball. Expect a cou-

(Please See CATOIR/22)

How we can sustain religious education in the future

By Father Peter J. Daly
Catholic News Service

How will we teach the faith to future generations?

We Catholics have a real concern about this.

In the last 10 years the Catholic Church in the United States closed nearly 1,000 elementary schools.

The pace of school closures is accelerating. More than 70 percent of those school closures came in the last five years.

The next decade looks equally bleak. In the Archdiocese of Washington, for example, we closed several elementary schools in the last three years and more closures are coming. We currently have 14 schools on a "watch list."

Overall, the number of youth in Catholic elementary and high schools has declined by about 450,000 students.

Catholics were the General Motors of education. Like GM, we had a great business model for 1959. But it doesn't work in 2009.

Nobody has all the answers, but like

most pastors, I have a few ideas.

First, I think we need to place our emphasis on religious education. Jesus told us to go make disciples of all nations, teaching what he taught us. He did not say we should teach algebra or English grammar. Our primary job is to teach the faith.

I would drastically increase our resources for religious education. We have about 4 million children in parish religious education programs, twice as many as we have in Catholic schools.

Second, we need a new model for religious education. The old model of one hour per week for 34 weeks is inadequate. Children miss classes, facilities are often poor and teachers are often not trained or supported.

If we spent more on religious education and had better facilities, materials and equipment, we might see better results.

Fostering religious education is much cheaper than running a school. Maybe we could even charge a reasonable tuition for it. After all, what do parents pay for dance classes and soccer coaches?

Third, there's a lot of learning of the faith that can go on outside the classroom. Parents can teach prayers and devotions at home. Youth ministers and

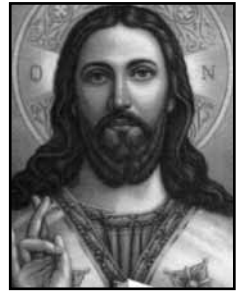
coordinators of youth activities can slip religious education into every youth group meeting.

Learning could be done in more intensive summer programs attended by students all day for a week. You can get more educational hours in a one-week summer program than a whole year of weekly one-hour classes.

Retreats can be learning experiences too. A weekend retreat focused on prayer, marriage or ethics could be life-changing.

(Please See DALY/21)

Our Holy Father's Monthly Intentions 2010



JANUARY

Young People and Media. That young people may learn to use social communication media for their personal growth and in preparation to serve society.

Christian Unity. That every believer in Christ may understand that unity among all Christians is necessary for effective proclamation of the gospel.

FEBRUARY

Scholars. That scholars and intellectuals, by sincere search for the truth, may come to know the one true God.

The Church's Missionary Identity. That the Church, aware of its missionary identity, may strive to follow Christ faithfully and to proclaim his gospel to all peoples.

Daily Offering Prayer

O Jesus, through the Immaculate Heart of Mary I offer you my prayers, works, joys and sufferings of this day in union with the Holy Sacrifice of the Mass throughout the world. I offer them for all the intentions of Your Sacred Heart: the salvation of souls, reparation for sin and the reunion of all Christians. I offer them for the intentions of our bishops and of all Apostles of Prayer, and in particular for those recommended by our Holy Father this month.

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JUST 4 KIDS

Peter is told in a vision to visit Cornelius



READ MORE ABOUT IT: Acts 10 Q&A

1. What did the angel tell Cornelius to do?
2. What happened when Peter spoke to Cornelius and his family?

BIBLE ACCENT

In the Bible, the term "gentile" refers to anyone who is not of Jewish descent. When the disciples began to preach to gentiles as well as Jews, they did not expect the gentiles who became Christians to adopt the practices of the Jewish tradition.

The apostle Paul preached openly against two levels of Christianity, meaning those who were Jewish and those who were not. Instead, in his Letter to the Romans he said God would judge every person "on the basis of faith" and not heritage.

The Acts of the Apostles says that the early followers of Jesus became known as Christians, a term we still use today to refer to people who believe in Jesus.

SPOTLIGHT ON SAINTS:

St. Antony

Antony the Abbot (251-356) was an Egyptian whose parents were

Christians. His parents died when he was 20 years old, leaving him a large inheritance and in charge of a younger sister. Before another year had passed, he followed the words of Jesus to the rich man, selling his possessions and giving them to the poor. Antony sold most of what he owned, saving only enough to care for himself and his sister. Fearing he may not have done enough, he gave away what he still had, put his sister into the keeping of nuns and took up a life of solitude, meager rations and religious devotion. In spite of his sparse living,

He founded a monastery and encouraged other religious during a time of persecution against Christians. He remained a model of faith and courage for monks and laymen until his death.

We honor him on Jan. 17.

PUZZLE

Unscramble the names of some of the places where the first Christians preached the Gospel.

- | | |
|--------------|-----------|
| 1. mjeelraus | 2. deauj |
| 3. aaairms | 4. zaag |
| 5. scudsam | 6. ddaly |
| 7. sprucy | 8. straly |

Cornelius was a centurion who believed in God. He prayed every day, and he gave offerings to the Jewish people. One afternoon an angel appeared to Cornelius and said, "Your prayers and almsgiving have ascended as a memorial offering before God. Now send some men to Joppa and summon one Simon who is called Peter."

As soon as the angel left, Cornelius sent two of his servants, along with a soldier, to find Peter.

At noon the following day, Peter went up on the roof to say his prayers when he had a vision. In his vision, he saw animals that, according to Jewish laws, could not be eaten.

A voice told him to eat what he saw, but he answered, "Certainly not, sir. For never have I eaten anything profane and unclean."

The voice replied, "What God has made clean, you are not to call profane."

Three times this happened. As Peter was wondering what the strange vision meant, the voice said to him, "There are three men here looking for you. So get up, go downstairs, and accompany them without hesitation, because I have sent them."

Peter went with the men to the home of Cornelius. Cornelius told Peter about the visitation by the angel.

Then Peter understood the meaning of his own vision, so he said to Cornelius and the members of his household, "In truth, I see that God shows no partiality. Rather, in every nation whoever fears him and acts uprightly is acceptable to him."

Peter summarized how Jesus came to earth and was crucified and rose again, and that Peter had been a witness to all of those things.

While Peter was speaking, the Holy Spirit came down upon those who were hearing him, and they began to glorify God. The men who had accompanied Peter were amazed that the glory of God had now been given to the gentiles as well. Cornelius and many others were baptized that day.

After Peter had returned to Jerusalem, the Jewish Christians asked Peter about what had happened. Peter explained his vision and what the Lord had done with Cornelius and his family.

"As I began to speak," he told them, "the Holy Spirit fell upon them as it had upon us at the beginning. ... If then God gave them the same gift he gave to us when we came to believe in the Lord Jesus Christ, who was I to be able to hinder God?"

Family

Faith like a child comes alive during Christmastime

By Jimmy Patterson

The late good Rev. Tom Kelley, who died five years ago this February, always likened the sound of crying children in church to the sound of God. Fr. Tom had no cry room at his church. Kids were welcomed, one and all. With his thinking in mind, God was everywhere at the Children's Christmas Mass at our church recently. It is maybe the one Mass of the year when crying kids can make church goers smile and actually enhance the message of the faith and the goodness and the innocence of children and the message of the season. Easy for me to say, you may be thinking, since none of the cranky little ones were anywhere near where I was sitting on Christmas Eve.



Patterson

Children's Christmas services, regardless the denomination, are beautiful in their simplicity and their message of hope. This year, the young people involved in the presentation of the Christmas story at St. Ann's focused on the symbols of the season: the star, the crown, the manger, the angel, the sheep and the cross.

The Christian faith boils down to these six symbols, symbols also represented through the words in a brief but powerful passage in our creed:

*For us and for our salvation
he came down from heaven:
by the power of the Holy Spirit
he was born of the Virgin Mary,
and was made man.*

In a book I am reading about structure in writing, the author tells a story of how his young son simplifies the story of Robin Hood: Robin Hood went riding. A bad guy came. They fought. He won.

Not much of a story without the further elements that

make it the historical work of fiction that it would become. But still, it captures the basic structure of story.

Much the same type of structural simplification can be applied to the Christian faith in the last verse of the gospel standard, "Go Tell It On The Mountain":

*Down in a lonely manger
the humble Christ was born,
and God sent our salvation
that blessed Christmas morn.*

It's a simple message that remains simple -- unless we make something of it. Leave those words alone and they tell the story of Christ's birth in a stable. Act on those words, apply them to your life, and only then does their meaning become so much more to us, one and all.

Jimmy Patterson is editor of the Angelus, Director of Communications for the Diocese of San Angelo and a freelance writer based in Midland.

Your Family

How to avoid communicating with your spouse

By Bill and Monica Dodds
Catholic News Service

Ah, those early courting days. You would stare into each other's eyes and hang on each other's every word.

Oh, those later days long after you've settled into married life. You stare at the computer or television and maybe catch every other word your spouse says. If it's when the computer is booting up or the TV is showing a commercial. (And not a good commercial. You know, like something that plays during the Super Bowl.) What happened?!

The end of the honeymoon, familiarity, kids, jobs ... life.

Not that it's all your fault. Or your spouse's. Compare:

1. "Do you see us building a future together? Maybe we should think about getting ma, ma, ma, married. There. I said it."

2. "Did you eat that last slice of pizza that I hid in the back of the fridge? You knew that was mi, mi, mi, mine. Yeah. I said it."

Similar but not quite the same, are



Bill and Monica Dodds

they?

So what besides being distracted and not listening can help ensure you successfully avoid communicating with your spouse? Try:

- ▶ Talking a lot more than listening.
 - ▶ Always zoning out at the end of the day (with the zone of your choice: TV, computer, video games, food, exercise, staring off into space ...).
 - ▶ Staying busy chatting, texting, e-mailing and on and on and on with complete strangers who are your online "friends."
 - ▶ Having a really great set of ear buds for your iPod.
 - ▶ Being with each other only rarely and only when one or both of you is very, very tired.
 - ▶ Wanting to "win" any discussion. (And keeping score too.)
 - ▶ Already "knowing" what your spouse is going to say. (Having developed the fine art of coming up with your answer or comment even before he or she finishes an observation or question or, better still, "reading" his or her mind.)
- Your spouse does some of those, huh? And you do, too. Every husband does. Every wife. Probably since Adam and Eve:
- Eve: "Try this apple. It's really good. I got it off that tree over there."
- Adam: "Hmm? What? Yeah. Whatever.

There. Now let me get back to ... Wait. What did I just eat?"

Not to mention Noah and his wife.

Him: "I'm going to build a great big boat in the back yard and put two of every kind of animal in it."

Her: "Uh huh, that's fine, dear. I have to get the laundry in off the line. It looks like rain."

And, of course, all of the above holds true for our prayer lives too. If prayer is communicating with our Creator -- and it is -- then we need to turn off the distractions and spend time with God. We need to listen as well as speak. (And do some speaking that isn't asking!)

On the Web: Better Communication and More

Any longtime married couple will tell you that relationships always need tending, including a tune-up from time to time. Looking for suggestions? Check out www.foryourmarriage.org, which is sponsored by the U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops.

Next: Ten Resolutions That Will Help You Be a Better Caregiver

Bill and Monica Dodds are the founders of the Friends of St. John the Caregiver and editors of My Daily Visitor magazine. Their Web site is www.FSJC.org. They can be contacted at MonicaDodds@YourAgingParent.com.



"It's the weekend, Dad. Read me one without a moral."

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ANSWERS

- | | |
|--------------|-------------|
| 1. Jerusalem | 5. Damascus |
| 2. Judea | 6. Lydda |
| 3. Samaria | 7. Cyprus |
| 4. Gaza | 8. Lystra |

Culture

'It's Complicated,' a complex tale with moments both funny, tragic

By John Mulderig
Catholic News Service

NEW YORK -- The aptly titled "It's Complicated" (Universal/Relativity) features an ethically tangled story demanding careful evaluation by mature viewers. Indeed, to quote the perplexed monarch of Siam in Rodgers and Hammerstein's classic musical "The King and I," from a Catholic moral perspective, "Is a puzzlement."

That's because writer-director Nancy Meyers' aesthetically smooth-running romantic comedy concerns a couple -- successful bakery-restaurant owner Jane (Meryl Streep) and legal eagle Jake Adler (Alec Baldwin) -- who, a decade after their divorce, reconnect and have an affair. This, despite his second marriage to much younger "trophy wife" Agness (Lake Bell) and Jane's budding romance with Adam (Steve Martin), an architect working on an addition to her home.

Assuming their union was valid to begin with, however, the pair's seeming adultery -- presented as a daring feminist adventure for Streep's well-delineated character -- would, in fact, be marital lovemaking. Yet the breach of trust with the new "spouse" can hardly be excused, and adds a further twist to the spiritually convoluted proceedings.

In its more serious moments, Meyer's script does highlight the lasting emotional toll exacted on children when their par-



Meryl Streep, Steve Martin, Alec Baldwin and Lake Bell costar in "It's Complicated."

ents split. Thus the three grown kids of the original match -- Lauren (Caitlin Fitzgerald), Gabby (Zoe Kazan) and Luke (Hunter Parrish) -- straightforwardly acknowledge that they're still hurt by the long-ago breakup.

And, in a touching scene, Jake and Agness' usually bratty young son Pedro (Emjay Anthony) shows his instinctive affection for his father, while being tucked into bed, by sleepily pressing

Jake's hand to his heart, a gesture made all the more poignant by the audience's knowledge that, by now, Jake is seriously considering deserting Agness and Pedro to return to Jane.

Like the chats Jane enjoys with her quartet of best friends, who also serve as her misguided romantic advisers, the conclusion toward which the plot moves accords more with freewheeling contemporary mores than with the perennial wis-

dom of church doctrine.

For marriage and family life resources rooted in Catholic teaching, visit: <http://www.usccb.org/laity/>.

The film contains complex moral issues; skewed values; implied sexual activity, some of it adulterous; off-screen masturbation; fleeting rear nudity; considerable drug use; some sexual references and humor; and a half-dozen crude or crass terms. The USCCB Office for Film & Broadcasting classification is L -- limited adult audience, films whose problematic content many adults would find troubling. The Motion Picture Association of America rating is R -- restricted. Under 17 requires accompanying parent or adult guardian.

Mulderig is on the staff of the Office for Film & Broadcasting of the U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops. More reviews are available online at www.usccb.org/movies.

PRIESTS: We continue to pray for our priests and priests throughout the diocese

(From 6)

homilies are good and he has a good singing voice. Some of us have had the opportunity to travel with him to San Francisco on our youth trips -- he is very cool! And he knows cars!

Sometimes we forget to tell him how much he is appreciated, but we have some ideas on how we can show our support and appreciation to not only him but to all priests. We should tell them how grateful we are that they accepted the call to the priesthood. We should respect and listen to them. We can become more involved in ministries at Mass -- altar serving, lecturing, usher-

ing, serving Communion. We should shake their hands after Mass and thank them for celebrating Mass.

Besides celebrating Mass and the sacraments with us we would like to see our priests help with youth activities, go to retreats, come to religious education classes, and most of all share their own experiences with us.

To celebrate the Year of Priests, we would like to plan a party in his honor and present him with a special gift. Additionally, we would like to help him celebrate his birthday and the anniversary of his priesthood.

To encourage more vocations, priests need to spread the word about how much

fun it is to be a priest. We have to provide more information to people -- have a job fair just about the priesthood. Most importantly, we have to think of our own possible vocation to the priesthood or religious life.

We thank you, Bishop Pfeifer, for answering the call to the priesthood and leading our diocese. We will continue to pray for you, our pastor and the priests of our diocese.

Sincerely,

*Grades 7-12
Holy Angels Parish
San Angelo*

YOUTH: We can pay new priests \$10 an hour

(From 6)

posters to get the message out that we need more priests. We can encourage men to serve God and His people and we can have activities to help people understand the benefits of being a priest. We can pay them \$10 an hour.

Bishop Pfeifer, we want to thank you for being a priest and leading our diocese. We also want to thank you for giving us Fr. Charles to lead our parish. We love and pray for both of you.

CATHOLIC MARITAL TRENDS are similar to those of the U.S. population as a whole.	
53%	of adult Catholics are currently married
25%	never been married
12%	divorced
5%	widowed
1%	separated
4%	unmarried and living with partner

PRIORITY: Diocese provides much assistance for married couples

(From 7)

wives together and is the basis for loving and committed communities. We also pledge ourselves to provide more ongoing support for all married couples and their families, especially with our programs that are parish-based. In doing this, we are then strengthening the entire Christian family, especially in our parishes.

We stress the importance of providing more assistance for people who are contemplating marriage, and for married couples in accord with the teaching of The Catechism of the Catholic Church which tells us, "By reason of their new state in life and of their new order [Christian spouses] have their own special gifts as the people of God. This grace proper to the Sacrament of Matrimony is intended to perfect the couple's love and strengthen their indissoluble unity. By this grace, they help one another to attain holiness in their married life and in welcoming and educating children." [CC1641]

This past year, a well-known writer and presenter, John Roberto, gave a seminar to the priests, and then a follow-up presentation to all the pastoral leaders of our Diocese in September. From these seminars, our priority was reinforced, and we realize, as the presenter suggested, that we need to make a paradigm shift as a way we minister and care for the people of our Diocese, especially in reference to family life and marriage. This does not necessarily mean beginning something totally new, but rather reinforcing the many good things we are doing and do them in a more effective way.

This new position for Family Life and Marriage will assist the Office of Education and Formation to continue to provide catechetical models that enhance family faith formation and foster life-long faith. A specific

focus will be to assist parishes in implementing the strategies for Family Faith Formation offered in recent workshops by John Roberto. Another focus is to address the issues on family life and marriage raised in the study done last April in eight areas around the Diocese. It will also be an opportunity to collaborate with other departments in an effort to promote family life and marriage in parishes throughout the Diocese. The parish is the pastoral setting to implement this number one priority of Family Life and Marriage. Now is the time for all of our priests, all pastoral leaders, to make every effort, cooperating with this new pastoral office for Family Life and Marriage, to look at ways at a local level of giving much more emphasis to family and marriage. For this to happen, it is most important that our priests, pastoral leaders and Pastoral Councils work closely with Mary Ann Lewis for the implementation of this priority. For this to happen as we move into the New Year, I am asking our priests and all pastoral leaders to give much more focus for planning for family faith formation, using the Nine Strategies that were outlined for us by John Roberto which give us Best Practices in Family Faith Formation. These Strategies have already been shared with our priests and other leaders, and I am asking them now to study these strategies at every Pastoral Council meeting throughout the year 2010.

As we launch this new effort to build up family life and marriage, let us pray especially to the Holy Family—Jesus, Mary and Joseph—to teach us how to develop new relationships of love among ourselves, and to live the virtues modeled by the precious Holy Family. I thank all of you for your cooperation and ask God's blessings upon you.

The Adult Catechism

Marriage and Family Life: How essential?

By Most Rev. Donald Wuerl
Archbishop of Washington

"They have no experience of family and therefore nothing to hold on to." This was how the director of a large prison ministry program recently described the increasingly large number of young people, usually minority and disadvantaged, who populate our nation's prison system. His experience shows how, with the collapse of the family, we are witnessing the unraveling of the fabric of society on the local, regional and national levels.



Wuerl

Why is the family so essential? Why does the Church devote so much effort in defending family life? Why is it that one of the major priorities of the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops is its pastoral initiative in support of the family? The Catechism of the Catholic Church answers these questions when it reminds us that "the family is the original cell of social life" (2207). It is the natural society in which a husband and wife come together in love, and give themselves to each other in love and in the gift of life.

The family is the first building block of the human community that grows in an ever-widening set of relationships beginning with a husband and wife, their children, the wider family and eventually all those other communities – educational, cultural, social, economic and, of course, political – of which they become a part.

If the original cell or the foundational building block is damaged in any way, or even destroyed, neither the body of which it is a cell nor the edifice of which it is the foundation can long endure.

Why has this condition reached such a critical point today? There have always been failed marriages and irresponsible parents in the past. Today, however, I believe we are seeing such an extensive and perhaps overwhelming

collapse of individual families precisely because our society no longer supports the basic and essential values on which families rest and our community is built. Even the very definition of marriage is challenged. The ancient time-honored and universally recognized definition of marriage as the union of a man and a woman is being rejected by an increasing number of state legislatures and young people who too often do not have a context for or understanding of the fullness of marriage.

At the core of the Church's teaching on family life is God's plan for the human race, which was set forth so majestically in the Book of Genesis. God's original plan – still operative today – calls for the man and woman to come together and form a communion of mutual support. "It is not good for the man to be alone. I will make a suitable partner for him" (Genesis 2:18). This partnership is to be a permanent one, as Jesus himself so explicitly confirmed (Matthew 19:3).

This vision of family life found in Scripture and Church teaching is not always replicated in the secular society in which we live. The apostolic exhortation of Pope John Paul II on the family, Familiaris Consortio, presents a beautiful vision of marriage and family that corresponds to God's plan, our true happiness and what we are called to sustain as faithful members of the Church. We find this teaching presented in both the Catechism of the Catholic Church and the United States Catholic Catechism for Adults.

For more information on the meaning of marriage and our archdiocesan effort to sustain this great gift of human life and experience, visit MarriageMattersDC.org.

The Church has two millennia of experience with family life. As the guardian of the natural moral law, the Church recalls for all of us how essential family life is and calls us to do all we can as members of both the Church and civil society to sustain and protect, foster and nourish a true understanding of marriage and family.

EDICTAL SUMMONS

December 30, 2009
CASE: MILLER -- LaCOUR
NO.: SO 09/52

The Tribunal Office of the Catholic Diocese of San Angelo is seeking Betsy Lynn LaCour.

You are hereby summoned to appear before the Tribunal of the Catholic Diocese of San Angelo, at 804 Ford Street, San Angelo, Texas 76905, on or before the day of January 2010, to answer to the Petition of Gary Don Miller, now introduced before the Diocesan Tribunal in an action styled, "Gary Miller and Betsy LaCour, Petition for Declaration of Invalidity of Marriage." Said Petition is identified as Case: MILLER -- LaCOUR; Protocol No.: SO 09/52, on the Tribunal Docket of the Diocese of San Angelo.

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

Given at the Tribunal of the Diocese of San Angelo on the 31st day of December 2009.

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

EDICTAL SUMMONS

December 30, 2009
CASE: MILLER -- SULLIVAN
NO.: SO 09/53

The Tribunal Office of the Catholic Diocese of San Angelo is seeking Patricia Ann Sullivan.

You are hereby summoned to appear before the Tribunal of the Catholic Diocese of San Angelo, at 804 Ford Street, San Angelo, Texas 76905, on or before the 31st day of January 2010, to answer to the Petition of Gary Don Miller, now introduced before the Diocesan Tribunal in an action styled, "Gary Miller and Patricia Sullivan, Petition for Declaration of Invalidity of Marriage." Said Petition is identified as Case: MILLER -- SULLIVAN; Protocol No.: SO 09/53, on the Tribunal Docket of the Diocese of San Angelo.

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

Given at the Tribunal of the Diocese of San Angelo on the 31st day of December 2009.

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

EDICTAL SUMMONS

December 30, 2009
CASE: KEENEY -- LEAKE
NO.: SO 09/62

The Tribunal Office of the Catholic Diocese of San Angelo is seeking Aaron C. Leake.

You are hereby summoned to appear before the Tribunal of the Catholic Diocese of San Angelo, at 804 Ford Street, San Angelo, Texas 76905, on or before the 31st day of January 2010, to answer to the Petition of Jonie Eldora Keeney, now introduced before the Diocesan Tribunal in an action styled, "Jonie Eldora Keeney and Aaron C. Leake, Petition for Declaration of Invalidity of Marriage." Said Petition is identified as Case: KEENEY -- LEAKE; Protocol No.: SO 09/62, on the Tribunal Docket of the Diocese of San Angelo.

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

Given at the Tribunal of the Diocese of San Angelo on the 31st day of December 2009.

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

EDICTAL SUMMONS

December 14, 2009
CASE: HENRY (JONES) - LUCAS
NO.: SO 09/14

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

You are hereby summoned to appear before the Tribunal of the Catholic Diocese of San Angelo, at 804 Ford Street, San Angelo, Texas 76905, on or before the 31st day of January 2010, to answer to the Petition of Melissa Ann Henry (Jones), now introduced before the Diocesan Tribunal in an action styled, "Melissa Jones and Michael Lucas, Petition for Declaration of Invalidity of Marriage." Said Petition is identified as Case: HENRY (JONES)--LUCAS; Protocol No.: SO 09/14, on the Tribunal Docket of the Diocese of San Angelo.

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

Given at the Tribunal of the Diocese of San Angelo on the 31st day of December 2009.

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

EDICTAL SUMMONS

December 14, 2009
CASE: HENRY (JONES) - SCHULZE
NO.: SO 09/15

The Tribunal Office of the Catholic Diocese of San Angelo is seeking Terry Lee Schulze.

You are hereby summoned to appear before the Tribunal of the Catholic Diocese of San Angelo, at 804 Ford Street, San Angelo, Texas 76905, on or before the 31st day of January 2010, to answer to the Petition of Melissa Ann Henry (Jones), now introduced before the Diocesan Tribunal in an action styled, "Melissa Jones and Terry Lee Schulze, Petition for Declaration of Invalidity of Marriage." Said Petition is identified as Case: HENRY (JONES) - SCHULZE; Protocol No.: SO 09/15, on the Tribunal Docket of the Diocese of San Angelo.

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

Given at the Tribunal of the Diocese of San Angelo on the 31st day of December 2009.

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

EDICTAL SUMMONS

December 14, 2009
CASE: HENRY - JONES
NO.: SO 09/16

The Tribunal Office of the Catholic Diocese of San Angelo is seeking Danny Jones.

You are hereby summoned to appear before the Tribunal of the Catholic Diocese of San Angelo, at 804 Ford Street, San Angelo, Texas 76905, on or before the 31st day of January 2010, to answer to the Petition of Melissa Ann Henry, now introduced before the Diocesan Tribunal in an action styled, "Melissa Jones and Danny Jones, Petition for Declaration of Invalidity of Marriage." Said Petition is identified as Case: HENRY - JONES; Protocol No.: SO 09/16, on the Tribunal Docket of the Diocese of San Angelo.

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

Given at the Tribunal of the Diocese of San Angelo on the 31st day of December 2009.

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

MARRIAGE: Diocese stressing importance of marriage, family life

(From 1)

couple and generates the capacity to be life-giving, inspiring others to fruitful-ness and unity

The theme for World Marriage Day has been permanently adopted as "Love one Another." This phrase is the commandment given us by Jesus in John 13:34. It speaks to us in a simple and challenging way of how God desires us to live. Loving one another is a daily choice – simple and challenging.

Worldwide Marriage Encounter seeks to accomplish this goal through its mission of renewal in the Church and continued conversion in the world. This mission is oriented to assist couples and priests to live fully their intimate and responsible relationships. The Catholic WWME accomplishes this by providing couples and priests with a spiritual experience as well as ongoing community support as they continue to live their vocation.

Worldwide Marriage Encounter has been

encouraged by Bishop Pfeifer to grow within the Diocese of San Angelo. With Bishop Pfeifer's direction for growth of Marriage Encounter opportunities, a West Texas Area was designated recently by the WWME Organization. This area encompasses the entire Diocese of San Angelo. In addition to this designation, a vibrant group of "Encountered Couples" has formed in Midland and, most recently, in San Angelo...with plans to develop more couple groups (circles) in many cities and towns throughout the Diocese. With their enthusiastic support, these couples have promoted Marriage Encounter Weekends in a variety of parishes. Currently, three Marriage Encounter Weekends are offered within our Diocese during the course of a year. The focus of a Weekend retreat is to assist married couple in strengthening their ability to communicate as well as to improve their ability to forgive each other for hurts and shortcomings. For the priest, Marriage Encounter offers this emphasis on communication and helps foster strong relationships with his parish community.

For this reason, it is not uncommon for priests to attend a Weekend along with married couples. We believe priests deserve this weekend "getaway" and Marriage Encounter can help with acquiring a substitute priest while attending a weekend.

In another example of Bishop Pfeifer's continued desire to strengthen marriages, an afternoon Marriage Enrichment will be offered in San Angelo at Christ the King Retreat Center on May 15, 2010 and will include Mass and dinner. Pastors and volunteers desiring to offer this and other forms of support for married couples are invited to contact Tom and Jeanie Van Vranken, Area Leaders for the West Texas Area of Worldwide Marriage Encounter. They can be contacted as follows: 432-683-8879 or email vanvranken@hughes.net

In the months ahead, Marriage Encounter Weekends will be held within our Diocese on February 26-28, 2010 at Circle Six Ranch in Stanton and on June 4-6, 2010 at Christ the King Retreat Center in San Angelo. To register call 432-697-9904 or register online at www.mewesttexas.org.



Too Sweet

2.2 million
couples marry each year in the U.S.

196,420
couples married in U.S. Catholic churches last year — about 9% of all marriages.

California, Illinois, New York, Pennsylvania, Texas
have the most number of Catholic marriages

6%
of currently married women have been married for at least 50 years.

57% women
60% men
who are 18 or older and married in the U.S.

Sources: U.S. Census and The Official Catholic Directory 2008 CEB

HUMANA

(Para 3)

la concepción los padres comparten en lo que se llama pro-creación, y que Dios es el tercer partido importante en cada acto de concepción. La madre, ni los padres de familia, no son libres ante los ojos de Dios de hacer la decisión de matar al no nacido, y los que están contemplando el aborto han de sentarse en oración y recordar que el gran tercer partido en la concepción es Dios quien da el alma al pequeño no nacido. ¿Qué tiene que decir Dios acerca del aborto? Esta es la pregunta principal.

Muchos pasajes de la Santa Escritura son la fundación para la constante e inquebrantable enseñanza de la Iglesia

DALY: Never lose heart in tough times

(From 15)

Above all, we need to see that religious education is not just for children. It is lifelong learning.

Every sizeable parish should have some adult religious education. This would help the young parents who are trying to answer their children's questions and older adults who want more than childhood explanations for life's myster-

Católica que el no nacido es humano y merece el amor y respeto de sus padres, especialmente la madre. Para aclarar, necesitamos indicar que las enseñanzas de la Iglesia Católica, desde su inicio, yéndonos hacia atrás, por lo menos al año 90 A.D., en el libro de Didache, se han enseñado que toda vida humana es sagrada desde su principio y el aborto, el matar directamente al no nacido, es siempre intrínsecamente malo. Lo malo nunca se puede justificar. También necesitamos declarar claramente que si los que efectúan el aborto, o los que libremente cooperan con esta acción mortal y son completamente conscientes del objetivo malvado de lo que hacen, son culpables de un pecado grave y así mismos se separan

ies.

Also, we have to use technology more. Catholic learning is moving online. We should use CDs in our cars and iPods on our treadmills. We shouldn't miss this revolution in learning.

Despite the school closures, we should not lose heart.

Jesus told us he would be with us until the end. That's good company.

Now go teach all nations.

de la gracia de Dios y pierden participación completa en la vida de la Iglesia Católica. Esto significa que no han de recibir la Santa Comunión y puedan incurrir en lo que se llama excomunión. Tocante lo malvado del aborto y el abuso de la vida humana para investigación, comparto con ustedes unas citas de las más últimas enseñanzas de nuestro Santo Padre, Papa Benedicto XVI en su encíclica llena de sabiduría, Caridad en Verdad (Caritas in Veritate), "A la plaga difusa, trágica, del aborto, podríamos añadir en el futuro, una sistemática planificación eugenésica de nacimiento...Detrás de estos escenarios hay planteamientos culturales que niegan la dignidad humana." Luego en esa carta encíclica estimulante, el Papa también dice, "La cuestión social se ha convertido radicalmente en una cuestión antropológica, en el sentido de que implica no sólo el modo mismo de concebir, sino también de cómo se manipula la vida como por bio-tecnológica. Cada día la vida humana se pone más bajo el control del hombre por la fecundación in vitro, la investigación con embriones, la posibilidad de la clonación y del híbrido humano. Todo esto nace y se promueve en la cultura actual desilusionada, que cree haber dominado cualquier misterio, puesto

que el origen de la vida está en nuestras manos. Pero no han de minimizar los escenarios que retan nuestro futuro, los nuevos y potentes instrumentos que la "cultura de la muerte" tiene a su disposición."

La vida humana, especialmente en su principio, está siendo amenazada más y más por los proyectos inmorales de investigaciones y por la legislación al nivel más alto de nuestra nación. Al escribirse este artículo, el Senado de los Estados Unidos aprobó la meta del grupo de presión para incluir el aborto en el plan de salud e incluir fondos federales para destruir a los no nacidos. Yo fuertemente estoy de acuerdo con la declaración por el Cardenal George, O.M.I., presidente de la Conferencia de Obispos Católicos de los Estados Unidos, quien llamó esta decisión del Senado "un error grave y un golpe serio a la reforma de cuidado genuino de salud. El Senado está ignorando la promesa hecha por el Presidente Obama y la voluntad de los americanos en fallar de incorporar las prohibiciones de fondos federales para el aborto y planes que incluyen aborto. La gran falla de excluir los fondos para el aborto convertirá aliados

(Mira OBISPO/23)

BISHOP: Critical attention given to abortion issue must not wane

(From 2)

and purpose in this world. Those who support abortion and wrongfully say it is the right of the mother or parents to choose, forget an essential fact that at conception the parents share in what is called pro-creation, and that God is the important third party in every act of conception. A mother, nor parents, are not free in the eyes of God to make the decision to kill the unborn, and those contemplating abortion should sit in prayer and remember that the great third party in conception is God who gives the soul to the little unborn. What does God have to say about abortion? This is the primary question.

Many passages of sacred scripture are the foundation for the constant and unbroken teaching of the Catholic Church that the unborn is human and deserves the love and respect of their parents, especially the mother. To make it clear, we need to point out that the teaching of the Catholic Church, from its very beginning, going back to at least the year 90 A.D. in the book of Didache, has taught that all human life is sacred from its very beginning and that abortion, the direct killing of the unborn, is always intrinsically evil. Evil can never be justified. We also need to state clearly that if those who perform an abortion, or those who willingly cooperate in this deadly action and are fully aware of the objective evil of what they do, they are guilty of a grave sin and thereby separate themselves from God's grace and from full participation in the life of the Catholic Church. This means they should not receive Holy Communion and they can incur what is called an ex-communication.

As regards the evil of abortion and the abuse of human life in research, I share with you some quotes from the latest teaching of our Holy Father, Pope Benedict XVI in his wisdom-filled encyclical, *Charity in Truth* (*Caritas in Veritate*), "To the tragic and widespread scourge of abortion, we may well have to add in the future the systematic eugenic programming of birth...underlying these scenarios are cultural viewpoints that deny human dignity." Then in that challeng-

ing encyclical letter, the Pope also states, "The social question has become a radically anthropological question, in the sense that it concerns not just how life is conceived, but how it is manipulated as bio-technology places it increasingly under man's control. In-vitro fertilization, embryo research, the possibility of manufacturing clones and human hybrids: all this is emerging and being promoted in today's highly disillusion culture, which believes it has mastered every mystery, because the origin of life is now in our grasp. We must never underestimate the disturbing scenarios that threaten our future, or the powerful new instruments that the cultural death has at its disposal."

Human life, especially at its very beginning, is being threatened more and more by immoral research projects and by legislation at the highest level in our country. As this article was being written, the U.S. Senate endorsed the abortion lobby's goal of mainstreaming abortion as health care and paying for abortion with our tax dollars. I strongly concur with the statement of Cardinal George, O.M.I., President of the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops, who called the decision of the Senate "a grave mistake and a serious blow to genuine health care reform. The Senate is ignoring the promise made by President Obama and the will of the American people in failing to incorporate longstanding prohibitions on federal funding for abortion and plans that include abortion. Failure to exclude abortion funding will turn allies into adversaries and require us and other to oppose this (health) bill because it abandons both principle and precedent." In the Senate legislative proposal approved shortly before Christmas, federal funds will help subsidize, and in some cases a federal agency will facilitate and promote, health plans that cover elective abortions. All purchasers of such plans will be required to pay for other people's abortions in a very direct and explicit way! In the Senate bill, many immigrant families would be unable to receive primary care and be compelled to rely on emergency room care.

It is one thing to talk globally about abortion but the more important thing is to look locally at our own diocese and to recognize

that sadly there are three abortion centers in our diocese under the care of Planned Parenthood that are regularly destroying the life of the unborn. Planned Parenthood in Midland does surgical abortions. Planned Parenthood in both San Angelo and Abilene do "medication abortions", which are produced by using the deadly and controversial RU-486 drug. This drug is designed to kill, and not heal or cure as all medicine should, and very often causes the woman using it very serious health problems.

I call on all the people of our diocese to be much more proactive in confronting the evil that is being done at these Planned Parenthood centers. We must remember that Planned Parenthood is a huge business and a major part of this business is the killing of unborn children. Planned Parenthood aborted 290,000 babies in 2007. The Planned Parenthood Federation of America is the single largest abortion provider in the U.S., and does this with the help of over \$336 million in tax funding.

All need to know, and make it clear to all people, that Planned Parenthood still bases its philosophy and principles on its founder, Margaret Sanger, a racist, who called Christianity "parasitic", and looked forward to the day when humanity would be freed from its tyranny. Margaret Sanger's principle espoused by Planned Parenthood goes directly against the gospel teaching of Jesus Christ, and can in no way be defended by any biblical reference. I point out to all, especially single women, who are faced with the critical abortion decision that other life options are provided for women and parents in San Angelo, Midland and Abilene through pregnancy centers and all of our Catholic churches.

My brother and sisters in Christ, as your bishop, I state clearly as I have done very often in my preaching and writing that the #1 moral and pastoral issue in Midland, San Angelo and Abilene is the issue of abortions that are performed by Planned Parenthood at these death centers. After what we do in church, by celebrating Eucharist, then the #1 priority must be to address this issue which is a life and death issue. The lives of our precious unborn sisters and brothers depend

on our action.

I have insisted over and over again that much more attention and action needs to be given to the critical abortion issue by our priests, deacons, women religious, pastoral leaders, members of ACTS, Cursillistas, Guadalupanas, all Catholic groups, and especially by all Knights of Columbus. Much more must be done in a proactive way to address this critical issue. Yes, I am grateful for the efforts that are being made to overcome abortion at the abortion centers in our diocese, and for the prayers that are offered in front of these centers. However, we do not have the number of people praying in front of these death centers that we should have when we take into account the large number of Catholics in these cities. We need much more preaching and teaching, we need to have more days of prayer in front of these centers, we need to have the pro-life intention prayed in all of our weekend masses, we need to write many more letters to the editor of our local papers about the evil of abortion, we need to have many more people taking part in the pro-life committees, and we need to be much more pro-active in communicating with all of our elected officials about the evil of abortion.

In the first chapter of the first book of the Bible, Genesis, we read that human life is made in the very image and likeness of God. This beautiful divine teaching should be what inspires us to be much more pro-active in the defense of the unborn and to speak out against the abuse of all human life at all stages of life. The sanctity of life is written in the hearts of all men and women. We must constantly come together to aspire to build a society that rejects the culture of death, and promotes a culture of life, in which every child, born and unborn, is respected and loved, and protected by laws.

In closing, we need to pray often the short, powerful prayer of Pope John Paul II, "God, give us the grace—when the sacredness of life before birth is attacked, to stand and proclaim that no one ever has the authority to destroy unborn life." Pope John Paul also pointed out, "Abortion—is the most unjust execution."

CATOIR: One good resolution you can make -- and keep -- this year

(From 15)

ple of misses. Turn to the Lord for help and swing again; you may hit a home run.

The purpose of making a resolution is not so much to test your strength as it is to keep you in the good fight. St. Peter

remained in the battle after he denied Christ three times.

The tradition is that he went to Mary in tears, asking her help. She consoled him and convinced him to carry on with courage. She probably told him to persevere in his good intentions. In this way,

his desire to make amends would be taken care of automatically.

If you want to make a worthwhile resolution for the coming new year, one that you can easily keep, why not decide to enter into silence and solitude once a day for two minutes, just before you go to

sleep at night. Be still and know that God is within you. Find your inner spirit, the place where the Holy Spirit resides.

Two minutes, that's all, because the kingdom of God is within you.

Happy New Year!

OBISPO

(Para 21)

en adversarios y requiere que nosotros y otros a oponer a esta ley (de salud) porque abandona ambos, principio y precedente.” Es una cosa hablar globalmente acerca de aborto pero la cosa mas importante es de ver localmente a nuestra propia diócesis y reconocer que tristemente hay tres centros de aborto en nuestra diócesis bajo el cargo de Planned Parenthood que regularmente destruyen la vida del no nacido. Planned Parenthood en Midland hace abortos quirúrgicos. Planned Parenthood, en ambos San Angelo y Abilene hace “abortos de medicación”, que son producidos por medio del uso de la droga controversial y mortal, la RU-486. Esta droga es diseñada para matar, y no para sanar y curar como toda medicina debería, y muy a menudo le causa a la mujer usándola problemas muy serios de salud. Llamo a todas personas de nuestra diócesis que tomen mucha mas iniciativa de enfrentar este malvado que se lleva a cabo en estos centros de Planned Parenthood. Debemos recordar que Planned Parenthood es un negocio muy grande y una parte mayor de este negocio es la matanza de pequeños no nacidos. Planned Parenthood abortó 290,000 niños en 2007. La Federación Americana de Planned

Parenthood es el proveedor más grande de abortos en los EEUU, y hace esto con la ayuda de más de \$336 millones fondos de impuestos. Todos debemos saber, y hacer claro a todo el mundo, que Planned Parenthood aún basa su filosofía y principios en su fundadora, Margaret Sanger, una racista, quien llamó a la cristiandad un “parásito”, y miraba hacía el día cuando la humanidad sería liberada de su tiranía. El principio de Margaret Sanger, abrazado por Planned Parenthood, va directamente en contra de la enseñanza evangélica de Cristo Jesús, y de ninguna manera puede ser defendida por alguna referencia bíblica. Recalco a todos, especialmente a las mujeres solteras, que se enfrentan con la critica decisión de aborto que hay otras opciones de vida proveídas para mujeres y padres de familia en San Angelo, Midland y Abilene por medio de centros de embarazo y todas nuestras iglesias católicas. Mis hermanos y hermanas en Cristo, como su obispo, declaro claramente, como lo he hecho regularmente en mi predicar y escritos, que el asunto moral y pastoral #1 en Midland, San Angelo y Abilene es el asunto del aborto que se lleva a cabo por Planned Parenthood en sus centros de muerte. Después de lo que

hacemos en la iglesia, el celebrar de la Eucaristía, la prioridad #1 debe de ser de enfrentar este asunto que significa vida o muerte. Las vidas de nuestros preciosos hermanos y hermanas no nacidos dependen de nuestra acción. He insistido vez tras vez que mucha mas atención y acción debe ser dada al asunto critico del aborto por nuestros párrocos, diáconos, religiosas, líderes pastorales, miembros de ACTS, Cursillistas, Guadalupanas, todos los grupos Católicos, y especialmente los Caballeros de Colón. Mucho más debe de hacerse en una manera proactiva para tratar con este asunto crítico. Sí, estoy muy agradecido por los esfuerzos que se están haciendo para terminar el aborto en los centros de aborto en nuestra diócesis, y por las oraciones que se ofrecen en frente de estos centros. Sin embargo, no tenemos el número de personas rezando en frente de estos centros que deberíamos de tener cuando tomamos en cuenta el gran numero de católicos en estas ciudades. Necesitamos más predicación y enseñanza, necesitamos más días de oración en frente de estos centros, necesitamos tener la intención de pro-vida rezada en todas las misas de fin de semana, necesitamos escribir más cartas al editor de los periódicos locales acerca del

malvado de aborto, necesitamos tener más personas tomando parte en los comités de pro-vida, y necesitamos ser mucho más activos en comunicar a todos nuestros oficiales elegidos acerca del malvado del aborto. En el primer capitulo del primer libro de la Biblia, Génesis, leemos que toda vida humana es hecha en la misma imagen y semejanza a Dios. Esta hermosa enseñanza divina debería ser lo que nos inspira a ser más proactivos en la defensa del no nacido, y hablar en contra del abuso de la vida en cualquier etapa. La santidad de la vida está escrita en los corazones de todo hombre y mujer. Debemos constantemente aspirar unidos a crear una sociedad que rechaza la cultura de muerte, y promueve la cultura de vida, en que cada niño, nacido o no nacido, es respetado y amado, y protegido por leyes. En conclusión, necesitamos rezar a menudo la corta, poderosa oración de Papa Juan Pablo II, “Señor, danos la gracia—cuando la santidad de vida antes de nacer sea atacada, de ponernos de pie y proclamar que nadie, nunca tiene la autoridad de destruir una vida no nacida.” Papa Juan Pablo también recalco, “Aborto—la ejecución más injusta.”

PADRE THAD

(Para 10)

El que un paciente esté considerando o pidiendo la eutanasia puede ser un indicador de que son otras sus preocupaciones o temores. El Dr. Teno y el Dr. Lynn, médicos de pacientes terminales, lo expresan así:

“Los pacientes de primer ingreso en cuidados paliativos frecuentemente quieren ‘terminar con todo’. En primera instancia esto puede parecer una solicitud de eutanasia activa, sin embargo muchas veces es una manifestación de su miedo al dolor, al sufrimiento y al aislamiento, o a una agonía prolongada por la tecnología. Por otra parte, estas peticiones quizá sean intentos del paciente por ver si en realidad a alguien le preocupa si vive o muere. Cumplir estos deseos con aceptación y prontitud puede resultar desastroso para el paciente pues lo interpreta como la confirmación de que no vale nada”.

Es posible también que las personas en condiciones de fragilidad o edad avanzada se

perciban a sí mismas como “una carga” para los demás, de manera que el que pidan la eutanasia puede indicar que les preocupa estar “imponiéndose” sobre la familia o allegados. Pero analizándolo, por supuesto que todos tenemos el derecho a ser una carga para otros. Cuando éramos bebés, niños, y especialmente adolescentes, fuimos “cargas” para nuestros padres. Esto nos permite ver cómo la idea misma de familia está enraizada en la noción de las cargas mutuas compartidas entre los integrantes de la familia. Estamos frente al verdadero reto de construir una cultura de la familia aun más fuerte (incluyendo la cultura de la atención médica) que promueva este apoyo mutuo.

Quienes se suicidan cortan de tajo con el apoyo y la unidad familiar. Estas personas quizá supongan que nadie resultará particularmente lastimado o afectado excepto ellas mismas, sin embargo, típicamente lo que sucede es lo contrario. Aun y cuando el suicidio esté asociado a alguna enfermedad mental, como sucede

muchas veces, es probable que detrás de la pérdida de su ser querido los familiares y allegados queden con un sentimiento de transgresión o traición.

De igual manera, es común que este mismo sentimiento de traición esté presente cuando la eutanasia voluntaria llega a una familia. Los parientes tomados por sorpresa quizá se culpen por no haber puesto atención; a otros les será difícil racionalizar el hecho y tratarán de acomodarlo lo mejor que pueden: “Mamá tomó el asunto por su cuenta y encontró quien le ayudara a resolverlo”, o “sus amigos le ayudaron en ese difícil trance y le hicieron fácil decir adiós en sus propios términos”.

En resumen, la eutanasia y el suicidio asistido no son más que formas de hacer corto circuito a nuestras interrelaciones e interconexiones humanas; fundamentalmente actos de violencia que más que ayudar lastiman. Estas decisiones dejan una sombra muy oscura sobre la vida que ha sido terminada. Acabar bien

con nuestras vidas, por el contrario, es estar abiertos a recibir la ayuda amorosa de otras personas y aceptar la parte de sufrimiento que pueda presentarse en nuestro camino, humanizando así —no satanizando— nuestra fragilidad, enfermedad o edad avanzada. Procuramos unos a otros al final de la vida en nuestros momentos de temor, soledad y sufrimiento, enaltece ese importante pasaje que cada uno de nosotros debe recorrer y donde la muerte llega en el momento providencial de Dios como una culminación de Su obra en nosotros.

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

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Dioce-Scenes



Big Spring

Msgr. Bernard Gully, at left in photo at left, and Fr. Ariel Lagunilla celebrate the Eucharist during a Mass to celebrate the purchase of land for a new church for the Holy Trinity Parish in Big Spring. Below, and below left, additional scenes from the ceremony.



WTOS members celebrate work in West Texas

By Deborah Micaiewicz

West Texas Organizing Strategy (WTOS) has been on the move in a very public way lately. Member churches, of which St. Therese in Carlsbad and St. Mary in San Angelo are members, held an Accountability Session on Sunday, October 18 where all seven San Angelo Mayoral candidates pledged support to the long-standing WTOS Agenda.

The Tom Green County Agenda, the result of 64 neighborhood and faith community meetings, advocates for neighborhood revitalization; diversity; living wages; equity in education; comprehensive infrastructure for all of Tom Green County; integrity in our justice system; equity in health, safety and civil rights; and fair water plans. Member churches organize their faith communities to encourage voter registration, informed participation at

public meetings, issues engagement, and education to name a few areas of work.

At the Accountability Session candidates explained how, if elected, they would work to support the WTOS Agenda – which is quite a change from what candidates usually do when given a public platform. However, WTOS is different. The Accountability Session took place in a church sanctuary. WTOS principals are based on Biblical principals of justice and equity for all God's people -- especially those marginalized and stricken by poverty.

The second big public event took place on November 10 as WTOS was publicly honored, for the third year in a row, by the City of San Angelo for its work in neighborhood revitalization. WTOS has facilitated relationships and partnerships among the development community resulting most recently in a federal grant which will fund creation of 20

new rent-to-own apartments in one of the targeted neighborhoods.

The third big celebration took place at the Blackshear Boys and Girls Club in San Angelo on November 19 where the public gathered over a delicious lunch provided by all the member churches and to view a presentation of recent and exciting neighborhood development, including the only platinum LEEDS (Leader in Energy & Environment Design) home in the State of Texas. The celebration continued with a bus tour facilitated by the City of San Angelo Development Services Department through the four targeted neighborhoods to see firsthand the revitalization and work accomplished by partnership and relationship and to encourage more.

Membership is open to all churches. FMI contact Beatris Vega at wtos@att.net .