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WEST TEXAS ANGELUS



Serving Catholics in the Diocese of San Angelo, Texas

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ALAN TORRE | APTORRE PHOTOGRAPHY

Bishop Michael Sis celebrated the annual Rural Life Mass for the Diocese of San Angelo on Aug. 27, 2020. After being previously postponed due to the COVID-19 pandemic, this year's Mass was held outdoors beneath a pavilion at Mandujano Brothers Produce Company in Coyoana, Texas. See more photos, Page 24.

From the Bishop's Desk
Mortality and faith



Bishop Michael J. Sis

Diocese of San Angelo

Thomas à Kempis says, "Every action of yours, every thought, should be those of one who expects to die before the day is out. Death would have no terrors for you if you had a quiet conscience. ... Then why not keep clear of sin instead of running away from death? If you aren't fit to face death today, it's very unlikely you will be tomorrow." (*The Imitation of Christ*, 1, 23, 1).

God has given us what we need to prepare spiritually for death. He has shown us the proper way to live by obeying his Commandments. He has instilled in every human heart the gift of the moral conscience, to help us avoid sin and apply his law in particular circumstances. He has sent us his Son Jesus Christ to show us the path to eternal life. He gives us wisdom and guidance through the Scriptures and the teachings of the church. He offers us the sacraments for the spiritual good of our souls.

Here are some things we can all do to prepare for a happy death: Love God. Love our neighbor as ourselves. Reconcile with God by turning away from our sins. Reconcile with others by offering forgiveness and seeking forgiveness. Fulfill our basic duties in life. Pray. Ask God what he wants us to do. Carry out the corporal and spiritual works of mercy. Live the beatitudes. Offer our sufferings in union with the sacrifice of Christ on the Cross in atonement for our sins and those of the whole world. Receive the sacraments frequently — especially confession and Communion.

Despite the limitations of the current pandemic, our priests are available in our churches to hear confessions and absolve sins. I recommend to our people that they contact their local parish, find out the times that confession is available, and prepare personally to make a good confession. (As a side note, while I was writing this article, sitting in the DFW Airport, just a few minutes after I composed this paragraph, a complete stranger approached me and asked if I would hear his confession. Perfect timing.)

Besides being spiritually prepared for the reality of death, it is also prudent to be prepared practically. This includes creating or updating our will and other important personal documents. When we have a will in place, it can make decisions much easier for our family and loved ones. Our choice of beneficiaries is an expression of our values. Regardless of whether or not we have any financial resources to pass along, we can all write down the principles, insights, morals, beliefs, and devotions that we have found

See BISHOP, Page 22

The Prayer Square

**Litany for a
happy death**

O Lord Jesus, God of goodness and of mercy, I come before you with a humble and contrite heart.

To you I commend my last hour and what awaits me after it.

When my feet, no longer able to move, shall warn me that my journey in this world is drawing to a close,

merciful Jesus, have mercy on me.

When my trembling hands shall no longer have the strength to clasp the crucifix, and against my will I am forced to let it fall upon my bed of suffering,

merciful Jesus, have mercy on me.

When my eyes, dull with the pain of near death, fix on you their dying gazes,

merciful Jesus, have mercy on me.

When my lips shall pronounce for the last time your most holy name,

merciful Jesus, have mercy on me.

When my face, pale and bathed in the sweat of death, shall indicate that my end is near,

merciful Jesus, have mercy on me.

When my ears, soon to be shut to the words of men, shall be opened to hear from your mouth the irrevocable sentence which will determine my condition for all eternity,

merciful Jesus, have mercy on me.

When my heart shall be overwhelmed by the anguish of death, and my spirit, troubled by the remembrance of my sins and the fear of your justice, shall struggle with the angel of darkness, who will strive to fill me with doubts concerning your pardon,

merciful Jesus, have mercy on me.

When I shall shed my last tear, the sign of my dissolution, receive it as a sacrifice of expiation for my sins, and in that dreadful moment,

merciful Jesus, have mercy on me.

When I shall have lost the use of all my senses, when the entire world shall have vanished from my sight, and when I shall groan in the anguish of my last agony and feel the sorrows of death,

merciful Jesus, have mercy on me.

When my soul shall leave my body pale, cold, and lifeless, receive my soul as a homage which I pay to your divine majesty, and in that moment, merciful Jesus, have mercy on me.

When at length my soul shall appear before you and behold for the first time the immortal splendor of your majesty, reject me not from your presence. Deign to receive it into the loving embrace of your mercy, so that I may eternally sing your praises.

Merciful Jesus, have mercy on me.

Reporting Sexual Abuse

The Catholic Diocese of San Angelo is firmly committed to creating and maintaining the safest possible environment for our children and vulnerable adults. If you or someone you know has been sexually abused by anyone who serves the Church, and you need a place to talk with someone about your feelings of betrayal or hurt by the Church, we are here to help you. To report incidents, call Lori Hines, Victim Assistance Coordinator,

325-374-7609 (cell), or write Diocese of San Angelo, Victim Assistance Ministry, PO Box 1829, San Angelo, TX 76902. If the incident occurred outside this diocese, our Victim Assistance Coordinator will assist in bringing your concern to the attention of the appropriate diocese. Please keep in mind that one always has the right to report abuse to civil authorities, and civil law requires that any abuse of a minor must be reported.

Reportar Abuso Sexual

La Diócesis Católica de San Ángelo está firmemente comprometida a crear y mantener el ambiente más seguro posible para nuestros niños y adultos vulnerables. Si usted o alguien que usted conoce ha sido víctima de abuso sexual por cualquier persona que sirve a la Iglesia, y necesita un lugar para hablar con alguien sobre sus sentimientos de traición o herido por la Iglesia, estamos aquí para ayudarle. Para reportar incidentes, llame a Lori Hines, Coordinadora de Asistencia a Víctimas, 325-374-7609 (celular), o es-

criba a la Diócesis de San Ángelo, Ministerio de Asistencia a Víctimas, PO Box 1829, San Ángelo, TX 76902. Un intérprete de español está disponible. Si el incidente ocurrió fuera de esta diócesis, nuestra Coordinadora de Asistencia a Víctimas le ayudará a traer su preocupación a la atención de la diócesis correspondiente. Por favor, tenga en cuenta que uno siempre tiene el derecho de reportar el abuso a las autoridades civiles, y la ley civil requiere que cualquier abuso de un menor de edad debe ser reportado.

La mortalidad y la fe



Obispo Michael J. Sis

Diócesis de San Ángelo

La pandemia del coronavirus está afectando nuestras vidas a todos los niveles, en el hogar y en la escuela, en el trabajo y en el juego. Afecta nuestras relaciones, nuestra espiritualidad y nuestras finanzas. Ha provocado sufrimiento físico, angustia emocional, y muerte.

La imprevisibilidad del virus puede resultar estresante. ¿Cuánto tiempo durará esto? Después de recuperarse del COVID-19, ¿existe una inmunidad duradera o es posible volver a infectarse? ¿Cuándo estará disponible una vacuna? ¿Qué tan cuidadoso debo ser? ¿Quién será el próximo infectado? ¿Perderé a mis seres queridos? ¿Qué pasa si contraigo el virus?

Muchos de nosotros ya conocemos personalmente a alguien que murió de COVID-19. Queridos miembros de nuestras familias y nuestras comunidades parroquiales han fallecido. Su pérdida ha causado dolor y luto. Aquellos de nosotros que sobrevivimos debemos enfrentar nuestra propia vulnerabilidad y mortalidad.

Esto presenta una gran oportunidad para reflexionar sobre nuestra preparación personal para el final de la vida. El Salmo 90:12 dice: “Enséñanos lo que valen nuestros días, para que adquiramos un corazón sensato.” Cuando nos encontramos en una situación de afrontar el hecho de la brevedad de la vida, puede ayudarnos a poner en orden nuestras prioridades.

Yo tenía un amigo que decía que era ateo. Me dijo: “No creo en Dios, pero tal vez cuando llegue a ser un anciano, empiece a creer en él.” Mientras su enfoque puede parecer astuto, ninguno de nosotros sabe cuántos días nos quedan en esta tierra. Nuestra religión nos inspira a vivir ahora con fe, esperanza y amor, y a preparar nuestras almas para la próxima vida. Cristo nos llama a elegirlo y seguirlo ahora. Él dice: “Renuncien a su mal camino, porque el reino de los cielos está ahora cerca” (Mateo 4:17). San Pablo dice: “Este es el día de la salvación” (2 Corintios 6:2).

Según nuestra fe cristiana, para aquellos que mueren en la gracia de Cristo, la muerte no es una tragedia, sino una experiencia positiva y santa. Es una participación en la muerte de Jesucristo, para que también podamos participar de su resurrección (vea Romanos 6:3-9 y Filipenses 3:10-11). San Pablo dice:

“Porque para mí la vida es Cristo, y la muerte una ganancia... Tengo un gran deseo de romper las amarras y estar con Cristo, lo que sería sin duda mucho mejor” (Filipenses 1:21-23). Al final de su vida, Santa Teresa de Lisieux expresó una perspectiva similar: “No estoy muriendo; estoy entrando en la vida” (*Las últimas conversaciones*).

Como cristianos, creemos que todo ser humano será juzgado por Dios al morir. El *Catecismo de la Iglesia Católica* dice que “la muerte pone fin a la vida del hombre como tiempo abierto a la aceptación o rechazo de la gracia divina manifestada en Cristo” (CIC, no. 1021). Nunca es demasiado temprano para decirle sí a Jesucristo y seguir el camino correcto.

Nuestra Iglesia nos llama a recordar nuestra mortalidad, y a prepararnos para la hora de nuestra muerte. Tenemos solo un tiempo limitado en esta vida y solo tenemos una vida para vivir. No hay “reencarnación” después de la muerte (CIC, no. 1013). La forma en que vivimos en esta vida tiene un impacto en nuestra vida eterna. San Francisco de Asís dice: “Alabado seas, mi Señor, por nuestra hermana muerte corporal, de la cual ningún hombre viviente puede escapar. Ay de aquellos que mueran en pecado mortal. Bienaventurados a los que encontrará en tu santísima voluntad porque la muerte segunda no les hará mal” (*Cántico de las Criaturas*).

Tomás à Kempis dice: “Así deberías conducirte en todas tus actividades y pensamientos como si hoy mismo te fueras a morir. Si hubiera tranquilidad en tu conciencia no tendrías mucho temor a la muerte... Mejor sería evitar los pecados que pretender huir de la muerte. Si hoy no te encuentras preparado, ¿de qué modo lo estarás mañana?” (*La Imitación de Cristo*, 1, 23, 1).

Dios nos ha dado lo que necesitamos para prepararnos espiritualmente para la muerte. Nos ha mostrado la forma correcta de vivir al obedecer sus mandamientos. Ha inculcado en cada corazón humano el don de la conciencia moral, para ayudarnos a evitar el pecado y aplicar su ley en circunstancias particulares. Nos ha enviado a su Hijo Jesucristo para mostrarnos el camino a la vida eterna. Nos da sabiduría y guía a través de las Escrituras y las enseñanzas de la iglesia. Nos ofrece los sacramentos para el bien espiritual de nuestras almas.

Aquí hay algunas cosas que todos podemos hacer para prepararnos para una muerte feliz: Amar a Dios. Amar a nuestro

prójimo como a nosotros mismos. Reconciliarnos con Dios apartándonos de nuestros pecados. Reconciliarnos con los demás ofreciendo perdón y buscando el perdón. Cumplir con nuestros deberes básicos en la vida. Orar. Preguntarle a Dios qué quiere que hagamos. Realizar las obras de misericordia corporales y espirituales. Vivir las bienaventuranzas. Ofrecer nuestros sufrimientos en unión con el sacrificio de Cristo en la Cruz en expiación por nuestros pecados y los del mundo entero. Recibir los sacramentos con frecuencia—especialmente la confesión y la Comunión.

A pesar de las limitaciones de la pandemia actual, nuestros sacerdotes están disponibles en nuestras iglesias para escuchar confesiones y absolver pecados. Recomiendo a nuestros feligreses que se comuniquen con su parroquia local, averigüen los horarios en que está disponible la confesión, y se preparen personalmente para hacer una buena confesión. (Como nota aparte, mientras yo escribía este artículo, sentado en el Aeropuerto de DFW, solo unos pocos minutos después de escribir este párrafo, un completo extraño se me acercó y me preguntó si podía escuchar su confesión. El momento perfecto).

Además de estar preparado espiritualmente para la realidad de la muerte, también es prudente estar preparado prácticamente. Esto incluye crear o actualizar nuestro testamento y otros documentos personales importantes. Cuando tenemos un testamento, podemos hacer que las decisiones sean mucho más fáciles para nuestra familia y seres queridos. Nuestra elección de beneficiarios es una expresión de nuestros valores. Independientemente de si tenemos o no recursos financieros para pasar, todos podemos escribir los principios, las percepciones, los valores morales, las creencias y las devociones que hemos considerado importantes en nuestra vida y que queremos transmitir a nuestra familia y a los demás.

Nuestra preparación práctica también incluye escribir nuestras preferencias para los servicios funerarios y hacer planes para nuestro entierro. Es muy útil escribir nuestros deseos y hablar de ellos con alguien a quien amamos. Estos podrían incluir, entre otras cosas, nuestras preferencias con respecto al lugar del funeral, el lugar del entierro, la música que se utilizará en los servicios funerarios, los nombres y la información de contacto de los posibles portadores del féretro y lectores, y selecciones de Escrituras del Ritual de exequias cristianas.

En nuestro sitio web, la Diócesis de San Ángelo proporciona un formulario de muestra para la designación de un agente con poder legal en asuntos médicos (<https://sanangelodiocese.org/end-of-life-preparation>). Esta es una forma de designar a alguien para que tome decisiones médicas en nuestro nombre si no podemos hacerlo.

El sitio web del Centro Nacional Católico de Bioética ofrece una *Guía católica para cuidados paliativos y hospicio*, así como una *Guía católica para las decisiones al final-de-la-vida* (<https://www.nbccenter.org/store>). Estos son recursos muy útiles.

Como personas de fe, debemos abordar la pandemia actual con seriedad y prudencia, pero no con pánico o alarma. Tomamos medidas razonables para proteger la salud y el bienestar de nosotros mismos y de los demás, y utilizamos nuestra creatividad para aprovechar al máximo esta difícil situación. Permitimos que el Espíritu Santo nos inspire a una mayor santidad a través de todo. Permitimos que Jesucristo nos acompañe en estos tiempos difíciles. Reflexionamos sobre nuestra propia vulnerabilidad y mortalidad. Hacemos tiempo para realizar actividades que traen alegría. Atendemos las necesidades de los demás. Usamos los medios disponibles para ayudar a establecer conexiones con nuestros seres queridos. Dejamos que la gente sepa que nos preocupamos por ellos. Damos gracias a Dios por cada nuevo día de vida. Nos arrepentimos de nuestros pecados y confiamos en la amorosa misericordia de Dios. Vivimos plenamente en el presente con la mirada puesta en la eternidad.

Espacio de Oración

Letanía para una muerte feliz

Oh Señor Jesús, Dios de bondad y misericordia, vengo ante ti con un corazón humilde y contrito. A ti te encomiendo mi última hora y lo que me espera después. Cuando mis pies, que ya no puedan moverse, me adviertan que mi camino en este mundo está por acabarse, Jesús misericordioso, ten compasión de mí. Cuando mis manos temblorosas ya no tengan fuerzas para agarrar el Crucifijo, y contra mi voluntad me vea obligado a dejarlo caer sobre el lecho de mi dolor, Jesús misericordioso, ten compasión de mí. Cuando mis ojos, apagados con el dolor de la cercana muerte, fijen en ti sus miradas moribundas, Jesús misericordioso, ten compasión de mí. Cuando mis labios pronuncien por última vez tu santísimo nombre, Jesús misericordioso, ten compasión de mí. Cuando mi rostro, pálido y bañado con el sudor de la muerte, indique que mi fin está cerca, Jesús misericordioso, ten compasión de mí. Cuando mis oídos, que pronto se cerrarán a las palabras de los hombres, se abran para escuchar de tu boca la sentencia irrevocable que determinará mi condición para toda la eternidad, Jesús misericordioso, ten compasión de mí. Cuando mi corazón sea abrumado por la angustia de la muerte, y mi espíritu, turbado por el recuerdo de mis pecados y el temor de tu justicia, luchará con el ángel de las tinieblas, quien se esforzará por llenarme de dudas acerca de tu perdón, Jesús misericordioso, ten compasión de mí. Cuando derrame mi última lágrima, el signo de mi disolución, recíbelo como sacrificio de expiación por mis pecados, y en ese momento terrible, Jesús misericordioso, ten compasión de mí. Cuando haya perdido el uso de todos mis sentidos, cuando el mundo entero se haya desvanecido de mi vista, y cuando gime en la angustia de mi última agonía y sienta los dolores de la muerte, Jesús misericordioso, ten compasión de mí. Cuando mi alma deje mi cuerpo pálido, frío y sin vida, recibe mi alma como un homenaje que rindo a tu divina majestad, y en ese momento, Jesús misericordioso, ten compasión de mí. Cuando por fin mi alma se presente ante ti y contemple por primera vez el esplendor inmortal de tu majestad, no me rechaces de tu presencia. Dígnate recibirla en el abrazo amoroso de tu misericordia, para que yo pueda cantar eternamente tus alabanzas. Jesús misericordioso, ten compasión de mí.

Odessa church installs COVID-friendly holy water fonts



COURTESY

St. Elizabeth Ann Seton Church in Odessa has found a way to bring back a bit of the familiarity of the churchgoing experience, albeit in a new, pandemic precaution format. The church has installed new sensor-activated holy water fonts that dispense water into a parishioner's hand when a palm is placed beneath the font. Parishioners can now complete the traditional sign of the cross upon entry to the church. Holy water fonts throughout the diocese were emptied in March to curtail the spread of COVID-19 as part of the diocese's broader efforts to curtail the spread of COVID-19.



COURTESY

CALENDARS



Bishop's Calendar

Please contact the bishop's assistant, Lupe Castillo, for information about the bishop's calendar.

325-651-7500

icastillo@sanangeliocese.org

September 2020

- 1 SAN ANGELO, Diocesan Pastoral Center, Presbyteral Council meeting at 11:00 a.m.
- 4 ODESSA, St. Mary's Central Catholic School, Mass at 10:00 a.m.
- 4 ODESSA, St. Elizabeth Ann Seton, Dedication of new nursery at 2:00 p.m.
- 7-11 SAN ANGELO, Christ the King Retreat Center, Annual Priests' Retreat
- 10 SAN ANGELO, Sacred Heart Cathedral, Chrism Mass at 6:30 p.m.
- 13 EDEN, St. Charles, Mass of Installation of Pastor, Father Bala Anthony Govindu, at 11:00 a.m.
- 17 SAN ANGELO, Diocesan Pastoral Center, Diocesan Charitable Foundation board meeting at 10:00 a.m.
- 19 BIG SPRING, Holy Trinity, Diocesan Deacon Council meeting at 10:30 a.m.
- 19 SWEETWATER, Holy Spirit, Confirmation Mass at 5:00 p.m.
- 27 McCAMEY, Sacred Heart, Confirmation Mass at 11:00 a.m.
- 27 CRANE, Good Shepherd, Confirmation Mass at 3:00

- 28 p.m.
SAN ANGELO, Diocesan Pastoral Center, Pastoral Plan Implementation Committee meeting at 10:00 a.m.

October 2020

- 1 CHRISTOVAL, Carmelite Hermitage, Solemn Profession of Vows of Br. Augustine Mary Stegenga at 10:30 a.m.
- 2 MIDLAND, Ranchland Hills, golf tournament for Holy Cross Catholic High School
- 3 SAN ANGELO, Sacred Heart Cathedral Gym, Annual Deacon Convocation
- 3 SAN ANGELO, Sacred Heart Cathedral, Mass at 5:00 p.m.
- 4 OZONA, Our Lady of Perpetual Help, 35th Anniversary Mass for Fr. Hilary Ihedioha at 11:00 a.m.
- 4 SAN ANGELO, St. Joseph, Respect Life Mass at 5:00 p.m.
- 6 SAN ANGELO, Diocesan Pastoral Center, Finance Council meeting at 11:00 a.m.
- 8 SAN ANGELO, Diocesan Pastoral Center, Vocation

- 11 Team meeting at 10:00 a.m.
SAN ANGELO, Sacred Heart Cathedral, Marriage Jubilee Mass at 2:30 p.m.
- 15 SAN ANGELO, Diocesan Pastoral Center, Diocesan Charitable Foundation board meeting at 10:00 a.m.
- 16-17 CONCEPTION, MO, Conception Seminary College Board of Regents meeting
- 18-19 AUSTIN, Texas Conference of Catholic Bishops' General Assembly
- 20 SAN ANGELO, Pastoral Center, Priest Pension Plan committee meeting at 10:30 a.m.
- 21 SAN ANGELO, Diocesan Pastoral Center, Deans' meeting at 1:30 p.m.
- 22 SAN ANGELO, Diocesan Pastoral Center, Liturgical Commission meeting at 1:00 p.m.
- 27 SAN ANGELO, Diocesan Pastoral Center, Presbyteral Council meeting at 11:00 a.m.
- 27 MIDLAND, Horseshoe Arena, Life Center fundraising dinner
- 29 ODESSA, UTPB, Mass at noon
- 29 MIDLAND, Midland Country Club, Guadalupe Radio Network 20th Anniversary Event at 7:00 p.m.
- 30 MIDLAND, Midland College, Mass at noon

Necrology of Priests and Deacons

Please pray for our departed clergy

September

- 1 Rev. James Delaney, OMI (2007)
- 2 Rev. Hilarin Lapinski (1994)
- 4 Rev. John Busch, OMI (2003)
- 5 Deacon Jesus Mercado (2009)
- 6 Rev. Vincent Daugintis (1990)

- 10 Rev. James Franchi (1969)
- 10 Rev. Leo St. John, OMI (1976)
- 15 Rev. Peter Vergauwen (2003)
- 23 Rev. Herman Valladares (1997)
- 25 Rev. William Lensing (1978)
- 26 Rev. William Cadigan, MSC (1971)
- 28 Deacon Paul Ramos (1990)

- 30 Deacon Reinaldo (Ray) Ramirez (2017)

October

- 4 Deacon Thomas Lambdin (1982)
- 5 Rev. William Meagher, OMI (1970)

- 7 Rev. Francis Schoutteten, OMI (2002)
- 8 Deacon Simon Franco (2008)
- 12 Deacon Peter Ballaro (2013)
- 15 Rev. James Norman, OMI (1987)
- 21 Deacon Richard Blake (1989)

Academic year begins with eight men in seminary for the Diocese of San Angelo

By Father Ryan Rojo

This fall, the Diocese of San Angelo has eight seminarians studying at three seminaries across the country. The diocese welcomed two new men to the program this summer: Joshua Basse from Odessa and Ismael Calzada from Midland. Six of the eight men are from Midland/Odessa, with the other two being from the Abilene area.

The five men who are currently in Philosophy (undergrad) at Conception Seminary College in Conception, Missouri, are Francisco Camacho, Humberto Diaz, David Garcia, Mauricio Romero, and Ismael Calzada. These men worked full-time jobs in their respective hometowns this summer. Mike Elsner, a second year Theologian (graduate) student studying at Kenrick-Glennon Seminary in St. Louis, Missouri, served at St. Ann's in Sonora for his summer internship. The highlight of the summer, however, was the diaconal ordination of Kevin Lenius at Holy Family Church in Abilene on August 1, 2020. Before his ordination, Deacon Lenius lived the 30-day Spiritual Exercises Retreat at the Sacred Heart Jesuit Retreat House in Sedalia, Colorado.

This year, our diocese is entering into a new relationship with Notre Dame Seminary in New Orleans, Louisiana, sending Joshua Basse to study Pre-Theology. Established in the early 1800s, Notre Dame is welcoming a class of 158 men, the largest in the school's history.

As the new Vocation Director/Seminarian Director for the Diocese of San Angelo, I want to express my gratitude to Bishop Sis for his confidence in naming me to such an important task. It is my hope that we can continue the good work begun by my predecessor, Father Michael Rodriguez, to build a culture of vocation in the diocese and beyond.

This year, the men will face the additional hardship of off-campus restrictions because of the COVID-19 pandemic. With this in mind, I am including the names and mailing addresses of our seminarians with the hope that the faithful in the diocese will remember their commitment with a simple card or letter. These names and addresses will appear in the West Texas Angelus again over the coming months. Thank you in advance for your thoughtfulness.

Through the intercession of the Blessed Virgin Mary, may our diocese see an increase in the number of good men studying to be Catholic priests!

Conception Seminary College (Undergrad)
P.O. Box 502
Conception MO, 64433

Ismael Calzada — Second year Philosophy at Conception Seminary College

Francisco Camacho — Fourth year Philosophy at Conception Seminary College

Humberto Diaz — Fourth year Philosophy at Conception Seminary College

David Garcia — Fourth year Philosophy at Conception Seminary College

Mauricio Romero — Fourth year Philosophy at Conception Seminary College

Kenrick Glennon Seminary (Graduate)
5200 Glennon Dr.
St. Louis, MO 63119

Deacon Kevin Lenius — Fourth year Theology at Kenrick-Glennon Seminary

Mike Elsner — Second year Theology at Kenrick-Glennon Seminary

Notre Dame Seminary (Graduate)
2901 S. Carrollton Ave.
New Orleans, LA 70118

Joshua Basse — First year Pre-Theology at Notre Dame Seminary



COURTESY

Back row, left to right: Ismael Calzada, Joshua Basse, Bishop Michael Sis, Vocation Director Father Ryan Rojo, David Garcia, Francisco Camacho
Front row, left to right: Mauricio Romero, Mike Elsner, Deacon Kevin Lenius, Humberto Diaz

Father Michael Rodriguez celebrates anniversary, begins new assignment



WEST TEXAS ANGELUS

Father Michael Rodriguez celebrated the 30th anniversary of his priestly ordination on Aug. 4, 2020, with a Mass at Holy Angels Church in San Angelo, assisted by the seminarians of the diocese. At the conclusion of the Mass, the seminarians presented him with a shield featuring the coat of arms of the diocese, a nod to his affinity for St. Michael the Archangel, who is often depicted with a shield.

Father Rodriguez was the most recent vocation director for the Diocese of San Angelo before the current director, Father Ryan Rojo. Father Rodriguez began a new assignment as the pastor of St. Joseph in Stanton and St. Isidore in Lenora on July 1. He was formally installed as pastor by Bishop Michael Sis during an installation Mass in Stanton on Sunday, Aug. 30.

Holy Cross Catholic High School begins school year



ALAN TORRE | APTORRE PHOTOGRAPHY

Above: Head of School Carolyn Gonzalez speaks at the opening Mass for the school year, held at St. Elizabeth Ann Seton Church in Odessa, Aug. 9.

Right: Students of Holy Cross Catholic High School take advantage of cooler weather by having classes under the trees in the courtyard of host church St. Elizabeth Ann Seton. Outdoor classes also provide for a safer, socially distant gathering.



COURTESY

Sisters with local ties make vows

By Congregation of Divine Providence

On July 25, 2020, Sisters of Divine Providence, while following social distancing guidelines, gathered in Sacred Heart Chapel at Our Lady of the Lake University in San Antonio, Texas, to celebrate Sister Kate Fitzgerald's perpetual profession of vows. Sister Kate, who entered the Congregation of Divine Providence (CDP) from St. John Fischer parish in Richmond, Texas (Archdiocese of Galveston-Houston), was surrounded by CDP Sisters and family during her final profession. Sister Kate's decision was solidified by her desire to do God's will. Sister Kate said, "To be obedient to God's will is why we are created, and I believe I can best hear and follow this call to love as a sister in the Congregation of Divine Providence. God's love has led me here, and through God's grace I will continue to follow the call."

Sister Kate lives in community in Midland, Texas, and will continue teaching kindergarten students at St. Ann's Catholic School.

Sister Christina C ne Ch vez entered the Congregation of Divine Providence after attending both Holy Redeemer Parish in Odessa and Good Shepherd Parish in Crane. On Sunday, July 26, 2020, Sister Christina renewed her temporary vows in Annunciation Chapel at Our Lady of the Lake Convent Center. It was a special day for Sister Christina as she was supported by Sisters of Divine Providence to continue her commitment.

To Sister Christina, renewing her vows means continuing to learn about women religious and their accomplishments throughout the centuries. "I choose to be a part of this life because I truly feel called to live out the 'prophetic' call as a religious and to be a radical witness in the world of how to entrust one's life to Divine Providence. I've found a place of belonging among the Sisters of the Congregation of Divine Providence where I can live out that call," she commented.

After professing her first vows in 2018, Sister



COURTESY

Pictured with other new members of the Congregation of Divine Providence are Sister Christina C ne Ch vez (far right), Sister Kate Fitzgerald (second from right), and Sister Megan Growing (third from right).

Christina began working full-time in ministry. She works in University Ministry at Our Lady of the Lake University in San Antonio, Texas. "In my ministry at OLLU, I've been able to share and teach about the CDP life, charism, mission, and vocation which is so energizing! I'm passionate about spreading the news about what women religious have been and are up to in their life and ministry," said Sister Christina.

She now focuses on the call to be "provident in our world" due to our society's recent struggles. She said, "I've found myself holding on to the phrase that 'God brings all things to good' as my guiding principle in both personal prayer and as a minister. I'm grateful for community life which also provides a space of wisdom when navigating new challenges in

both life and ministry. I feel honored to live out my life as a Sister of Divine Providence."

During the same weekend, Hermana Mar a Cruz de la Cruz Botello celebrated her final profession of vows in Quer taro, M xico; Sister Melissa Cessac celebrated her first profession of vows in San Antonio, Texas; and Sister Megan Growing, also from the Diocese of San Angelo, joined Sister Christina as they both celebrated their renewal of temporary vows in San Antonio, Texas.

Sisters of Divine Providence support young women looking to further discern their call to religious life and live out their vocation. To learn more about the vocation to religious life, please visit www.cdptexas.org or call (210) 434-1866.

Bishop Sis appoints deans to three-year terms

West Texas Angelus

On Aug. 24, 2020, Bishop Michael Sis appointed the deans of the three deaneries in the Diocese of San Angelo for the next three-year term. They are as follows:

- Rev. Msgr. Fred Nawarskas, Abilene Deanery
- Very Rev. Rodney White, Midland-Odessa Deanery
- Very Rev. Adam Droll, San Angelo Deanery

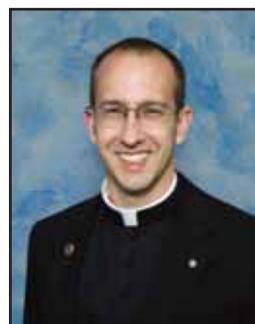
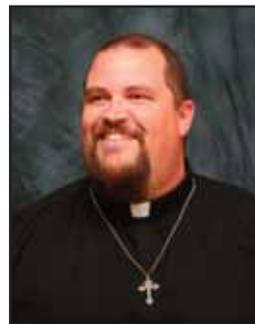
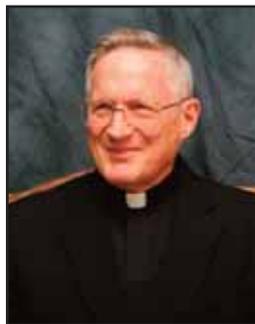
The dean represents the bishop to the priests and others of his deanery. While a priest elected to the Presbyteral Council represents his brother priests to the bishop, the dean appointed by the bishop represents the office of bishop to his brother priests and also to the whole church in his area.

The bishop appoints each dean for a three-year term. The bishop canvasses the opinions of the priests in each deanery before selecting and appointing a new dean.

The dean channels information from the bishop to the deanery. He keeps up-to-date information on diocesan policies, passing them on to the deanery. He keeps information flowing to the office of bishop about pastoral progress in the deanery.

The dean promotes and coordinates the common pastoral activity in the deanery. He stands at the point of focus of the bishop, the priests, and the people. The dean stands available as intermediary when circumstances require and when properly asked. The dean deepens and promotes the fraternity of the clergy in the deanery.

The dean fulfills those duties assigned to the vicar forane in Canon Law (Canon 555). The dean assists with the pastoral and financial audit coordinated by the chancellor and the diocesan finance officer each time there is a change of pastor in the deanery. In addition to those audits, the dean makes his canonical visitation of each parish and mission in the deanery every three years.



Clockwise from top left: Msgr. Fred Nawarskas, dean of the Abilene Deanery; Father Rodney White, dean of the Midland-Odessa Deanery; and Father Adam Droll, dean of the San Angelo Deanery.

Diocese names new vice-chancellor

West Texas Angelus

The Diocese of San Angelo recently announced that Deacon Marc Mata has been hired in the new position of vice-chancellor. The primary duty of the vice-chancellor will be as a human resources specialist. "Deacon Marc comes to us with a great deal of knowledge and experience in this area and we are excited to have him on board," said diocesan Chancellor Mike Wyse.

Deacon Mata has been a certified Senior Professional in Human Resources since 2010.

In addition to his role as human resources specialist for the diocese at the Diocesan Pastoral Center in San Angelo, Deacon Marc will also be available to assist and advise parishes and organizations within the diocese with their own human resource concerns, including hiring and terminations, job descriptions, pay scales, employer best practices, development of personnel policies and manuals, employee evaluations, benefits, and employee discipline.

Deacon Mata will also serve as the new COVID-19 Coordinator for the Diocese of San Angelo, filling the role previously held by Mike Elsner, a seminarian for the diocese who has returned to studies for the new academic year.



Deacon Marc Mata

New leadership for Knights of Columbus in diocese

By Brian Bodiford West Texas Angelus

The Knights of Columbus in the Diocese of San Angelo have a new diocesan deputy. Joe Jacobo began his tenure on July 1, 2020, taking over from Don Piwonka, who had served in the role for eight years.

The role of diocesan deputy in the Knights of Columbus is one that only exists in the state of Texas. The reason for this, as one might expect, is that "Texas is so big," said Piwonka. The diocesan deputy assists the state deputy in relaying information to the local knights, and also appoints district deputies, of which there are nine in the San Angelo territory. There are around 200 district deputies in Texas. "The state deputy would have that many appointments to appoint" without the role of diocesan deputy, Jacobo said.

There are 3,475 members of the Knights of Columbus in 35 councils (several councils make up a district) in the Diocese of San Angelo.

Jacobo celebrated 20 years as a member of the Knights of Columbus in June. Shortly after joining, he was appointed as a lower officer in his council. "My first position was lector, and from there I kind of went up the ladder holding different offices," he said. Most recently, Jacobo, who is a parishioner of St. Mary's in Odessa, served as one of two assistant diocesan deputies in the Diocese of San Angelo.

"Joe's been assistant five years, and he is ready to take over the reins of diocesan deputy," Piwonka said.

Jacobo sees an opportunity in the ways the world has become more virtual, particularly in a diocese the size of San

Angelo, which has the largest land area of any diocese in Texas. "Geographically, it is an obstacle to ... lead from that position," but with virtual meetings and video conferencing, "it's a whole lot easier to be meeting with everyone and building relationships," Jacobo noted.

When asked about the difference in roles between assistant diocesan deputy and diocesan deputy, Jacobo said, "I'm there to lead our district deputies so they can lead their councils at the local level. We all have goals, and I'm there to try to help everyone with achieving those goals, answering questions from our membership, answering questions from parishioners at the local and diocesan level."

Jacobo takes on the new role at a time when the organization of the Knights of Columbus has also changed. The Knights have recently revamped the process of achieving the four degrees of membership (charity, unity, fraternity, and patriotism), allowing knights to gain the first three degrees at once and opening the organization up so that initiations are no longer done behind closed doors. "We didn't talk about what we did in those, just for the idea of making them special, I guess. But now they're all open," Piwonka said, noting that the public and knights' families can attend initiations. One can even join virtually online today.

The Knights of Columbus was founded in 1882 by Father Michael J. McGivney, who is on track for beatification in October. "He wanted to have the degrees done in a way that would intrigue new men to want to join by secrecy, and they kept that tradition up until about a year ago," Jacobo said. "Nothing really weird would happen, but it was just to in-



WEST TEXAS ANGELUS

New Knights of Columbus Diocesan Deputy Joe Jacobo (left) and outgoing deputy Don Piwonka outside the Diocesan Pastoral Center in San Angelo, Aug. 7, 2020.

trigue men" who were interested in joining. Much of the tradition of initiation has been kept, but "there's really no need for secrecy."

"It's going to be more open, it's going to be family oriented, families will be involved. It will be out in the open, preferably after a Mass. Even parishioners can witness the ceremonies," Jacobo said of the current initiation process.

Jacobo begins his tenure as diocesan deputy at a time when the motto of the state deputy is "Be not afraid." While this motto was chosen before the current pandemic and societal unrest in the country, it has proven prescient. "Be not afraid" actually fits in perfectly with these times

that we're in," Jacobo said. "The Holy Spirit has guided the Knights to make changes that have fit in very well with what we're currently in."

Outgoing diocesan deputy Piwonka said of his 8 years of service in the role that his favorite part was "being able to work with ... knights throughout the diocese, meeting people that I wouldn't have necessarily met" and learning about efforts throughout the state to foster unity.

As for his goals in the role of the new diocesan deputy for the Diocese of San Angelo, Jacobo hopes "to bring awareness that we are here for our communities. We are here for the church, the bishop. That we are here to serve."



ALAN TORRE | APTORRE PHOTOGRAPHY

Bishop Michael Sis poured chrism oil over a new altar at St. Lawrence Church near Garden City on Aug. 10, 2020. Bishop Sis was at the parish to bless the new altar and recent renovations to the church.

St. Cyprian kept faith amid persecution, schism

Thasius Cecilianus Cyprianus (Cyprian) was a leading lawyer noted for his eloquence, manners and knowledge in 3rd century Carthage, North Africa. He was a prominent figure in the city's civil, political and social life. At middle age, he met an old priest named Caecilian who introduced him to Christianity. The truth of Christianity struck him full force and he was baptized. Cyprian made a vow of chastity, which greatly astonished the Carthaginians, with one biographer later exclaiming "Who ever saw such a miracle!"



Mary Lou Gibson

Speaking of Saints

Cyprian studied the Scriptures and the Christian thinkers and became a great scholar of the Bible. Rev. Clifford Stevens writes in *The One Year Book of Saints* that as Cyprian began to lead a holy life, it brought him peace and happiness

After a few years, he became a priest and in 249 he was elected Bishop of Carthage by the choice of the people, the clergy, and neighboring bishops. Over the next several years he dealt with the persecutions of the Roman Emperors, the rebaptism of heretics and apostates, an anti-pope named Novatian, and a plague.

About a year after Cyprian became bishop, the Emperor Decius issued an edict that ordered all inhabitants to sacrifice to the pagan gods. Richard McBrien writes in *Lives of the Saints* that many Christians apostatized by sacrificing to these idols or by buying certificates that falsely stated they had sacrificed.

Cyprian went into hiding and continued to administer his diocese through a steady stream of letters urging unity in the face of persecution.

When the crisis ended, Cyprian returned and allowed those who had lapsed and then repented back into communion after a period of penance. This was a time of calm from persecution, but not from controversy with other church leaders. During Cyprian's absence from his diocese, a priest named Novatus began receiving the apostatized back without any penance. Paul Burns writes in *Butler's Lives of the Saints* that this started a schismatic group of clerical and lay supporters.

Cyprian also had to deal with Novatian, the anti-pope, who wanted a more severe approach insisting that the church could not absolve apostates. Cyprian recognized Cornelius (251-253) as the true pope. Cyprian's more moderate treatment of the lapsed was approved by the Council of Carthage in 251.

McBrien writes that Cyprian disagreed with Pope Stephen I (254-257), the successor to Cornelius, over the issue of the rebaptism of heretics and schismatics. Along with most of the churches of North Africa, Syria and Asia Minor, Cyprian held that these people had to be rebaptized and could then be welcomed back into the church after they had done appropriate penance.

Carthage was struck with the plague from 252-254. Christians were blamed and Cyprian wrote a treatise, "On the Mortality," to comfort the people. He organized the Christians of the city to have mercy and charity not only to their own people but also to their enemies and persecutors.

In 257 the Emperor Valerian began another persecution. David Farmer writes in the *Oxford Dictionary of Saints* that all bishops, priests and deacons were required to participate in official pagan worship. Cyprian was exiled to Curibus and returned to Carthage a year later for trial. He was arrested and refused to renounce his faith. He was sentenced to death and was executed on September 14, 258.

Cyprian's greatest legacy is his collected writings, which were translated into Greek. They focused on dogma, morals, asceticism, and ecclesiastical discipline. Much of what he wrote was of such permanent value that he is quoted in documents of Vatican II (1962-5).

Cyprian is the patron of Algeria and North Africa. His feast day is September 16.

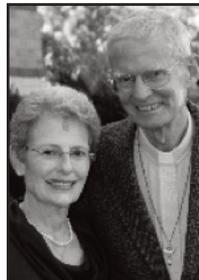
Mary Lou Gibson writes about the saints for the West Texas Angelus from her home in Austin.

Forgetting what lies behind: A promise for the family and the nation

St. Paul, describing his own spiritual pilgrimage in his Letter to the Philippians, says that his goal is to count everything as loss in his past life in order that he may gain Christ and his righteousness. Then he writes, "Not that I have already obtained this or am already perfect; but I press on to make it my own, because Christ Jesus has made me his own. Brethren, I do not consider that I have made it my own; but one thing I do, forgetting what lies behind and straining forward to what lies ahead, I press on toward the goal for the prize of the upward call of God in Christ Jesus" (3:12-14, RSVCE). This does not mean that there is nothing good in our past life. We are created in the image of God and that image is good. The original sin of the human race gives us a predilection for sin, and our own choice affirms that predilection. However, we are not powerful enough to destroy the image of God in us. We must allow God to choose what he wants to keep in us and let him forgive the sin in order that we may forget it and live in the present and into the future in freedom.

Forgetting what lies behind is only possible if we are aware of our own sin, repent of it, and receive the forgiveness of Christ. We must ask ourselves, "Do I really want to forget what lies behind?" How often do we cling to just one thing in our past life that prevents us from receiving the forgiveness of Christ? In the Letter to the Hebrews we are reminded of the passage in Jeremiah about the New Covenant God makes with his people in Jesus Christ. The author quotes Jeremiah when the prophet, speaking the words of the Lord, says, "For I will be merciful toward their iniquities, and I will remember their sins no more" (8:12). When we know that the Lord "remembers our sins no more," it is like a cup of cold water to a man dying of thirst.

If we want God to forgive our sins and forget them and in so doing free us from the shackles of the past, we must be honest in our self-examination. There can be at least two tendencies that keep



Father Knick and Sandie Knickerbocker

us from such honesty. These are the same tendencies that anyone who studies history must guard against. One tendency is to romanticize our past, to gloss over the sin that is there. The other is to see only the bad and give it more power than God in our lives. In the tendency to romanticize our past we give ourselves more credit that we deserve. In the tendency to see only the bad we do not recognize the power that Jesus Christ has over sin and Satan.

The primary human community that either helps us to the forgiveness and forgetfulness we need or hinders us in receiving it is the family. Over the years our family has ministered to many other families as a household of the Holy Family. We have had relationships with Black, Anglo, Hispanic, and Asian families. As we have interacted, our own family has been blessed by them. One thing we have learned is that we may not be able to change the societal breakdown of the family, but we can make a difference as one family to another in their need.

When families have problems, and all families do, it is tempting either to gloss over them by excusing the behavior of a member of the family or continually reminding the family member of his or her fault. In either case forgiveness and forgetfulness is hindered by the actions of the other family members.

See KNICKERBOCKERS, Page 21

Using your gifts to help reconnect the church

Since the Covid-19 pandemic began in March, I have heard from a number of people of varying ages who have felt disconnected from the church. This is understandable to a degree, because for a period we could not gather in person for Mass and were cut off from that physical connection to our faith. At the same time, I have also heard some express frustration in their perception that the parish staff or priests were not doing enough to reach out. While I'm sure we all could do a better job of connecting and engaging with parishioners who feel disconnected, some of this disconnect has been because we have been approaching the faith from a consumer mentality.

I cannot count the number of times that somebody would approach me while I was in parish ministry and share their great idea of a new program they wanted implemented, or a new activity they were sure would change the parish for the better. Yet, more often than not, when I would then invite that same person to take the lead on their own suggestion, I was told, "But that's your job" or "I think Father should do it."

The issue wasn't necessarily that they weren't qualified or weren't supported. The problem is too many have adopted the mindset that faith is a consumer activity. We are there to be spiritually fed, entertained, or educated. Too often we forget that all who are baptized are called to participate in the mission of the church. The models of ministry that some parishes have maintained help to support this attitude of consumerism. They operate in such a way that people believe that only the priest or the paid staff can take on leadership of something.

While there is a need for quality, competent, and professional staff in our parishes to help oversee programs and ministries, it should not be the expectation that only the staff or clergy be actively administering all the various programs. We must allow the lay faithful to use their gifts to help further the mission of the Church.

As Pope Francis reminded us in *Evangelii Gaudium*, "All the baptized, whatever their position in the Church



Alison Pope

or their level of instruction in the faith, are agents of evangelization, and it would be insufficient to envisage a plan of evangelization to be carried out by professionals while the rest of the faithful would simply be passive recipients. The new evangelization calls for personal involvement on the part of each of the baptized. Every Christian is challenged, here and now, to be actively engaged" (*EG*, no. 120).

If our only involvement in the parish is to go to Mass and send our children to religious education, then we are not completely fulfilling our duties as baptized members of the church. We are not simply to be consumers of the faith. We are to have an active part of our own in the life and activity of the church. That activity will look different for each person based on their state of life.

The staff and clergy in the parishes must also be aware of their part in encouraging the move away from a consumer mentality. We must not be so concerned with maintaining power and control that we are not willing to allow others to take leadership roles and contribute to the life of the church. As the *Catechism of the Catholic Church* tells us, "Baptism gives a share in the common priesthood of all believers" (*CCC*, no. 1268).

I believe this time of pandemic actually gives us the opportunities to discover new ways to involve people in ministry. If you're feeling disconnected from others in the parish, volunteer to organize a group to call parishio-

ners to check in and see if there is something the parish can help them with or just to pray with them. If you have great ideas on how your parish can support parents in building up their domestic church, offer to help your catechetical leader put together resources that can be handed out to families. Do you have a concern for those who may not be able to leave their homes to get groceries or other necessities? Volunteer to organize groups who are willing to shop for others or who are willing to make porch deliveries to those confined to their homes.

Especially now, we must keep in mind that our faith has a communal aspect. It is not just about how something affects me, but how my faith affects the community. How can we use our talents and passion to contribute to our parishes, rather than simply waiting for somebody else to do it for us?

The US Bishops tell us in *Coworkers in the Vineyard of the Lord*, that "by their baptismal incorporation into the Body of Christ, lay persons are also equipped with gifts and graces to build up the Church from within" (p. 12). We must not buy into the mindset that our gifts are less than another's. In St. Paul's First Letter to the Corinthians, we are reminded that there are many parts to the body, but none is more important than the other. In fact, all of them are necessary so that the body can operate in an optimal way. The same is true for our faith communities. We need all members to contribute their individual gifts so that we can operate in an optimal way.

The challenge for all of us, especially myself, is to look for ways to help and serve, rather than waiting for somebody to come along to serve me. We each have passions, gifts, and talents that can be used to help build up the church. Are we going to live up to our baptismal responsibilities to contribute to the life of the church? Or will we continue to simply be a consumer and thus contribute to our own feelings of disconnection?

Alison Pope is an associate director of the Diocese of San Angelo's Office of Evangelization and Catechesis.

Believing is seeing

Most people are familiar with the proverb "Seeing is believing," to indicate that "you need to see something before you can accept that it really exists or occurs." Thomas has long been its poster child, given his statement "Unless I see the mark of the nails in his hands and put my finger into the nailmarks and put my hand into his side, I will not believe" (Jn 20:25). If we switch words around, however, the resulting phrase has far more importance to understanding human behavior, for our beliefs greatly affect our "vision."

In the early 20th century, medical doctor and psychologist Alfred Adler wrote about the importance of one's "biased apperception," which is sometimes referred to as "private logic," "life style," or "cognitive schema." This is something that each individual develops early in life which colors the way he or she perceives the world, others, and himself or herself. This perspective typically remains constant throughout one's life and affects attitudes, behaviors, and the interpretation of reality. One of the goals of therapy is to help the individual to understand this "bias" and determine whether it has caused or is causing problems in their thoughts and actions regarding self, others, and — for me, a Christian therapist — God. Once a person "understands" why they believe the way they have believed all their lives, change is possible.

As a simplistic example, a boy grows up in a family where he is the youngest child in a family with three older sisters. His mother and father are highly educated and all the children are extremely bright. The boy, however, does not believe that because all he knows is that his sisters do everything better than he does and they all read school books that are way beyond his comprehen-



James R. Sulliman, PhD

sion. His feelings of "less than" are exacerbated by the fact that all three girls delight in telling him how "dumb" he is and never fail to point out his mistakes and failures. His self-perception may become one of inadequacy, despite the intelligence and abilities with which he is endowed. His expectation is that he will fail at anything meaningful. "Meaningful," however, is defined by anything at which he fails in order to support his life view. The things he succeeds at become trivial ... the things he fails at are the only ones that matter!

I have seen doctors that have felt like they were not "good enough" because they were not surgeons. And surgeons who were disappointed in themselves for not being heart surgeons. Even a heart surgeon who was suicidal because he was second in his class. His father, also a physician who was first in his class, referred to him throughout his life as his "number two son" even though he was the firstborn. There was nothing he could achieve that would alter his biased self-perception.

Often, people will "unknowingly" marry someone who will continue to reinforce the private beliefs they hold about themselves, others, and the world at large. A

person who likes control marries someone who is passive while an individual who has been "led" all their life chooses a "commander." Sometimes we marry someone who challenges our "faulty" life perspective and confusion, frustration, anger, and continuous efforts to defend an often indefensible position arise when being confronted by someone who has completely different beliefs.

Some people become convinced that "everyone is out for themselves" and most people are not good. It creates an attitude of "I am not going to help anyone else because no one does anything for me." Such a negative viewpoint is easily reinforced by highlighting and remembering all the numerous examples of the bad things people do and minimizing the good which gives ample data to support that "reality." People of this persuasion never fail to see "the dark cloud behind the silver lining." It is difficult for family members not to be affected by a committed "downer."

It is almost as if we put on a pair of glasses at a young age through which we view the world. Just as eye glasses "distort" reality so that things are made clearer to us, our private logic is like a special pair of bifocals that magnify the events and interactions that support our world view, while minimizing or discarding those things that are not in compliance with our beliefs.

Long after we leave our childhood, this same kind of thing also happens in a similar way when we make judgments about people that we are getting to know. Once an impression and judgment are formed, the "believer" often becomes intransigent and selects those

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FATIMA

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Now playing in theaters and on demand at home

In 1917, outside the parish of Fátima, Portugal, a 10-year-old girl and her two younger cousins witness multiple visitations of the Virgin Mary, who tells them that only prayer and suffering will bring an end to World War I. As secularist government officials and Church leaders try to force the children to recant their story, word of the sighting spreads across the country, inspiring religious pilgrims to flock to the site in hopes of witnessing a miracle. What they experience will transform their quiet lives and capture the attention of a world yearning for peace. Based on real-life events and starring Joaquim de Almeida (*Queen of the South*), Goran Višnjić (*Beginners*), Stephanie Gil (*Terminator: Dark Fate*) and Lúcia Moniz (*Love, Actually*), with Sônia Braga (*Aquarius*) and Harvey Keitel (*The Piano, The Irishman*), *FATIMA* is an uplifting story about the power of faith.

Check with your local theater about showtimes, or rent the film at home through Prime Video, Apple TV, Google Play, Vudu, and other platforms. Form more information, visit www.fatimathemovie.com.

Job Opening: Chief Financial Officer

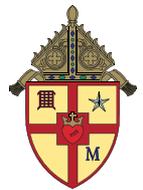
The Diocese of Amarillo is accepting applications for the position of Chief Financial Officer (CFO). The CFO is responsible for providing, developing and maintaining financial accountability standards and ethics for all diocesan matters. The CFO directs, manages and supervises the financial operations of the Pastoral Center in conjunction with the Bishop. The CFO manages the diocesan assets and advises management in financial operations. Applicant must be licensed as a Certified Public Accountant or have compatible experience. Familiarity with diocesan financial operations is preferred, but other accounting experience will be considered.

Experience as a chief finance officer or other high-level accounting or finance position is a plus. The position requires excellent communication and organizational skills. Applicants should have proficiency with information technology, including knowledge of spreadsheet, database, and accounting computer applications.

A full job description can be found on the Diocesan website at www.amarillodiocese.org/finance

Resumes will be accepted until Tuesday, September 15, 2020 and should be sent to:

Deacon Phil Whitson
Diocese of Amarillo
P. O. Box 5644
Amarillo, TX 79117



Or emailed to: pwhitson@dioama.org.

Apertura de Trabajo: Oficial Jefe de Finanzas

La Diócesis de Amarillo invita solicitudes de empleo para el puesto de Oficial Jefe de Finanzas (CFO). El cargo requiere proveer, desarrollar y mantener todo estándar y ética de responsabilidad financiera de carácter diocesano. CFO dirige, maneja y supervisa operaciones financieras del Centro Pastoral en unión con el Obispo. CFO maneja el patrimonio diocesano y aconseja a otros jefes sobre operaciones financieras. Los solicitantes deben tener licencia de Contador Público Certificado o experiencia compatible. Se prefiere conocimiento de operaciones financieras diocesanas, pero experiencia en contabilidad de otro tipo se tomará en cuenta.

Es ventaja tener experiencia como oficial jefe de finanzas o en puesto de alto grado. El puesto requiere gran habilidad de comunicación y organización. Los solicitantes deben tener habilidad en el uso de tecnología de informática como hojas de cálculo, base de datos y programas de contabilidad.

Vea detalles en inglés en el apartado www.amarillodiocese.org/finance.

Se aceptarán solicitudes y currículum hasta el martes, 15 de septiembre de 2020. Envíenlos por correo a:

Deacon Phil Whitson
Diocese of Amarillo
P. O. Box 5644
Amarillo, TX 79117



O por email a: pwhitson@dioama.org.

DIOCESE OF SAN ANGELO
Office of Evangelization and Catechesis

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Journeying Together: Accompanying Young People and Families through the Messiness of Everyday Life.

Keynote Presenter:

Paul E. Jarzembowski
United States Conference of Catholic Bishops
Secretariat of Laity, Marriage, Family Life and Youth
Assistant Director Youth and Young Adult Ministries.

Since 2013, Paul Jarzembowski has served on staff at the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops in Washington DC, leading the USCCB's efforts for youth and young adults. He and his wife Sarah live in the Maryland suburbs of Washington DC.

Breakout Sessions– TBA

More Information forthcoming

Conference Registration with Payment

\$20 before October 2, 2020
\$30 after October 2, 2020

For more information, contact the Office of Evangelization and Catechesis at 325-651-7500 or evangelizationcatechesis@sanangelodiocese.org

Cancellations

The “To The Heights” young adults conference, originally scheduled for Oct. 9–11, 2020, at St. Stephen Church in Midland has been canceled.

It is with sadness that we have to tell you that the Heart of JMJ Foundation’s Catholic Women’s Conference for 2020 has had to be canceled. We did it reluctantly but with the continued concern about COVID-19 among our attendees we felt it was the right thing to do at this time to protect you and your families. We WILL be back in 2021 because the Joy of the Lord will always be contagious! If you registered already, you are registered for next year! If you ordered a t-shirt, it will be mailed to you.

Mark your calendar for Sept. 10–11, 2021, at the McNease Convention Center in San Angelo. Bishop Sis is on the calendar for Mass and we are working with our speakers, hoping they will be able to return also! We will keep you updated. If you have any questions or concerns, please contact JoAnn Turner at 325-763-9400. God bless you and see you next year!



**Catholic Diocese of San Angelo
Immigration Services**

IMMIGRATION LEGAL SERVICES CLINICS

WHO: Accredited Representatives for the Diocese of San Angelo

WHERE:
Our Lady of Guadalupe Catholic Church
1401 E Garden Lane
Midland, Texas 79701

WHEN: 9:00 am to 4:00 pm

July 15 th	October 21 st
August 19 th	November 18 th
September 16 th	December 16 th

CASES ACCEPTED

- ❖ Adjustment of Status
- ❖ Advance Parole
- ❖ Affidavit of Support
- ❖ Application to Immigrate Family Members
- ❖ Consular Processing/Waivers
- ❖ DACA Applications
- ❖ I-90 Renewal (Green Cards)
- ❖ Naturalization
- ❖ Pardons
- ❖ Refugee/Asylee Processes
- ❖ Remove Condition on Residency
- ❖ Travel Documents
- ❖ U Status Applications for Victims of Crime
- ❖ VAWA for Victims of Domestic Violence
- ❖ Work Permits/Renewal Applications

APPOINTMENTS & INFORMATION (Please do not call Our Lady of Guadalupe Parish)

Diocese of San Angelo Immigration Services
Patricia Stokes Santana
(325) 212-6192

OFFICE AND TELEPHONE CONSULTATIONS AND IMMIGRATION SERVICES ARE PROVIDED FOR NORMAL FEES.

**SAINT BONIFACE
Festival
OLFEN, TEXAS**

October 11, 2020

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ALSO AVAILABLE IN DRIVE THRU LINE

**AUCTION ENDS
& RAFFLE DRAWING
Oct 11, 3 pm**



Adapting to the times

Social distancing. Masks and face coverings. Outdoor liturgies. Confirmations celebrated by the parish priest without the bishop. The COVID-19 pandemic has caused us all to rethink what it looks like to be a compassionate neighbor and loving member of the Body of Christ.

Photographer Alan Torre, whose work covering the Midland and Odessa area is regularly featured in the *West Texas Angelus*, has been witness to many of our clergy, staff, and parishioners taking new precautions seriously as we seek to share in the joy of fellowship while minimizing the risk of spreading disease.

For more on the current requirements for Mass, special liturgies, Catholic schools, faith formation, and other parish gatherings, visit <https://sanangelodocese.org/covid-19-statements>.

All photos are courtesy of Alan Torre, APTorre Photography.



First Communion at Our Lady of San Juan Church in Odessa



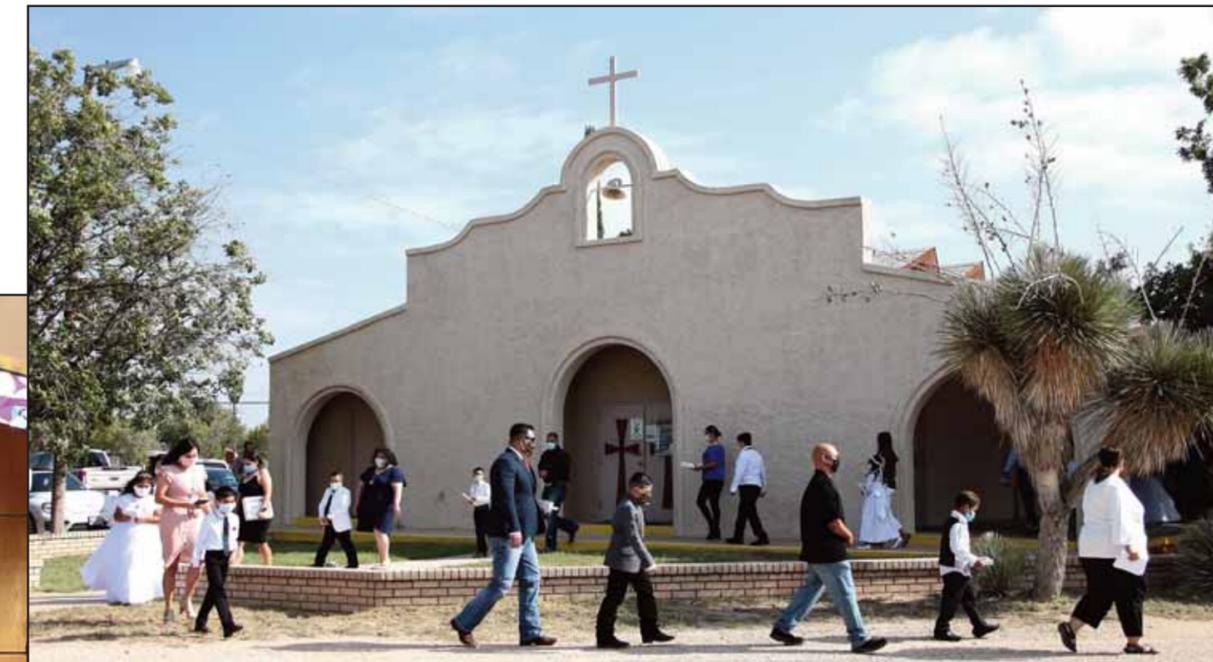
Confirmation at St. Elizabeth Ann Seton Church in Odessa



Preparation for Confirmation at Holy Redeemer Church in Odessa



Confirmation at St. Stephen Church in Midland



First Communion at Our Lady of San Juan Church in Odessa

GRN RADIO SCHEDULE

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

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

The GRN (*Radio for Your Soul*) is an EWTN Affiliate. The weekday programs (most are 'live' call-ins) are:

- 6 AM - *Morning Glory*
- 7 AM - *Daily Mass (EWTN Chapel)*
- 8 AM - *Catholic Connection Tue-Thur*
- 9 AM - *More to Life with Greg & Lisa*
- 10 AM - *Women of Grace with Johnnette Williams*
- 11 AM - *Take 2 with Jerry and Debbie*
- 12 PM - *The Doctor Is In with Dr. Ray*
- 1 PM - *Called to Communion*
- 2 PM - *EWTN Open Line*
- 3 PM - *Chaplet of Divine Mercy*
- 3:15-5 pm - *Kresta in the Afternoon*
- 5-7 PM - *Catholic Answers Live*
- 8 PM - *EWTN Nightly News*
- 8:30 PM - *Patriotic Rosary Mon-Thur*
Rosary w/ Fr. Benedict G. Fri-Sun

Schedule Exceptions for GRN shows

Wednesday 11 AM - *Construyendo el Reino de Dios (90.9 FM Español)*

- Mon. & Fri., 8 AM - *GRN Alive*
- Saturday 8:00 AM - *Christ is the Answer*
- Saturday 9:00 AM - *GRN Alive Repeat*
- Saturday 10:00 AM - *We Sing our Faith*

Get the FREE App or listen online:

GRNOnline.com

Questions or to promote your business & events:

sammy@grnonline.com

432-682-5476



New officers installed for Catholic Daughters



COURTESY

The Catholic Daughters of the Americas, Court Santa Angela #1736, held their 2020-22 Installation of Officers and Chaplain the evening of July 29, 2020, at Holy Angels Church in San Angelo with Chaplain Father Josh Gray celebrating the holy sacrifice of the Mass, followed by the CDA ceremony directed by District Deputy Linda Binns. Pictured (L to R) are Betty Brockmann, Linda Binns, Joyce Fine, Regent Claudette Molina, Financial Secretary Martha Tafoya, Chaplain Father Josh Gray, Mary Lovell, Recording Secretary Susie Garcia, Rae Flannery, Anne Smith, Vice Regent Pris Keating, Linda Kujawski, Charlotte Drone, Pollie Lux, Margaret Courville, Christine Gillett. Not pictured: photographer Celi Padilla, and Treasurer Jennifer Torres.

St. Peter Church in Mertzon recipient of OCP grant

Congratulations to St. Peter Catholic Church in Mertzon on the reception of a \$1,200 grant from Oregon Catholic Press!

The Oregon Catholic Press Parish Grants Program offers direct financial grants to provide assistance to parishes seeking to enhance the worship experience of their parish community. This year, St. Peter Catholic Church in Mertzon applied for and received a \$1,200 grant from OCP to enhance their community's liturgy and music. Parish Grants from OCP are commonly used for:

- Improving multicultural ministries with additional training and purchasing of bilingual worship materials;
- Providing online, digital or electronic resources to

support liturgy preparation;

- Upkeep, repair and replacement of musical instruments, equipment and facilities;
- Purchasing music, hymnals and other worship materials;
- Attending or hosting musical or liturgical conferences or workshops.

These grants are available to Roman Catholic parishes located within the United States that did not receive a grant within the previous year. For more information on how to apply for an OCP Parish Grant, please visit <https://www.ocp.org/en-us/parish-grants> or contact Mercedes Rassi, Director of Stewardship and Development at mrassi@sanangelodiocese.org.

'Making room in your heart for those with whom you disagree'

By Jennifer Allmon

Texas Catholic Conference of Bishops

Watching the social media reactions to the political conventions over the last two weeks has certainly created an opportunity for prayer. These conventions and the responses of friends and family have led to prayer for conversion in the hearts and minds of our brothers and sisters to embrace the dignity of all human life from conception to natural death. I remain convinced that the path to this conversion will be paved by honest, respectful, and civil dialogue within our families and communities.

I don't mean a conversation where I bring my talking points to convince another of the error of his ways, but a true listening and responding to the deepest hopes and fears of our brothers and sisters, even when we have different perspectives or solutions.

This past November the USCCB announced a campaign to encourage the faithful and all people of goodwill to engage with civility. *Civilize It* is about making room in your heart for those with whom you disagree. Each one of us is a beloved child of God and we must respond in love to that reality. *Civilize It* is a non-partisan call to focus on

the dignity of all people, even when we disagree, and to put faith in action by bearing witness to a better way forward. The campaign encourages us to pledge to act with civility, clarity, and compassion in this election year and beyond.

Civility: To recognize the human dignity of those with whom I disagree, treat others with respect, and rise above attacks when directed at me.

Clarity: To root my political viewpoints in the Gospel and a well formed conscience, which involves prayer, conversation, study and listening. I will stand up for my convictions and speak out when I witness language that disparages others' dignity, while also listening and seeking to understand others' experiences.

Compassion: To encounter others with a tone and posture which affirms that I honor the dignity of others and invites others to do the same. I will presume others' best intentions and listen to their stories with empathy. I will strive to understand before seeking to be understood.

By forming our consciences and growing in dialogue with others we can transform the culture.

Find *Civilize It* at <https://www.wearesaltandlight.org/civilize-it>.

Lack of respect for life, for nature have same root, pope says

By **Cindy Wooden**
Catholic News Service

VATICAN CITY (CNS) — A lack of respect for human life from conception to natural death and a lack of respect for the environment are both signs of a person claiming power over something that is not theirs to control, Pope Francis said.

"They are the same indifference, the same selfishness, the same greed, the same pride, the same claim to be the master and despot of the world that lead human beings on the one hand to destroy species and plunder natural resources and, on the other, to exploit poverty, to abuse the work of women and children, to overturn the laws of the nuclear family (and

to no longer respect the right to human life from conception to its natural end," the pope said Sept. 3.

Pope Francis made his remarks in a speech written for a group of laypeople advising the French bishops' conference on ways to promote and implement the teaching of *Laudato Si'*, on *Care for Our Common Home*.

The group, which included the actress Juliette Binoche, traveled to Rome by train as a carbon-saving alternative to traveling by plane.

The Vatican press office said the pope handed his prepared text to members of the group and then had an unscripted conversation with them, telling them that his own "ecological conversion" began in

2007 by listening to Brazilian bishops at the Latin American bishops' meeting in Aparecida, Brazil.

At the time, "I understood nothing," he said. But he began listening and studying and dialoguing with scientists and theologians. The result was *Laudato Si'*, the encyclical published in 2015.

Ecological concern is a Christian concern, he said.

"The Bible teaches us that the world was not born in of chaos or by accident but by a decision of God who called it — and always will call it — into existence out of love," the pope said. "The universe is beautiful and good, and contemplating it allows us to glimpse the infinite beauty and goodness of its author."

Christians have a moral obligation to respect the creation God has entrusted to them "as a garden to cultivate, protect, make grow according to its potential," he said. "And if human beings have the right to make use of nature for their own needs, they cannot in anyway claim to be its owners or despots, but only administrators who must give an account of their use."

Jesus taught his followers to live in harmony, with justice, in peace and recognizing others as brothers and sisters, the pope said. But "when one considers nature only as an object of profit and self-interest — a vision that consolidates the whim of the strongest — then harmony is shattered and serious inequality, injustice and suffering result."

Vatican official: Human fraternity is the Christian response to identity politics

By **Catholic News Agency**

VATICAN CITY (CNA) — The secretary of the Vatican's Pontifical Council for Interreligious Dialogue has argued that as tribalism and identity politics increase, the Catholic Church should cooperate with other religions to promote human fraternity.

"Today we have a problem of identity, an identity crisis. One affirms one's identity... and excluding the others," Father Indunil Janakarathne Kodithuwakku Kankanamalage told CNA earlier this week.

The Sri Lankan priest also said that "today we see that tribalism is emerging again." Tribalism, he explained, affirms "your own group at the expense of the others" and leads to discrimination.

"Fraternity means that you try to welcome the other as the brother and sister in spite of his or her differences. ... We belong to one family. We are brothers and sisters. This is also very Christian."

Kankanamalage is from the Diocese of Badulla in Sri Lanka, where he was ordained a priest in 2000. He has served

at the Pontifical Council for Interreligious Dialogue (PCID) for eight years, first as under-secretary and now as secretary.

He spoke to CNA following the publication of the document "Serving a Wounded World in Interreligious Solidarity," a joint project of the pontifical council and the World Council of Churches (WCC).

The WCC is a global ecumenical body founded in 1948. The Catholic Church is not a member of the organization, though it sends official observers to meetings.

Kankanamalage said the PCID has had an ongoing collaboration with the WCC and members of the two bodies meet annually. "Serving a Wounded World," published Aug. 27, is their latest joint document.

"People are wounded because of this pandemic. ... And then also we have other wounds," the PCID secretary said. He specifically pointed to racism, religious intolerance, discrimination, economic and ecological injustice, as well as the injustices faced by migrants and pris-

oners.

He said that the reason the PCID wanted to address these wounds from an ecumenical and interreligious perspective was because "here we have a situation where we are all wounded. It is not only one religion or one nation or one part of the world."

"The whole humanity is wounded and here we need to respond unitedly," he explained.

Religion has the power to "transform the person within," he noted. "The inspiration for us Christians comes from our Christian teaching. And also we can see that other religions are also responding to this crisis based on their respective teachings."

"Our response has to be a comprehensive response."

"Serving a Wounded World" argues that, for Christians, the basis for "interreligious solidarity" is found in the Holy Trinity. It lays out principles for expressing this solidarity amid a global pandemic that has claimed more than 822,000 lives.

The 24-page publication also offers a

series of recommendations, urging Christians to "promote a culture of inclusivism which celebrates difference as God's gift" and create "space for dialogues."

"The office is now really concentrating on promoting this document," Kankanamalage said.

According to the official, the basis of the document "is very Christian." He cited its use of Old and New Testament quotations and the Parable of the Good Samaritan to illustrate common values.

"We have universal values: love your neighbor, compassion. All of these things are universal values based on Christ," he said. "Basing [our efforts] on these things, we can tackle these issues unitedly in spite of our differences."

He pointed to Pope Francis' emphasis on similar values.

"Pope Francis often speaks of fostering a culture of compassion, a fraternal culture, a culture of encounter," Kankanamalage said.

It has been widely reported that Pope Francis will release an encyclical, the third of his pontificate, on the subject of human fraternity in early October.

Science, religion not opposing sides in humanity's progress, cardinal says

By **Junno Arocho Esteves**
Catholic News Service

VATICAN CITY (CNS) — Although technology has made leaps and bounds over the past decades, the scientific community must not isolate itself in its own advancements and exclude religion from the search for ways to overcome today's challenges, said Cardinal Pietro Parolin, Vatican secretary of state.

Citing Pope Francis' call for an "interdisciplinary approach" on issues such as sustainability, Cardinal Parolin told participants at a scientific conference that science and religion must work together for the good of humanity.

An interdisciplinary approach "should not be limited to the exact sciences," the cardinal said Sept. 2 at the EuroScience Open Forum in Trieste, Italy.

"It should also include, for example, religion — which cannot be relegated to the sphere of the irrational — in all those forms of wisdom that humanity has devel-

oped over the course of history."

According to its website, the EuroScience Open Forum, also known as ESOF, is a biennial conference that gathers scientists, political leaders, educators and journalists "to discuss current and future breakthroughs in contemporary science."

In his address on the conference's opening day, Cardinal Parolin highlighted the need for dialogue between science and faith in "envisioning and achieving a future of peaceful coexistence among people."

Reflecting on humanity's relationship with the environment, the Italian cardinal echoed the warnings of "an ever-growing number of voices from politicians, scientists and men and women of different religious confessions" that "humanity has produced a global impact that can no longer be undone."

"Today, we are more and more aware, too, of the cost being paid by our planet, a cost unequally divided among the coun-

tries of the world. This profound global impact should challenge us all," he said.

"If we want to survive and if we want life on this planet to survive, then we still have to learn to assume a responsibility for our common home on the global level," he said. "At the same time, science by itself is not enough to resolve this problem."

The Vatican secretary of state also reflected on humanity's relationship with technology. Advancements such as communication and information technology, while "indeed impressive," have drastically changed people's lives and their interactions with others.

"Machines are becoming more human, even as human beings are becoming more like machines," he said. "The church is deeply concerned about the effect of this exponential digitalization of communication and of society on young people."

Cardinal Parolin also said that "the effects of the media diet to which all of us are exposed" has challenged people's trust in news sources, resulting in "traditional

sources of authority" no longer holding sway.

That distrust is particularly evident with the COVID-19 pandemic and "much harm was caused by incorrect scientific information," he said.

"The pandemic seems to have created what may be the most difficult period in decades for scientific communication," the cardinal said. "The issue is no longer just scientific fact and objectivity but — to use a biblical expression — 'the heart of man.'"

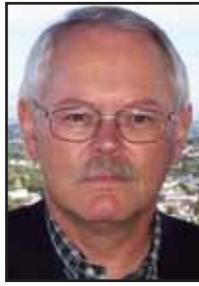
In order to reach a true and authentic progress and ensure a better world for future generations, Cardinal Parolin said that people today must recover their "sense of what it means to be human."

"Only by returning to a world of real and nonvirtual relationships will we be able to recover those horizons of meaning that can give rise to a shared desire to build for the future," he said.

Follow Arocho on Twitter: @arochoju

Catholic Voices

The invitation to courage



Father Ron Rolheiser

empathy (though at its worst has me avoiding situations of conflict). Either way, it's hasn't particularly gifted me with the qualities that make for prophetic courage. I want, habitually, not to upset people. I dislike confrontation and want peacefulness at almost any cost, though I do draw some lines in the sand. But I'm no John the Baptist and it's taken me many years to learn that, admit it, and understand why — and also to understand that my temperament and history are only an explanation and not an excuse for my cowardice at times.

In the end, the virtue of courage is not contingent upon birth, temperament, or mental toughness, though these can be helpful. Courage is a gift from the Holy Spirit and that's why one's temperament and background may only serve as an explanation and not as an excuse for a lack of courage.

I highlight this because our situation today demands courage from us, the courage for prophecy. We desperately need prophets today, but they are in short supply and too many of us are not particularly eager to volunteer for the task. Why not?

A recent issue of *Commonweal* magazine featured an article by Bryan Massingale, a strong prophetic voice on the issue of racism. Massingale submits that the reason we see so little real progress in dealing with racial injustice is the absence of prophetic voices where they are most needed, in this case, among the many good white people who see racial injustice, sympathize with those suffering from it, but don't do anything about it. Massingale, who lectures widely across the country, shares how again and again in his lectures and in his classes people ask him: But how do I address this without upsetting people? This question aptly expresses our reticence and, I believe, names both the issue and the challenge.

As Shakespeare would say, "Ah, there's the rub!" For me, this question touches a sensitive moral nerve. Had I been in one of his classes I would no doubt have been one of those to ask that question: but how do I challenge racism without upsetting people? Here's my problem: I want to speak out propheti-

cally, but I don't want to upset others; I want to challenge the white privilege which we're so congenitally blind to, but I don't want to alienate the generous, good-hearted people who support our school; I want to speak out more strongly against injustice in my writing, but I don't want multiple newspapers drop my column as a result; I want to be courageous and confront others, but don't want to live with the hatred that ensues; and I want to publicly name injustices and name names, but don't want to alienate myself from those very people. So this leaves me still praying for the courage needed for prophecy.

Several years ago, a visiting professor at our school, an African-American man, was sharing with our faculty some of the near daily injustices he experiences simply because of the color of his skin. At one point I asked him: "If I, as a white man, came to you like Nicodemus came to Jesus at night and asked you what I should do, what would you tell me?" His answer: Jesus didn't let Nicodemus off easily just because he confessed his fears. Nicodemus had to do a public act to bring his faith into the light, he had to claim Jesus' dead body. Hence, his challenge to me: you need to do a public act.

He's right; but I'm still praying for the prophetic courage to do that. And aren't we all?

The Book of Exodus and why coming back to Mass matters

In connection with an academic project of mine, I've recently been poring over the book of Exodus and numerous commentaries thereupon. The second most famous book of the Old Testament is concerned primarily with the manner in which God shapes his people so that they might become a radiant beacon, a city set on a hill. On the biblical reading, Israel is indeed chosen, but it is never chosen for its own sake, but rather for all the nations of the world.

I would say that this formation takes place in three principal stages: first, God teaches Israel to trust in his power; secondly, he gives Israel a moral law; and thirdly, he instructs his people in holiness through right praise. The lesson in trust happens, of course, through God's great act of liberation. Utterly powerless slaves find freedom, not by relying on their own resources, but rather upon the gracious intervention of God. The moral instruction takes place through the Ten Commandments and their attendant legislation. Finally, the formation in holiness happens through a submission to an elaborate set of liturgical and ceremonial laws. It is this last move that perhaps strikes us today as most peculiar, but that has, I will argue, particular resonance in our strange COVID period.

That education in religion involves moral instruction probably seems self-evident to most of us. And this is because we are, willy-nilly, Kantians. In the eighteenth century, the philosopher Immanuel Kant contended that all of religion is reducible to ethics. What the religious thing is finally all about, Kant argued, is making us more just, loving, kind, and compassionate. In con-



Bishop Robert Barron

Word on Fire Ministries

temporary language, Kantianism in religion sounds like this: "As long as you're a good person, it doesn't really matter what you believe or how you worship."

Now, there is no question that the book of Exodus and the Bible in general agree that morality is essential to the proper formation of the people of God. Those who would seek to follow the Lord, who is justice and love, must be conformed to justice and love. And this is precisely why we find, in the great Sinai covenant, injunctions not to steal, not to commit adultery, not to covet, not to kill, etc. So far, so Kantian.

But what probably surprises most contemporary readers of the book of Exodus is that, immediately following the laying out of the moral commandments, the author spends practically the rest of the text, chapters 25 through 40, delineating the liturgical prescriptions that the people are to follow. So for example, we find a lengthy section on the construction of the ark of the covenant: "They shall make an ark of acacia wood; it shall be two and a half cubits long, a cubit and a half wide, and a cubit and a half high. You shall overlay it with pure gold, inside and outside you shall overlay it." And as an ornament on the top of the

ark, "You shall make two cherubim of gold. ... Make one cherub at the one end, and one cherub at the other. ... The cherubim shall spread out their wings above, overshadowing the mercy seat." Next, we find instructions regarding the elaborate furnishings inside of the tabernacle, including a lampstand, a table for the so-called "bread of the presence," pillars and various hangings. Finally, an enormous amount of space is given over to the description of the vestments to be worn by the priests of Israel. Here is just a sampling: "These are the vestments that they shall make: a breastpiece, an ephod, a robe, a checkered tunic, a turban, and a sash. When they make these sacred vestments. ... They shall use gold, blue, purple, and crimson yarns, and fine linen."

No indication whatsoever is given that the moral prescriptions are somehow more important than the liturgical prescriptions. If anything, the contrary seems to be the case, since Exodus is followed immediately by the book of Leviticus, which consists of twenty-eight chapters of dietary and liturgical law. So what are we post-Kantians to make of this? First, we should observe that the biblical authors do not think for a moment that God somehow requires liturgical rectitude, as though the correctness of our worship adds anything to his perfection or satisfies some psychological need of his. If you harbor any doubt on this score, I would recommend a careful reading of the first chapter of the prophet Isaiah and of the fiftieth psalm. God doesn't need the ark and the tabernacle and priestly vestments and regular worship, but we do. Through the gestures and symbols of its liturgical praise,

Israel is brought on line with God, ordered to him. The moral law directs our wills to the divine goodness, but the liturgical law directs our minds, our hearts, our emotions, and yes even our bodies to the divine splendor. Notice how thoroughly the ceremonial instructions of Exodus involve color, sound, and smell (there is an awful lot about incense), and how they conduce toward the production of beauty.

I said above that Exodus' stress on the liturgical and ceremonial has a profound relevance to our time, and here's why. For very good reasons, we abstained completely from public worship, and even now our ability to worship together is very limited. In most dioceses in our country, the obligation to attend Sunday Mass is, again for valid reasons, suspended. My fear is that when the propitious moment arrives, when we are again able to return to Mass, many Catholics will stay away, since they've grown accustomed to absenting themselves from worship. And my concern takes a more specifically Kantian form: Will many Catholics say to themselves, "You know, as long as I'm basically a good person, what's the point of all of this formal worship of God?"

Could I recommend that you take out your Bible, open to the book of Exodus, especially chapters 25 through 40, and consider just how crucially important to God is the correct worship offered by his holy people? Liturgy has always mattered. The Mass — involving vestments, ritual gesture, smells and bells, song and silence — still matters, big time. Isn't it enough that you're a good person? Not to put too fine a point on it: no.

Voces Catolicas

Afirmemos católicamente la valentía de nuestros trabajadores hispanos

Los primeros días de septiembre nos invitan a enfocarnos en una de las actividades más nobles del ser humano: el trabajo.

Trabajamos para sostener nuestras familias, realizar nuestras vocaciones, vivir mejor y asegurarnos de que nuestra sociedad progrese. Trabajamos para tener un presente decente y asegurar un futuro estable para nuestros hijos.

En un mundo ideal, nos gustaría trabajar haciendo lo que nos gusta. La educación nos acerca más a este ideal. Sin embargo, millones de personas simplemente tienen que trabajar en lo que pueden para cumplir con sus responsabilidades. Para ellas un trabajo es un trabajo, y eso ya es una bendición.

Quisiera reflexionar sobre los muchos trabajadores hispanos que con valentía sostienen gran parte de muchas industrias en los Estados Unidos como en el caso de la agricultura, la pesca, la construcción, la industria hospitalaria y restaurantera, la asistencia médica, servicios de limpieza y minería, entre otros.

¿Por qué hablar de estos empleados



Hosffman Ospino
Catholic News Service
Caminando Juntos

usando el término valentía? Aparte de las exigencias físicas y mentales que obviamente acompañan estos empleos, la pandemia actual ha puesto a millones de trabajadores hispanos frente a frente con el virus COVID-19, el cual es altamente contagioso y letal.

Doctores, enfermeras, maestros y otros empleados en profesiones similares también están expuestos a este virus de manera frecuente. Sin embargo, es más probable que las industrias que les emplean les ofrezcan medidas de seguridad que los campesinos, los trabajadores en

Mira OSPINO, Página 23

La invitación al coraje

El coraje no es uno de mis puntos fuertes, al menos no un género particular de coraje.

La Escritura nos dice que mientras Juan Bautista crecía, se hacía fuerte en espíritu. Mi crecimiento fue algo diferente. A diferencia de Juan Bautista, mientras yo crecía, me volvía acomodaticio en espíritu. Esto tuvo sus razones. Nací con lo que Ruth Burrows describiría como “sensibilidad torturada”, una personalidad hipersensible, y nunca he sido capaz de desarrollar una piel bien curtida. Esa no es la materia prima de la que están hechos los profetas. Cuando eres niño, en el patio de juego te va mejor tener la fuerza física bruta para desafiar una situación injusta, o te va mejor dejar marchar las cosas para que no te perjudiquen. También te va mejor desarrollar agudas destrezas en evitar la confrontación y en el arte de procurar la paz. Igualmente, cuando no estás dotado de una fuerza física superior y surgen situaciones desafiantes en el patio, en seguida aprendes a huir de la confrontación. En el patio, el cordero sabe que es mejor no acostarse con el león ni enfrentarse a él, al margen de las visiones escatológicas del profeta Isaías.

Y no todo eso es malo. Crecer como lo hice no contribuyó a tener una piel bien curtida ni el coraje vivo que se supone para ser profeta, pero me dio una aguda pantalla de radar, a saber, una sen-



Padre Ron Rolheiser

sibilidad que, en el mejor de los casos, es una genuina empatía (aunque, en el peor de los casos, me tiene eludiendo situaciones de conflicto). De todos modos, eso no me ha dotado particularmente de cualidades que contribuyan al coraje profético. Deseo, habitualmente, no contrariar a la gente. Me disgusta la confrontación y quiero la paz casi a cualquier precio, aunque trazo algunas líneas sobre arena. Sin embargo, no soy ningún Juan Bautista, y ello me ha costado muchos años aprenderlo, admitirlo y entender por qué, a la vez que entender que mi temperamento e historia son sólo una explicación y a veces no una excusa para mi cobardía.

Al fin y al cabo, la virtud del coraje no depende del origen, temperamento ni tenacidad mental, aunque estos pueden ayudar. El coraje es un don del Espíritu

Mira ROLHEISER, Página 22

El Libro de Éxodo y por qué volver a la misa es importante

En relación con un proyecto académico mío, recientemente he estado estudiando el libro de Éxodo y numerosos comentarios al respecto. El segundo libro más famoso del Antiguo Testamento se ocupa principalmente de la forma en que Dios da forma a su pueblo para que se convierta en un faro radiante, una ciudad situada en una colina. En la lectura bíblica, Israel es elegido, pero nunca por su propio bien, sino por el de todas las naciones del mundo.

Diría que esta formación se lleva a cabo en tres etapas principales: primero, Dios enseña a Israel a confiar en su poder; en segundo lugar, le da a Israel una ley moral; y tercero, instruye a su pueblo en la santidad a través de la alabanza justa. La lección de confianza ocurre, por supuesto, a través del gran acto de liberación de Dios. Los esclavos totalmente impotentes encuentran la libertad, no confiando en sus propios recursos, sino en la intervención gratuita de Dios. La instrucción moral tiene lugar a través de los Diez Mandamientos y su correspondiente legislación. Por último, la formación en la santidad se realiza mediante la sumisión a un elaborado conjunto de leyes litúrgicas y ceremoniales. Es este último movimiento el que quizás nos parezca hoy más peculiar, pero que tiene, sostengo, una resonancia particular en nuestro extraño período del COVID.

Que la educación en la religión im-



Obispo Robert Barron
Word on Fire Ministries

plica la instrucción moral probablemente parece evidente para la mayoría de nosotros. Y esto es porque somos, a tontas y a locas, kantianos. En el siglo XVIII, el filósofo Immanuel Kant sostuvo que toda la religión es reducible a la ética. Kant argumentaba que en definitiva el fin de lo religioso es hacernos más justos, amorosos, amables y compasivos. En el lenguaje contemporáneo, el kantismo en la religión suena así: “Mientras seas una buena persona, no importa lo que creas o cómo des culto”.

Ahora, no hay duda de que el libro del Éxodo y la Biblia en general están de acuerdo en que la moralidad es esencial para la formación adecuada del pueblo de Dios. Aquellos que buscan seguir al Señor, que es justicia y amor, deben ser conformados a la justicia y el amor. Y es precisamente por eso que encontramos, en la gran alianza del Sinaí, órdenes de no

Mira BARRON, Página 22

Sólo unidos podemos sobrevivir el virus

Deberíamos haber sabido que el único modo de triunfar sobre el virus es estar unidos — rico y pobre, ciudadano e inmigrante, legal o indocumentado, preso o libre, joven o anciano — con confianza y empatía.

Los médicos dieron bello ejemplo. Cuando Nueva York estaba en la más oscura hora, sus hospitales abrumados, los enfermos muriéndose en los pasillos esperando ser admitidos, cientos de muertos cada día, almacenados en camiones refrigerados porque los funerarios y crematorios habían excedido su capacidad — médicos, enfermeras y otros especialistas vinieron de otros estados para ayudar.

Ahora que el campo de batalla ha cambiado a Texas, Florida, California y Arizona, Nueva York ha compartido no sólo su personal sino también ventiladores y otros aparatos para asistir a esos estados similarmente abrumados.

Desafortunadamente, la unidad en general nos ha eludido. Recuerdo como muy temprano en la crisis, una mujer en el interior del país dijo que no le importaban los problemas de Nueva York, opinión común en varios sectores. Pronto, por falta de liderazgo nacional, la división aumentó: los políticos contra los científicos, las áreas rurales contra las ciudades, los que aceptaban utilizar máscaras contra los que las apoyan.

El resultado no debe sorprendernos.



Moises Sandoval
Catholic News Service
Buscando Vida

Estados Unidos ha sufrido más muertes que cualquier otro país en el mundo.

Lo más triste al darnos cuenta que el virus había llegado y amenazaba la vida de todos fue la urgencia en Connecticut y otros estados de armarse para protegerse, no del virus sino de los vecinos. La venta de armas aumentó tremendamente. Por esa razón, cuando se cerraron la mayoría de los negocios, las tiendas de armas quedaron abiertas. Esa gente temía perder sus pertenencias.

Ahora las voces más altas y enfadadas son de los contrarios que nos dividirán más. El columnista Ben Smith del periódico The New York Times recientemente escribió sobre estas voces enrabiaadas por la clausura de la economía para mitigar el daño de la pandemia. Estos abogan constantemente contra el uso de máscaras y sobre la preocupación por salvar vidas. Ellos sienten que se debe abrir

Mira SANDOVAL, Página 23

Catholic Voices

Tragedies in human medical experimentation

Between 1932 and 1972, a series of highly unethical medical studies were performed on a group of 400 African-Americans by doctors from the U.S. Public Health Service.

Officially referred to as the Tuskegee Study of Untreated Syphilis in the Negro Male, the research protocol enrolled 399 impoverished sharecroppers from Macon County, Alabama, all of whom had syphilis, and a control group of 201 others who were free of the disease. The 399 were never told that they had syphilis or that their condition was sexually-transmitted, but only that they had "bad blood."

The study began at a time when no effective treatments for syphilis existed, but as penicillin became the standard of care during the mid-1940s, the infected men were not offered the new drug; in fact, it was withheld from them during the next 25 years, to enable researchers to track the progression of their disease.

The outcry that followed the public revelation of these unethical research methods, described in an investigative report in the *Washington Star*, resulted in the study's finally being shut down. By then, there had already been widespread devastation, with 28 participants having died from syphilis, 100 more having perished from related complications, and the subjects' having transmitted the disease to at least 40 spouses and 19 of their children.

In May 1997 President Clinton issued a public apology to the victims and their families, stating, "The United States government did something that was wrong — deeply, profoundly, morally wrong." Many afterward questioned how such ethically offensive research could have continued unabated for so many decades.

In the final analysis, the Tuskegee syphilis experiments relied upon a defective theory of ethics, still popular today, known as "utilitarianism." Utilitarianism seeks to determine right from wrong by focusing on a calculation of consequences (and so is sometimes also called "consequentialism"), asserting that the best ethical choice is the one that produces "the greatest good for the greatest number" and maximizes "usefulness."

For the Tuskegee experiments, the usefulness was the knowledge gained through studying the progression of syphilis in human patients, including what consequences (like blindness, insanity) typically can be expected to occur, at what stages, etc. This basic medical knowledge could end up serving the interests of thousands or millions of other individuals in the future, it was asserted, even as doctors overlooked the litany of sufferings and harms inflicted on an unfortunate few.

A utilitarian approach to justifying scientific research on humans usually implies that we need to "balance" the value of new scientific discoveries against the dignity of human experimental subjects. In this view, the two represent "competing values," and in a world with no moral absolutes, some individuals may emphasize one set of values, while others will give more weight to



Father Tad Pacholczyk

Making Sense of Bioethics

another. Compromise can then open up a "middle" solution, allowing for some experimentation on humans to be carried out for the good of research, even if it might at times be harmful, debilitating or lethal to its subjects. In any real-world setting, this means that those who are most vulnerable — the poor, the weak, the disenfranchised and the sick — become rife for exploitation whenever particular research goals are declared worthy of pursuit.

This utilitarian approach to "balancing values" provides a highly flawed ethical framework that has been used to justify other immoral biomedical research projects like the German medical experiments on prisoners during the Second World War, human embryonic stem cell research, and other forms of exploitative human experimentation.

In each of these, researchers have been motivated by good goals like learning about disease, developing treatments, and helping others. Finding treatments and making progress against disease is clearly very praiseworthy. But a good end cannot justify an immoral means. That is where the need for a non-utilitarian ethical understanding becomes paramount. Maintaining immovable negative ethical norms against the abuse of research subjects is key, including norms like: "Do no harm," "do not kill," "always secure informed consent," etc.

The rights of patients to these protections should not be taken as values to be balanced against the goals of research. This risks sweeping away the vital interests of human subjects in a tide of appeals to societal utility or medical progress. The negative norm, which requires that one should never harm, exploit or destroy human life in the pursuit of laudable research goals, can only be fulfilled in one way: by refusing to violate the norm.

These kinds of negative norms serve the essential role of setting fixed and clear boundaries for ethically acceptable research, strict limits on the pursuit of even the most worthwhile of scientific goals. This helps assure that humans, who are endowed with an absolute value and a unique dignity in themselves, are appropriately protected from any forms of utilitarian reckoning.

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 and www.fathertad.com.

Life lessons on hospitality

When my husband and I married, we had just completed a volunteer commitment with the Jesuit Volunteer Corps, teaching school in the Alaskan Bush at a Jesuit boarding school in a remote village.

Then, we chose to live in the big city of Anchorage, and our first home was a tiny cabin we rented in a friend's backyard. One person could fit into the kitchen nook, the bathroom was attached to our bedroom, and the square footage of the whole place was minuscule. It was a tight fit, but for newlyweds with few possessions, it was cozy.

The problem came with the steady flow of visitors. Anchorage is the air hub for a largely roadless state. If you were traveling from rural areas to the Outside, as Alaskans call the rest of the world, you passed through Anchorage. If you were heading from almost anywhere up to Fairbanks, you passed through Anchorage. And sometimes, you just wanted to come to Anchorage.

Scores of friends, relatives and former volunteers came to our little home (and later, other homes we had) to crash, often arriving with a backpack and a six-pack. It was part of being young in Alaska, and we made countless trips to the airport.

The busiest and most challenging times for me were those very early days of marriage. No matter how dear the friends and



Effie Caldarola
Catholic News Service

For the Journey

how much fun they were, I hadn't planned on operating a bed and breakfast. But as a vagabond volunteer, I'd spent my share of time in others' homes, imposing on and enjoying their welcoming.

When I look back now, I know that my stress was probably sometimes transparent. Occasionally, my hospitality was thin and I regret that.

I think of that phrase from the Letter to the Hebrews: "Do not neglect hospitality, for through it some have unknowingly entertained angels."

In the Judeo-Christian tradition, as in all major faiths, hospitality is an obligation. That applies to individuals, but also to any country that maintains a standard of morality. Most countries accept a generous quota of well-vetted refugees, but even before the pandemic changed everything, the

See CALDAROLA, Page 23

The need for sacred spaces during COVID-19

My son's pediatrician had one piece of advice at his nine-month checkup: baby-proof our home. "Secure bookshelves to walls, cover electrical outlets, put up gates and get safety locks for cabinets," he said. "And bring everything along to Grandma and Grandpa's, too, because most accidents happen in other people's homes."

My son is an unusually fast crawler and has a pretty long wingspan, so we had already implemented safety measures. But the doctor's emphasis drove home the point: Restrain and constrain against his instincts, at least for this period of time.

I think many of us can sympathize with my son's frustrations: We've been restricted to certain spaces for nearly five months. A few weeks ago, The New Yorker ran a cartoon depicting family members climbing the walls of their living room. The caption read, "It's great to have something we can all do together." Many of us can relate.

Our access to people and places has been unnaturally curbed, limited to activities and places that have been deemed "essential" by people charged with protecting our health and safety. Our world has been baby-proofed, so to speak, though for good reason: flattening the curve, protecting those who are most at risk, and supporting those on the front lines of the pandemic. Keeping ourselves safe, even if we'd prefer to risk it on occasion, is also a worthy reason for being a bit caged in.



Elise Italiano Ureneck
Catholic News Service

Finding God in All Things

But as we turn the corner from summer to fall and then fall to winter, I can't help but wonder how long we will be able to manage without more access to certain spaces, particularly those that are sacred. Let me explain.

A few weeks ago, my husband and I were in Philadelphia visiting family, and we stopped by the Cathedral of Sts. Peter and Paul where we got engaged. We wanted to bring our son to the plaza where we made our commitment and stop inside the church where we attended Mass in thanksgiving.

I approached the doors of the church, assuming that they would be locked. Every church I have approached on weekday walks with my son during the pandemic has been locked. My heart sinks each time.

When the door opened, I began to cry. The chance to walk inside, to draw near to

See URENECK, Page 23

Catholic Voices

Catholic solidarity with our brave Hispanic workers

The early days of September afford us the opportunity to turn our attention to one of the noblest activities: human labor.

We work to support our families, fulfill our vocations, live better lives and ensure that our nation thrives. We work to have a decent present and to secure a stable future for our children.

In an ideal world, we work doing what we like. Education puts us closer to that ideal. Millions of people, however, must simply work in whatever is available to make ends meet. For them a job is a job, and that alone is a blessing.

Allow me to bring some attention to the many brave Hispanic workers who are the backbone of core industries in the U.S., such as farming, fishing, construction, hospitality, restaurants, child and personal care, cleaning services, medical assistance and mining, among others.

Why speak of these workers as brave? Besides the obvious physical and mental exigencies of these jobs, the current pandemic placed millions of Hispanic workers face-to-face with the highly contagious and lethal COVID-19 virus.

Workers such as doctors, nurses, teachers and others in similar professions are also exposed regularly to this virus. Yet, their industries are more likely to offer safety protections that are not always available to, say, farmers, hotel workers and people performing cleaning services.

It is no secret that workers in mining, farming, service and hospitality industries are often poorly paid.



Hosffman Ospino
Catholic News Service

Journeying Together

Many need two or three jobs to make ends meet. The impact of such circumstances on personal and family life is dear. COVID-19, in a matter of months, made tough jobs even tougher.

Many of the jobs Hispanics perform are survival jobs, literally. COVID-19 has given a new meaning to the term survival. Millions of Hispanics do not have the luxury of working from their homes, from their computers or in properly ventilated offices.

Picking up crops, taking care of the elderly in nursing homes, cleaning spaces, babysitting, cooking and serving food in restaurants, etc., are tasks that Hispanics and other on-the-ground workers cannot do remotely. They must be on site and thus risk everything, including health and life. They also risk the well-being of their families and friends.

Hispanics are three to four times more likely to be infected with COVID-19 than white people. The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention reported re-

cently that more than 26% of deaths due to COVID-19 in the U.S. were among Hispanics.

About 70% of Hispanics identified COVID-19 as the most urgent issue threatening their lives and well-being. More urgent than immigration, the economy and racism. Nearly 60% of Hispanics live in households where someone recently lost a job or had a significant salary reduction.

Mindful that about half of all Hispanics self-identify as Catholic, chances are that many of these brave workers share our parishes. Many of them bring their babies to be baptized, go to Mass to be sustained with the Eucharist and seek spiritual support from Catholic pastoral leaders.

Have we met with them? Have we told them, "Thank you for what you do"? Have we expressed our solidarity with them by saying, "How can I support you?"

Those Hispanic workers who risk their lives to survive and ensure that our economy thrives must not go unnoticed by our Catholic community. We need to engage in Catholic solidarity with these brave workers. They are our sisters and brothers. With them, we are nation and church.

We pray with gratitude for these workers, millions of them immigrants and refugees, and all others who labor every day with love and sacrifice.

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

Post-grad lessons from the plague year

It seems as if there are two kinds of graduation narratives for what happens after young collegians toast each other with one last Natty Light or hard seltzer, flip their tassels and head out to take on the world.

The first narrative is that the world is their oyster. The economy is booming, entry-level jobs are plentiful, and projections show that their lifetime earnings will be the envy of their non-college-educated peers. Such was the welcome for the class of 2019.

The second narrative is that they are unlucky enough to have been stepping out into a stagnant economy, with job prospects scarce and the likelihood of living at home with mom and dad dismally inevitable. I'm looking at you, 2020.

I know how you feel. I graduated in one of those dismal times. Inflation. Political turmoil. High unemployment. Like many of my peers, I fled first to the safe haven of grad school. Then, hungry to experience a bit of what we called TRW (the real world), I crossed the country and became a fish cutter. I learned a great deal at both places.

Fast forward a number of decades, and now it is my youngest daughter, a proud 2020 grad, who is sharing that second narrative of dismal prospects awaiting her class. Yet her challenges, while superficially similar to mine in the bleak postgrad prospects, are far more striking than anything I endured.

For starters, last May came and went without a graduation ceremony. The class of 2020 will be the one with the giant asterisk explaining why no graduation videos, no graduation speakers, no closure, as we say these days.

And that robust economy that greeted the grads of 2019 has almost instantaneously vanished. The graduates gave up cap and gown for masks and social distancing. Job interviews are by video, internships are remote and everything comes freighted with risks.

Yet I don't pity my daughter and her generation. Living through a historic pandemic, economic collapse and racial upheaval isn't pretty, but it is instructive.

It is so darn easy to take things for granted: That success is guaranteed. That earnings always go up. That



Greg Erlandson
Catholic News Service

Amid the Fray

we're No. 1 by virtue of just being us. The graduating class of 2020 is learning some more important lessons.

There are no guarantees, for starters. Life is for real. There are 160,000 people who were alive last February and are not now. My daughter has taken to saying with a touch of mock drama, "We are all going to die." Besides being a statement of fact, I think it is her way of dealing with the immensity of the moment.

Another lesson is that sacrifice is part of life. We make sacrifices for others. My daughter, who is living with us for the moment, knows that our vulnerability to the coronavirus is greater than hers, and this impacts the jobs she considers, the outings she makes. It's not all about her. It's about us.

That's a lesson our whole nation is struggling to learn. Her generation may understand it more quickly than its predecessors.

Finally, there is the lesson of faith, hope and gratitude. God is still with us, and in our need, we turn to him a bit more. Hope keeps us going, preserving us from self-pity and despair. And gratitude. To see so many people in need right now puts our own frustrations in perspective.

This too shall pass. We'll get through this terrible time, but I hope the class of 2020 doesn't forget what it is learning after graduation: There are good lessons in bad times, if they pay attention.

Erlandson, director and editor-in-chief of Catholic News Service, can be reached at gerlandson@catholic-news.com.

Cartoon Corner



St. Paschal Mission Church updates facilities

In July, Father Chinna Pagidela and the parish council of St. Paschal Mission Church in Sterling City made plans to repair and improve the exterior of the church building. The parish council proceeded with the plans and secured a proposal from Gary Schwarzenberger, with Dad & the Boyz Construction from Lubbock. After receiving approval from Bishop Michael Sis of the Diocese of San Angelo, an agreement was reached with the work to begin Monday, Aug. 10.

The scope of the work was to be done in four phases and included the following: pouring a two foot splash pad along the sides of the foundation so that rain water is diverted away from the building to minimize any future shifting/upheaving of the foundation; grading and sloping the top soil away from the splash pads and distributing crushed limestone rock on the east, west, and front sides of the building for landscaping and beautification purposes; demolishing and replacing the sidewalks on the east and north sides of the building, which included replacing the 16' x 27' concrete landing in front of the steps, while replacing the handicap ramp to be in compliance with ADA standards; removing and replacing the deteriorating grout between the rock stones on the exterior walls surrounding the building; installing of a 4' x 2' painted cross on top of the steeple.; and a power washing of the exterior walls around the building.

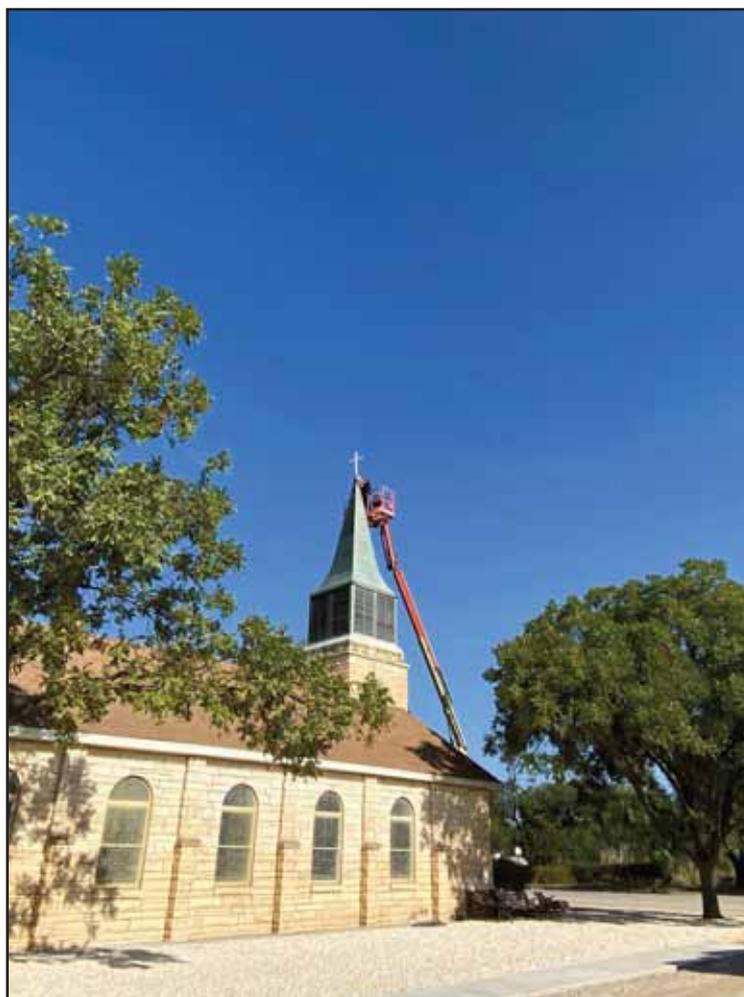
Several individuals helped to make this project possible and St. Paschal wishes to acknowledge their contributions: Leland Foster — donated caliche rock; Ray Sparks — provided a place for the demolished concrete; John Frerich — donated the crushed limestone rock; Eddie Wayne Cypert — donated the trucking of the limestone rock, and Carl Hoelsher — coordinated the trucking and free landscape rock for the project.

The parish council is most appreciative of contractor Gary Schwarzenberger and his boys for taking the time to do the work properly while having the vision to create a xeriscape environment around the church that enhances the beauty of the facility while minimizing future maintenance and watering expense.

The parishioners are very proud of the improvements that were made to the building and grounds of St. Paschal Mission and would encourage everyone to drive by the church on 5th Street and take a look for yourself.



COURTESY



COURTESY

Gary Schwarzenberger of Dad & the Boyz Construction works to install a new cross at the top of the steeple at St. Paschal Church in Sterling City.

Panelists say Father Tolton's example offers path to racial justice

By Norma Montenegro Flynn
Catholic News Service

WASHINGTON (CNS) — Father Augustus Tolton, who in 1886 became the first identified Black priest ordained for the United States, challenged the status quo to bring about social change.

Father Tolton lived a life of joy, rooted in his desire to help others and humbly work to achieve equality and justice for all, said participants of a panel discussion about the priest's legacy.

The online presentation Aug. 29, titled "Tolton's Legacy: A Roadmap to Unity," was organized by the Tolton Ambassador Corps, a nationwide group of Catholics commissioned to spread awareness about the significance of Father Tolton's cause for sainthood.

The Archdiocese of Chicago opened Father Tolton's sainthood cause in 2010. Pope Francis declared him "venerable" in June 2019 after a theological commission unanimously recognized his "virtuous and heroic life." Two steps of the process remain: beatification and canonization.

Father Tolton served as a parish priest in Chicago, where he died in 1897 at age 43.

In keynote remarks, Archbishop Wilton D. Gregory of Washington encouraged the faithful to work for justice and righteousness, particularly during the current time of racial tension and intolerance.

"Despite the presence of hatred and pain in our society, we can boldly and wholeheartedly live our faith with courage," Archbishop Gregory said. "Racism is a plague that continues to desecrate even the church that Christ himself has established."

The archbishop encouraged online viewers to live their faith and work for justice and reconciliation. He said that prayer, diligence, and hope were the basis of Father Tolton's ministry in the face of intense, systemic societal and ecclesial racism.

"His testimony is a needed example to a world that profoundly needs not to lose hope as we make every effort to bring about justice in our time as Catholics today," he added.

Panelists addressed lessons from the life of the African American priest who struggled with slavery, racism and injustice, but persevered because of his faith. They said his life is an example of faithful commitment to justice that can inspire today's Catholics.

"The church really, truly formed him because they really saved him. They took him from the ravages of his background and made something out of him, and gave him a chance in life that otherwise he would not have received from others," said Auxiliary Bishop Joseph N. Perry of Chicago, archdiocesan postulator of the sainthood cause.

Father Tolton was born in Missouri in 1854. While he was still a child, his mother escaped slavery with her children, opening the door to a Catholic education that later flourished into a vocation. As his repeated efforts to enter seminaries in the U.S. were rebuffed, Father Tolton pursued his priestly formation in Rome and was ordained a priest there in 1886.

After his ordination, he was sent back to the U.S. to serve in Illinois, becoming the first African American priest to do missionary work in his own country. Throughout his ministry, Father Tolton encountered widespread racism, but he remained focused on shattering barriers of prejudice and hatred.

Panelists also addressed ways to boost the number of Blacks in religious vocations and ways to support them as they experience rejection and discrimination.

Kathleen Dorsey Bellow, director of the Institute of Black Catholic Studies at Xavier University in New Orleans, called for greater access to faith formation and active involvement of parishioners in the life of the church.

"If we're going to have a thriving clergy, if we're going to

KNICKERBOCKERS

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For example, when a family member has shattered the unity of a family by sexual sin, alcoholism, or the use of drugs (not uncommon problems), other family members can seek excuses for the transgressor. When this is done, it may indicate that the other members of the family do not want to ask themselves what they may have done to contribute to the family member's aberrant behavior. On the other hand, we have seen family members come down hard on the transgressor, never seeking to understand the reasons for this wrongful behavior. Again, this may indicate the unwillingness of family members to face themselves and their culpability in the matter.

Often families become dysfunctional because of the refusal of family members to be honest with themselves about themselves and to seek the righteousness of Christ which alone can help them forgive and forget and have the freedom to press on into the future. In such

cases, the members of the family can take their inability to forgive and forget into the culture outside the family.

In America we see this happening today. When we consider the murder of George Floyd that was the catalyst sparking the demonstrations which have degenerated into rioting and looting, we wonder what the family life of George Floyd, the police officer who killed him, and the thousands of rioters were like. What happened in the families of these people that may have contributed to more deaths and much destruction of property?

This does not mean that an individual person has no choice in the matter. We have seen many people not only survive a poor family life but also rise above it and become a husband or wife, a father or mother of a new family that is healthy spiritually.

It brings into sharper focus St. Paul's affirmation in his own life to "forget what lies behind and press on to what lies ahead." There is an effort among some in America to look only at the evil in the American past, but you cannot read history as the present in the past. This is romanticism in reverse. It is as wrong as ignor-

ing the evil and remembering only the good. What is it in the lives of people that makes them want to destroy our culture and makes them unable to see the good that is also there? Is it something bad in their own lives that they are trying to erase by exposing the sins of those who are dead?

Just as a Christian can learn from his or her personal past, repent of sin, have the good affirmed, and forget about the bad because it has been forgiven, so a family can do the same. And when family life is healthy, the culture is healthy. As St. Gregory of Nyssa says, "When, therefore, we end that civil war within ourselves, we become peace. By this peace we demonstrate that the name of Christ, which we bear, is authentic and appropriate" (*Liturgy of the Hours*, IV,107).

Father Knick Knickerbocker is a retired priest of the Diocese of San Angelo, ordained under the Pastoral Provision which allows for the reception of married former Episcopalian priests into the Catholic Church. He and his wife, Sandie, write a monthly column for the West Texas Angelus.

SULLIMAN

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examples which lend credence to an increasingly entrenched belief. If I believe that someone is a very good person, no matter what the person does, I will still have "evidence" to support that judgment. If they do something nice, I nod my head knowingly with confirmation of my assessment ... if they do something "neutral," I see it as a subtle reflection of their goodness ... if they do something terrible, I simply discount it as their having a "bad day." No matter what they do, my opinion does not change. This works the same way with every other belief we have as well.

If someone is suspicious about the "goodness" of a person or a relationship, likewise, they will always be on the lookout for evidence to support their viewpoint, weaving a collection of words, actions, and feelings into a tapestry that, taken out of their true context, provide useful confirmation for their skewed vision. Once someone is convinced of malevolence, it again makes no difference what the person does. That is why someone who commits a serious crime has difficulty finding someone, including members of parole boards, who see them in a different light.

When I was completing my PhD and post-doctoral classes, I became a counselor and then Director of Guidance and Counseling at a very large high school in Tallahassee, Florida. After the first week of my first year as the director, a veteran social studies teacher came to me and was quite perplexed because I had not provided all the teachers with the list of the "Walter Scott Criswell House" kids. The Criswell House was a half-way house for boys who had gotten in trouble with the law. I asked why she wanted it. She told me that she and the other teachers needed to know who the "bad kids" were. She was angry when I told her I would not be providing that list any longer and immediately went to the principal in anticipation of her going over my head. I convinced him that there was no need to set those kids up for getting thrown out of class. At the end of the year, I compared disciplinary referrals with the previous year and the decline was staggering. There was more than a 75% reduction in discipline referrals. Did the young men suddenly become better behaved that year or was the "biased apperception" removed? This was not unlike a study a few years earlier by a Harvard professor named Rosenthal who told teachers at an elementary school south of San Francisco that a group of children had particularly high IQs. In reality he had chosen them at random. Two years later, those children had a greater increase in their IQ

than did the other children. The number of research articles that support the fact that beliefs have massive impacts on what is perceived is staggering. Indeed, the discipline of Social Psychology has produced countless studies that demonstrate our "selective vision."

There is no more important "belief" than our belief in God. It too, has its foundation in our early years and is the responsibility of parents to develop. Children should see reflections of God in loving mothers and fathers who they can completely trust and should know they are fully loved. How difficult it becomes for us to trust the Father we cannot see when we experience abuse, discouragement, negativity, criticism, and hurt from the one we can see. Jesus knew the importance of childlike trust when he emphatically stated "It would be better for him if a millstone were tied around his neck and he be thrown into the sea than for him to cause one of these little ones to sin" (Lk 17:2).

When we see others that believe God is vengeful and inflicts people with diseases, blindness, paralysis, and all other forms of pain, it is our responsibility to do our best to help them see that "God is love" (1 Jn 4:8). That is not always easy to do when the things we face seem to be inconsistent with a loving Father, and is the argument levied against "believers" by atheists. But we must not expect to "see" first before we believe as Thomas Merton writes in *The Ascent to Truth*, or the faith journey may never begin.

Jesus also knew well how one's beliefs, once formed, were difficult to change. We see that very clearly in Mark 6:3-6: "Is he not the carpenter, the son of Mary and the brother of James and Joses and Judas and Simon? And are not his sisters here with us? And they took offense at him. Jesus said to them 'a prophet is not without honor except in his native place and among his own kin and in his own house.' So he was not able to perform any mighty deed there, apart from curing a few sick people by laying hands on them. He was amazed by their lack of faith."

Jesus replies to Thomas' lack of faith by telling him "Have you come to believe because you have seen me? Blessed are those who have not seen but have believed" (Jn 20:29). It is only when we truly believe that we will "see" ... and when people can see Jesus in us, it will make it easier for them to believe.

Dr. James Sulliman, a graduate of Rutgers University and Florida State University, has 50 years' experience in individual, marriage, and family therapy. He is also the Abilene-area pro-life coordinator for the Diocese of San Angelo.

Notice

Are YOU interested in learning more about permanent deacons? If so, please talk to your pastor then, if he agrees, send your contact information to:

deaconoffice@sanangelodiocese.org

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BISHOP

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important in our life and that we want to pass on to our family and others.

Our practical preparation also includes writing down our preferences for funeral services and making plans for our burial. It is very helpful to write down our desires and talk them over with someone we love. These could include, among other things, our preferences regarding the place for the funeral, the place for the burial, music to be used in the funeral services, names and contact information for potential pallbearers and lectors, and Scripture

ROLHEISER

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Santo, y por eso el temperamento y los antecedentes de uno sólo pueden servir como explicación y no como excusa por la falta de coraje.

Destaco esto porque nuestra situación hoy nos reclama coraje, el coraje para la profecía. Hoy necesitamos desesperadamente profetas, pero escasean; y demasiados de nosotros no estamos deseosos de presarnos a esa tarea. ¿Por qué no?

Un reciente número de la revista *Commonweal* presentaba un artículo de Bryan Massingale, una fuerte voz profética sobre la cuestión del racismo. Massingale opina que la razón de que veamos tan poco progreso verdadero en el tratamiento de la injusticia racial es la ausencia de voces proféticas donde son más necesarias, en este caso, entre los muchos blancos buenos que ven la injusticia social, simpatizan con los que la sufren, pero no hacen nada por ella.

BARRON

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robar, no cometer adulterio, no codiciar, no matar, etc. Hasta ahora, muy kantiano.

Pero lo que probablemente sorprenda a la mayoría de los lectores contemporáneos del libro del Éxodo es que, inmediatamente después de la exposición de los mandamientos morales, el autor pasa prácticamente el resto del texto, los capítulos 25 a 40, delineando las prescripciones litúrgicas que el pueblo debe seguir. Así que, por ejemplo, encontramos una larga sección sobre la construcción del arca de la alianza: “Harás un arca de madera de acacia: ciento veinticinco centímetros de largo por setenta y cinco de ancho y setenta y cinco de alto. La revestirás de oro puro por dentro y por fuera, y alrededor le aplicarás un listón de oro”. Y como adorno en la parte superior del arca, “Harás dos querubines cincelados en oro... Estarán uno frente a otro, mirando al centro de la tapa... cada uno arrancará de un extremo de la tapa, y la cubrirán con las alas extendidas hacia arriba”. A continuación, encontramos instrucciones sobre el elaborado mobiliario dentro del tabernáculo, incluyendo un candelabro, una mesa para los llamados “panes presentados”, pilares y varias colgaduras. Por último, una enorme cantidad de espacio se dedica a la descripción de las vestimentas que deben usar los sacerdotes de Israel. Aquí hay sólo una muestra: “Ornamentos que confeccionarán: efod, pectoral, manto, túnica bordada, turbante y faja. Los ornamentos... se confeccionarán en oro, púrpura violácea, roja y escarlata y lino”.

No se da ninguna indicación de que las prescripciones morales sean de alguna manera más importantes que las litúrgicas. En todo caso, parece que ocurre lo contrario, ya que al Éxodo le sigue inmediatamente el libro del Levítico, que consta de veintiocho capítulos de leyes alimentarias y litúrgicas. Entonces, ¿qué vamos a hacer los post-kantianos con esto? En primer lugar, debemos observar que los autores bíblicos no piensan ni por un momento que

selections from the Order of Christian Funerals.

On our website, the Diocese of San Angelo provides a sample form for designation of a health care agent for medical power of attorney

(<https://sanangelodiocese.org/end-of-life-preparation>). This is a way to appoint someone to make medical decisions on our behalf if we become unable to do so.

The website of the National Catholic Bioethics Center offers a *Catholic Guide to Palliative Care* and Hospice as well as a *Catholic Guide to End-of-Life Decisions* (<https://www.ncbcenter.org/store>). These are very helpful resources.

As people of faith, we need to approach the current pandemic with seriousness and prudence, but not with

Massingale, que da conferencias a lo largo y ancho del país, cuenta cómo muchas veces, en sus conferencias y en sus clases, la gente le pregunta: Pero, ¿cómo me enfrento a esto sin contrariar a la gente? Esta pregunta expresa acertadamente nuestra reticencia; y -creo yo- señala no sólo el problema sino también el desafío.

Como diría Shakespeare: “¡Ah, ahí está el babilis!” Para mí, esta cuestión toca un nervio moral sensible. Si hubiera estado en una de sus clases, no habría dudado en haber sido uno de los que le hicieron esa pregunta: “Pero, ¿cómo desafío al racismo sin contrariar a la gente? He aquí mi problema: Yo quiero hablar claro proféticamente, pero no quiero contrariar a los otros; quiero desafiar el privilegio blanco al que estamos ciegos tan congénitamente, pero no quiero alejarme de la gente generosa y de buen corazón que sostiene nuestra escuela; quiero hablar claro más fuertemente contra la injusticia en mis escritos, pero no quiero que, como resultado, muchos periódicos dejen de publicar mi columna; quiero ser valiente y hacer

Dios requiere de alguna manera la rectitud litúrgica, como si la corrección de nuestro culto añadiera algo a su perfección o satisficiera alguna necesidad psicológica suya. Si tienen alguna duda al respecto, recomiendo la lectura atenta del primer capítulo del profeta Isaías y el salmo 50. Dios no necesita el arca y el tabernáculo y las vestiduras sacerdotales y el culto regular, pero nosotros sí. A través de los gestos y símbolos de su alabanza litúrgica, Israel se pone en línea con Dios, se ordena a él. La ley moral dirige nuestras voluntades a la bondad divina, pero la ley litúrgica dirige nuestras mentes, nuestros corazones, nuestras emociones, y sí, incluso nuestros cuerpos, al esplendor divino. Observen cuán minuciosamente las instrucciones ceremoniales del Éxodo involucran el color, el sonido y el olor (hay mucho sobre el incienso), y cómo conducen a la producción de belleza.

He dicho antes que el énfasis del Éxodo en lo litúrgico y ceremonial tiene una profunda relevancia en nuestro tiempo, y aquí está el porqué. Por muy buenas razones, nos abstuvimos completamente del culto público, e incluso ahora nuestra capacidad de dar culto juntos es muy limitada. En la mayoría de las diócesis de nuestro país, la obligación de asistir a la misa dominical está —de nuevo por razones válidas— suspendida. Mi temor es que cuando llegue el momento propicio, cuando podamos volver a la misa, muchos católicos se mantengan alejados, ya que se han acostumbrado a ausentarse del culto. Y mi preocupación toma una forma más específicamente kantiana: Muchos católicos se dirán a sí mismos: “Sabes, mientras sea básicamente una buena persona, ¿de qué sirve todo este culto formal a Dios?”.

¿Puedo recomendarles que saquen su Biblia, la abran en el libro del Éxodo, especialmente los capítulos 25 a 40, y consideren cuán crucialmente importante para Dios es el culto correcto ofrecido por su pueblo santo? La liturgia siempre ha importado. Las vestiduras de la Misa, los gestos rituales, los olores y las campanas, las canciones y el silencio, siguen siendo importantes. ¿No es suficiente con que seas una buena persona? No quiero exagerar en nada: no.

panic or alarm. We take reasonable steps to protect the health and well-being of ourselves and others, and we use our creativity to make the most of this difficult situation. We allow the Holy Spirit to inspire us to greater holiness through it all. We allow Jesus Christ to accompany us through these trying times. We reflect on our own vulnerability and mortality. We make time to do activities that bring joy. We attend to the needs of others. We use the means available to us to help make connections to the ones we love. We let people know we care about them. We give thanks to God for each new day of life. We repent of our sins and trust in the loving mercy of God. We live fully in the present with an eye to eternity.

frente a los demás, pero no quiero vivir con el odio consiguiente; y quiero señalar públicamente las injusticias y señalar nombres, pero no quiero alejarme de esa misma gente. Así que esto me deja orando aún por el coraje necesario para la profecía.

Hace varios años, un profesor que visitó nuestra escuela, un afro-americano, estuvo contando a nuestra facultad algunas de las injusticias casi diarias que él experimenta simplemente a causa del color de su piel. En un momento le pregunté: “Si yo, como hombre blanco, me acercara a ti, como Nicodemo se acercó a Jesús por la noche, y te preguntara qué debería hacer, ¿qué me dirías?” Su respuesta: Jesús no excusó a Nicodemo fácilmente sólo porque confesó sus temores. Nicodemo tuvo que hacer un acto público para traer su fe a la luz, tuvo que solicitar el cuerpo muerto de Jesús. Por lo tanto, su desafío para mí: necesitas hacer un acto público.

Tenía razón; pero aún estoy orando para que el coraje profético haga eso. ¿Y no estamos orando todos nosotros por lo mismo?

TOLTON

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have religious, then we as laypeople have to be partners with them. We have to be recruiting them, we have to be supporting them, we have to make sure we stand up for them when they run into hardships," Bellow said.

Bishop Perry invited families and parish communities to nurture vocations like the religious people who encouraged Father Tolton to consider his vocation.

"I encourage members of parish councils to have an eye to see who's out there," he said.

The panelists pointed out that in working for reconciliation, creating dialogues that foster a culture of encounter is essential.

"We need to have a conversation, but a conversation that doesn't begin and end with the condemnation of people. It has to be a conversation that says this is the situation that we're living with. We all have an investment, and there's room for all of us to grow," Archbishop Gregory said.

Throughout history, the archbishop continued, many other people from racial and ethnic groups also experienced racism and prejudice and discussing such experiences can be helpful as communities seek healing.

"We should be able to speak honestly about how that has shaped us and what we can do to be more compassionately understanding toward one another," Archbishop Gregory said.

Other panelists included Cecilia Moore, associate professor of religious studies at the University of Dayton, and Father David Jones, pastor of St. Benedict the African Parish in Chicago.

In closing, the speakers encouraged Black Catholics and others to follow the example set by Father Tolton and other saints who have shown love and grace amid adversity.

"Regardless of what is dished out to us," Bishop Perry said, "we have to return respect and love and that in itself will save the world."

Montenegro Flynn writes for the Catholic Standard, newspaper of the Archdiocese of Washington.

URENECK

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the Lord in the tabernacle, was so welcome. The feeling that this space was different from other ordinary spaces was palpable in a way that was more magnified than before the pandemic began.

While social distancing has helped many of us to more intentionally make our homes "domestic churches" by incorporating more religious imagery or scattering sacramentals around, that same space is also where we eat, recreate, work, study, exercise and scroll

through social media platforms.

It is true that God is present where two or three are gathered, and grace does sanctify our ordinary activities. Nature has also been a godsend. I don't know how I'd be faring if I couldn't pray while hiking the nearby reservoir or go sit by the ocean.

But sacred spaces — those where God dwells — are true sanctuaries. You know it viscerally by their silence, their smell, by the creaking kneelers and the draft in the rafters. The air is different inside.

Jesus tells us that Martha "chose the better part." But what do you do for months — maybe a year or more —

when you can't sit at his feet?

My son knows that the space is different, too. He observes that his father and I act differently there than we do at home. When we take him to socially distanced Mass, he is captivated by the stained-glass windows and lights up when the bells ring at the elevation of the host.

Our baby is proof that our senses need the sacred. Pastors, please keep your doors open as much as you safely can.

Elise Italiano Ureneck is a communications consultant and is a columnist for Catholic News Service.

CALDAROLA

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U.S. was cutting our refugee admissions drastically, a tragic turn of events.

Recently, I found out that a relative of mine had invited into her home four young refugees from Somalia. Since their acceptance into the U.S. with their mother a couple of years ago, my cousin has been assisting them, getting them into good schools and offering sustaining friendship. Then, when a crisis produced

a need for temporary foster care, she volunteered, despite a pandemic and having three young children of her own.

From my cousin, and from my own memories, I've learned some lessons.

One, life is very short. Do what you can for people when you can and do it as well as you can. Then, don't spend time with regrets.

Secondly, when going through something challenging, whether illness, COVID-19 isolation or a stressful situation, my tendency can be to obsess, thinking of it as the central reality. Will

this ever end? Yes, it will end and I'll move on to the next challenge. This is life. Cherish it every day and find the good in it.

Thirdly, in every aspect of life, God exists. God has a lesson for me in every circumstance, something to teach me. Be still and listen.

Lastly, we all need to know our limits. Every life has boundaries and every country has borders. But God is continually inviting us to stretch ourselves, to do more than we ever thought we could.

SANDOVAL

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todo, no importa el costo.

Smith entrevistó a Alex Berenson, prominente por sus escrituras y participación en televisión de noticias, quien opinó que la póliza actual de mitigación y de salvar vidas es el equivoco más grande de nuestra época, peor que Vietnam, impulsado por histeria de los medios de comunicación. "Los políticos temen demasiado por la muerte de los ancianos, que de todas maneras van a morir pronto," dijo.

Berenson escribió recientemente que,

en el peor caso, 600,000 norteamericanos morirían, pero que, en un año o dos el virus probablemente tendría poco impacto, la población habiendo disminuido sólo 3 %. Aboga que simplemente tenemos que aceptar la muerte de cientos de miles. Ignora el éxito de China, Corea del Sur, Nueva Zelanda y Grecia, entre otros, en neutralizar el virus y restablecer sus economías sin masas de muertos.

Aún, esa lógica tiene su audiencia en altos consejos, aunque, como escribe Smith, el presidente Trump, el gobernador Ron DeSantis de Florida, y otros no le ponen importancia a salvar vidas, quizás porque la política ordinaria humana pone

alto valor en la vida, hasta la de los ancianos.

No obstante, la amenaza a la vida existe, sin sangre, sin empatía. Imagínese como podríamos bregar con cientos de miles cuando 20,000 muertos abrumaron los sistemas médicos en Nueva York. Sería un apocalipsis con horrores no imaginables.

Dividiéndonos entre los que cuentan y los que no cuentan ha sido el problema siempre — en la administración de justicia, la educación, inmigración y relaciones entre las razas.

El dicho, "Unidos triunfamos, desunidos fallamos," es lo clave siempre.

OSPINO

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los hoteles o personas que trabajan en limpieza no siempre reciben.

No es un secreto que los empleados en las industrias minera y agrícola, y aquellos que trabajan en servicios generales y de hospitalidad tengan salarios bajos. Muchos de ellos necesitan dos y tres trabajos para cumplir sus obligaciones. El impacto de dichas circunstancias en su vida personal y familiar es notable. El virus COVID-19, en unos pocos meses, hizo que trabajos difíciles lo sean mucho más.

Muchos de los empleos que los hispanos tienen son empleos de sobrevivencia, literalmente. El virus COVID-19 le ha dado un significado nuevo a la palabra sobrevivencia. Millones de hispanos no tienen el lujo de trabajar desde sus hogares, usando sus computadores o en oficinas con ventilación adecuada.

Recoger las cosechas, cuidar a los ancianos, limpiar edificios, cuidar niños, cocinar y servir comidas en los restaurantes, etc., son tareas que los hispanos

y otros trabajadores esenciales no pueden realizar de manera remota. Estas personas deben estar allí, en el lugar donde los necesitan, y por consiguiente arriesgan todo, incluso su salud y su vida. También arriesgan el bienestar de sus familias y de sus amigos.

Los hispanos tienen entre tres y cuatro veces más posibilidades de infectarse con el virus del COVID-19 que las personas de raza blanca. El Centro de Control y Prevención de Enfermedades reportó recientemente que más del 26% de las muertes asociadas con el virus COVID-19 en los Estados Unidos ocurrieron entre los hispanos.

Cerca del 70% de los hispanos identificaron el virus COVID-19 como la mayor amenaza para sus vidas y su bienestar. Más urgente que temas de migración, economía y racismo. Cerca del 60% de hispanos viven en hogares en donde alguien perdió su trabajo o recibió una reducción salarial recientemente.

Sabiendo que aproximadamente la mitad de todos los hispanos se identifican como católicos, es muy posible que muchos de estos trabajadores valientes

compartan nuestras parroquias. Muchos de ellos traen a sus bebés para ser bautizados, van a Misa para ser sostenidos con la Eucaristía y buscan apoyo espiritual de parte de los líderes pastorales católicos.

¿Les hemos encontrado? ¿Les hemos dicho, "gracias por lo que hacen"? ¿Les hemos expresado nuestra solidaridad diciéndoles, ¿"cómo les podemos apoyar"?

Esos trabajadores hispanos que arriesgan sus vidas para sobrevivir y asegurarse que la economía de esta nación se mantenga a flote no pueden ser ignorados por nuestra comunidad católica. Necesitamos solidarizarnos con estos trabajadores valientes con un espíritu católico. Ellos son nuestros hermanos y hermanas. Con ellos somos nación e iglesia.

Oremos con agradecimiento por estos trabajadores, millones de ellos inmigrantes y refugiados, y por los muchos otros que como ellos laboran cada día con amor y sacrificio.

Ospino es profesor de teología y educación religiosa en Boston College.

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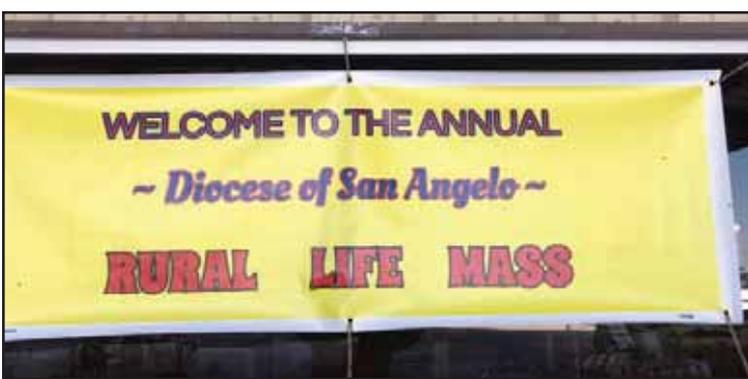
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