

CHANGE SERVICE REQUESTED

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WEST TEXAS ANGELUS



Serving Catholics in the Diocese of San Angelo, Texas

Volume 42, No. 7

July 2022

Launch of Eucharistic Revival unites the church



BECCA SANKEY

Members of parishes from around the Diocese of San Angelo came together for a eucharistic procession through downtown San Angelo following a Mass at the Cathedral Church of the Sacred Heart to inaugurate the diocesan phase of the National Eucharistic Revival June 18.

By Becca Sankey

In the wake of the COVID-19 pandemic, churches were shuttered and, when they reopened, restrictions were put into place; some parishioners opted to watch Mass online to protect themselves or others, said Bishop Michael Sis of the Catholic Diocese of San Angelo in a YouTube video. The distance of the past two years makes the National Eucharistic Revival, a three-year endeavor, critical. “We need to get people to come back to church,” Sis said in the video.

The San Angelo Diocese kicked off the National Eucharistic Revival on Saturday, June 18, at the Cathedral Church of the Sacred Heart, in a Mass celebrated by Sis. The packed cathedral resounded with celebratory music, as parishioners joyously sang “Alleluia!” and horns blared in harmony.

More than 40 priests are serving as official “Eucharistic Preachers” for the National Eucharistic Revival, among them Father David Herrera and Father Ryan Rojo, both of the San Angelo Diocese.

The inaugural Mass was followed by a 1-mile procession through downtown San Angelo, a talk about the Eucharist from Rojo, and an overnight eucharistic adoration.

In the video, Sis said the three-year revival includes the diocesan phase from the summer of 2022 to 2023; the parish phase from the summer of 2023 to 2024; and,

lastly, the national phase from the summer of 2024 to Pentecost 2025. The national phase, he said, will focus on the un-churched.

“I’m encouraging you in whatever way you can to be actively involved in this revival of faith and practice in the precious gift of the holy Eucharist,” Sis said in the YouTube video.

In addition to the setbacks of COVID, the revival is important because recent polls show that a significant number of Catholics in the United States do not understand or believe in the truth of the Eucharist, Sis said.

“Jesus Christ gave us the precious gift of the holy Eucharist in his ministry here on earth,” he said in the video. “He took bread and wine and transformed it into his body and blood, and he commanded us to carry out that same thing in the Catholic Mass. So when we go to a Catholic Mass and receive holy Communion, we are receiving the real presence of Jesus Christ himself: his body and blood, his soul and divinity.”

During the Saturday Mass, Sis asked three things of the people throughout the next three years. “Invite, explain, and reflect,” he said. “We know Jesus is in our church, in our Mass and the tabernacle after Mass. Bring people to him. ... Bring people to church with you. Part of that invitation is dedicated to the RCIA (Rite of Christian Initiation for Adults) and religious education to prepare people to re-

ceive Jesus — sacramentally and in holy Communion.”

As part of his request for Catholics to explain the Eucharist, Sis said, “I want you to be able to point out those basic passages in the Bible about the Eucharist. It’s not that hard to learn the basic points of our tradition, of our faith, in the Bible.”

Reflection, he added, is like the function of a mirror. “Give witness by the way you live your life. When you receive Mass, you literally carry Christ in you. If we go to Mass and receive the Eucharist but live a life of sin, we become a contradiction. If we are going to become a convincing witness, the way we live is important. It includes the language we choose to use, and it includes our lifestyle. All of that needs to be coherent with the Eucharist.”

The Eucharist, he added, means thanksgiving. “Rather than live in a perpetual pity party, we live in thanksgiving,” he advised the church. “We mirror the Eucharist when we serve to unite people rather than divide them.”

Parishes within the diocese did just that — united — as they took to the streets of downtown San Angelo following the Mass. With heat radiating off the streets and the sun beating down mercilessly, more than 200 people followed Sis, who — as carefully as if he were clutching a newborn baby — walked slowly while holding up the golden monstrance beneath

See REVIVAL, Page 6

Supreme Court overturns Roe in anticipated Dobbs decision

By Carol Zimmermann
Catholic News Service

WASHINGTON (CNS) — In a 5-4 decision June 24, the U.S. Supreme Court overturned its nearly 50-year-old decision in *Roe v. Wade* that legalized abortion in this country.

The court’s 213-page ruling in *Dobbs v. Jackson Women’s Health Organization* was not totally unexpected due to the leak of an opinion draft a month earlier. The ruling emphasizes that there is no constitutional right to abortion in the United States.

The *Dobbs* case focused on Jackson Women’s Health Organization, an abortion clinic in Mississippi that challenged the state’s law banning abortion after 15 weeks of pregnancy.

The court’s reversal of its long-standing abortion ruling brings abortion policy decisions to the state level. At least half of states plan to ban or restrict abortions with this decision in place, and 13 states have

See DOBBS, Page 18

Bishop Sis thanks God for end to Roe

By Bishop Michael J. Sis
Diocese of San Angelo

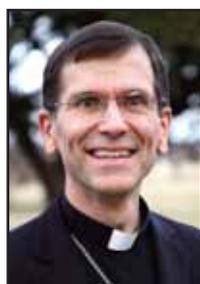
From the moment of conception, a human being has the right to life. Therefore, I give thanks to God for the decision by the U.S. Supreme Court to overturn *Roe v. Wade*. This is an answer to many prayers. I am also grateful that in 2021 the Texas Legislature and Governor Greg Abbott already passed the Human Life Protection Act, a law prohibiting elective abortion, which will become effective 30 days after the final ruling is issued.

I encourage everyone to offer ongoing, practical support to our local pregnancy resource centers, and to pray for their staff and volunteers. Pregnant mothers in our communities in West Texas need support to help them obtain the necessities of life for themselves and their children. This is a time for all of us to step up our support for mothers and fathers in welcoming and caring for God’s precious gift of life.

In the Bible, Psalm 139:13-14 says, “You formed my inmost being; you knit me in my mother’s womb. I praise you, because I am wonderfully made; wonderful are your works!” Every child growing in the womb is loved by God. I hope and pray that more and more people in our world will come to affirm this fundamental truth.

From the Bishop's Desk

Witnessing for the Eucharistic Revival



**Bishop
Michael J. Sis**

Diocese of
San Angelo

Jesus worked many miracles in the years of his public ministry. And he continues to work miracles in our time. Every day, on the altars of our Catholic churches throughout the world, he works the miracle of feeding us with his body and blood in holy Communion. Beginning this summer, and over the next three years, we are asking Jesus to work another miracle – a revival of eucharistic faith here in West Texas.

On June 18, 2022, on the Solemnity of the Most Holy Body and Blood of Christ, we celebrated the inauguration of the diocesan year of a National Eucharistic Revival in the Catholic Church in the United States. We are asking our Lord Jesus to use this Eucharistic Revival as an occasion of renewal of understanding and commitment to the great gift of the holy Eucharist.

To foster the fruitfulness of this revival, I am asking Catholics in the Diocese of San Angelo to give witness to the gift of the Eucharist. How can we give witness? In three ways – by inviting, explaining, and reflecting.

Invite:

Jesus Christ is in our churches, in the celebration of the Mass and in the tabernacle after Mass is over. We can give witness by bringing people to him. We can introduce them to him, so they can get to know him better and be touched and healed by him.

We can bring people to church with us. This includes family members, neighbors, friends, and those who otherwise would not have a way to get there. We can create a welcoming atmosphere in every one of our churches in the diocese, so that visitors will feel welcome and want to come back. We can also pitch in and help with the RCIA and religious education efforts in the parish, to prepare people to receive Jesus sacramentally in holy Communion.

Explain:

This Eucharistic Revival is an opportunity to prepare

ourselves to explain the basic facts of the truth of the Eucharist, so we can defend those truths when they are misunderstood or misrepresented. We can take the time to learn how to point out the basic passages in the Bible about the Eucharist. We can study how the reality of the Eucharist has been our constant belief and practice from the time of Jesus, through 2,000 years of history, up to today.

Reflect:

A powerful way to give witness to our eucharistic faith is to live our life in a way that reflects the truth about the Eucharist. When we receive holy Communion, we receive God himself into our body and soul. We carry Christ in us. Therefore, the way we treat people should reflect that fact. If it does not, then we are making it more difficult for people to believe in our resurrected Lord.

If we go to Mass and receive the Eucharist, but live a life of sin, cheating, disrespect, and selfishness, then we become a countersign, a contradiction, and a scandal. If we are going to give convincing witness, then the way we live should be a reflection of the holiness that we receive regularly in the Eucharist. This includes the way we treat our family members, the way we treat co-workers, and the way we treat strangers along the way. It includes the language we use. It also includes our life-

style. All of these need to be coherent with the Eucharist if we are to provide effective witness. In all that we do, our lives as believers are to reflect Christ's real presence in our world.

For example, in the Eucharist, the sacrifice of Jesus Christ on the cross is made present to us on the altar. We mirror that sacrifice when we are willing to make sacrifices for the good of others.

The Eucharist is an act of thanksgiving for the good things God has done for us in Jesus. We reflect the Eucharist when we live with an attitude of gratitude for the many blessings God has given us.

The Eucharist is the source of our unity. We mirror the Eucharist when we serve to unite people rather than to divide them.

Finally, our lives give witness to the importance of the Eucharist when we take seriously our commitment to come and participate actively in the Mass, and when we arrange our schedule with the Mass as a priority rather than as an afterthought. Our active participation in the Mass increases when we sit in a place where we can get the most out of it, when we try our best to sing the songs, when we pray the prayers, and when we allow God to speak to our hearts through the Scripture readings.

As we begin the three-year journey of our National Eucharistic Revival, every one of us can find a way to contribute to its success through our personal witness. My hope is that we will all do our part by inviting, explaining, and reflecting the truth of the Eucharist.

For more information about the Eucharistic Revival, please explore the helpful website offered by the U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops at eucharisticrevival.org. This website provides opportunities to become a prayer partner for this revival, share a personal testimony, and explore Catholic teaching about the Eucharist. Our diocesan website also offers additional material at <https://sanangelodiocese.org/eucharistic-revival>.

Why was *Roe v. Wade* overturned? Here's a look at some of the reasons given

By Jonah McKeown
Catholic News Agency

DENVER (CNA) — The U.S. Supreme Court on June 24 issued an opinion in *Dobbs v. Jackson Women's Health Organization* overturning *Roe v. Wade* and *Planned Parenthood v. Casey*, returning the question of abortion policy to the states and to the people's elected representatives.

Why did the Court make this decision? Here are some of the reasons that the justices gave in the majority opinion for overturning *Roe*:

1. The Constitution makes no reference to abortion.

The opinion points out that abortion is not mentioned in the Constitution, nor, the opinion says, is such a right "implicitly protected by any constitutional provision, including the one on which the defenders of *Roe* and *Casey* now chiefly rely—the Due Process Clause of the Fourteenth Amendment."

2. Abortion is not "deeply rooted in this Nation's history and tradition."

Supreme Court precedent had held that any right not explicitly mentioned in the Constitution must be "deeply rooted in this Nation's history and tradition" and "implicit in the concept of ordered liberty."

"The right to abortion does not fall within this category," the court concluded.

3. Abortion is "fundamentally different" than the subjects of related court decisions because it involves the taking of a life.

Abortion is "fundamentally different" from other deci-

sions related to sexual relations, contraception, and marriage, the justices wrote, because it destroys what other court decisions call "fetal life" and what the Mississippi law in question describes as an "unborn human being."

"None of the other decisions cited by *Roe* and *Casey* involved the critical moral question posed by abortion," the opinion says.

4. Thanks to *Roe*, women's voices on abortion have not been heard.

By preventing the people's elected representatives at the state and local levels from regulating abortion, the court argues that women's voices — both pro- and anti-abortion — were silenced under *Roe*.

"Our decision...allows women on both sides of the abortion issue to seek to affect the legislative process by influencing public opinion, lobbying legislators, voting, and running for office," said the *Dobbs* decision.

"Women are not without electoral or political power. It is noteworthy that the percentage of women who register to vote and cast ballots is consistently higher than the percentage of men who do so."

5. States have "legitimate interests" in regulating abortion.

A law regulating abortion, like other health and welfare laws, is entitled to a "strong presumption of validity" if there is "a rational basis on which the legislature could have thought that it would serve legitimate state interests."

"These legitimate interests include respect for and preservation of prenatal life at all stages of development; the protection of maternal health and safety; the elimination of particularly gruesome or barbaric medical proce-

dures; the preservation of the integrity of the medical profession; the mitigation of fetal pain; and the prevention of discrimination on the basis of race, sex, or disability," the decision explains.

6. *Roe*'s reasoning was "exceedingly weak."

"*Roe* was egregiously wrong from the start. Its reasoning was exceptionally weak, and the decision has had damaging consequences. And far from bringing about a national settlement of the abortion issue, *Roe* and *Casey* have enflamed debate and deepened division," said Alito's decision.

7. State consensus on abortion existed before *Roe*.

The right to abortion was "entirely unknown in American law" until the latter part of the 20th century, said Alito's decision.

"Indeed, when the Fourteenth Amendment was adopted, three quarters of the States made abortion a crime at all stages of pregnancy."

8. The Supreme Court can't settle the abortion debate, but legislators may.

"It is time to heed the Constitution and return the issue of abortion to the people's elected representatives," the decision says.

"This Court's inability to end debate on the issue should not have been surprising. This Court cannot bring about the permanent resolution of a rancorous national controversy simply by dictating a settlement and telling the people to move on. Whatever influence the Court may have on public attitudes must stem from the strength of our opinions, not an attempt to exercise 'raw judicial power'."

The Prayer Square

Prayer for rain

O God, in whom we live and move and have our being, grant us sufficient rain, so that, being supplied with what sustains us in this present life, we may seek more confidently what sustains us for eternity. Through Christ, our Lord. Amen.



COURTESY

St Thomas Parish in Miles hosted a Pray For Rain Walk on Earth Day, April 22. Some 30 walkers gathered to petition the Lord for the gift of rain that is so badly needed in the area. Deacon Frankie Aguirre led the group in prayers as the group walked from the church to the almost dried up Willow Creek 2.2 miles outside town and then back. Walkers recited multiple Rosaries and Divine Mercy Chaplets, in addition to a prayer service held on the banks of Willow Creek, asking for the gift of rain.

Testimonio del Avivamiento Eucarístico



**Obispo
Michael J. Sis**

Diócesis de
San Ángelo

de la Eucaristía, para que podamos defender esas verdades cuando se malinterpreten o tergiversen. Podemos tomarnos el tiempo para aprender a señalar los pasajes básicos de la Biblia acerca de la Eucaristía. Podemos estudiar cómo la realidad de la Eucaristía ha sido nuestra creencia y práctica constante desde la época de Jesús, a través de 2000 años de historia, hasta hoy.

Reflejar:

Una forma poderosa de dar testimonio de nuestra fe eucarística es vivir nuestra vida de una manera que refleje la verdad sobre la Eucaristía. Cuando recibimos la sagrada Comunión, recibimos a Dios mismo en nuestro cuerpo y alma. Llevamos a Cristo en nosotros. Por lo tanto, la forma en que tratamos a las personas debe reflejar ese hecho. Si no es así, entonces estamos haciendo más difícil que la gente crea en nuestro Señor resucitado.

Si vamos a Misa y recibimos la Eucaristía, pero vivimos una vida de pecado, engaño, falta de respeto, y egoísmo, entonces nos convertimos en una contraseña, una contradicción, y un escándalo. Si vamos a dar un testimonio convincente, entonces la forma en que vivimos debe ser un reflejo de la santidad que recibimos regularmente en la Eucaristía. Esto incluye la forma en que tratamos a los miembros de nuestra familia, la forma en que tratamos a los compañeros de trabajo, y la forma en que tratamos a los extraños en el camino. Incluye el lenguaje que usamos. También incluye nuestro estilo de vida. Todo esto debe ser coherente con la Eucaristía si queremos dar un testimonio

efectivo. En todo lo que hacemos, nuestras vidas como creyentes deben reflejar la presencia real de Cristo en nuestro mundo.

Por ejemplo, en la Eucaristía, el sacrificio de Jesucristo en la cruz se nos hace presente en el altar. Reflejamos ese sacrificio cuando estamos dispuestos a hacer sacrificios por el bien de los demás.

La Eucaristía es un acto de acción de gracias por las cosas buenas que Dios ha hecho por nosotros en Jesús. Reflejamos la Eucaristía cuando vivimos con una actitud de gratitud por las muchas bendiciones que Dios nos ha dado.

La Eucaristía es la fuente de nuestra unidad. Reflejamos la Eucaristía cuando servimos para unir a las personas en lugar de dividirlos.

Finalmente, nuestras vidas dan testimonio de la importancia de la Eucaristía cuando tomamos en serio nuestro compromiso de venir y participar activamente en la Misa, y cuando organizamos nuestro horario con la Misa como una prioridad y no como algo secundario. Nuestra participación activa en la Misa aumenta cuando nos sentamos en un lugar donde podamos aprovecharla al máximo, cuando hacemos todo lo posible para cantar las canciones, cuando rezamos las oraciones, y cuando permitimos que Dios hable a nuestro corazón a través de las lecturas de las Escrituras.

Al comenzar el viaje de tres años de nuestro Avivamiento Eucarístico Nacional, cada uno de nosotros puede encontrar una manera de contribuir a su éxito a través de nuestro testimonio personal. Mi esperanza es que todos hagamos nuestra parte invitando, explicando, y reflejando la verdad de la Eucaristía.

Para obtener más información sobre el Avivamiento Eucarístico, explore el útil sitio web que ofrece la Conferencia de Obispos Católicos de EE. UU. en [eucharisticrevival.org](https://sanangelodiocese.org/eucharistic-revival). Este sitio web brinda oportunidades para convertirse en un compañero de oración para este avivamiento, compartir un testimonio personal, y explorar la enseñanza Católica sobre la Eucaristía. Nuestro sitio web diocesano también ofrece material adicional en <https://sanangelodiocese.org/eucharistic-revival>.

En la decisión anticipada de Dobbs, Corte Suprema anula Roe

Por Carol Zimmermann
Catholic News Service

WASHINGTON (CNS) — El 24 de junio, en una decisión de 5-4, la Corte Suprema de Estados Unidos anuló su decisión de casi 50 años en *Roe v. Wade*, el caso que legalizó el aborto en el país.

El fallo de 213 páginas de la corte en *Dobbs v. Jackson Women's Health Organization* no fue del todo inesperado debido a la filtración de un borrador de opinión un mes antes. El fallo enfatiza que no existe el derecho constitucional al aborto en Estados Unidos.

El caso de *Dobbs* se centró en la Organización de Salud de la Mujer de Jackson, una clínica abortista en Mississippi que desafió la ley estatal que prohíbe el aborto después de las 15 semanas de embarazo.

Dicho fallo de la Corte Suprema sobre el aborto hace que las decisiones de política de aborto queden en manos de los estados. Al menos la mitad de los estados planean prohibir o restringir abortos con esta decisión vigente, y 13 estados tienen leyes desencadenantes, establecidas para prohibir abortos inmediatamente después de la revocación de *Roe*.

"Sostenemos que *Roe* y *Casey* deben ser anulados", escribió el juez Samuel Alito en la opinión mayoritaria de la corte. *Casey v. Planned Parenthood* es la decisión de 1992 que confirmó *Roe*.

A Alito se unieron los jueces Clarence Thomas, Neil Gorsuch, Brett Kavanaugh, y Amy Coney Barrett.

La votación para mantener la restricción del aborto en Mississippi fue de 6 a 3, y el presidente del Tribunal Supremo, John Roberts, votó con la mayoría. En una opinión separada, Roberts manifestó que no habría anulado la decisión de *Roe* de la corte.

Alito, escribiendo para la mayoría, dijo: "La Constitución no hace referencia al aborto, y ningún derecho de este tipo está protegido implícitamente por ninguna disposición constitucional, incluyendo aquella en la que ahora se basan principalmente los defensores de *Roe* y *Casey*: la Cláusula del Debido Proceso de la Enmienda 14".

Los obispos católicos de Estados Unidos que han apoyado la revocación de *Roe* reaccionaron de inmediato de manera positiva a la decisión de la corte, que llega al final del mandato de este año.

La Conferencia de Obispos Católicos de Estados Unidos calificó la decisión como un "día histórico en la vida de nuestro país, uno que estimula nuestros pensamientos, emociones, y oraciones".

"Oramos para que nuestros funcionarios electos ahora promulguen leyes y políticas que promuevan y protejan a los más vulnerables entre nosotros", expresaba la declaración del 24 de junio del arzobispo de Los Ángeles, José H. Gómez, presidente de la USCCB, y el arzobispo de Baltimore, William E. Lori, presidente del Comité de Actividades Pro-Vida de la USCCB.

"Damos gracias a Dios por la decisión de hoy . . . Esta decisión justa salvará a innumerables niños inocentes que simplemente esperan nacer", indicaban los

obispos católicos de Nueva York en un comunicado poco después de que se diera a conocer la opinión de la corte.

Aquellos en ambos lados del asunto estaban fuera de la corte cuando se emitió el fallo y continuaron manifestándose con fuerza durante toda la tarde con carteles, megáfonos, abrazos, y gritos.

Las multitudes han estado fuera de la corte, bloqueada ahora por vallas de seguridad, durante días, anticipando esta decisión, tal como lo estaban cuando se filtró un borrador de opinión a principios de mayo.

Comentando desde la Casa Blanca el 24 de junio, el presidente Joe Biden dijo que la decisión de la corte fue, "en mi opinión, un día triste para el país, pero no significa que la lucha haya terminado", e instó a los estadounidenses responder con sus votos en las próximas elecciones.

También instó a los manifestantes "mantener todas las protestas pacíficas", y agregó: "Debemos oponernos a la violencia en cualquier forma, independientemente de su razón".

La opinión de *Dobbs* es muy similar al borrador filtrado que calificó a *Roe* como "extremadamente erróneo desde el principio".

Los jueces Stephen Breyer, Sonia Sotomayor, y Elena Kagan escribieron una disidencia conjunta que enfatizó la importancia de las decisiones anteriores de la corte sobre este tema.

Ellos agregaron, "Cualquiera que sea el alcance exacto de las próximas leyes, un resultado de la decisión de hoy es seguro: la

reducción de los derechos de las mujeres y de su condición de ciudadanas libres e iguales".

En su disidencia, los jueces también señalaron que sentían "tristeza por este tribunal, pero más por las millones de mujeres estadounidenses que hoy han perdido una protección constitucional fundamental".

Cuando la corte anunció el año pasado que tomaría este caso, luego de considerarlo más de una docena de veces desde 2020, los jueces dijeron que solo revisarían una de las tres preguntas que se les presentaron: "Si todas las prohibiciones de pre viabilidad sobre los abortos electivos son inconstitucionales".

Ese punto de viabilidad — cuando se dice que un feto puede sobrevivir por sí mismo — fue un punto clave en este caso, porque la Corte Suprema había dictaminado consistentemente que los estados no pueden restringir el aborto antes de las 24 semanas, o cuando un feto puede sobrevivir por sí mismo".

Un escrito de "amigo de la corte" presentado por la USCCB enfatizó que el aborto no es un derecho creado por la Constitución y lo llamó "inherentemente diferente de otros tipos de decisiones personales a las que esta corte ha otorgado protección constitucional".

Refiriéndose a las principales decisiones de aborto de la corte, el informe también advirtió que, si la Corte Suprema "continúa tratando el aborto como un tema constitucional", enfrentará más preguntas en el futuro sobre "qué tipo de regulaciones de aborto son permisibles".

Papa: Cooperación interreligiosa es necesaria para enfrentar amenazas

Por Carol Glatz
Catholic News Service

CIUDAD DEL VATICANO (CNS) — El diálogo y la cooperación interreligiosa son más necesarios que nunca durante este tiempo en que las personas y el planeta enfrentan múltiples amenazas, dijo el papa Francisco a una delegación de budistas de Tailandia.

"Tristemente, por todos lados escuchamos el grito de una humanidad herida y una tierra quebrada", dijo.

"Nuestra tarea hoy es guiar a nuestros respectivos seguidores a un sentido más vívido de la verdad de que todos somos hermanos y hermanas", dijo al grupo durante una audiencia en el Vaticano el 17 de junio.

"Se deduce que debemos

trabajar juntos para cultivar la compasión y la hospitalidad por todos los seres humanos, especialmente los pobres y marginados", dijo el papa.

La delegación incluía a más de 30 monjes budistas destacados, unos 60 budistas laicos y varios representantes de la Iglesia católica en Tailandia, según Vatican News. Estuvieron en Roma asistiendo a una conferencia el 17 de junio titu-

lada "Amistad entre budistas y cristianos para una cultura de encuentro", patrocinada por la Pontificia Universidad Urbana de Roma y el Dicasterio del Vaticano para el Diálogo Interreligioso.

El propósito de su visita fue conmemorar el 50º aniversario del encuentro entre san Pablo VI y el 17º patriarca budista supremo de Tailandia, Somdej Phra Wannarat.

Espacio de Oración

Oración para Pedir la Lluvia

Señor Dios, en quien vivimos, nos movemos y existimos, concédenos la lluvia oportuna, a fin de que, ayudados convenientemente con los bienes de la tierra, anhelemos con más confianza los bienes eternos.
Por Cristo Nuestro Señor. Amen.

CALENDARS

Please pray for our clergy



July

- 2 Rev. Bernard Degan, CM (D — 2001)
- 2 Deacon Floyd Frankson (D — 1992)
- 4 Rev. Msgr. Charles Dvorak (D — 1963)
- 4 Deacon Michael Kahlig (B)
- 5 Rev. Msgr. Robert Bush (B)
- 5 Rev. Ray Wilhelm, OMI (D — 2006)
- 5 Rev. Joseph Ogbonna (B)
- 6 Deacon Gary Rhodes (B)
- 7 Rev. Guy Kagere (O — 2002)
- 7 Deacon Alex Sosa (B)
- 10 Rev. Emil J. Gerlich (D — 1969)
- 12 Rev. Michael Udegbonam (O — 1981)
- 14 Deacon Joel Gutierrez (B)
- 14 Deacon Bobby Wright (B)
- 17 Deacon Andrew Davis (B)
- 17 Rev. Tony Franco (B)
- 17 Deacon Enrique Martinez (B)
- 17 Rev. George Varakukala (D — 2020)
- 19 Rev. Msgr. Andrew Marthaler (D — 1984)
- 19 Bishop Michael Sis (O — 1986)
- 21 Rev. Michael Rodriguez (B)
- 22 Bishop Thomas J. Drury (D — 1992)
- 22 Deacon Abel Campos (D — 2002)
- 26 Deacon José Rosales (D — 2000)
- 27 Rev. Joe Barbieri (B)
- 27 Rev. John Kuehner (O — 2003)
- 27 Deacon Victor Lopez (B)
- 27 Deacon Scott Randolph (B)
- 28 Rev. Frank Chavez (B)
- 29 Deacon Jesus Napoles (B)
- 31 Deacon Ignacio Villa (B)

August

- 2 Rev. Francis Njoku (O — 1997)
- 4 Rev. Isidore Ochiabuto (O — 2001)
- 4 Rev. Michael Rodriguez (O — 1990)
- 4 Deacon Jose Villagrana (B)
- 6 Rev. Bhaskar Mendem (O — 2004)
- 7 Rev. Andrew DeMuth (D — 1969)
- 9 Deacon Flabio Franco (B)
- 10 Rev. Michael Barbarossa, OFM (D — 1981)
- 11 Rev. Francis Mysliwicz, OMI (D — 1975)
- 12 Rev. David Herrera (O — 1989)
- 12 Rev. Ted McNulty (D — 2006)
- 14 Rev. Bernard Binversie (D — 1992)
- 15 Rev. Msgr. James Bridges (B)
- 15 Rev. Sam Homsey, CPPS (D — 2004)
- 15 Rev. Fabian Rosette (O — 1980)
- 15 Rev. Johnrita Adegboyega (O — 2000)
- 17 Deacon Orlando Mendoza (B)
- 17 Deacon Daniel Vaughan (B)
- 18 Rev. Serafin Avenido (B)
- 19 Rev. Msgr. Arnold A. Boeding (D — 1989)
- 21 Deacon William Callan (D — 1988)
- 21 Deacon Encinencio Samaniego (D — 2008)
- 22 Rev. Charles Larue (D — 2005)
- 22 Deacon Enrique Martinez (O — 1976)
- 22 Deacon Jesse Martinez (B)
- 22 Deacon Ernie Sanchez (O — 1976)
- 23 Rev. Raymond Gallagher (D — 2010)
- 23 Deacon Eufrazio Hernandez (D — 1998)
- 23 Rev. Charles A. Knapp (D — 1978)
- 24 Deacon Edward Gonzalez (B)
- 27 Deacon Mike Medina (B)
- 28 Deacon Mario Calderón (D — 1998)
- 28 Deacon Antonio Gonzales (O — 1976)
- 29 Rev. Msgr. Francis X. Frey (D — 2014)

**B = Birthday | O = Date of Ordination
D = Date of Death**



Please contact the bishop's assistant, Lupe Castillo, for information about the bishop's calendar.
325-651-7500 | lcastillo@sanangelodiocese.org

Bishop's Calendar

July 2022

- 3 CARLSBAD, St. Therese, Installation of Pastor Fr. Josh Gray at 8:30 a.m.
- 3 SAN ANGELO, St. Margaret, Installation of Pastor Fr. Josh Gray at 10:30 a.m.
- 6 ABILENE, St. Vincent Pallott, Mass at 7:00 p.m.
- 5 SAN ANGELO, Diocesan Pastoral Center, Priestly Life & Formation Committee meeting at 11:00 a.m.
- 8 SAN ANGELO, Diocesan Pastoral Center, Joint meeting of Diocesan Finance Council and Presbyteral Council at 11:00 a.m.
- 9 SAN ANGELO, Diocesan Pastoral Center, Cursillo Leadership Summer meeting at 10:00 a.m.
- 9 MIDLAND, St. Stephen, Mass of Thanksgiving for the Supreme Court Dobbs decision at 5:00 p.m., followed by reception
- 10 ODESSA, St. Elizabeth Ann Seton, Installation of Pastor Fr. Joe Barbieri at 11:00 a.m.
- 10 ODESSA, St. Elizabeth Ann Seton, Special Needs Mass at 4:00 p.m.
- 11 ABILENE, Holy Family, Mass of Thanksgiving for the Supreme Court Dobbs decision at 6:30 p.m., followed by reception in the parish hall
- 14 SAN ANGELO, Christ the King Retreat Center, Teen ACTS at 7:00 p.m.
- 15-16 SAN MARCOS, State Council Knights of Columbus
- 17 SAN ANGELO, Holy Angels, Installation of Pastor Fr. Santiago Udayar at 11:00 a.m.
- 17 SAN ANGELO, Cathedral of the Sacred Heart, Mass of Thanksgiving for the Supreme Court Dobbs decision at 6:00 p.m., followed by reception in the gymnasium
- 18-22 TYLER, Annual meeting of Hermanamiento with Honduran dioceses
- 24 MIDKIFF, St. Thomas, Dedication of New Altar at 8:00 a.m.

- 25 SAN ANGELO, Diocesan Pastoral Center, Diocesan Liturgical Commission meeting at 1:30 p.m.
- 26 SAN ANGELO, Presbyteral Council meeting at 11:00 a.m.
- 28 SAN ANGELO, Diocesan Pastoral Center, Priest Pension Plan Committee meeting at 2:00 p.m.
- 29 ABILENE, Sacred Heart, Mass for Diocesan Charismatic Conference at 7:00 p.m.
- 31 ODESSA, St. Elizabeth Ann Seton, Mass for 40th Anniversary of Parish at 12:30 p.m.

August 2022

- 1 GUADALUPE RADIO, Live show from 12:10-12:30 p.m.
- 2-4 NASHVILLE, Knights of Columbus Supreme Convention
- 5-6 MIDLAND, St. Stephen, Discernment Retreat
- 6 FORT STOCKTON, Our Lady of Guadalupe, Mass of 25th Anniversary of Ordination of Fr. Francis Njoku at 5:30 p.m.
- 7 MIDLAND, Annual Clergy and Youth Kickball game at 5:00 p.m.
- 8-10 SAN ANGELO, Christ the King Retreat Center, Seminarian Gathering
- 11 SAN ANGELO, ASU Newman Center, Mass at 9:00 a.m.
- 13 SAN ANGELO, Diocesan Knights of Columbus Conference at 9:00 a.m.
- 14 SHEFFIELD, Good Shepherd Mission, Mass at 11:00 a.m.
- 14 ODESSA, St. Elizabeth Ann Seton, Holy Cross Catholic High School Convocation Mass at 4:00 p.m.
- 15 SAN ANGELO, Diocesan Pastoral Center, Charitable Foundation Board meeting at 10:00 a.m.
- 16 SAN ANGELO, Christ the King Retreat Center, Diocesan Mission Council meeting at 6:00 p.m.
- 17 ODESSA, St. Mary's Central Catholic School, Mass of the Holy Spirit at 10:00 a.m.

Upcoming Special Collections

**Honduran Partnership Dioceses
July 17, 2022**

Funds collected will be used to support the Dioceses of La Ceiba and San Pedro Sula, our sister dioceses in Honduras.

**Diocesan Priests' Retirement
August 7, 2022**

A chance to support the retired priests of the Diocese of San Angelo after years of service

**College and University
Campus Ministry
August 28, 2022**

Help our campus ministers bring Christ to college and university campuses

**Positions available: Angelo
Catholic School seeks
kindergarten and social
studies teachers**

Angelo Catholic School has two open teaching positions (kindergarten and middle school social studies). The applicants for the kindergarten position should be a Christian, have experience teaching in elementary grade levels (K-5), and a degree in elementary education is preferred. The middle school candidates should be a Christian, have a degree in government/history with experience teaching middle school, teaching certification is preferred. Interested candidates should submit a resume and cover letter by email to Elizabeth Mata, Principal of Angelo Catholic School at emata@angelocatholic.school.org. Applications will be accepted until the positions are filled.



Christ the King Retreat Center

July 2022

- 4 CKRC Offices Closed in observance of Independence Day
- 6 DOSA Staff Meeting, Mass & Lunch
- 13-17 Teen ACTS
- 21-24 Women's Walk to Emmaus
- 28-31 Boys' Chrysalis

August

- 5-7 Engaged Encounter & NFP
- 7-10 Seminarian Gathering
- 12-14 Men's Walk to Emmaus
- 26-28 DOSA Deacon Retreat #1



The Roman Catholic Diocese of San Angelo gives thanks for the recent life-affirming Dobbs decision by the Supreme Court of the United States with

Masses of Thanksgiving

celebrated by Bishop Michael J. Sis

Saturday, July 9 at 5:00 p.m.
St. Stephen Parish in Midland

Monday, July 11 at 6:30 p.m.
Holy Family Parish in Abilene

Sunday, July 17 at 6:00 p.m.
Cathedral Church of the Sacred Heart in San Angelo

All are welcome to attend

Each Mass will be followed by a reception
Stay to meet your local pro-life ministry leaders and learn about organizations in our communities helping mothers and families in need

For more information about how to help build a local culture of life and support those with unplanned pregnancies, contact any of our four area coordinators for Pro-Life activities:

Abilene area: Dr. Jim Sulliman, sulliman@camalott.com	Odessa area: Deacon Edward Gonzalez, egonzalez@sanangelodiocese.org
Midland area: Faustino "Tino" Rodriguez, tinoridriguez777@gmail.com	San Angelo area: Stephanie Socha, stephaniesocho@yahoo.com



You are invited to join

MOST REVEREND MICHAEL SIS BISHOP of SAN ANGELO

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MASS For CHILDREN With DISABILITIES

And Their

FAMILIES

All People are Encouraged to Attend!!!

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A Blessing will be Given to Caregivers and Those with Disabilities

Opportunity to Attend Mass as a Family

**Questions?
Ask Megan Galvan
214-901-6099**

DATE: SUNDAY, JULY 10
TIME: 4:00 PM

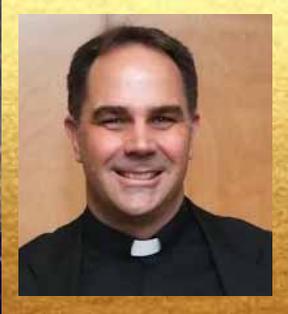


LOCATION:
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SETON CATHOLIC CHURCH**
7601 N Grandview
Odessa, TX 79765
(432) 367-4657
Seatonparishodessa.org

It's going to be a beautiful night!

Father Donald Calloway

Award Honoree Msgr. Fred Nawarskas

Guadalupe Radio Network
Ninth Annual
"Fishers of Men" Dinner 2022



Saturday, October 1, 2022
7:00 PM

Odessa Marriott Hotel & Conference Center
305 E 5th St, Odessa, TX, 79761

For more information: GRNOnline.com
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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 Mini-

stry, 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. To report about a bishop, the Catholic Bishop Abuse Reporting Service can be accessed by visiting ReportBishopAbuse.org or by calling 800-276-1562 (national hotline).

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 escriba 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. Para reportar sobre un obispo, se puede acceder al Servicio de Reportes de Abuso de Obispos Católicos visitando ReportBishopAbuse.org o llamando al 800-276-1562 (línea directa nacional).

REVIVAL

Continued from Page 1

a canopy carried by Knights of Columbus. Parishioners fanned themselves, pushed baby strollers, held the corners of banners emblazoned with the names of their parishes, clutched half-empty water bottles, and swiped at the sweat beading their faces. They also sang and prayed.

The fanfare caught the attention of passersby, some of whom emerged from downtown buildings to watch the procession as it passed. "Go get my phone," one

woman said to a young boy as they exited the front doors of a building on historic Concho Avenue. "Hurry! Hurry!"

Shelby and Jacob Kalina brought their two children, 4-year-old Briggs and 9-year-old Skylar, to take part in the procession.

"We were asked to come represent our parish, and we thought it would be something good to bring our children to and let them see what this is all about — and us as well," Shelby said. "I figure there's some things like this you only do once in your lifetime."

The procession came to a stop in front

of the Concho River, near a larger-than-life statue of a Jumano Native American Indian, part of the tribe to whom The Lady in Blue, Sor María de Jesús de Ágreda, introduced Christianity in West Texas hundreds of years ago.

With the river in the background, Sis placed the monstrance on a white altar before kneeling in quiet reverence and prayer.

On the trek back to the cathedral — their home parish — Willie and Karen Barreto, their son Tristen, and Karen's mother, Ophelia Hogeda, were winded but in good spirits. "I've never done this be-

fore," Karen said of the eucharistic procession. "I think that having a recommendation to the Eucharist brings awareness to how we can take the little holes where God presents himself ... for granted. A lot of people just go through the motions; they just don't even think it's a big deal anymore, so when I heard we were recommending and having a revival. ... That's what we just need ... to refresh our memories. We all need that encouragement in our lives."

Becca Sankey is a freelance writer living in San Angelo.



BECCA SANKEY



BECCA SANKEY

Bishop Michael Sis led the people in adoring the Blessed Sacrament at the banks of the Concho River, the halfway point in the eucharistic procession June 18.

Mass at the Cathedral Church of the Sacred Heart in San Angelo June 18 inaugurated the diocesan year of the National Eucharistic Revival in the Diocese of San Angelo.

Bishops approve new socially responsible investment guidelines



CATHOLIC CHARITABLE FOUNDATION
FOR THE
ROMAN CATHOLIC DIOCESE OF SAN ANGELO

By Lois Folger
President of the Board of Trustees
Catholic Charitable Foundation

The mission of the Catholic Charitable Foundation is to connect faith with charitable giving to serve the needs of the Roman Catholic Diocese of San Angelo. Our vision is to be the keystone for socially responsible investing to make a lasting impact in the work of parishes, schools, and other Catholic institutions within the diocese. At the foundation, we are committed to following the guidelines for investing by the U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops (USCCB).

The USCCB convened last November and approved a revised set of "Socially Responsible Investment Guidelines." These guidelines were first issued in 1991 and were later updated in 2003. The revisions integrate *Laudato Si': On Care for Our Common Home*, Pope Francis' encyclical letter written in 2015 that addresses human life and its relationships with God, our neighbor, and our earth.

The new USCCB guidelines are grouped into five main categories:

- Protecting Human Life
- Protecting Human Dignity
- Enhancing the Common Good
- Pursuing Economic Justice
- Saving Our Global Home

The guidelines, like the earlier versions, continue to promote an investment strategy that avoids doing harm, works actively for change, and promotes the common good.

In making investments, the Catholic Charitable Foundation acknowledges the twin objectives of investing in a morally responsible manner while attempting to maximize total financial returns. The Catholic Charitable Foundation Board of Trustees reviews our investment guidelines to ensure that USCCB guidelines are followed. The investment committee, which advises the Board of Trustees, regularly reviews investment performance, asset allocation, acceptable risk levels, and total returns. Together we safeguard the assets while obtaining a competitive return for our invested funds over the long term.

The newly revised guidelines can be found at <https://www.usccb.org/resources/socially-responsible-investment-guidelines-2021-united-states-conference-catholic-bishops>.

Two priests killed in Nigeria in separate incidents

By Catholic News Agency Staff

DENVER (CNA) — Two priests were killed over the weekend in Nigeria, one in Kaduna state and one in Edo state.

Father Vitus Borogo, a priest serving in the Archdiocese of Kaduna, was killed June 25 "at Prison Farm, Kujama, along Kaduna-Kachia Road, after a raid on the farm by terrorists," the chancellor of the Kaduna archdiocese said in a statement shared with ACI Africa.

Father Borogo, who was age 50, was the Catholic chaplain at Kaduna State Polytechnic.

In Edo state, Father Christopher Odia was kidnapped from his rectory at St. Michael Catholic Church, Ikabigbo, Uzairue, around 6:30 a.m. June 26. He was killed by his abductors, the Diocese of Auchi has announced.

Father Odia was 41, and the administrator of St. Michael's and principal of St. Philip Catholic Secondary School in Jattu.

The Sun, a Nigerian daily, reported that a Mass server and a local vigilante who followed the abductors were shot and killed during Father Odia's kidnapping.

More Christians are killed for their faith in Nigeria than in any other country worldwide — at least 4,650 in 2021, and nearly 900 in the first three months of 2022 alone.

According to the UK-based human rights foundation Christian Solidarity Worldwide, Kaduna state has become "an epicenter of kidnapping and violence by non-state actors, despite being the most garrisoned state in Nigeria."

Earlier this month gunmen attacked a Catholic church and a Baptist church in Kaduna state, killing three people and reportedly kidnapping more than 30 worshippers, and more than 40 Christians were killed in an attack on a Catholic church in Ondo state on June 5.

Jude Atemanke contributed to this report.

Nigerian bishop says country 'worse off' now

By Catholic News Service

ROME (CNS) — While the Catholic Church continues to play its part in helping people in Nigeria, the policies of the current government obstruct a clear path toward peace and reconciliation between Christians and Muslims, said Bishop Matthew Hassan Kukah of Sokoto, Nigeria. Addressing a virtual conference on peacebuilding, hosted by the Kroc Institute for International Peace Studies at the University of Notre Dame, Bishop Kukah said the rise of banditry and violence in Nigeria "has taken over and consumed a lot of the gains we have made" in

building peace. "Just to tell you how little progress we have made, we still have a military general as our president. And, therefore, it is little wonder that this journey has proven to be a challenge and a source of great difficulty for our people," he said June 20. Attacks against Christians, especially Catholics, have been on the rise in the country. On June 5, gunmen entered St. Francis Xavier Church in Owo, killing at least 50 people and leaving dozens wounded. Most recently, gunmen attacked churchgoers June 20 at St. Moses Catholic Church as well as a neighboring Baptist church in the northern state of Kaduna, killing three and kidnapping 40 people.

UTPB campus ministry takes part in ESTEEM



Two University of Texas Permian Basin students and two young adult diocesan ministry leaders traveled to Washington, D.C. at the beginning of April to participate in the ESTEEM capstone conference. Left to right: Alessia LeBlanc, Alison Pope of the diocesan Office of Evangelization and Catechesis, Emilia Gutierrez, and Midland/Odessa campus minister Anita Montez.

COURTESY

ESTEEM inspires reflection on church and self

By Emilia Gutierrez

ESTEEM is a program for college and university students around the country looking to grow their faith and learn about the Catholic Church. As a member of the University of Texas Permian Basin's ESTEEM program, I was lucky to have represented the university at its first time attending the national ESTEEM conference.

Leading up to the conference there were a series of topics that we analyzed and conversed about. Throughout the weeks there were biblical excerpts and passages from other books that we analyzed and discussed to fully understand a piece of writing, whether it was literally or spiritually. I was also challenged with weekly questions to put to practice what we discussed and to deeply reflect on myself. Throughout the year I have gained an understanding of the church but most importantly on how I play a role in my parish. ESTEEM has guided me to grow and build an understanding of the church and my faith, but it has also helped me grow as a person.

All the material discussed throughout the weeks was all compiled and presented at this year's ESTEEM conference. This year's conference was held in Washington, D.C. at Gallaudet University. There, I was able to meet incredible speakers who talked about their journey in finding and strengthening their faith, as well as finding their role in their parish.

After the conference, I felt incredibly inspired from the many wise words spoken and heartwarming people I met. One of my favorite parts was getting to meet other students and seeing how college and university students from around the country and from different backgrounds came together all seeking to grow and learn about their faith. While we were in Washington, we were able to squeeze in some exploring of a few of the many historical sites and monument found in the capital. Lastly, I am incredibly thankful to have had the opportunity to attend the 2022 ESTEEM conference because not only did I get the opportunity to learn about the church and about myself, but likewise, I learned about the history that has shaped this country and the world's humanity.

Finding oneself through ESTEEM

By Alessia LeBlanc

College students often find their freshmen year of college overwhelming — the new place, new people, and brand-new atmosphere. One thing, however, that is the same no matter where you go is faith. As an active Catholic I have found comfort in the routine of Sunday Mass. Imagine my excitement when the Catholic Club at UTPB became involved in the Catholic leadership program, ESTEEM. The program was founded as a partnership between Leadership Roundtable and St. Thomas More Catholic Chapel and Center at Yale University. The aim is to develop the next generation of young Catholics and show and teach them about what their place in the church could look like in college and after.

As a part of ESTEEM, I would participate in weekly meetings in which we talked about all different realities of life and how we can become young leaders of faith. I took the time to reflect on myself and dive deep into my talents and how I can use them to serve the church. We also talked about leadership and how to be a leader that is effective, responsible, efficient, inclusive, while still upholding Catholic values. Then, at the end of the academic year, ESTEEM members from all different schools meet at an annual conference.

This year's conference was April 1 – 3 in Washington, D.C. The conference was an amazing experience. It gave me a chance to talk to Catholics from all over, from Yale University to St. Thomas in Miami, Florida. Not only was I able to form connections with other students but also with alumni from the program as well. We listened to panelists who were simply laypeople of the church about how they found their role in the church, whether it be a ministry of the church or simply being an active member. Together they discussed career paths and how to balance a job, a social life, and one's faith. After listening there was a time to discuss the topics in groups, followed by a question-and-answer session.

This was not only a wonderful experience to meet other Catholics, but it really showed me how universal Catholicism is. As a unified group of Catholics within the United States Capital, we were able to attend mass at the Immaculate Conception Catholic Church, where we became one body in the Eucharist. I am so thankful to the ESTEEM program for showing me a life within the Church after college. The opportunities presented to me and the people I met while at the Conference made me more excited that I am a part of such a large community and universal religion that is the Catholic Church.



Father Francis Njoku to celebrate 25 years of priestly ministry

Father Francis Njoku will celebrate the 25th anniversary of his ordination to the priesthood Aug. 6, 2022, at the St. Agnes Church of Our Lady of Guadalupe Parish in Fort Stockton with a 5:30 PM Mass. All are invited.

The ESTEEM (Engaging Students to Enliven the Ecclesial Mission) program was founded as a joint partnership between Leadership Roundtable and St. Thomas More Catholic Chapel and Center at Yale University. The purpose of ESTEEM is to develop the next generation of Catholic leaders.

Partner sites, in the form of college and university campus ministries, are responsible for offering small seminars crafted using materials supplied by ESTEEM. A core tenant of the ESTEEM program is mentorship. Each site pairs student participants with a mentor who is living a life of faith as a post-college adult.

Each spring, participants from ESTEEM sites across the country gather for a capstone conference. This conference includes small and large group sessions and keynotes.

ESTEEM is not intended to serve as catechesis, nor is it intended to offer training in young adult ministry. Rather, it aims to identify young adults who are already knowledgeable and committed to their faith and who desire to serve the church. It cultivates their desire for service to the church, provides a curriculum that encourages leadership, and offers opportunities for such service, developing a network of talented, actively engaged young adults serving in the church.

This academic year, our campus ministry at UTPB in Odessa was an ESTEEM site. What attracted us to become an ESTEEM site was the mentorship aspect, as well as the focus on preparing students for leadership in a parish post-college, rather than just concentrating on their service in a campus ministry setting.

Two students and two young adult ministry leaders traveled to Washington, D.C. at the beginning of April to participate in the ESTEEM capstone conference. Emilia Gutierrez and Alessia LeBlanc, both students at UTPB, Anita Montez, Campus Minister in Midland/Odessa, and Alison Pope, Office of Evangelization and Catechesis, represented our ESTEEM site.

Archbishop asks church to be in solidarity with migrants who died in truck

By Catholic News Service

SAN ANTONIO (CNS) — The archbishop of San Antonio offered prayers for dozens of people found dead as well as more than a dozen survivors discovered June 27 in sweltering conditions in a semi-truck.

Authorities said June 28 the death toll had risen to 51. Originally, first responders pulled 16 people alive from the rig, including 12 adults and four teenagers.

"We pray for the souls of the ... people who died in such a cruel, inhuman manner this evening," Archbishop Gustavo García-Siller said in a statement soon after first responders made the gruesome discovery about 6 p.m. local time.

Authorities said the victims were migrants. They said the truck, found on a remote back road in San Antonio, appeared to be part of a smuggling operation.

Rubén Minutti, Mexico consul general in San Antonio, said 27 of the people who died are believed to be of Mexican origin based on documents they were carrying, the Associated Press reported.

Roberto Velasco Álvarez, head of the Mexican government's North American mission, said on Twitter June 28 that in addition to the Mexican nationals, seven victims were originally from Guatemala and two were Honduran.

Officials believe the tragedy is the deadliest smuggling incident of its kind in U.S. history.

Auxiliary Bishop Mario E. Dorsonville of Washington, chairman of the U.S. bishop's Committee on Migration, joined Archbishop García-Siller in mourning the death toll.

"This is a tragic loss of life and a harrowing depiction of the extreme risks assumed by migrants out of sheer desperation," the bishop said. "With deep sadness, I join Archbishop García-Siller in praying for strength, mercy and understanding during this difficult time, especially for the survivors of this horrific incident."

"I also unite with Pope Francis in asking the Lord to 'open our hearts so these misfortunes never happen again.'"

"Unfortunately, this disregard for the sanctity of human life is all too common in the context of migration," Bishop Dorsonville continued. "As a church called to build a culture of life, we cannot tolerate this injustice. Instead, we must recognize that we are brothers and sisters, each imbued with God-given dignity."

"To prevent further loss of life," he said, "we urge governments and civil society to promote access to protection, including asylum, develop new pathways for those compelled to migrate and combat

human trafficking in all its forms."

Archbishop García-Siller also asked for prayers for the survivors who were hospitalized, their families and "the first responders who assisted and saved lives and must now carry with them the memories of this scene of carnage."

In addition, he called on people of the archdiocese "to unite in solidarity, as these brothers and sisters are members of our family."

News of the deaths reached Pope Francis, who tweeted June 28 that he was offering prayers for those who died in Texas as well as at least 23 sub-Saharan migrants who died June 24 while attempting to flee Morocco by scaling a border fence to cross into the Spanish enclave of Melilla in north Africa on the Mediterranean coast.

"Let us #PrayTogether for these brothers and sisters who died following their hope of a better life; and for ourselves, may the Lord might open our hearts so these misfortunes never happen again," the pope's tweet said.

San Antonio Police Chief Bill McManus told reporters hours after the discovery that three people were in police custody, although their connection to the situation was unclear.

The first call about the truck came from a worker in the area who had heard a cry for help and went to investigate,

McManus said.

San Antonio Fire Chief Charles Hood said those found alive were conscious, "hot to the touch," and suffering from heat stroke and exhaustion.

"There were no signs of water in the vehicle, and no visible working AC unit on that rig," he said.

Temperatures in the San Antonio area ranged from the high 90s to low 100s, according to the National Weather Service. With a few days left in the month, meteorologists said this June was already the warmest June on record in San Antonio.

Smuggling operations working within the United States have been known to pack migrants into trucks or cargo trailers after they have already crossed the border in an attempt to sneak them past U.S. Border Patrol highway checkpoints.

In Morocco, officials said that five people died during what they described as a "stampede" June 24. Moroccan state TV updated the death toll to 23 late June 25.

However, nongovernment organizations on the ground said the number of deaths could be higher. *The Guardian* reported that an official with Walking Borders, an agency working with Africans seeking to cross into Spain from Morocco, said 37 deaths had been confirmed.

Melilla is one of two autonomous cities of Spain located in north Africa.

The long-awaited canonization of Titus Brandsma, Carmelite priest, journalist, mystic, and martyr

By the Carmelite Nuns of Our Lady of Grace Monastery
Christoval, Texas

For many years, those who know of Titus Brandsma, and Carmelites in particular, have longed for the highest recognition by the church to be bestowed upon Blessed Titus Brandsma for his heroic life of charity, living in imitation of Mary, a life full of grace. On May 15, 2022, Pope Francis did just that by naming Titus Brandsma a saint of the holy Roman Catholic Church. Father Titus joins the company of saints to whom the faithful can reach out for intercessory prayers and for help in living the Gospel way of life, like Father Michael Driscoll, O.Carm., did, and whose healing from cancer became the miracle needed for Titus' canonization.

Titus, who was born Anno Sjoerd Brandsma in 1881 in the Netherlands, is known for his fervor for the faith and was martyred for standing up to the Nazis because he directed journalists of the Catholic press in Holland (the Netherlands) not to publish any Nazi propaganda. He was nicknamed the "dangerous little friar," arrested and sent to a series of Nazi prisons before ending up at the Dachau concentration camp. On July 27, 1942, he was killed by lethal injection by a nurse whose life he changed by smiling at her and giving her his rosary before she ended his life. That simple gift of the rosary changed her, even becoming one of the witnesses for Titus' beatification process. He was declared blessed by Pope St. John Paul II in 1985.

Father Titus was known for his exceptional compassion, charity, trust in God, and for his great love for the Mother of God, the Blessed Virgin Mary. Titus, who had a gentle nature yet powerful presence, not only loved his neighbor but more profoundly his enemies — the Nazis. While in Dachau, he was mercilessly beaten and tortured, yet he always urged his fellow prisoners to forgive their persecutors by overcoming hatred with love. Never giving into bitterness and resentment, he gave others courage to endure the horrors of war.

Although he never spoke about his interior mystical experiences, it was obvious that Titus beheld the presence of God within himself. He said: "We must



Dutch Carmelite Titus Brandsma (1881-1942). Photographer unknown, date unknown (probably end 1920s). Source: Wikimedia.

see God first of all as the deepest ground of our being, hidden in our inmost nature, yet able to be seen and contemplated there." From that depth of love, Titus was able to unconditionally love everyone around him. Still, he never took for granted his responsibility as a priest and journalist. This was ultimately why he was martyred for his Catholic faith.

In times of upheaval and discord in our lives, Titus Brandsma is an ideal pillar of support we can rely on to help keep us focused on Christ, to embrace the call to forgive and love our enemies, and to accept the love God has for each of us, that we may love our neighbor as God has loved us.

St. Titus Brandsma, pray for us!
Feast Day: July 27th

- - -

To learn more about the life, spirituality and works of St. Titus Brandsma, O.Carm., visit the international website of the Carmelite Order at <https://ocarm.org/en/canonization-of-blessed-titus-brandsma>.

Diocese releases synod report compiling local input and listening sessions



West Texas Angelus

The diocesan phase of the ongoing Synod 2021–2023, which aims to assess synodality in the church, came to a close in June 2022 with the publication of a report on the local phase of the synod. The report has been submitted to the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops, which will compile their own report from the reports of dioceses around the country. This national report will then be sent to the Vatican.

The report from the Diocese of San Angelo, available online at sanangelodiocese.org/synod-2021-2023, compiles the findings after the diocese completed 37 listening sessions and collected individual questionnaires following the opening of the diocesan phase of the synod in October 2021.

Groups gathered for listening sessions included: parishes; a Catholic grade school; separate gatherings of campus ministries, young adults, and high school students; LGBTQ+ gatherings; coordinators and directors of religious education, youth ministers; organizations like Cursillo, Charismatic Renewal, Guadalupanas. Formerly incarcerated individuals were also gathered for a listening session, as were priests, women religious, deacons and wives, seminarians, diocesan staff, and ministers from other faiths.

The aim of the listening sessions and individual feedback was to capture an image of how the church is perceived among various groups within and outside the Catholic Church, as well as to learn how the church can better serve these groups and people.

The report finds that "concerns with clergy" were the most frequently-cited perceived issue with the church. "Cleri-

calism has led to a disconnect with the laity and the realities they are facing," the report said. "There is a need to know the community being served and to base ministry to that community on their needs."

Another common theme was the "need for true hospitality at all levels," with accompanying suggestions for everything from more training of ushers and parish staff to ongoing formation for those in ministry roles. A "need for events and ministries that will build community" was also cited.

More formation opportunities for people was a common theme, beyond those in active parish ministry, for old and young alike. A theme at all sessions was a desire for more transparency and effective communication from the church. Several of the groups shared insights into why they may have found it difficult to find belonging in the church, from racism to rigidity to reluctance to discuss tough issues.

The report finds that "people find joy in their experiences with the church when they gather to build community and when they feel welcomed. ... They want to contribute to the community, to have their gifts recognized and used in productive ways."

The report concludes: "We are challenged to identify, invite, and educate potential leaders to help strengthen parish life. We need to cultivate a lifestyle of welcoming among all members of the church. Rather than always expecting others to change, we each need to be willing to change ourselves. God is a God of unconditional love, and we must stop making his love a conditional thing."

The full report can be read at sanangelodiocese.org/synod-2021-2023.



Catholics need better understanding of the Mass, pope says

VATICAN CITY (CNS) — The "sense of mystery" and awe Catholics should experience at Mass is not one prompted by Latin or by "creative" elements added to the celebration, but by an awareness of sacrifice of Christ and his real presence in the Eucharist, Pope Francis said. "Beauty, just like truth, always engenders wonder, and when these are referred to the mystery of God, they lead to adoration," he wrote in an apostolic letter "on the liturgical formation of the people of God." Titled "Desiderio Desideravi" ("I have earnestly desired"), the letter was released June 29, the feast of Sts. Peter and Paul. The title comes from Luke 22:15 when, before the Last Supper, Jesus tells his disciples, "I have earnestly desired to eat this Passover with you before I suffer." In the letter, Pope Francis insisted that Catholics need to better understand the liturgical reform of the Second Vatican Council and its goal of promoting the "full, conscious, active and fruitful celebration" of the Mass. "With this letter I simply want to invite the whole church to rediscover, to safeguard and to live the truth and power of the Christian celebration," the pope wrote. "I want the beauty of the Christian celebration and its necessary consequences for the life of the church not to be spoiled by a superficial and foreshortened understanding of its value or, worse yet, by its being exploited in service of some ideological vision, no matter what the hue."

Attendees build bridges, share painful stories and hopes for inclusiveness

CHICAGO (CNS) — The last day of a national Catholic gathering in Chicago for culturally diverse ministry leaders and young adults started with a prayer service that included African worship music and prayers in multiple languages, including some from Africa and the Middle East. The energy of the participants gathered at the "Alive in Christ: Young, Diverse, Prophetic Voices Journeying Together" event was evident. The conversations centered on the next steps in the multiyear process and how ministry leaders can bring their learning into their parishes, centers and organizations. For many, like Semret Hailemariam, a member of the Ge'ez Rite Eritrean Catholic community, the journey has helped build bridges between her Catholic community and others. "This entire process has been so humbling. We would have never had the opportunity to share about our rich liturgy, history and culture had it not been for the invitation," said Hailemariam. The culturally diverse groups represented were: Asian and Pacific Islander, Black and African American, European American, Hispanic and Latino, Native American and Alaska Natives, as well as migrants, refugees and travelers. About 325 people participated in the national event, and about 150 dioceses were represented, in addition to Catholic national organizations, colleges and universities, campus ministries, and apostolic movements.

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In face of rejection and injustice, do good, pope says

By Junno Arocho Esteves
Catholic News Service

VATICAN CITY (CNS) — True disciples of Jesus always choose to do good, even when they are rejected, and never resort to anger or threatening divine punishment on others, Pope Francis said.

Speaking to pilgrims during his Sunday Angelus address June 26, the pope said that when treated unjustly, Jesus does not take "the path of anger but that of a resolute decision to go forward, which, far from translating into harshness, implies calm, patience, long-suffering, not slackening the least bit in doing good."

"This means that when we meet with opposition, we must turn toward doing good elsewhere, without recrimination," he said.

In his address, the pope reflected on

the Sunday Gospel reading from St. Luke, which recalled Jesus being rejected by the people of Samaria while traveling to Jerusalem with his disciples.

The pope said Jesus' decision to travel to Jerusalem while fully aware "that rejection and death await him" is a reminder that to be true followers, Christians must be resolute in the face of suffering.

"For we must be serious disciples of Jesus, truly decisively, not 'rosewater Christians' as an old woman I knew used to say. No, no, no! Decisive Christians," he said.

The choice to do good, he continued, also must be made without seeking approval or applause because those are nothing more than "pride, combined with weakness, susceptibility and impatience."

"Let us then ask Jesus for the strength to be like him, to follow him

with firm resolve on this path of service. Not to be vindictive, not to be intolerant when difficulties arise, when we spend ourselves for good and others do not understand, indeed, when they demean us," the pope said.

In the Gospel, the pope recalled, the rejection by the people of Samaria angered the disciples James and John who suggest that Jesus punish the people "by raining fire from heaven down on them."

Jesus not only rejects their proposal, "he also rebukes the two brothers" for their "desire for revenge."

"The 'fire' that Jesus came to bring on the earth is something else," the pope said. "It is the merciful love of the Father. And it takes patience, constancy and a penitential spirit to make this fire grow."

Pope Francis also reflected on the theme of "fire" when he met June 25 with members of religious orders

founded by St. Luigi Orione.

"The fire of Christ is a good fire" and not like the destructive fire that James and John wanted to unleash on others, the pope said. "His is a fire of love, a fire that lights people's hearts, a fire that gives light, that warms and revives."

Knowing where to bring that light and warmth, he said, "requires looking at today's world as apostles, that is, with discernment but with sympathy, without fear, without prejudice, with courage; looking at the world as God looks at it, feeling as our own the sorrows, joys and hopes of humanity."

"We must see the miseries of this world of ours as the reason for our apostolate and not as an obstacle," the pope said.

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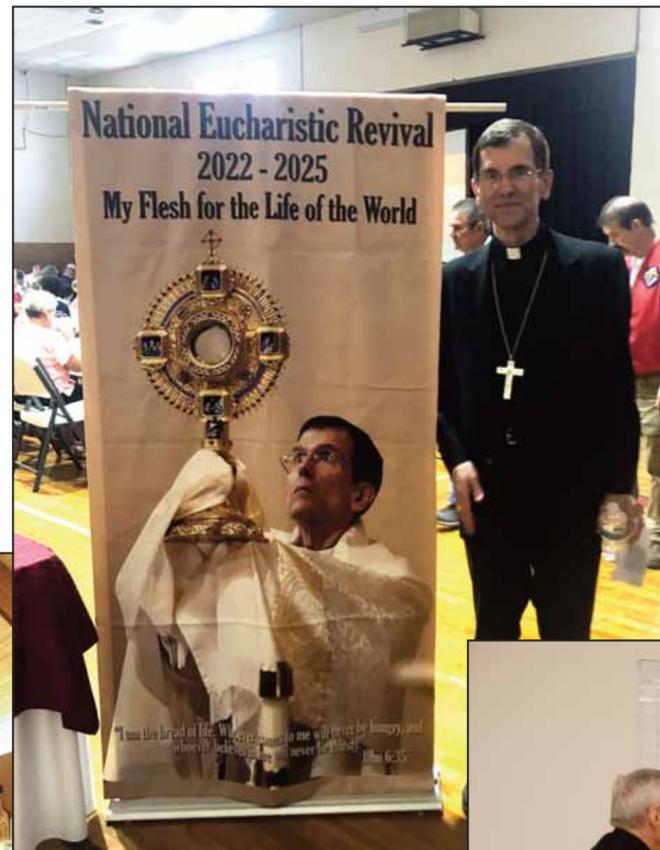
Corpus Christi procession, Holy Spirit Parish, Sweetwater, June 19, 2022.

COURTESY



Confirmation Mass at Our Lady of Perpetual Help Parish in Ozona, May 29, 2022.

COURTESY



Bishop Sis stands next to the National Eucharistic Revival banner. Each parish and mission in the Diocese of San Angelo received a banner, distributed at the inauguration of the National Eucharistic Revival June 18.

COURTESY



Confirmation Mass at St. Francis of Assisi Parish in Abilene, May 31, 2022.

COURTESY



ALAN TORRE | APTORRE PHOTOGRAPHY

Holy Trinity Parish in Big Spring celebrated the 45th anniversary of priestly ordination of Father Serafin Avenido June 26, 2022.



Bishop Mario A. Avilés (second from left), Auxiliary Bishop of the Diocese of Brownsville, was the speaker at a deanery day of reflection for the priests of the Abilene and San Angelo Deaneries held at St. Margaret of Scotland Parish in San Angelo June 29. Pictured with Bishop Avilés are Msgr. Fred Nawarskas, Father Emilio Sosa, Father Juan Lopez Cortes, MSP, Father Anthony Franco, and Father Francis Onyekozuru. Bishop Avilés held a second day of reflection for the priests of the Midland/Odessa Deanery June 30.

WEST TEXAS ANGELUS

How to get out of a faith slump

A faith slump can happen to anyone. Prayer isn't working or we don't feel motivated. When we do make it to Mass, we struggle to focus or we don't feel God any more near to us than when we went in. God seems distant, or we may wonder if God is even there at all.

I have had more than a few slumps in my faith myself, both before and after I entered religious life and became a priest. Here are a few tips I have picked up along the way.

For one, resist the urge to blame yourself. Lots of things can do harm, temporary or lasting, to our faith lives. My faith has been challenged by things like hypocrisy among leaders of the church, or a sense that my experience as a single young adult was not valued at my parish, or I simply didn't fit.

It is not a faith or character weakness on our part to struggle with the oftentimes stark difference between the reality of the church in front of us and what Jesus calls us to. Go gentle with yourself and remember that God will



**Father Stuart Wilson-Smith,
CSP**

Catholic News Service

Faith Alive

faithfully be present to us whether we feel it or not.

Turning inward, while prayer may not be the only way out of a faith slump, how we spend our time in conversation with God is critical. On this, one of my biggest helps over the years has been simply appreciating that our approach to prayer may change over the years, certainly between the major stages of life. This is normal.

Looking up new ways of praying is always a worthwhile exercise. You might try, for example, an Ignatian Examen (reviewing the day reflectively with an eye toward God's action) or "lectio divina" (reading Scripture prayerfully, listening for God's voice speaking to you).

Bearing in mind that prayer is about being in relationship with God, what our prayer life may need most is a retreat. A retreat in Catholic terms is time set apart for reflection, prayer and resting with God. Some retreats may be guided or there will be an option to meet with a spiritual director. Look around your region and see if there are any Catholic retreat centers near you.

As much as a slump in our faith may seem to be an internal matter, I have found that it is best not to approach it this way alone. Getting out of a faith slump often means directing our hearts and minds outside of ourselves.

See WILSON-SMITH, Page 19

GRN RADIO PROGRAM SCHEDULE

GUADALUPE RADIO NETWORK

Radio for your soul can be heard on:

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

POPULAR ENGLISH PROGRAMS

6:00-7:30 AM - GRN Catholic Drive Time

7:30 AM - Holy Mass - The Society of Our Lady of the Most Holy Trinity

8:00 AM - Catholic Connections - Teresa Tomeo

9:00 AM - More 2 Life - Dr. Greg & Lisa Popcak

10:00 AM - Women of Grace - Johnnette Williams

11:00 AM - Take 2 - Jerry Usher & Debbie Georgianni

12:00 PM - The Doctor is In - Dr. Ray Guarendi

1:00 PM - Called to Communion - Dr. David Anders

2:00 PM - EWTN Open Line

3:00 PM - A Life Lived Joyfully with The Divine Mercy Chaplet

4:00 PM - Monday & Friday - The Catholic Current - Fr. Robert McTeigue, S.J.

Tuesday - Thursday - Kresta in the Afternoon

5:00 - 7:00 PM - Catholic Answers Live

8:00 PM - EWTN Nightly News

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Embracing the 'other'

Ten years ago, I traveled to Assisi, Italy, on pilgrimage, to follow in the footsteps of St. Francis. For days, we immersed ourselves in the words and actions of St. Francis throughout his life.

Of all the moments that resonated with me, though, there was one story that seemed especially challenging — both for him and me. That was the story of St. Francis embracing the leper.

In Assisi during Francis' time, those suffering from leprosy were relegated to the plains below the city, far from the everyday view of the town's residents. Francis himself admitted that he was repulsed by the sight of the lepers.

Therefore, it was quite a profound conversion for Francis when he encountered a leper on the road one day and, instead of turning away, reached out and embraced him. In the leper, he suddenly saw Christ.

When I listened to the story, I remember immediately wondering how I would have reacted had I been in Francis' place? Would I have been loving enough to look beyond the illness and see the person?

In the years since, I have often replayed that same question in my mind when I have encountered people that society tends to deem as "the other." Those people, though not marked by physical illness as the lepers were, can be marked by things such as poverty, illness, addiction, sexuality, race or many other things that can force people to the margins of society.

Sometimes, I think we might marginalize these people out of fear. Or maybe we do it simply out of a lack of investment — if it doesn't affect my life, why should I bother?

But much like with many things in our lives, we only confront the divisions that have crept into our lives when we come face to face with the reality of those situations and it closely touches our lives.

Only then are we called — much like St. Francis — to make the decision to either embrace the other or turn our backs. I am sorry to say that there have been times when I've done both. We probably all have.

In fact, I can still recall one rainy day when I was driving



Susan Hines-Brigger
Catholic News Service

Faith Alive

with a friend and we came to a stoplight. Standing on the sidewalk directly next to us was a weathered and dirty man sitting atop a bucket, holding a tattered cardboard sign asking for food or money. The rain had soaked his clothes and he hung his head to deflect the water from falling on his face.

Immediately, my friend told me not to look over toward him. If I did, she said, he'd probably come over to the car. Anyway, he probably only wanted money for drugs, she added. I'm embarrassed to say that the same thought briefly crossed my mind.

As I sat there, waiting for the light to turn, I glanced over at the man. We made eye contact and he gave me a nod and a soft smile, almost as if to absolve me from my judgment of him. The light changed and I went along my way.

After I drove away, I remember wondering if that was my "St. Francis embracing the leper" moment and I had carelessly driven away from it. After dropping off my friend, I retraced my route to once again find the man and bring him the umbrella I had in my car, as well as a warm meal and a blanket. But he was gone. I had missed my opportunity.

The remembrance of that day, along with the memory of St. Francis and his own encounter of the other, continues to challenge me today. For in the other, I can see Christ, if I only take the time to look.

Susan Hines-Brigger is a mother of four, ranging in age from 23 to 11. She is also an executive editor of St. Anthony Messenger magazine.

The Eucharist in our time

In the Catholic Church, the National Eucharistic Revival to renew faith in the real presence of the Body, Blood, Soul, and Divinity of Jesus Christ in the Eucharist could not come at a better time. The present lack of faith in the real presence of Jesus in the Eucharist is part of our entire culture's failure to recognize reality present in the world around us, a failure to recognize the objective reality outside our own minds. The result is that we think we have the freedom to create our own reality.

This failure to recognize and believe in the reality outside our own minds has developed over several centuries in our western culture. We can trace it as far back as late medieval nominalist philosophy, but a useful point of departure in understanding this cultural aberration is the philosophy of the French philosopher Rene Descartes (1596-1650). He decided that the only thing he could not doubt was the fact that he was a thinking being. He famously said, "I think; therefore I am." In other words, the only thing he could know was the certainty of the existence of his own subjectivity.

The popular development of this Cartesian philosophy has led to a denial of objective reality, objective truth, a common reality that all human beings can know. We think we are free to create a world according to our own thought. However, when there is no common objective reality, the desires of an individual person direct a person's thinking. When our desires control our thinking, we can't deal with the complexities of human life, and we retreat into simplistic ideologies to attempt to force our own desires on other people. This means we are ready to condemn what we think are the sins of others (past and present) and judge ourselves as righteous. We can embrace an ideology that says a baby in the womb of his or her mother is not a living human being, that two men or two women can live together in a sexual relationship and call it marriage, that we are free to decide whether we want to be



**Father Knick and Sandie
Knickerbocker**

Diocese of San Angelo

male or female, and the list goes on. The result is the destruction of the family, which is the bedrock of all cultures.

What about the real presence of the Body, Blood, Soul, and Divinity of Jesus in the Eucharist? In our culture each person is free to decide "what the Eucharist means for me." We can take it or leave it. We don't realize what we are treating in such a cavalier fashion. Descartes said, "I think; therefore I am." Jesus said, "I am the way, and the truth, and the life. No one comes to the Father except through me" (Jn 14:6). At the Last Supper, Jesus said, "This is my Body which will be given for you; do this in remembrance of me." He then took the chalice of wine and said, "This cup is the new covenant in my blood" (Lk 22:19-20). And in a previous teaching, Jesus said, "I am the bread of life; whoever comes to me will never hunger, and whoever believes in me will never thirst" (Jn 6:35). "Amen, amen, I say to you, unless you eat the flesh of the Son of Man and drink his blood, you have not life within you. Whoever eats my flesh and drinks my blood has eternal life, and I will raise him on the last day" (Jn 6:53-54). What happens if we decide that Jesus is not really present in the Eucharist and take it anyway? St. Paul warns us, "Therefore

See KNICKERBOCKERS, PAGE 13

Kateri Tekakwitha still an inspiration over 300 years later

Tekakwitha was a Mohawk maiden who lived a pretty unremarkable life in the mid-17th century with her tribe, the Turtle Clan, in what is now Auriesville, New York. The Mohawks were the fiercest of the “Five Nations” of Iroquois.

The Iroquois were known for their invasion tactics and savage fighting with other Native American tribes. It was during one of these invasions that Tekakwitha’s mother, Kahenta, was taken captive. She was an Algonquin who had been converted by the Black Robes, the Jesuit missionaries who worked among the Indians.

Kahenta married a Mohawk chief and Tekakwitha was born in 1656 in the village of Gandaouaque. When she was four, a smallpox epidemic swept through her village killing many, including her parents and baby brother. The disease left her badly disfigured and partially blind. She went to live with an uncle and was raised as a high-ranking Mohawk maiden by the older women of the tribe.

In 1667 Tekakwitha met Jesuit missionaries who visited the home of her uncle. Father Clifford Stevens writes in *The One Year Book of Saints* that Tekakwitha was very shy by nature, and she did not receive any Christian instruction for a long time. She finally approached Father Jacques de Lamberville, who instructed her in the Christian faith and baptized her on Easter Sunday 1676 with the name of Kateri, the Mohawk form of Catherine.

Her relatives had been pressuring her to marry, the



Mary Lou Gibson

Speaking of Saints

only viable option for a girl of her tribe. She defied convention by converting. She was scorned, ridiculed, and ostracized by her family. Father Lamberville advised her to go to the Christian village of Sault Ste. Marie near Montreal where she could live her Christian faith without hindrance. She received her First Communion there in 1677.

John J. Delaney writes in the *Dictionary of Saints* that it was here she began a life of great holiness and austerity, taking a vow of chastity in 1679, something most unusual for an American Indian woman. She dedicated herself to Christ and was noted for her devotion to prayer and to works of charity, caring for the sick and the aged. She had a deep devotion to the Blessed Sacrament and, although she could not read or write, she spent hours at the altar talking to her God.

As the years went by, her health worsened, and she

suffered great pain in her last two months of life. When she died in 1680, she had become an inspiration to the American Indian community and was revered as a saint.

Matthew Bunson writes in *John Paul II’s Book of Saints* that when Kateri laid in state, her face glowed and all the blemishes disappeared. Two Jesuits and a score of Native Americans who were in the room saw this transformation.

Kateri Tekakwitha is known as the “Lily of the Mohawks” (the lily being the symbol of purity).

In 1980, she was declared blessed by Pope John Paul II before hundreds of Native Americans in Rome.

Tekakwitha’s clan believed in an old Mohawk prophecy: “one day, our children will speak to the world.” In 1997, part of that prophecy came true with a musical composition honoring Blessed Kateri Tekakwitha that was performed at St. Mary’s Parish in Oneonta, New York.

Kateri Tekakwitha was canonized a saint on Oct. 21, 2012, by Pope Benedict XVI, the first North American Indian canonized. Her feast day is July 14. Devotion to Kateri has been responsible for establishing Native American ministries in Catholic churches throughout the United States and Canada. She is the patron of Native Americans, refugees, and the environment.

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

“Lincoln’s” house divided

In June of 1858, three years before the start of the Civil War, Abraham Lincoln was chosen to be his political party’s nominee for the United States Senate. In accepting the nomination, Lincoln gave a speech and one segment of that speech is both long remembered and prophetic. In addressing the issue of slavery, Lincoln declared, “A house divided against itself cannot stand. I believe this government cannot endure, permanently half slave and half free. I do not expect the Union to be dissolved — I do not expect the house to fall — but I do expect it will cease to be divided. It will become all one thing, or all the other.” So powerful was his oration that the speech is referred to by historians as the “House Divided Speech” and the phrase is automatically associated with Lincoln in the minds of many. It took a four-year civil war in which more Americans died than in all of the major wars combined for our country’s states to once again become “United.”

Today we celebrate the end of another “war” ... one that was ongoing for not four, but 49 years. And the 620,000 lives that were lost in the American Civil War pale in comparison to the more than 63 million lives that have been lost through abortions. Supreme Court Justice Samuel Alito wrote that the *Roe vs Wade* decision in 1973 was “egregiously wrong from the start” and although that wrong has finally been corrected, it by no means marks the end of abortion in our country.

Roughly half of the states in our nation will continue to allow the killing of babies in their mothers’ wombs to continue. It is in those states that a majority of abortions have already been taking place, which means most abortions in our country will continue, especially when women will now travel to them be-



James R. Sulliman, PhD

cause killing their baby is prohibited in the state in which they live. And it truly is “killing a baby.”

“Abortion” is a much easier term for “pro-choicers” to use, but it does not convey the essential gravity of the procedure. Planned Parenthood itself acknowledged that reality when they declared in one of their informational pamphlets that “an abortion kills the life of a baby after it has begun.” What if we used THOSE words instead of “abortion” to make it clear what we are talking about? Instead of saying that some states have laws that allow abortions, what if we said some states have laws that allow mothers to kill their babies? Instead of saying “I support a woman’s RIGHT to have an abortion,” would as many people say “I support a woman’s RIGHT to kill her baby?” Instead of saying an abortion should be safe and rare, what if we said “killing babies should be safe and rare.” Would as many people support “killing a baby?” How ludicrous would it sound if instead of declaring “abortion is healthcare”, we said “killing a baby is healthcare?”

For decades, pro-lifers have knelt, prayed, marched, sacrificed, and died in their effort to stop the evil of killing babies. The day has finally come when

legally killing a baby in Texas and many other states will finally end! There is great reason to celebrate, and still, we have great reason to be sad.

Babies in our country will continue being killed. California, New York, and Florida account for well over one-third of all baby killings, and killing babies in those states and others will not stop. More and more our nation might be more aptly referred to as the “Divided States of America,” and division is precisely what Satan wants. The originator of death hates any life that God has created.

And so, the “good ship USA” sails on with hopefulness for a future where killing babies for any reason has ended. Unlike Lincoln who believed there would be eventual unity, with all states embracing either slavery or freedom, it does not appear likely when it comes to killing babies. If only half a ship takes on water, it still sinks. And Lincoln’s quote? It turns out that the great man was actually quoting the greatest man. Matthew 12:25 tells us what Jesus said, and the warning that applies to our country:

“But he knew what they were thinking and said to them, ‘Every kingdom divided against itself will be laid waste, and no town or house divided against itself will stand.’”

A more recent warning was given to us by Pope John Paul II when he stated, “a nation that kills its children has no future.”

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.

KNICKERBOCKERS

Continued from Page 12

whoever eats the bread or drinks the cup of the Lord unworthily will have to answer for the body and blood of the Lord” (1 Cor 11:27).

In her discernment of the development of doctrine, what does the Catholic Church teach that will help us understand the reality of the presence of Jesus in the Eucharist? In the Catechism of the Catholic Church, the Church teaches that “The Eucharist is ‘the source and summit of the Christian life.’ ... For in the blessed Eucharist is contained the whole spiritual good of the Church, namely Christ himself” (no. 1324). It is the Eucharist that guides our thinking. Quoting St. Irenaeus (c. 130-202), the Catechism says, “Our way of thinking is attuned to the Eucharist, and the Eucharist in turn confirms our way of thinking” (no. 1327). In other words, it is the objectively real presence of Christ in the Eucharist that guides the way we think, not our own desires.

Moreover, in discerning “how” Christ can be present in the Eucharist, the church teaches the doctrine of transubstantiation. This doctrine was developed in the Middle Ages when people in the west still understood that our minds are meant to discover the truth in objective reality. They understood that all things in the objective world outside our own minds are composed of an outer nature (called “accidents”) and an inner nature (called “substance”). Our minds can perceive both the outer and inner natures. In the celebration of the Eucharist, at the consecration of the bread and wine the outer nature of the bread and wine remain the same, but the inner nature is “transubstantiated” and becomes the

Body, Blood, Soul, and Divinity of Jesus Christ. In the sixteenth century the Council of Trent confirmed the truth of this teaching (CCC no. 1376).

However, there is something else that can help us understand the objectively real presence of Christ in the Eucharist. In St. Paul’s Letter to the Philippians the Apostle encourages the Christians in Philippi to “humbly regard others as more important than yourselves.” He then quotes what is probably one of the earliest Christian hymns that speaks of how it is that the infinite, eternally existent Son of God, the Second Person of the Holy Trinity, could become a human being with a human body and soul united to his divine substance in the Incarnation. The Apostle writes: “Have this mind among yourselves, which was in Christ Jesus, who, though he was in the form of God, did not count equality with God a thing to be grasped, but emptied himself, taking the form of a servant, being born in the likeness of men. And being found in human form he humbled himself and became obedient unto death, even death on a cross. Therefore God has highly exalted him and bestowed on him the name which is above every name, that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, in heaven and on earth and under the earth, and every tongue confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father” (Phil 2:5-11, RSVCE). In other words, it is by his perfect humility — his perfect self-forgetfulness for love of us — that he became a human being.

What does this tell us about the presence of the Body, Blood, Soul, and Divinity of Christ in the Eucharist? The same Son of God who is capable of perfect self-forgetfulness for love of us in the Incarnation and his atoning death said at the Last Supper of the bread and wine, “this is my Body, this is my Blood.” At every Mass the perfect humility

of Jesus allows him to enter the bread and wine which become his Body and Blood. This is the presence of Jesus himself in the Eucharist that guides all our thinking, not our own desires.

In our popular version of Cartesian philosophy, it is our pride that makes us think that we can make whatever we desire to be reality. If we want to know that the Body, Blood, Soul, and Divinity of Jesus Christ are really present in the Eucharist, we must ask him to give us his own humility. When we do that, our lives will be transformed just as the bread and wine are transubstantiated in the Mass. This gives us a completely new outlook on life. It allows us to glimpse the glory of Jesus Christ — his love, truth, and beauty — in every person, because every person is made in the image of God and has the freedom to surrender to the perfect humility of Christ and be a bearer of his glory, as St. Paul says, to be “transformed into the same image from glory to glory, as from the Lord who is the Spirit” (2 Cor 3:18).

In our American history there was a great outpouring of the Holy Spirit in the 18th century in what historians call the First Great Awakening. In the early 19th century there was a Second Great Awakening. These were Protestant evangelical movements. Now is the time in America for a Third Great Awakening, one led by the Catholic Church, one that will transform American culture, as the church proclaims the real presence of Jesus Christ — his Body, Blood, Soul, and Divinity — in the Holy Eucharist.

Father Knick Knickerbocker is a retired priest of the Diocese of San Angelo, married to Sandie Knickerbocker. Father Knick was ordained under the Pastoral Provision which allows for the reception of married former Episcopalian priests into the Catholic Church.

Catholic Voices

René Girard and the social media swamp

I had the good fortune last week of conducting a conversation with Luke Burgis, the author of a splendid book called *Wanting: The Power of Mimetic Desire in Everyday Life*. The text is a practical and common-sense application of the theorizing of René Girard, one of the most seminal and creative thinkers of the last century. Girard's fundamental insight — and it's reflected in the subtitle of Burgis' book — is that human desire is not straightforward but mimetic or imitative. This means that we rarely want something simply because we recognize it as good; rather, we want it because someone else wants it. There is, accordingly, a triangular quality to most forms of wanting, our desire for the object moving, as it were, through the desire of another person.

Though this can sound abstract, it's actually on display everywhere. Just watch a young child peacefully at play next to a pile of toys. He remains utterly indifferent to a particular ball — until another child comes along and picks it up. Suddenly, he is mesmerized and wants that ball so intensely that a conflict breaks out. Or think of those rather clunky, red basketball sneakers that everyone had to have in the 1990s. We wanted them so passionately, not because they had such compelling intrinsic qualities, but because Michael Jordan wanted them. In point of fact, all of advertising is based on the Girardian dynamic of mediated desire.

Now, precisely because our desiring has this imitative quality, it leads, almost inevitably, to what Girard calls "mimetic rivalry." Since I want what you want and since there is only so much of what we both want, we start fighting with each other. If we extrapolate from two individuals to a bigger group, we can see that a simple mimetic rivalry can become a mimetic crisis, a frenzy of conflictual desire among all the members of a community, a society, a church. So committed are the combatants to the rivalry that they become, in Girard's language, "monstrous doubles" of one another, more and more alike in their fury and obsession.

At this point, we must speak of perhaps the most famous insight of René Girard — namely, the scapegoating mechanism. Since the war of all against all, prompted by the mimetic crisis, is intolerable, we, by an instinct more

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unconscious than conscious, tend to identify a scapegoat whom we can blame for our troubles. We convince ourselves that, if we but drive him out or eliminate him, we can relieve the tension in our community. Examples of this dynamic positively abound in literature and in history. Read Shirley Jackson's haunting short story "The Lottery," or Herman Melville's tale *Billy Budd*, or William Golding's *The Lord of the Flies*, or watch any of the Hunger Games films, or for that matter, revisit the story of the woman caught in adultery from the Gospel of John, and you will see both mimetic desire and the scapegoating mechanism on full display. Moreover, even the most casual survey of history shows the prominence of the scapegoat: Hitler's targeting of Jews, the lynching of African Americans in our country, race prejudice of all kinds, the Salem witch trials, etc., etc.

Girard speculates that the violent marginalizing or outright destruction of the scapegoat does indeed produce a brief peace, a respite from the violence. But it is necessarily evanescent and unstable and hence gives rise in short order to more mimesis, more rivalry, and more violence. One of Girard's most powerful insights is that biblical religion — alone among the religions and philosophies of the world — effectively unmasks the scapegoating dynamic and demonstrates that God stands on the side of victims and not victimizers. It hence shows a way out of the awful rhythms of imitation, competition, and blaming.

There are wonderful and numerous resources if you want to get more deeply into the Girardian theory, but I rehearse it briefly now because of its massive applicability to the world that so many of us live in so constantly. The so-

cial media space is practically a Girardian laboratory, or better, a Petri dish. Because we are constantly on display to one another — through our pictures, our postings, our comments, our liking and unliking — the imitative factor is intensified and mimetic crises can, as we say, "go viral" almost instantly. Animosity and resentments that used to take months or years to build up can now develop in minutes. And the very ferocity of these rivalries produces the particularly virulent form of scapegoating with which we are all too familiar. Let's face it: the social media space is practically a breeding ground for scapegoats, victims of the mob, objects of cancellation. And as Girard would have appreciated, the identification and elimination of the scapegoat brings a brief and unstable peace to the social media world, but it soon gives way to more violence and other scapegoats have to be found.

Is there a way out of this mess? In his book, Burgis recounts a few stories of people who, caught up in a mimetic frenzy and realizing how they were being affected so negatively, simply opted out. They stepped away from the imitation and the competition; they took their ball and went home. Arthur Brooks, keenly aware of how destructive social media can be, has said that a tremendous sense of liberation comes when we just put away our devices, get off of Facebook, YouTube, and Instagram, and live more normal lives. In other words, just say no to the toxic world of the internet. Now, a complete abstinence might be impossible to achieve, but I might suggest an intermittent fasting from social media. The other — and more permanent — way out is to cultivate the virtue of love. Love, which is willing the good of the other, is an antidote to mimetic rivalry and the scapegoating mechanism. Instead of competing with another, desiring what he wants, you should desire what is objectively good for him. You will find that this dissolves conflict and hence obviates the need for scapegoats. When you find yourself, therefore, caught in Girardian dynamics, especially on social media, engage in the simplest act of love.

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

Suicide and our misunderstandings

Margaret Atwood once wrote that sometimes a thing needs to be said, and said, said again, until it doesn't need to be said anymore. That's why I write a column annually on suicide, mostly saying the same things over and over again. The hope is that, like a note put into a bottle and floated out to sea, my little message might find someone needing consolation after losing a loved one to suicide.

What needs to be said, and said again, about suicide? Four things.

First, that it's a disease and perhaps the most misunderstood of all diseases. We tend to think that if a death is self-inflicted, it is voluntary in a way that death through physical illness or accident is not. For most suicides, this isn't true. A person who dies by suicide dies, as does the victim of a terminal illness or fatal accident, not by his or her own choice. When people die from heart attacks, strokes, cancer, AIDS, and accidents, they die against their will. The same is true for suicide, except that in the case of suicide the breakdown is emotional rather than physical — an emotional stroke, an emotional cancer, a breakdown of the emotional immune system, an emotional fatality.

This is not an analogy. There are different kinds of heart attacks, strokes, cancers, breakdowns of the immune system, and fatal accidents. However, they all have the same effect; they all take someone out of this life against his or her own will. No one who dies through suicide actually wants to die. He or she only wants to end a pain that can no longer be endured, akin to someone jumping to his death out of a burning building because his clothes are on fire.

Second, we should not worry unduly about the eternal salvation of a suicide victim, believing (as we used to) that suicide is the ultimate act of

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despair and something God will not forgive. God is infinitely more understanding than we are and God's hands are infinitely safer and gentler than our own. Imagine a loving mother having just given birth, welcoming her child onto her breast for the first time. That, I believe, is the best image we have to picture how a suicide victim (most often an overly sensitive soul) is received into the next life. God is infinitely understanding, loving, and gentle. We need not worry about the fate of anyone, no matter the cause of death, who exits this world honest, oversensitive, gentle, over-wrought, and emotionally crushed. God has a special love for the broken and the crushed.

Knowing all of this however, doesn't necessarily take away our pain (and anger) at losing someone to suicide; but faith and understanding aren't meant to take our pain away but rather to give us hope, vision, and support as we walk within our pain.

Third, we should not torture ourselves with second-guessing when we lose a loved one to suicide: "What might I have done? Where did I let this person down? If only I had been there? What if ...?" It can be natural to be haunted with the thought, "if only I'd been there at the right time." Rarely would this have made a difference. Indeed, most of the time, we weren't there for the exact reason that the person who fell victim to this disease did

not want us to be there. He or she picked the moment, the spot, and the means precisely so that we wouldn't be there. Perhaps it's more accurate to say that suicide is a disease that picks its victim precisely in such a way so as to exclude others and their attentiveness. This is not an excuse for insensitivity, especially towards those suffering from dangerous depression, but it should be a healthy check against false guilt and fruitless second-guessing.

We're human beings, not God. People die of illness and accidents all the time and sometimes all the love and attentiveness in the world cannot prevent a loved one from dying. Love, for all its power, is sometimes powerless before a terminal illness.

Fourth, when we lose a loved one to suicide, one of our tasks is to work at redeeming that person's memory, namely, to put that person's life into a perspective wherein his or her memory is not forever tainted because it is viewed through the prism of suicide.

A proper human and faith response to suicide should not be horror, fear for the victim's eternal salvation, guilty second-guessing about how we failed this person, and a hushed, guarded tone forever afterwards when we speak of him or her. Suicide is indeed a horrible way to die, but we must understand it (at least in most cases) as a sickness, a disease, an illness, a tragic breakdown within the emotional immune system. Most of all, we must trust God, God's goodness, God's understanding, God's power to descend into hell, and God's power to make all things right, even death by suicide.

Oblate Father Ron Rolheiser is a theologian, teacher, and award-winning author. He can be contacted through his website: www.ronrolheiser.com. Now on Facebook: www.facebook.com/ronrolheiser

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"God cannot inspire unrealizable desires. I can then, in spite of my littleness, aspire to holiness."
St Theresa of Lisieux

Voces Catolicas

El suicidio y nuestros malentendidos

Margaret Atwood escribió una vez que en ocasiones una cosa necesita ser dicha, y dicha, y dicha de nuevo, hasta que ya no se necesite decirla más. Por eso escribo anualmente una columna sobre el suicidio, generalmente diciendo las mismas cosas una y otra vez. La esperanza es que, como una nota incluida en una botella y puesta a flote en el mar, mi pequeño mensaje podría encontrar a alguien que necesitase consuelo después de perder a un ser querido por suicidio.

¿Qué hay que decir, y decir de nuevo, sobre el suicidio? Cuatro cosas.

Primera, que es una enfermedad y tal vez la más incomprendida de todas ellas. Tendemos a pensar que, si una muerte es autoinfligida, resulta voluntaria de un modo que la muerte por enfermedad física o accidente no lo es. Para la mayoría de los suicidios, esto no es verdad. Una persona que muere por suicidio, muere como lo hace la víctima de una enfermedad terminal o un fatal accidente, no por su propia elección. Cuando la gente muere por ataques cardíacos, ataques cerebrales, cáncer, AIDS y accidentes, muere contra su voluntad. Lo mismo es verdad para el suicidio, excepto que, en el caso del suicidio, el golpe es emocional más bien que físico: un ataque emocional, un cáncer emocional, un derrumbe del sistema inmunitario emocional, una fatalidad emocional.

Esto no es una analogía. Hay diferentes clases de ataques cardíacos, ataques cerebrales, cánceres, derrumbes del sistema inmunitario y accidentes fatales. Sin embargo, todos ellos tienen el mismo efecto; todos ellos quitan la vida contra su propia voluntad. Quien muere por suicidio no necesariamente quiere morir. Sólo quiere poner fin a un dolor que ya no se puede soportar, semejante a alguien que salta a su muerte de entre un edificio en llamas porque sus ropas están ardiendo.

Segunda, no deberíamos preocuparnos indebidamente acerca de la salvación eterna de una víctima del suicidio,



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creyendo (como solíamos hacer) que el suicidio es el último acto de desesperación y algo que Dios no perdonará. Dios es infinitamente más comprensivo que nosotros, y las manos de Dios son infinitamente más seguras y más benignas que las nuestras. Imaginaos una amorosa madre que acaba de dar a luz, acogiendo a su hijo en su pecho por primera vez. Esa -creo yo- es la mejor imagen con que tenemos que describir cómo una víctima del suicidio (casi siempre, un alma excesivamente sensible) es recibida en la nueva vida. Dios es infinitamente comprensivo, cariñoso y amable. No debemos preocuparnos por el destino de nadie -cualquiera que sea la causa de la muerte- que abandona este mundo siendo honrado, hipersensible, gentil, forjado y emocionalmente aplastado. Dios tiene un amor especial por los abatidos y aplastados.

Con todo, conocer todo esto no quita necesariamente nuestro dolor (y enojo) al perder a alguien por suicidio; pero la fe y comprensión no suponen eliminar nuestro dolor sino más bien darnos esperanza, visión y apoyo mientras caminamos en nuestro dolor.

Tercera, no deberíamos torturarnos con la duda cuando perdemos a un ser querido por suicidio: "¿Qué podría haber hecho? ¿Dónde dejé plantada a esta persona? ¿Si únicamente hubiera estado allí? ¿Qué si..." Puede ser natural estar obsesionado con el pensamiento, "si únicamente

hubiera estado allí en el momento preciso". Difícilmente esto habría cambiado las cosas. Ciertamente, la mayoría de las veces no estábamos allí por la sencilla razón de que la persona que cayó víctima de esta enfermedad no quería que estuviéramos en su presencia. Ella escogió el momento, el lugar y los medios exactamente para que no estuviéramos allí. Tal vez sea más correcto decir que el suicidio es una enfermedad que elige a su víctima precisamente de modo que se excluya a otros y su atención. Esto no es una excusa para la insensibilidad, especialmente hacia aquellos que sufren de depresión peligrosa, pero debería ser un saludable freno contra la falsa culpa y la duda infructuosa.

Somos seres humanos, no Dios. La gente muere de enfermedad y accidentes todo el tiempo, y a veces todo el amor y atención del mundo no pueden impedir la muerte de un ser querido. El amor, a pesar de todo su poder, es a veces impotente ante una enfermedad terminal.

Cuarta, cuando perdemos a un ser querido por suicidio, una de nuestras tareas es trabajar por redimir la memoria de esa persona, a saber, poner la vida de esa persona en una perspectiva en que su memoria no quede manchada para siempre porque sea vista a través del prisma del suicidio.

Una respuesta humana idónea y de fe al suicidio no debería ser el horror, el temor por la salvación eterna de la víctima, la duda culpable sobre cómo abandonamos a esta persona y un tono acallado y guardado para siempre después, cuando hablamos de ella. El suicidio es ciertamente una manera horrible de morir, pero debemos entenderlo (al menos en la mayoría de los casos) como una debilidad, un mal, una enfermedad, un derrumbe en el sistema inmunitario emocional. Lo principal: debemos confiar en Dios, la bondad de Dios, la comprensión de Dios, el poder de Dios para descender a los infiernos y el poder de Dios para enmendar todas las cosas, incluso la muerte por suicidio.

Miren al futuro, no al pasado, dice el papa a familias

Por Junno Arocho Esteves
Catholic News Service

CIUDAD DEL VATICANO (CNS) — Las familias cristianas están llamadas a emprender un camino de amor y servicio que las lleve a la alegría y la esperanza en el futuro, expresó el papa Francisco.

En el matrimonio y la vida familiar, quienes siguen el llamado de Jesús verán que "él siempre nos precede en el amor y el servicio. Y quienes lo siguen no serán defraudados", manifestó el papa el 25 de junio en su homilía en una misa con miles de peregrinos quienes participaban en el Encuentro Mundial de las Familias.

"Queridas familias, también a ustedes se les ha pedido que no tengan otras prioridades, que no 'miren atrás', que no añoren su vida anterior, su libertad de antes, con sus engañosas ilusiones. La vida se 'fosiliza' cuando no está abierta a la novedad del llamado de Dios y suspira por el pasado", acotó.

El Santo Padre participó en la misa al aire libre en la Plaza de San Pedro, pero no pudo presidir la liturgia por problemas en la rodilla. En cambio, fue el cardenal estadounidense Kevin J. Farrell, prefecto del Dicasterio para los Laicos, la Familia, y la Vida, quien presidió.

Antes de concluir la misa, el cardenal Farrell anunció que se celebrará en Roma un "Jubileo de las Familias" durante el Año Santo 2025. El cardenal dijo que el próximo Encuentro Mundial de las Familias tendrá lugar en 2028.

"A partir de este momento, oremos para que estos sean grandes eventos de gracia que toquen los corazones de miles de familias", dijo el cardenal Farrell.

Con altas temperaturas en Roma durante toda la semana, el Vaticano había trasladado la misa a la noche para "acomodar la participación de los fieles".

El papa Francisco llegó a la Plaza de San Pedro y, con varios niños a bordo de su papamóvil, condujo para saludar a las

familias y los peregrinos. También se detuvo varias veces en el camino para besar a los bebés que le traían.

En su homilía, el Sumo Pontífice reflexionó sobre la segunda lectura del día de la Carta de San Pablo a los Gálatas, en la que el apóstol instó a los cristianos no usar su libertad "como una oportunidad para la carne, sino para servirse unos a otros por amor".

Si bien la libertad sigue siendo "uno de los ideales y objetivos más preciados de la gente de nuestro tiempo", sostuvo el papa, muchos "carecen de la mayor libertad de todas, que es la libertad interior".

En el contexto de la familia, dijo, los cristianos no están llamados a ser "planetas" o "satélites", cada uno viajando en su propia órbita, sino que están llamados a ser un "lugar de encuentro, de compartir, de salir de nosotros mismos para acoger a los demás y estar junto a ellos".

"La familia es el primer lugar donde aprendemos a amar", dijo el papa. "No permitamos que la familia se envenene con las toxinas del egoísmo, el individualismo, la cultura actual de la indiferencia y el derroche, y como resultado pierda su propio ADN, que es el espíritu de aceptación y servicio".

Recordando la primera lectura del día del Primer Libro de los Reyes — en la que el profeta Elías unge a su sucesor, Eliseo — el papa Francisco dijo que la relación entre los profetas era una "relación entre generaciones" que refleja "la transmisión del testimonio" de los padres a los hijos".

Elías, explicó, se encontraba en "un momento de crisis y miedo por el futuro", al igual que muchos padres que "temen que sus hijos no puedan encontrar su camino en medio de la complejidad y la confusión de nuestras sociedades".

Sin embargo, en ese momento, "Dios hace que Elías se dé cuenta de que el mundo no se acaba con él y le ordena pasar su misión a otro", señaló.

"Queridos padres, si ayudan a sus



CNS PHOTO | VATICAN MEDIA

El papa Francisco saluda a un bebé antes de asistir a misa en la Plaza de San Pedro durante el Encuentro Mundial de Familias en el Vaticano el 25 de junio de 2022. El cardenal estadounidense Kevin J. Farrell, prefecto del Dicasterio para los Laicos, la Familia, y la Vida, presidió la misa.

hijos a descubrir y aceptar su vocación, verán que también ellos serán 'atrapados' en esta misión; y encontrarán la fuerza necesaria para afrontar y superar las dificultades de la vida", dijo el papa.

La lectura del Evangelio del día de San Lucas, en la que Jesús fue rechazado por el pueblo de Samaria en su camino hacia su muerte en Jerusalén, dijo el papa, es una lección poderosa para las familias, especialmente las parejas casadas que están llamadas a experimentar "el matrimonio y la vida familiar como misión".

"Lo que Jesús encontró en Samaria tiene lugar en toda vocación cristiana, incluyendo la de la familia", indicó el papa. "Hay momentos en los que tenemos que asumir la resistencia, la oposición, el rechazo, y la incompreensión que nacen del corazón humano y, con la gracia de Cristo, transformarlos en aceptación de los demás y amor gratuito".

Partiendo de sus comentarios prepa-

rados, el Santo Padre dijo que se necesita valentía para tener una familia y lamentó que "vemos muchos jóvenes que no tienen la valentía de casarse".

"Muchas veces una madre me dice: 'Por favor, haz algo. Habla con mi hijo porque no se quiere casar con nadie. ¡Tiene 37 años!'"

"'Pero señora'", dice que le responde, "'deje de plancharle las camisas. Empiece a enviarlo afuera para que se vaya del nido'".

El papa Francisco instó a las familias recordar su importancia para la sociedad y para la iglesia, porque "la iglesia nació de una familia, la Sagrada Familia de Nazaret, y está compuesta mayoritariamente por familias", expresó el papa.

"Que el Señor les ayude cada día a perseverar en la unidad, la paz, y la alegría, y a mostrar a todos los que encuentran que Dios es amor y comunión de vida", dijo.

Catholic Voices

Aging and a season of fruitfulness

By Sr Constance Veit, Isp

With the Supreme Court's overturning of *Roe v. Wade*, June 24 will no doubt be remembered as an historic day by pro-life advocates the world over. I have to admit that my thoughts were elsewhere that day — focused on life's last stage — as my family bid farewell to a beloved uncle, our family patriarch.

As I tried to catch up on the news the day after his funeral, a column written by Kathryn Jean Lopez of the National Review Institute, a good friend, caught my eye.

Opining on what she believes to be abortion's most detrimental effects on our society, Lopez wrote, "We are violent; we do not look at human beings as unique creations made with purpose and plan."

These sad words stood in stark contrast to my uncle's farewell celebration the day before. My uncle lived every stage of his life to the full for nearly 92 years. Though no one would have proposed him as a role model of healthy aging in terms of diet and exercise, his life was rich in relationships, purpose and faith until the very end.

An orthodontist for over 40 years, my uncle was remembered by former patients and their parents as kind, patient and genuinely interested in the young people he served. He was involved in numerous professional organizations, local causes and educational institutions, volunteered as a eucharistic minister at a local hospital well into his eighties and attended daily Mass until COVID-19 closed his parish doors in 2020.

Despite all of his accomplishments, what struck me most about my uncle was his generous spirit, upbeat demeanor and unselfish love for his family and friends. Nothing gave him greater pleasure than being surrounded by his children and grandchildren, yet his interest in others reached well beyond his family.

He was known to quietly assist people who could not afford dental care to obtain it from his friends, and he enjoyed mentoring young people in the pursuit of their dreams.

Although he never mastered the use of a computer my uncle maintained ties with everyone he loved via telephone, especially during the pandemic.

He was also an avid reader and consumer of local and national news and tried his best to keep his wife grounded in reality despite her advancing dementia.

In his message for this year's celebration of the World Day of Grandparents and the Elderly, Pope Francis wrote that the ebbing of one's strength and the onset of illness in old age, together with the fast pace of the world, can lead seniors to implicitly accept the idea that they are useless. My uncle never succumbed to this temptation.

Pope Francis encourages seniors to remain active in their later years, especially on a spiritual standpoint. "We ought to cultivate our interior life through the assiduous reading of the word of God, daily prayer, reception of the sacraments and participation in the liturgy," he wrote.

"In addition to our relationship with God, we should also cultivate our relationships with others: first of all by showing affectionate concern for our families, our children and grandchildren, but also for the poor and those who suffer, by drawing near to them with practical assistance and our prayers. These things will help us not to feel like mere bystanders, sitting on our porches or looking out from our windows, as life goes on all around us. Instead, we should learn to discern everywhere the presence of the Lord. Like "green olive trees in the house of God" (cf. Ps 52:10), we can become a blessing for those who live next to us."

Pope Francis has called old age "a season of enduring fruitfulness."

He wrote, "The special sensibility that those of us who are elderly have for the concerns, thoughts and the affections that make us human should once again become the vocation of many. It would be a sign of our love for the younger generations. This would be our own contribution to the revolution of tenderness, in which I encourage you, dear grandparents and elderly persons, to take an active role."

My uncle never stopped bearing fruit; he was a blessing to all those who knew him.

As I thank God for his life and love, I look forward with joy to the World Day of Grandparents and the Elderly on July 24.

I hope you too will celebrate this special day by opening your eyes and hearts to the seniors in your midst who are still bearing fruit for the kingdom and who are eager to become a blessing for you.

Sister Constance Veit is the communications director for the Little Sisters of the Poor in the United States and an occupational therapist.

What's cooking? Ingredients for life

Congratulations, graduates, you're on your way! Whether leaving high school, college, graduate or trade school — you have worked hard and achieved much! Parents, friends, family, God and even strangers are smiling (and, perhaps, sighing with relief). And on many onlookers' minds is, undoubtedly, a question: Now what?

Perhaps you have a well-planned answer to the question, now. Or, perhaps, you're still a bit unsure.

Either way, I'd like to suggest something that can be of great help however and wherever God leads you next: Learn to cook.

Practically speaking, the ability to prepare good food is important for our health, finances and families now and to come. Self-prepared, fresh foods carry a powerful nutritional punch, and being able to share what we make is one of the blessings of the earth's abundance and our care.

There's also a wonderful feeling of satisfaction when we are able to enjoy the fruits of our labors. And making our own food eliminates costs such as delivery fees — important considerations today!

But beyond the tangible benefits, there's another way to consider the art and science of learning to cook (and cook well). Cooking is a splendid metaphor for how we live.

The "ingredients" we invite into our lives, the way we balance all of them and bring them to our work, relationships and faith life, is a kind of culinary practice. Food for the journey, nourishment for our souls, what's cooking throughout our days helps us understand and nurture the fullness of our journey, ultimately, to God.



Maureen Pratt
Catholic News Service

Living Well

"Ingredients" might be the people we befriend, the relationships we nurture, the things that occupy our time, including prayer and other faith practices, exercise and time spent listening to others. They are also the experiences we allow into our days through travel, exploration and play, and those challenges that occur, whether personal or professional, that certainly have an impact.

Assembling all the ingredients and understanding their importance to living well, a good and faithful life, is part of the "cooking" process. The care in preparation includes how we spend our time, the attention we give to good and uplifting or self-giving acts, for example, of charity.

All along the way, our fine-tuning with the assistance of prayer and the guidance of the Holy Spirit, helps us balance the ingredients, mindful of the need to not be overwhelmed by one and neglect another. A life "to taste" is one that supports our physical,

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How we live our lives on and offline

A few months back I had the opportunity to speak with a theologian who is doing some serious thinking about the ethics of technology and its broader effects on our understanding of ourselves and our neighbors.

Luis Vera, associate professor of theology at Mount St. Mary's University in Emmitsburg, Maryland, writes and lectures on subjects including artificial intelligence and augmented reality. His research is focused on how the tools shape us, but also about how the Catholic tradition can orient our response to those pressures.

His observations were so thought-provoking, I wound up cutting my social media use cold turkey to evaluate my relationship to it.

Don't get me wrong. Vera did not say that these platforms were by their nature morally evil or that Catholics should flee from the "digital highways" that retired Pope Benedict XVI and Pope Francis have said that we should evangelize.

Rather, he said something that pricked my conscience: "If more and more of our life is mediated by these social media platforms, the way we present ourselves before others has to play by their rules."

As he spoke, I did a superficial examination of conscience and concluded that I had a pretty good handle on things. But then he added one more thought.

"The real question is, Can you hack these platforms so



Elise Italiano Ureneck
Catholic News Service

Finding God in All Things

that they do not affect the rest of your life? Can you use them in way that breaks the deeper rules of behavior that the platform presents to you?"

It was not so much what I was doing online as offline that stopped me in my tracks. The evidence presented itself fairly quickly against my initial assessment.

Perhaps the most glaring behavioral change I noticed was how often I pulled out my phone to photograph someone or something. Whether or not I was going to share a photo online, I was reflexively taking photos of scenery, meals and most worrisome — my children.

That habit flew in the face of advice I had received

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Roe and the legacy of abortion

On Friday, June 24, the Supreme Court overturned *Roe v. Wade* (1973) and *Planned Parenthood v. Casey* (1992) and, by implication, a long line of abortion decisions relying on them.

This ends a regime of almost half a century, during which the court invalidated even modest efforts to regulate or restrain abortion — laws on informed consent, parental rights in the case of an unemancipated minor, health protections for women and so on.

Widely supported laws against late-term abortions, and even against mistreating a child born alive during an attempted abortion, were attacked. Justice Sandra Day O'Connor, no pro-life activist, complained in 1986 that "no legal rule or doctrine is safe from ad hoc nullification by this court" when the case involves abortion.

The right to abortion, found nowhere in the Constitution or in the country's legal history and traditions before *Roe*, was defended more zealously than some rights that are explicit in our founding document. Partly because it was fabricated from the policy preferences of the judges themselves, it had no internal controls against unprincipled expansion.

Five justices have said this must stop. They do not respond, however, by reading a pro-life policy into the Constitution. In his concurring opinion, Justice Brett Kavanaugh says forthrightly that "the Constitution is neutral on the issue of abortion and allows the people and their elected representatives to address the issue through the democratic process." In the short run, that will mean a patchwork of different state laws.

The court's action nonetheless evoked outrage and



Richard Doerflinger
Catholic News Service

A More Human Society

sometimes vandalism among those who hail the court's past abortion decisions as landmarks in defense of women's rights. They will not want to hear, at least not yet, that a vulnerable woman's "right" to help take the life of her defenseless child is not something to celebrate, that the dignity and rights of women can and must rely on a far more positive foundation.

The challenge for pro-life Americans, especially Catholics, will be not only to protect the unborn child, but to show women frightened by the court's decision that we will stand up for their interests and their equal status in society. Feminists for Life, a group that takes this challenge to heart, may have said it best: "Abortion is a reflection that we have not met the needs of women."

In any case, women make up just over half the population, and a somewhat higher percentage of the voting public. Women committed to "abortion rights" now face the unsettling prospect of debating women

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Catholic Voices

Appreciating good homilies



Greg Erlandson
Catholic News Service

Amid the Fray

My wife was picking up our child from the Methodist preschool once when she saw the pastor practicing his Sunday sermon, speaking from the pulpit to an empty church days before he would deliver it. His desire to get it right, to hear how it sounded, to practice his delivery, was striking.

Not every priest is a born preacher (hence so many canned homilies). But practice can make better. One young priest I knew who was aware of his deficiencies studied books like Father Alfred McBride's guide to preaching, *How to Make Homilies Better, Briefer, Bolder*. He diligently worked on his sermons and dramatically improved his ability to hold people's attention while imparting some substance.

It is hard to speak to a diverse audience ranging from squalling toddlers and distracted parents to senior citizens who have heard it all before. But those eight or 10 or 15 minutes are likely to be the only time in the entire week that most Catholics will get a Catholic exhortation. It is a precious opportunity not to be wasted.

Not every catechetical deficiency can be addressed in a homily, but for those eight minutes, Catholics can see the connection between Scripture and their lives. It is an invitation to grow closer to the Lord and to his church.

And I think I speak for all of us when I say thank you to those priests and deacons who take the time to preach well and leave us with food for thought in the week that follows.

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

Mass shootings in the US and Christian hope



Father Francis Onyekozuru

Diocese of San Angelo

According to the Gun Violence Archive, there have been over 250 mass shootings in the U.S. this year, and we are barely halfway through 2022. Nineteen innocent children, their two heroic teachers, and the gunman lost their lives in the recent mass shooting in Uvalde, Texas. Many were injured. The incident sent a shockwave down our spines, especially in our local Texas communities.

The country is once again horrified. It has left many with emotional, physical, and moral pain. Why such pain and evil in the world? This question is inevitable in the face of human suffering. The suffering intensifies if no satisfactory answer is given (John Paul II, *Salvifici Doloris*, no. 9).

It is self-evident that rampant gun violence currently burdens our society. Understandably, many would say (like Saint Augustine) that we are not to disapprove of silver and gold because of greedy people, food because of gluttons, drinks because of drunkards, attractive women and men because of fornicators or adulterers, (nor the right of people to bear arms because of mental illnesses and extremist hateful ideologies). After all, physicians make good use of fire (more like needles, scissors, and scalpels these days), whereas a poisoner makes evil of bread. Things should not be blamed, but those who use them in evil ways (St. Augustine, *De Libero Arbitrio*, 1.16.34.114).

In a very compassionate response to the mass shooting in Odessa/Midland in 2019, Bishop Michael J. Sis rightly notes: "There are no easy answers as to how to end this epidemic of gun violence in our state and our country." These issues did not begin today. The 1789 Constitution of the United States, ratified on December 15, 1791, includes the Second Amendment. It states: "A well-regulated Militia, being necessary to the security of a free State, the right of the people to keep and bear Arms, shall not be infringed." The right to own and bear firearms is enshrined in the US Constitution.

A 1976 crime statistic shows that

64% of all murders were carried out by firearms. About 85% of police officers killed were killed with firearms (United States Catholic Conference, Community and Crime: A Statement of the Committee on Social Development and World Peace, Washington DC. 1978). There are an estimated 40,000 firearm-related deaths in the United States each year. This is about the same number of people that die in car accidents annually.

Historically, the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops (USCCB) issues and supports policy initiatives that affirm common sense measures of gun policy to address the gun violence epidemic. Prominent in such initiatives are improved mental health interventions, efforts to ban assault weapons, universal background checks, a federal gun trafficking bill, regulations on sales of handguns, safety measures, and an honest assessment of violent images and experiences in our society. Extreme Risk Protection Orders ("ERPOs" or "red flag laws") and licensing handguns are two policies that could help. Licensing handguns would have a huge effect on gun homicides. Bipartisan support exists for these two initiatives. For every 10-20 ERPOs issued, a life is saved (Bishop Frank J. Dewane's "Address to the USCCB General Assembly," Baltimore, November 2019).

In 1975, the US bishops noted that automatic weapons are used in drug commerce. They called for a control and an eventual elimination of these from the

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Why journalism matters



Effie Caldarola
Catholic News Service

For the Journey

One of the great takeaways of the Watergate era was that journalism got a big boost. Carl Bernstein and Bob Woodward, *The Washington Post* reporters who broke open the scandal, made digging out the truth look patriotic and, let's face it, cool. Lots of students went into journalism.

June 17 was the 50th anniversary of the break-in at the Democratic National Committee headquarters at the Watergate complex in Washington, a break-in that led to a cover-up and the famous question, "What did the president know, and when did he know it?"

That president was, of course, Richard Nixon, and the Senate hearings that looked into the cover-up, with its cast of seedy characters and hush money, riveted the nation as investigators tried to learn how far up in the White House the cover-up went.

Millions of Americans watched as the hearings blanketed television channels and screamed at us from banner headlines in the daily newspapers to which we all still subscribed.

By the time Nixon resigned the presidency in August 1974, I was on my way as a Jesuit volunteer to a little village in interior Alaska with no television access and definitely no morning newspaper. I was out of the loop. But Watergate had made a big impression.

And it's been impacting all of us ever since, whether you were born during Watergate or not.

Now we are once again embroiled in hearings, this time a House Select Committee, investigating the Jan. 6, 2021, insurrection in which rioters broke into the U.S. Capitol, resulting in several deaths and disrupting a joint session of Congress that would certify the presidential election. Vice President Mike Pence, House Speaker Nancy Pelosi and other leaders were threatened with violence.

The question this time isn't what did the president know, but how much of this did the president cause, and is he criminally liable for a proposed coup attempting to overthrow a legitimate election?

These are weighty questions, more serious than those faced by Richard Nixon.

In the Watergate hearings, no Capitol police officer

testified to slipping in blood as she tried to defend access to this symbol of our democracy. No one was beaten, no mock gallows were erected.

Today's hearings come to a country divided.

A friend sent me a video of a homilist discussing Jesus' prayer, the one in John where he addresses God and asks "that they may all be one, as you Father, are in me and I in you, that they also may be in us."

The homilist goes on to say that if Jesus' great prayer was for unity, then the evil one's wish is for division.

It strikes me, in the midst of so much anger and discord in our country and even in our church, that the truth makes us free and leads to unity. Unity isn't necessarily some feel-good, "kumbaya" agreement on all issues.

We can disagree — liberal versus conservative, Democrat versus Republican, but still be united on common principles and truths. We don't have to hate each other.

We need basic agreement on the facts — there aren't "alternative facts."

This is why good journalism is so important. Objective, well-researched, hard-scrabble journalism. We all probably have our favorite news outlets, but we should all have several of them. We should reject conspiracy theories and sites that provide no sources and do not detail their research.

The days of the morning paper, the reliance on print journalism, are waning. But that doesn't mean good journalism is gone.

The Jesuit Pierre Teilhard de Chardin said it best: "Faith has need of the whole truth."

Cartoon Corner



DOBBS

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trigger laws put in place set to ban abortions right away upon *Roe's* reversal.

"We hold that *Roe* and *Casey* must be overruled," Justice Samuel Alito wrote in the court's majority opinion. *Casey v. Planned Parenthood* is the 1992 decision that affirmed *Roe*.

Alito was joined by Justices Clarence Thomas, Neil Gorsuch, Brett Kavanaugh and Amy Coney Barrett.

The vote to uphold Mississippi's abortion restriction was 6-3, with Chief Justice John Roberts voting with the majority. In a separate opinion, he said he would not have overturned the court's *Roe* decision.

Alito, writing for the majority, said: "The Constitution makes no reference to abortion, and no such right is implicitly protected by any constitutional provision, including the one on which the defenders of *Roe* and *Casey* now chiefly rely — the Due Process Clause of the 14th Amendment."

U.S. Catholic bishops who have supported a reversal of *Roe* immediately reacted positively to the court's decision that

comes at the end of this year's term.

The U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops called the decision a "historic day in the life of our country, one that stirs our thoughts, emotions and prayers."

"We pray that our elected officials will now enact laws and policies that promote and protect the most vulnerable among us," said the June 24 statement by Los Angeles Archbishop José H. Gomez, USCCB president, and Baltimore Archbishop William E. Lori, chairman of the USCCB's Committee on Pro-Life Activities.

"We give thanks to God for today's decision ... This just decision will save countless innocent children simply waiting to be born," said the New York Catholic bishops in a statement shortly after the court's opinion was released.

Those on both sides of the issue were outside the court when the ruling came down and continued to gathered in force throughout the afternoon with posters, bullhorns, hugging and shouting.

Crowds have been outside the court — blocked off now by security fencing — for days, anticipating this decision, just as they were when a draft of the opinion was leaked in early May.

In remarks from the White House June 24, President Joe Biden said the court's decision was "a sad day for the country in my view, but it doesn't mean the fight is over," and he urged Americans to respond with their votes in the upcoming elections.

He also urged demonstrators to "keep all protests peaceful," adding: "We must stand against violence in any form, regardless of your rationale."

The *Dobbs* opinion is very similar to the leaked draft that called *Roe* "egregiously wrong from the start."

Justices Stephen Breyer, Sonia Sotomayor and Elena Kagan wrote a joint dissent that emphasized the significance of the court's previous decisions on this issue.

They added: "Whatever the exact scope of the coming laws, one result of today's decision is certain: the curtailment of women's rights, and of their status as free and equal citizens."

They also noted that their dissent was "with sorrow — for this court, but more, for the many millions of American women who have today lost a fundamental constitutional protection."

When the court announced last year that it would take this case, after consid-

ering it more than a dozen times since 2020, the justices said they would only review one of the three questions presented to them: "Whether all pre-viability prohibitions on elective abortions are unconstitutional."

That point of viability — when a fetus is said to be able to survive on its own — was a key point in this case, because the Supreme Court had consistently ruled that states cannot restrict abortion before 24 weeks, or when a fetus could survive on its own.

A friend-of-the-court brief submitted by the USCCB stressed that abortion is not a right created by the Constitution and called it "inherently different from other types of personal decisions to which this court has accorded constitutional protection."

Referring to the court's major abortion decisions, the brief also warned that if the Supreme Court "continues to treat abortion as a constitutional issue," it will face more questions in the future about "what sorts of abortion regulations are permissible."

Follow Zimmermann on Twitter: @carolmaczinn

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civilian populace. This 1975 statement actually supports handgun licensing. It is applauded by many as having the strongest research of any gun policy showing its adoption would greatly reduce gun homicides. For instance, the State of Connecticut approved a handgun licensing law in the mid 90s with a result of 40% decrease in gun homicides. The state's non-gun homicides remained at the same level. This is in contradistinction to Missouri which repealed their handgun licensing law in 2007 and saw a 25% increase in gun homicides. Research shows that background checks (although highly recommended) do not seem to hold great promise in drastically reducing homicides.

On Nov. 15, 2000, the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops issued "Responsibility, Rehabilitation, and Restoration: A Catholic Perspective on Crime and Criminal Justice." Herein, our shepherds rightly maintain that handguns are properly accessible to law enforcement and military personnel but should not be easily accessible to civilians. On June 3 this year, the USCCB sent a letter to all members of Congress encouraging them to unite, stop the massacres, and advance life-saving legislation on this issue. Almost three weeks later, on June 23, the USCCB sent another letter to all U.S. federal lawmakers urging them to support the Bipartisan Safer Communities Act.

Researchers at Columbia and Harvard Universities recently discovered that, between 1990 and 2017, the rate of mass shooting casualties in states without a ban on a large capacity magazine was more than double in comparison to states with such a ban. The yearly deaths from mass shootings are also more than three times higher. Shootings involving a large capacity magazine have about 62% higher mean average death toll.

Mental health is a very relevant issue in all this. An estimated 10 million recorded Americans struggle with mental illness, with about 3 million of such folks untreated. Greater access to mental health treatments ought to be prioritized. With the COVID-19 pandemic came an increase in mental health struggles. Studies do not support the claim that patients of mental illness are more susceptible to violence than the general populace.

Safe storage makes a big difference. Intentional education on safe storage is highly encouraged for saving lives, especially with reference to school shootings and suicide. It is, however, difficult to properly enforce safe storage laws since, in most cases, violations are discovered only after tragedies have already occurred.

Amidst tragedies, there is a gift that comforts us while grieving our loved ones. That gift is HOPE! Christian hope is a theological virtue through which we desire the kingdom of God and eternal life as our ultimate happiness (Catechism of the Catholic Church, no. 1817). With this hope, we place our trust in the promise made by Christ that he is going to prepare a place for us where we will join him after life on this earth (Jn 14:3). St. Paul affirms the existence of this promise thus: "no eye has seen, no ear has heard, no human mind has ever conceived what God has planned for those who love him" (1 Cor 2:9). This Christian hope does not disappoint (Rom 5:5).

In its earthly or basic form, it is the hope that draws parents and guardians to go through the arduous, yet joyful responsibility of raising children, hoping that those children would not be gunned down; hoping that someday they would grow to become good citizens of

nations. Such hope is expressed in people's determination and relentless optimism in the face of hardships. Hope gives audacity; the willingness to push forward despite all the evidence to the contrary, that families and communities like Uvalde, beleaguered by senseless mass shootings, could still push through. We hope despite personal setbacks, loss of jobs, inflation, illness in families, and parents left with the lifeless bodies of their children. Regardless of these, we still retain some control over how to respond, how to live again, and how to give each other shoulders to lean on. The earthly hope is a foretaste of the Christian hope.

The Christian hope helps us not to rely on our own strength during tragedies, but on the help of the grace of the Holy Spirit (Catechism of the Catholic Church, no. 1817). Our strength to hope and persevere comes from God, who is never outdone in strength and grace. He is the same God that poured himself out for us and defied the powers of death through the death of his only begotten Son.

Hope as a theological virtue helps us to respond to the aspiration of happiness which God has placed in our hearts. It takes up our basic earthly hopes, purifies and elevates them so as to have them ordered to the kingdom of heaven. It keeps us from discouragement. It sustains us during times of abandonment. It opens up our hearts in anticipation of the beatific vision. Lifted by this hope, we are preserved from the depth of gloominess and led to the happiness that flows from love (Catechism of the Catholic Church, no. 1818).

St. Augustine notes the temporality of life on this earth. He reminds us that no one has ever died who was not going to die eventually. The end of life makes a long life the same as a short life; for in the sight of God, the one is not better and the other lesser (Augustine, *The City of God*, Book 1, Chapter 2).

Hope also expresses itself as our helmet of salvation (1 Thes 5:8) along our journey to eternity. It makes joy possible even under trials and difficulties, like people who are marching through the unforgiving deserts with joyful expectancy of some oasis and eventual green pastures. Many martyrs radiated this joy even while dying. St. Paul exhorts us to "rejoice in hope, endure in affliction, and persevere in prayer" (Rom 12:12).

In every circumstance, prayer is an expression of our hope. Prayer nourishes our hope, for in prayer, we encounter the mysterious presence of God. Pope Benedict XVI calls prayer a school of hope. It is a setting for learning and practicing hope (Spe Salvi, no. 32). Drawing from Augustine's idea of the intimate relationship between hope and prayer, Pope Benedict XVI explains that during prayers, our hearts are expanded and cleaned (of vinegar) to receive God's great tenderness and goodness (like honey).

In the beatitudes, Jesus says, "Blessed are they who mourn, for they will be comforted" (Mt 5:4). The comfort he has promised us will surely come to pass. This promise in this beatitude props up our minds towards heaven as the new and everlasting Promised Land for our deceased folks and ourselves. Commenting on this beatitude, Servais Pinckaers asserts: "Let us be honest. Among all the beatitudes there is none like this one for flying in the face of common sense" (Pinckaers, *The Pursuit of Happiness*, 2011, p.77). The promised reward is that simple. It is a promise of consolation by Christ who knows the pains of losing loved ones. He was aggrieved and wept at the death of his friend, Lazarus (Jn 11:35). At some point before his public ministry, he must have grieved the loss of his foster father, Joseph. He identifies with us in our grief and sorrow.

Pinckaers further describes this beatitude as an invitation for us to be fully human first. It means acknowledging our sorrow and not wanting to be mere infants amused with beautiful stories and sheltered from painful and disturbing sights, but inwardly mature people who dare to look reality in the face. We are urged to remain resolute in the faces of sorrowful circumstances. The reward of comfort follows our passing through the crushing experiences of sorrow. We do not seek them out, but we pass through such experiences when they come, not around them. We face them head-on, not run away or shrink from them. This is how Jesus was able to defeat death. He passed through it and transformed it into an avenue to eternal life. In like manner, we can defeat sorrow and grief by passing through them with God's grace and the accompanying theological virtue of hope.

St. Thomas Aquinas explains that the comfort promised in the beatitude is not only in the afterlife. The consolation of mourners begins in this life and extends to the afterlife. The reward of comfort will be fully consummated in the life to come, but meanwhile they are, in a manner, begun, even in this life. We are "comforted" in this life, by receiving the Holy Spirit, who is called the "Paraclete — the Comforter" (Aquinas, *Summa Theologica*, I-II, q. 69, a. 2).

"It takes a good person with firearm to stop a 'bad' person with firearm." "Japan could not invade the U.S. by land because they feared that most U.S. households owned firearms and would use them before the military arrives." "When laws are made against firearms, only the law-abiding citizens would follow such laws, while those who had decided to harm others would not follow such laws." "The Second Amendment is an important part of the Bill of Rights." "The whole issue is muddled up in political gymnastics." These statements have truths.

Another thing that is true is that many of our people are dying due to mass shootings, and most people agree that something needs to be done. Thankfully, both houses of Congress just passed the Bipartisan Safer Communities Act: a firearm regulation and mental health bill geared toward alleviating the problem. Many mass shootings are linked to the two epidemics of mental health challenges and extremist hateful ideologies.

Another thing is true: Christian HOPE helps! Despite the tragedies, this hope draws us to keep working for a better and safer world. The great certitude of hope, despite all challenges and tragedies, is firmly upheld by the undying power of God's grace. It is God's grace through the gift of hope that can give us the courage to continue working, to invite God into schools and public places, to garner and implement our innovative ideas and laws to make our society safer, and to push through in the presence of grief caused by senseless shootings.

Pope Benedict XVI reminds us that the Christian hope is a trustworthy hope which could help us during crises. With this hope, we can outlast challenges. No matter how arduous the strife and struggles are, we can live through them relying on this trustworthy hope. This hope is engraved in the knowledge of God. People live without hope when they live without God in the world. To come to know God — the true God — means to receive hope and to live in hope (Spe Salvi, nos. 1-3). Hope never fails! May our individual and collective efforts in combatting the root causes of these tragedies never fail.

Father Francis Onyekozuru is parochial administrator of St. Mary Queen of Peace Parish in Brownwood.

URENECK

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from a former supervisor and mentor who advised me to take "mental pictures" of my children in their early years. Now that her children are grown, she likes to use her imagination and senses to recall special memories and moments from their youth.

I had hundreds of iPhone photos but was already struggling to re-create the moments she was referring to. Better to experience a moment than to photograph one I've missed, I thought.

I also had to acknowledge a pull toward materialism. Any Catholic woman who spends time on Instagram is

PRATT

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emotional and spiritual selves so that we are ever able to continue well, with joy and purpose.

Of course, as happens with making a favorite dish (or even a routine snack), sometimes ingredients might not be readily available. We might find that our best-laid plans are derailed by the absence of opportunity or circum-

WILSON-SMITH

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Matthew 25 lays out this point for us well: The hungry and thirsty, the stranger, the imprisoned -- how we treat these least in our midst is how we treat Christ himself.

To jumpstart our faith, we need to encounter Christ and spend time with him, in the gift of the Eucharist, yes, but also in the eucharistic life the Blessed Sacra-

DOERFLINGER

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who disagree with them. But that happens in a democracy, and the debate will be infinitely more productive if conducted with civility and mutual respect.

One group ignoring that advice calls itself "Ruth Sent Us," after the late Supreme Court Justice Ruth Bader Ginsburg. Justice Ginsburg was a prominent advocate for "abortion rights." The group claims to honor her by, for example, targeting Justice Amy Coney Barrett's church and her school-age children for angry protests.

But recently I came across "Scalia Speaks," a collection of speeches by the late Justice Antonin Scalia, who was known for his biting criticisms of *Roe* and *Casey*. The book's foreword is by Scalia's longtime friend, Justice Ginsburg. She concludes:

"If our friendship encourages others to appreciate that some very good people have ideas with which we disagree, and that, despite differences, people of goodwill can pull together for the well-being of the institutions we serve and our country, I will be overjoyed, as I am confident Justice Scalia would be."

Ruth did not send "Ruth Sent Us." But she and Antonin could send us to seek common ground in helping children and their mothers.

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

served up accounts and ads for religious home goods, jewelry and mementos that promise to help you make your home a little sanctuary in a secular world.

But the more I scrolled, the more time I spent thinking about what I wanted to buy to create that home rather than, well, creating that home. The work of appointing a home is a worthy endeavor, and there's a lot to be said about the importance of a beautiful, ordered dwelling.

But the real dream of the "dream home" is the family life that takes place inside the walls, not what's hanging on them. It's the work and time put into creating moments of joy, strengthening bonds, modeling prayer and forgiveness. And it's usually sticky, smelly and disorderly, at least until the kids are asleep.

Even though ours is a world focused on "living our

stances beyond our life's grocery list. Thinking of cooking helps here, too.

Versatility, the kind that finds alternatives so as to keep on track, is part of the skills we develop as we put together a meal. We learn from experience what works, and we take good advice from loved ones, mentors and faith leaders so that we continue to be inspired, encouraged and faith filled.

Sometimes, challenges might arise that completely upend the carefully assembled ingredients and plans you

ment calls us to. The solidarity and self-gift we receive in Christ must be shared.

Service to those with whom Christ has so closely identified may take a variety of forms and there is no need to necessarily reinvent the wheel. Wherever we are, there tends to be those already doing the work.

Yours or another local parish may have organized a regular food pantry that requires assistance. The diocese may have a prison ministry that needs volunteers to spend a few minutes on the phone with a returning citizen or to write letters to those still incarcerated.

truths" and "living our authentic selves," it has become a world of performance. Politics feels like performance. Journalism reads like performance. Most tweets from Catholic leaders and thinkers are performative if not provocative. Because we're always "on," we seem to be a bit "off."

I don't know if I can hack the platforms in a way that doesn't change my offline behavior. The jury's still out on whether or not I'll use them again. But I'd like to think that my children are playing more freely with my phone away, and I'm seeing them — really seeing them — for the first time.

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

graduates, indeed all of us, have gathered. Yet, we of faith, looking to Scripture, know one ingredient of them all is constant, never going stale, never vanishing from our hearts.

Jesus, the bread of life (Jn 6:35), is always present, and in the sacraments, especially Eucharist and reconciliation, we are sustained. We move ahead with joy to that ultimate meal, a heavenly banquet!

Pratt's website is www.maureenpratt.com.

To whomever we minister, we will meet Christ, and faith in him and his kingdom of perfect peace, justice and love can only increase.

Father Stuart Wilson-Smith is a priest of the Paulist Fathers and associate pastor of Old St. Mary's Church in Chicago. Father Stu is currently writing a book on Catholicism and mental health, and as a songwriter has released an album on the same theme, "It's Not Just You, It's Everybody," available on all major digital platforms.



CNS PHOTO | COURTESY USCCB
Bishop Ronald A. Hicks of Joliet, Ill., left, Bishop Michael J. Sis of San Angelo, Texas, Auxiliary Bishop Joseph N. Perry of Chicago and Bishop Edward J. Burns of Dallas process into the June 23, 2022, opening Mass of the "Alive in Christ: Young, Diverse, Prophetic Voices Journeying Together" national multicultural gathering in Chicago.

Member

*Catholic News Service
Catholic Media Association
Texas Catholic News*

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

Subscription rate for all others:

\$10 per year

THIRD CLASS POSTAGE PAID AT
SAN ANGELO, TEXAS

Printed by

*Livestock Weekly
San Angelo, Texas*

Submissions:

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

COPY, PHOTO DEADLINE:

Third Friday of every month.

Photos should be in jpeg format.

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

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

Bishop Michael J. Sis
Publisher

Brian Bodiford
*Editor
Director of Communications*

The West Texas Angelus
Official Newspaper of the
Diocese of San Angelo, Texas
POSTMASTER: Send all address changes to:
WEST TEXAS ANGELUS
P.O. Box 1829
SAN ANGELO, TX
76902-1829

‘I will miss you all’ Father Charles Greenwell retires after 29 years at Holy Angels



Father Charles Greenwell was the main celebrant at a June 26 Mass at Holy Angels Parish in San Angelo. The Mass commemorated Father Greenwell's retirement and the culmination of 40 years of priestly service. Bishop Michael Sis gave the homily at the Mass, which was celebrated by Msgr. Larry Droll, Father Steve Hicks, Father Balachandra Nagipogu, Father Tom Barley, Father Adam Droll, Msgr. Bernard Gully, and Father Josh Gray. Deacon Leslie Maiman and Deacon Floyd Schwartz also served.

WEST TEXAS ANGELUS

By Brian Bodiford
West Texas Angelus

In his homily honoring Father Charles Greenwell June 26, Bishop Michael Sis noted that the parishioners of Holy Angels Parish in San Angelo had become accustomed to their pastor's "mercifully brief" preaching. The bishop's homily, he let them know, would be less brief. Such was necessary to give due credit to the man of the hour.

Father Greenwell retired from active ministry effective July 1, 2022. The Mass held on June 26 was offered as a dual celebration of his retirement and the milestone of 40 years as an ordained priest. Father Greenwell has been the pastor at Holy Angels Parish for 29 years.

"God has not just given Father Charles the gift of the priesthood, he has given us the gift of Father Charles," Bishop Sis said. In addition to his popular brevity in homilies, Bishop Sis noted several qualities that the faithful have come to admire in Father Greenwell: his compassion, especially when it comes to funerals; his high intelligence; his modesty; his memory; and his strong belief in the importance of lay leadership. He also praised the many projects that Father Greenwell has overseen in his nearly three decades of leadership at the parish.

Recalling Jesus' command at the last supper to "love one another as I have loved you," Bishop Sis said, "that's the kind of love that must be at the core of the Catholic priesthood," the kind of love that Father Greenwell em-

bodied. Everybody has a vocation, the bishop said, and "every day we should wake up and choose to say yes again to our calling," just as the people of Holy Angels have seen their pastor do time and time again.

After Mass at Holy Angels, hundreds attended a reception held at the McNease Convention Center in San Angelo. After a catered meal, many people who have known and worked with Father Greenwell over the years shared brief testimonies and gratitude. Speakers were Ken Yates, Grand Knight of the Knights of Columbus Council #12008; Parish Council President Frank Casares; Finance Council President Maurice Fortin; Deacon Floyd Schwartz, who knew Father Greenwell from his time at St. Lawrence Parish near Garden City; and Msgr. Larry Droll, Vicar for Priests in the Diocese of San Angelo.

To conclude the evening, a slideshow was shown with photos of Father Greenwell from infancy to retirement before the man of the hour took to the podium himself. Father Greenwell thanked the speakers for their words, joking about his own "expertise" in areas like finance. "The good Lord and my guardian angel have done a great job" putting the right people in his life, he said.

"If I had been a farmer," Father Greenwell said, "I might need to be congratulated for retiring from the field. But the field I've been working in has been a blessing."

"I will miss you all," Father Greenwell concluded.

Father Charles Greenwell began his priestly service in the Diocese of Lubbock, before coming to the San Angelo Diocese. Prior his years of service to Holy Angels



WEST TEXAS ANGELUS

Father Charles Greenwell visited with friends and parishioners at a reception to honor his 40th priestly anniversary and retirement from active ministry.

Parish, Father Greenwell served about three years at the Cathedral Church of the Sacred Heart in San Angelo and St. Therese in Carlsbad, followed by three years at St. Lawrence Parish.

The new pastor of Holy Angels is Father Santiago Udayar.

San Angelo first diocese to receive relics tied to National Eucharistic Revival



As part of the National Eucharistic Revival, relics of St. Manuel Gonzalez and Blessed Carlo Acutis will travel around the country. The Diocese of San Angelo was the first diocese to receive the relics, which were first displayed in our diocese at Holy Angels Parish in San Angelo June 26.



A relic of St. Manuel Gonzalez



A relic of Blessed Carlo Acutis