

CHANGE SERVICE REQUESTED

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WEST TEXAS ANGELUS

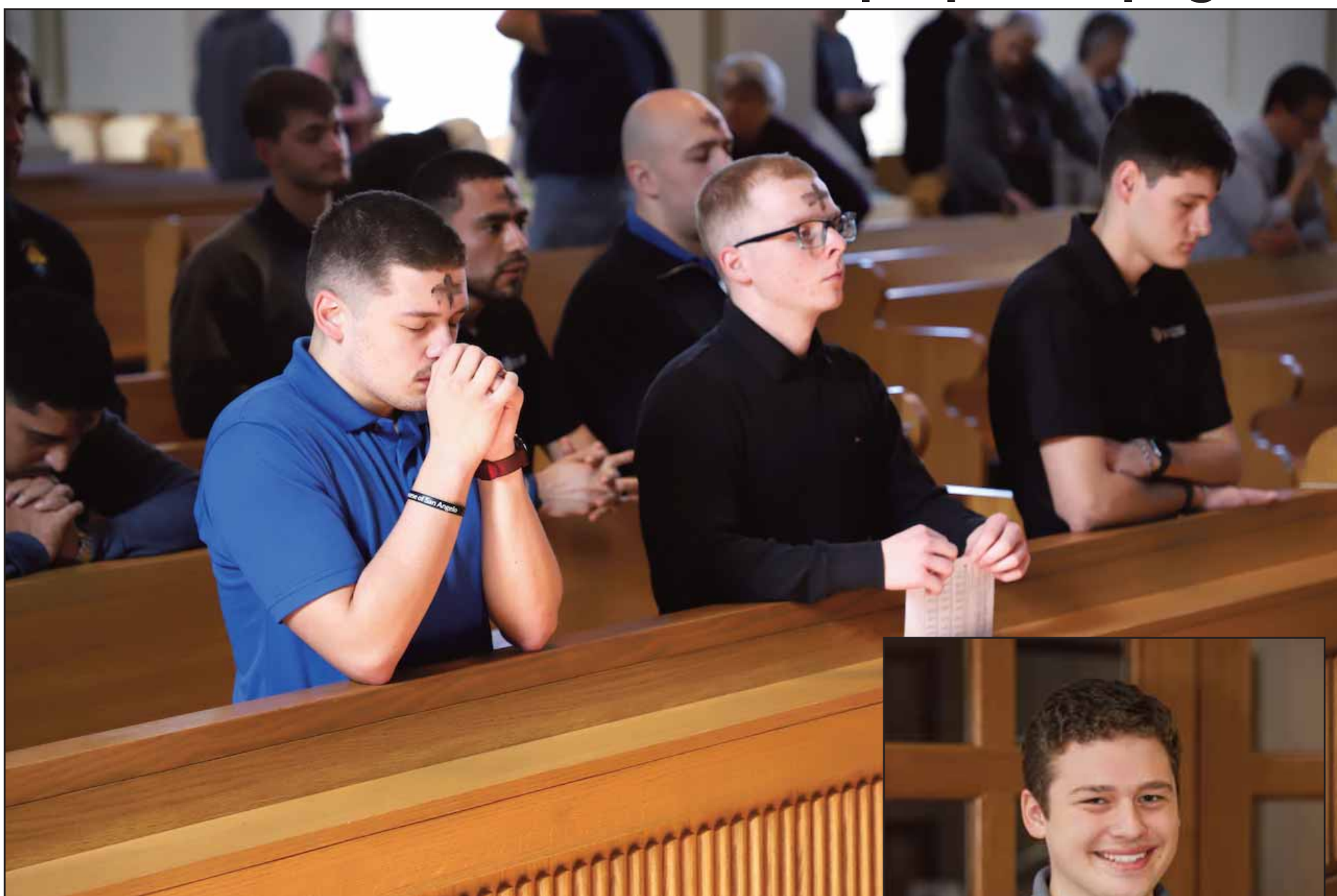


Serving Catholics in the Diocese of San Angelo, Texas

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Midland's Martinez selected as 'perpetual pilgrim'



COURTESY CONCEPTION SEMINARY COLLEGE

Raymond Martinez, left, prays at Conception Seminary College on Ash Wednesday.

By Brian Bodiford
Editor, West Texas Angelus

Raymond Martinez II enjoys going on pilgrimage. Some of his favorites include a trip to Poland with fellow seminarians from the Diocese of San Angelo, which he called “a wonderful opportunity,” and one closer to home to visit the National Shrine of Our Lady of Champion in Wisconsin — the only approved Marian apparition in the United States. Martinez says these pilgrimages have allowed the Lord to encounter him and for him to encounter Christ in others.

Soon, Martinez will embark on his most intense pilgrimage yet, walking up to 15 miles per day for seven weeks as part of the latest iteration of the National Eucharistic Pilgrimage, now in its third year. Martinez, the oldest of three chil-

dren, has been a seminarian for the diocese since the spring of 2023. A son of St. Stephen Parish in Midland, he is a junior in college, studying at Conception Seminary College in Conception, Missouri. He will serve as one of nine “perpetual pilgrims” on the St. Frances Xavier Cabrini route this summer.

“Being a perpetual pilgrim is a wonderful gift,” Martinez said March 24. “I love sharing my Lord with others, and in a unique way the pilgrimage shares our Lord with the whole nation.”

“I want to share my love of our Eucharistic Lord and allow other people to encounter him as I have,” Martinez said.

The National Eucharistic Pilgrimage began in 2024 with four routes crossing the country that ended with pilgrims converging in Indianapolis for the 10th National

Eucharistic Congress. In 2025, the National Eucharistic Pilgrimage returned, this time traveling a single route from Indianapolis to Los Angeles. This year, the pilgrimage route runs up the east coast from Florida to Maine before turning back south to end in Philadelphia on the weekend of July 4, coinciding with the 250th anniversary of the signing of the Declaration of Independence.

Though this is his first time as a perpetual pilgrim, as long as there has been a National Eucharistic Pilgrimage, Martinez has found a way to participate. “I’ve attended the last two Eucharistic pilgrimages that the National Eucharistic Congress” has held, he said. The first year, one of the four routes that ended in Indianapolis began in Texas. Martinez attended a stage of the pilgrimage in



OSV NEWS PHOTO | RACHAEL MEIER, SIMPLE HEART PHOTOGRAPHY, COURTESY NATIONAL EUCHARISTIC CONGRESS
Raymond Martinez II, a seminarian for the Diocese of San Angelo, Texas, is one of the nine “perpetual pilgrims” walking the National Eucharistic Pilgrimage’s 2026 St. Frances Cabrini route along the East Coast. Martinez is pictured in a Jan. 24, 2026, photo.

See PILGRIM, Page 20

From the Bishop's Desk

Overcoming the fear of death



**Bishop
Michael J. Sis**

Diocese of
San Angelo

In the Easter season, we celebrate the victory of Jesus Christ over sin and death. This presents us with the opportunity to confront something that affects many people — the fear of death.

To have a repugnance and fear of death is a natural human response rooted in the survival instinct. Like the fear of snakes, spiders, and heights, it can move a person to avoid dangerous threats to life. However, it sometimes becomes so intense that it causes undue anxiety and interferes with a joyful existence. It can paralyze us from carrying out our mission.

Of course, it is not a sin to have fears. When Cardinal Karol Wojtyła became Pope John Paul II in 1978, he felt some fear. After all, being pope is a big job. In the first homily he gave in St. Peter's Square, he spoke about fear. He recalled what the angel said to Mary at the Annunciation: "Be not afraid" (Lk 1:30). Pope John Paul II taught us that, no matter what danger we might be afraid of, the power of Christ's death and resurrection is greater than any evil that we could suffer.

We can learn from our fear. As human beings, we need to be in touch with our fear, admit it honestly, and accept the fact of the fear. Then, as Christians, we need to present it to God, asking him to transform our fear into a deeper trust in him.

The death of the body is a certain, inevitable fact of life. It is normal and natural. Our mortal body is not a perfect machine. It will eventually wear out, break down, and die. God never promised us a certain number of years in this life. Every day is a precious gift from God. We must learn to live within the limits of our physical condition, appreciating that each phase in life has its special blessings and purpose. Even amidst the pains, disabilities, and diminishing capacities of aging, each one of us can live with gratitude and appreciate the present moment.

Human life is sacred from the moment of conception until natural death. Since God is the author of life, only God has the right to determine the end of life. No human being has the right to carry out an act or an omission which, of itself or by intention, directly causes or hastens the death of an innocent person or of oneself.

While we cherish the precious gift of life and seek to preserve it through healthy choices, we also must honestly face its shortness. Psalm 90:12 says, "Teach us to number our days aright, so that we may gain wisdom of heart." Our Catholic faith calls us to remember our mortality, and to prepare ourselves for the hour of our death. We have only a limited time in this life, and we have only one life to live. It is spiritually beneficial to remember our mortality and accept it realistically.

Every human being will be judged by God immediately upon death. The *Catechism of the Catholic Church* says that "Death puts an end to human life as the time open to either accepting or rejecting the divine grace manifested in Christ" (CCC, no. 1021). Thomas à Kempis says, "Death would have no terrors for you if you had a quiet conscience. ... Then why not keep clear of sin instead of running away from death?" (*The Imitation of Christ*, 1, 23, 1). St. John Chrysostom teaches, "Let us not then fear death, but let us only fear sin" (*Homily 5 on the Statues*, 14). St. Francis of Assisi says, "Praised are you, my Lord, for our sister bodily death, from whom no living

man can escape. Woe on those who will die in mortal sin! Blessed are they who will be found in your most holy will, for the second death will not harm them" (*Canticle of the Creatures*).

In the treasures of our Catholic tradition, God has given us the basic tools that we need to prepare spiritually for death: Love God. Reconcile with God by turning away from our sins. Accept his grace and forgiveness. Love our neighbor as ourselves. Reconcile with others by offering forgiveness and seeking forgiveness. Pray. Carry out the corporal and spiritual works of mercy. Live the beatitudes. Receive the sacraments frequently — especially confession and Communion.

I believe that one of the key reasons why humans fear death is because they have an underdeveloped view of heaven. Our Catholic faith transforms our fear of death by opening our eyes to the magnificence of heaven. It is total happiness forever, where we live in complete union with God, an entirely new mode of existence, beyond the limits of space and time. Heaven is beyond our human capacity for understanding and description (CCC, no. 1027). St. Paul says that God "is able to accomplish far more than all we ask or imagine" (Eph 3:20). Try to imagine what you would consider to be the best possible existence; heaven is infinitely better than that. St. Paul says, "What eye has not seen, and ear has not heard, and what has not entered the human heart, what God has prepared for those who love him" (1 Cor 2:9).

Whatever is joyful in this life will be infinitely more joyful in heaven. Whatever is beautiful in this life will be infinitely more beautiful in heaven. Whatever is loving in this life will be infinitely more loving in heaven. This is the understanding that allowed St. Thérèse of Lisieux to have complete confidence at the hour of her death. She said, "I'm not dying. I'm beginning to live!"

The more we ponder heaven, the less we will fear death. The following passages from Scripture help to orient us toward what God has in store for us:

- Jesus says in John 14:2-3, "In my Father's house there are many dwelling places. If there were not, would I have told you that I am going to prepare a place for you?" When the Apostle John had a vision of a new heaven and a new earth, he said, "He will wipe away every tear from their eyes, and there shall be no more death or mourning, wailing or pain, for the old order has passed away" (Rev 21:4). Describing our life in union with God in heaven, he said, "We shall see him as he is" (1 Jn 3:2).

- St. Paul says, "To me life is Christ, and death is gain" (Phil 1:21). He teaches us that "our citizenship is in heaven, and from it we also await a savior, the Lord Jesus Christ. He will change our lowly body to conform it with

his glorified body by the power that enables him to bring all things into subjection to himself" (Phil 3:20-21). Paul continues, saying, "we know that if our earthly dwelling, a tent, should be destroyed, we have a building from God, a dwelling not made with hands, eternal in heaven" (2 Cor 5:1). He expresses his longing for eternal union with God in heaven: "We would rather leave the body and go home to the Lord" (2 Cor 5:8).

- St. Paul further assists us to overcome our fear of death with this teaching: "We do not want you to be unaware, brothers, about those who have fallen asleep, so that you may not grieve like the rest, who have no hope. For if we believe that Jesus died and rose, so too will God, through Jesus, bring with him those who have fallen asleep. ... Thus we shall always be with the Lord" (1 Thes 4:13-14, 17).

Pope Leo XIV recently offered a beautiful reflection on death. He taught, "Death is not the end, but the passage toward full light, toward a happy eternity. The Risen One has gone before us in the great trial of death, emerging victorious thanks to the power of divine Love. Thus, he has prepared for us the place of eternal rest, the home where we are awaited; he has given us the fullness of life in which there are no longer any shadows and contradictions. ... The light of his victory illuminates our own mortality, reminding us that death is not the end, but a passing from this life into eternity. Therefore, death is not something to be feared, but rather a moment to prepare for. It is an invitation to examine our lives and so live in such a way that we may one day share not only in the death of Christ, but also in the joy of eternal life" (General Audience, Dec. 10, 2025).

The Prayer Square

Psalm 23

The Lord is my shepherd;
there is nothing I lack.
In green pastures he makes me lie down;
to still waters he leads me;
he restores my soul.
He guides me along right paths
for the sake of his name.
Even though I walk through the valley of the
shadow of death,
I will fear no evil, for you are with me;
your rod and your staff comfort me.

You set a table before me
in front of my enemies;
You anoint my head with oil;
my cup overflows.
Indeed, goodness and mercy will pursue me
all the days of my life;
I will dwell in the house of the Lord
for endless days.

Data: Younger Catholics increasingly Hispanic; over half of Gen-Z adults stay Catholic

By Gina Christian
OSV News

Younger Catholic adults in the U.S. are more likely to be Hispanic or Latino, while just over half of Gen-Z individuals raised Catholic are likely to retain that identity in adulthood.

Those and other insights on the nation's adult Catholics were shared by researcher Mark Gray in a March 23 analysis posted to Nineteen Sixty-four, the blog of the Center for Applied Research in the Apostolate at Georgetown University.

"We heard a lot in 2025 about a possible religious revival and about Catholics outnumbering Protestants in this younger demographic. What's in the numbers?" wrote Gray, director of CARA Catholic Polls, research associate professor at Georgetown, and editor of the blog.

To find out, CARA drew on data from the Comparative Election Survey (CES) in 2023 and the General Social Survey (GSS), a nationally representative survey of adults in the U.S. conducted since 1972.

CARA researchers used Pew Research Center's generational year definitions, which classify Gen-Z as those born between 1997 and 2012, Millennials as between 1981-1996, Generation X as between 1965-1980, and Baby Boomers as between 1946-1964. The Silent Generation was born

between 1928 and 1945.

Baby Boomers represent one third (33%, or 17.2 million) of the nation's adult Catholics, with Gen-X (13.1 million) and Millennials (12.7 million) each representing a quarter.

The Silent Generation counts 2.8 million, or 5% of U.S. adult Catholics.

Gray noted in his post that researchers could only "see" Gen-Z adults (age 18 and up), not younger members, in the survey data, but presently they comprise 13% (7.1 million) of adult Catholics.

"It's with these youngest Catholics that there seems to be the greatest interest in data," he said.

He noted the data available now shows that 2023 CES data showing Millennial and Gen-Z Catholics appearing to "match or eclipse" their Protestant counterparts was "more than likely" a fluctuation in the survey's margin of error. The CES data before and after 2023 doesn't align with that finding, and the GSS also did not show "any similar jump in Catholic affiliation" in those generations either.

"Surveys are always blurry images rather than picture portraits," he explained in his post.

For older generations, "Catholics trail Protestants in all observations" of CES and



OSV NEWS PHOTO | THERESA OROZCO, COURTESY OF NCADDHM

Dozens of young adults had the opportunity to speak with eight bishops about their joys, challenges, and hopes while participating in synodal circles on Oct. 23, 2025, as part of the annual conference of the National Catholic Association of Diocesan Directors of Hispanic Ministry (NCADDHM) in Newark, N.J. Younger Catholic adults in the U.S. are more likely to be Hispanic or Latino, while just over half of Gen-Z individuals raised Catholic are likely to retain that identity in adulthood, according to a March 23, 2026, data analysis by Mark Gray of the Center for Applied Research in the Apostolate.

Cómo superar el miedo a la muerte



**Obispo
Michael J. Sis**

Diócesis de
San Ángelo

tra hermana la muerte corporal, de la cual ningún hombre vivo puede escapar. ¡Ay de los que mueran en pecado mortal! Bienaventurados los que se encuentren en tu santísima voluntad, porque la segunda muerte no les hará daño” (*Cántico de las Criaturas*).

En los tesoros de nuestra tradición católica, Dios nos ha dado las herramientas básicas que necesitamos para prepararnos espiritualmente para la muerte: Amar a Dios. Reconciliarnos con Dios apartándonos de nuestros pecados. Aceptar su gracia y perdón. Amar al prójimo como a nosotros mismos. Reconciliarnos con los demás ofreciendo y pidiendo perdón. Orar. Realizar las obras de misericordia corporales y espirituales. Vivir las bienaventuranzas. Recibir los sacramentos con frecuencia – especialmente la confesión y la Comunión.

Creo que una de las razones principales por las que los humanos temen a la muerte es su visión limitada del cielo. Nuestra fe católica transforma este temor al abrirnos los ojos a la magnificencia celestial. Es la felicidad plena para siempre, donde vivimos en completa unión con Dios, un modo de existencia totalmente nuevo, más allá de los límites del espacio y el tiempo. El cielo trasciende nuestra capacidad humana de comprensión y descripción (CIC, núm. 1027). San Pablo afirma que Dios “puede realizar mucho más de lo que pedimos o imaginamos”

(Ef 3:20). Intenta imaginar cuál sería la mejor existencia posible; el cielo es infinitamente mejor. San Pablo dice: “Ni ojo vio, ni oído oyó, ni por mente humana han pasado las cosas que Dios ha preparado para los que lo aman” (1 Cor 2:9).

Todo lo que nos llena de alegría en esta vida será infinitamente más alegre en el cielo. Todo lo que es bello en esta vida será infinitamente más bello en el cielo. Todo lo que es amoroso en esta vida será infinitamente más amoroso en el cielo. Esta comprensión fue la que permitió a Santa Teresa de Lisieux tener plena confianza en el momento de su muerte. Ella dijo: “No estoy muriendo. ¡Estoy empezando a vivir!”

Cuanto más meditamos sobre el cielo, menos temeremos a la muerte. Los siguientes pasajes de las Escrituras nos ayudan a orientarnos hacia lo que Dios tiene preparado para nosotros:

- Jesús dice en Juan 14:2-3: “En la casa de mi Padre hay muchas habitaciones. De no ser así, no les habría dicho que voy a prepararles un lugar.” Cuando el apóstol Juan tuvo una visión de un cielo nuevo y una tierra nueva, dijo: “Él enjugará las lágrimas de sus ojos. Ya no habrá muerte ni llanto, ni llanto ni pena, pues todo lo anterior ha pasado” (Apocalipsis 21:4). Al describir nuestra vida en unión con Dios en el cielo, dijo: “Lo veremos tal como es” (1 Juan 3:2).

- San Pablo dice: “Para mí, la vida es Cristo, y la

muerte es ganancia” (Fil 1:21). Nos enseña que “nuestra patria es en el cielo, y de allí esperamos al Salvador que tanto anhelamos, Cristo Jesús, el Señor. Pues él cambiará nuestro cuerpo miserable usando esa fuerza con la que puede someter a sí el universo, y lo hará semejante a su propio cuerpo, del que irradia su gloria” (Fil 3:20-21). Pablo continúa diciendo: “Sabemos que si nuestra morada terrenal, una tienda de campaña, se destruye, tenemos de Dios un edificio, una morada no hecha por manos humanas, eterna en el cielo” (2 Cor 5:1). Expresa su anhelo de unión eterna con Dios en el cielo: “Preferiríamos dejar el cuerpo e ir a la casa del Señor” (2 Cor 5:8).

- San Pablo nos ayuda a superar el miedo a la muerte con esta enseñanza: “Hermanos, deseo que estén bien enterados acerca de los que ya descansan. No deben afligirse como hacen los demás que no tienen esperanza. ¿No creemos que Jesús murió y resucitó? De la misma manera, pues, Dios hará que Jesús se lleve con él a los que ahora descansan... Y estaremos con el Señor para siempre” (1 Tes 4:13-14, 17).

El Papa León XIV ofreció recientemente una hermosa reflexión sobre la muerte. Enseñó: “La muerte no es el final, sino el paso hacia la luz plena, hacia una feliz eternidad. El Resucitado nos ha precedido en la gran prueba de la muerte, saliendo victorioso gracias al poder del Amor divino. Así, nos ha preparado el lugar del descanso eterno, el hogar donde nos espera; nos ha dado la plenitud de la vida en la que ya no hay sombras ni contradicciones... La luz de su victoria ilumina nuestra propia mortalidad, recordándonos que la muerte no es el final, sino un paso de esta vida a la eternidad. Por lo tanto, la muerte no es algo que debemos temer, sino más bien es un momento para el que debemos prepararnos. Es una invitación a examinar nuestras vidas y vivir de tal manera que un día podamos participar no solo de la muerte de Cristo, sino también de la alegría de la vida eterna” (Audiencia General, 10 de diciembre de 2025).

Espacio de Oración

Salmo 23

El Señor es mi pastor: nada me falta;
en verdes pastos él me hace reposar.
A las aguas de descanso me conduce,
y reconforta mi alma.

Por el camino del bueno me dirige,
por amor de su nombre.

Aunque pase por quebradas oscuras,
no temo ningún mal,
porque tú estás conmigo
con tu vara y tu bastón,
y al verlas voy sin miedo.

La mesa has preparado para mí
frente a mis adversarios,
con aceites perfumas mi cabeza
y rellenas mi copa.

Irán conmigo la dicha y tu favor
mientras dure mi vida,
mi mansión será la casa del Señor
por largos, largos días.

Análisis de datos: Los católicos más jóvenes tienden a ser hispanos; más de la mitad de los adultos de la Generación Z continúan siendo católicos

Por Gina Christian
OSV News

Los adultos católicos más jóvenes de EE.UU. tienen más probabilidades de ser hispanos o latinos, mientras que poco más de la mitad de los miembros de la Generación Z criados en la fe católica suelen conservar esa identidad en la edad adulta.

El investigador Mark Gray compartió estas y otras ideas sobre los católicos adultos del país en un análisis del 23 de marzo publicado en Nineteen Sixty-four, el blog del Centro de Investigación Aplicada para el Apostolado de la Universidad de Georgetown, conocido como CARA, por sus siglas en inglés.

“En 2025 se habló mucho de un posible resurgimiento religioso y de que los católicos superarían en número a los protestantes en este grupo demográfico más joven. ¿Qué revelan los números?”, escribió Gray, director de CARA Catholic Polls, profesor asociado de investigación en Georgetown y editor del blog.

Para averiguarlo, CARA se basó en datos de la Encuesta Electoral Comparativa (CES, por sus siglas en inglés) de 2023 y de la Encuesta Social General (GSS en inglés), una encuesta representativa a nivel nacional de adultos en los EE.UU. que se lleva a cabo desde 1972.

Los investigadores de CARA utilizaron las definiciones de años generacionales del Pew Research Center, que clasifican a la Generación Z como aquellas personas nacidas entre 1997 y 2012, a los Millennials como los nacidos entre 1981 y 1996, a la Generación X como los nacidos entre 1965 y 1980, y a los Baby Boomers como los

nacidos entre 1946 y 1964. La llamada Silent Generation nació entre 1928 y 1945.

Los baby boomers representan un tercio (33%, o 17,2 millones) de los católicos adultos del país, mientras que la Generación X (13,1 millones) y los millennials (12,7 millones) representan cada uno una cuarta parte.

La Generación Silenciosa (Silent Generation) cuenta con 2,8 millones, o el 5% de los católicos adultos de EE.UU.

Gray señaló en su publicación que los investigadores solo pudieron “ver” a los adultos de la Generación Z (de 18 años en adelante), y no a los miembros más jóvenes, en los datos de la encuesta, pero que actualmente estos constituyen el 13% (7,1 millones) de los católicos adultos.

“Parece haber un mayor interés en los datos sobre estos católicos más jóvenes”, afirmó.

Señaló que la información disponible actualmente muestra que los datos de la CES de 2023, según los cuales los católicos de la Generación Y (millennial) y la Generación Z parecían “igualar o superar” a sus homólogos protestantes, eran “más que probablemente” una fluctuación

Véase DATOS, Página 5

En una foto de archivo se ve a jóvenes rezando durante un encuentro regional de un día de oración en Herndon, Virginia. El 23 de marzo de 2026, se publicó un análisis de datos del realizado por Mark Gray del Centro de Investigación Aplicada para el Apostolado (CARA, por sus siglas en inglés) que indicaba que los adultos católicos más jóvenes en EE.UU. son más propensos a ser hispanos o latinos, mientras que poco más de la mitad de los individuos de la Generación Z que fueron criados como católicos probablemente mantendrán esa identidad en la edad adulta.



FOTO OSV NEWS | TYLER ORSBURN/CADDHM

CALENDARS

Please pray for our clergy



April

- 1 Rev. Bonaventure Anuforo (B)
 2 Rev. Ignatius Edet (B)
 2 Deacon Lazaro Sevier (D — 2009)
 3 Deacon Edward Martinez (D — 1985)
 3 Deacon Alan Neff (D — 2016)
 4 Deacon Andres Hernandez (D — 2013)
 4 Deacon Hector Mendez (B)
 4 Rev. Jim Nugent, C.Ss.R (D — 2012)
 7 Deacon Jerry Treviño (D — 2017)
 12 Rev. Patrick Akpanobong (B)
 13 Rev. Innocent Eziefule (B)
 16 Deacon Eliseo Carrillo (D — 1989)
 17 Deacon Antonio Gonzalez (D — 2025)
 17 Deacon Daniel Holguin (B)
 17 Rev. Msgr. James Plagens (D — 2015)
 17 Rev. Lee Zimmerman, CM (D — 2000)
 19 Rev. John Lavin (D — 1983)
 19 Rev. Georgius Sexton, OMI (D — 1979)
 19 Rev. Jeevan Kamalapuram (O — 2007)
 20 Deacon Claudio Sanchez (B)
 21 Rev. Thomas Leahy, SAC (D — 1969)
 22 Deacon Jesus Vasquez (D — 2018)
 23 Rev. Louis Droll (D — 2006)
 23 Deacon Walter Hammons (B)
 24 Rev. Msgr. Fred Nawarskas (B)
 24 Rev. Balachandra Nagipogu (O — 2006)
 25 Deacon Dwain Hennessey (B)
 25 Deacon Marcos Mata (B)
 25 Deacon Juan Muñoz (D — 2007)
 27 Rev. John Collet, OMI (D — 2022)
 29 Deacon Robert Daigle (D — 1986)
 30 Rev. Gilbert Rodriguez (B)
 30 Rev. Joe Barbieri (O — 1988)

May

- 1 Deacon Eduardo Castillo (B)
 1 Deacon Leslie Maiman (O — 2015)
 2 Rev. Russell Schultz (D — 2004)
 2 Deacon Luis Villarreal (B)
 5 Rev. Clifford Blackburn, OMI (D — 2005)
 7 Rev. Msgr. Kevin Heyburn (D — 2001)
 8 Deacon Julio Carrasco (D — 2025)
 8 Deacon Stanley Sienkiewich (B)
 9 Deacon Juan Arguello (D — 2019)
 9 Rev. Tom Diab (D — 2007)
 9 Rev. Leo Diersing (D — 1999)
 13 Deacon Leslie Maiman (B)
 13 Rev. Bhaskar Morugudi (O — 1999)
 14 Deacon Manuel Luevano (D — 2019)
 15 Deacon Wayne Rock (D — 2006)
 18 Rev. Arokiadoss Arokiasamy (O — 2013)
 18 Rev. David Herrera (B)
 18 Bishop Michael Pfeifer, OMI (B)
 18 Deacon Clemente Villa (B)
 19 Deacon Ronald Stegenga (B)
 20 Deacon Robert Moreno (B)
 21 Deacon Ricardo Torres (B)
 22 Deacon Michael LaMonica (B)
 22 Rev. Kevin Lenius (O — 2021)
 22 Rev. Emilio Sosa (B)
 25 Rev. Tom Barley (O — 1991)
 25 Rev. Terry Brenon (O — 1991)
 25 Rev. Martin Hubbs, OCarm (O — 2012)
 25 Rev. Balachandra Nagipogu (B)
 26 Rev. Bonaventure Anuforo (O — 2007)
 27 Rev. Charles Greenwell (O — 1982)
 27 Rev. Msgr. Fred Nawarskas (O — 1967)
 27 Rev. Mark Woodruff (O — 1972)
 28 Rev. Francis Hynes, CM (D — 1996)
 29 Rev. Msgr. Bernard Gully (O — 1962)
 30 Rev. Felix Archibong (O — 2015)
 30 Rev. Ryan Rojo (O — 2015)
 31 Rev. Joey Faylona (O — 2003)
 31 Rev. Gilbert Rodriguez (O — 1974)
 31 Rev. Rodney White (O — 2003)

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

(Dates of birth and ordination given for living clergy; date of death for deceased.)



Bishop's Calendar

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

April 2026

- 2 SAN ANGELO, Sacred Heart Cathedral, Mass of the Lord's Supper at 6:30 p.m.
 3 SAN ANGELO, St. Margaret, Good Friday Procession and Way of the Cross at 12:00 noon
 3 SAN ANGELO, Sacred Heart Cathedral, Service of the Lord's Passion at 6:30 p.m.
 4 SAN ANGELO, Sacred Heart Cathedral, Easter Vigil at 8:30 p.m.
 5 CARLSBAD, St. Therese, Mass and blessing of narthex at 9:00 a.m.
 5 SAN ANGELO, Sacred Heart Cathedral, Spanish Mass at 12:00 p.m.
 8 BALLINGER, St. Mary, Confirmation Mass at 6:00 p.m.
 11 FORT STOCKTON, Our Lady of Guadalupe (St. Agnes), Confirmation Mass at 5:30 p.m.
 12 RANKIN, St. Thomas the Apostle, Confirmation Mass at 9:00 a.m.
 12 BIG LAKE, St. Margaret of Cortona, Confirmation Mass at 12:30 p.m.
 12 MIDLAND, The Way Retreat Center, Project Miriam at 6:00 p.m.
 14 SAN ANGELO, Diocesan Pastoral Center, Catholic Charitable Foundation Board meeting at 10:00 a.m.
 15 SAN ANGELO, Diocesan Pastoral Center, Priest Personnel Board meeting at 10:30 a.m.
 15 WALL, St. Ambrose, Confirmation Mass at 6:00 p.m.
 16 SAN ANGELO, Diocesan Pastoral Center, Vocation Team meeting at 1:00 p.m.
 17 MIDLAND, St. Ann, Confirmation Mass at 6:30 p.m.
 18 MIDLAND, Holy Cross Catholic High School, Diocesan Schools Commission at 9:30 a.m.
 18 SAN ANGELO, Christ the King Retreat Center, St. John Catholic Campus Outreach Spring Gala at 6:00 p.m.
 19 GARDEN CITY, St. Lawrence, Confirmation Mass at 10:00 a.m.
 20 SAN ANGELO, ISD Board of Trustees meeting at 5:15 p.m.
 21 MIDLAND, Our Lady of Guadalupe, Deanery meeting at 10:00 a.m.
 22 COLEMAN, Sacred Heart, Confirmation Mass at 6:00 p.m.
 23 SAN ANGELO, Diocesan Liturgical Commission meeting at 1:00 p.m.
 24-25 DALLAS, Knights of Columbus State Convention
 26 GREENWOOD, St. Rita of Cascia, Confirmation Mass at 11:30 a.m.
 26 MIDLAND, San Miguel Arcángel, Confirmation Mass at 5:00 p.m.
 27 SAN ANGELO, Christ the King Retreat Center, Diocesan Mission Council meeting at 4:00 p.m.
 30 ODESSA, St. Elizabeth Ann Seton, Confirmation Mass at 6:00 p.m.

May 2026

- 1 MIDLAND, St. Stephen, Confirmation Mass at 7:00 p.m.
 2 ODESSA, St. Mary, Confirmation Mass at 10:00 a.m.
 2 MIDLAND, Petroleum Club, Holy Cross Catholic High School Black and Gold Ball
 2 ODESSA, St. Mary, Marriage Jubilee Mass at 2:00 p.m.
 3 ANDREWS, Our Lady of Lourdes, Confirmation Mass at 10:30 a.m.
 4 SAN ANGELO, Sacred Heart Cathedral, Confirmation Mass at 6:30 p.m.
 6 ABILENE, Holy Family, Confirmation Mass at 6:30 p.m.
 7 SAN ANGELO, Diocesan Pastoral Center, Priest Pension Committee meeting at 10:30 a.m.
 12 ODESSA, St. Joseph, Confirmation Mass at 6:00 p.m.
 13 MIDLAND, Our Lady of Guadalupe, Confirmation Mass at 6:00 p.m.
 14 SAN ANGELO, Diocesan Pastoral Center, Priestly Life and Formation Committee meeting at 10:00 a.m.
 15 GARDEN CITY, Hoelscher Pit Stone Quarry, Rural Life Mass at 6:00 p.m.
 16 SAN ANGELO, Sacred Heart Cathedral, Lady in Blue Mass at 4:00 p.m., followed by Rosary Procession
 17 SAN ANGELO, Holy Angels, Confirmation Mass at 11:00 a.m.
 19 ABILENE, St. Francis, Confirmation Mass at 6:30 p.m.
 20 ODESSA, Holy Redeemer, Confirmation Mass at 7:00 p.m.
 22 MIDLAND, Holy Cross Catholic High School, Graduation at 10:00 a.m.
 23 MIDLAND, Our Lady of Guadalupe, Diaconal Ordination of Joshua Basse at 10:30 a.m.
 23 BIG SPRING, Holy Trinity, Confirmation Mass at 5:00 p.m.
 24 SONORA, St. Ann, Confirmation Mass at 10:00 a.m.
 24 SHEFFIELD, Good Shepherd, Confirmation Mass at 2:00 p.m.
 24 OZONA, Our Lady of Perpetual Help, Confirmation Mass at 6:00 p.m.
 28 SAN ANGELO, Diocesan Pastoral Center, Presbyteral Council meeting at 11:00 a.m.
 28 STANTON, St. Joseph, Confirmation Mass at 7:00 p.m.
 29 SAN ANGELO, Christ the King Retreat Center, STACTS Retreat at 11:30 a.m., hear Confessions at 3:00 p.m.
 30 BROWNWOOD, St. Mary Queen of Peace, Confirmation Mass at 5:30 p.m.
 31 ABILENE, St. Vincent Pallotti, Confirmation Mass at 5:30 p.m.



Christ the King Retreat Center

April 2026

- 3 CKRC Offices closed for Good Friday
 9 DOSA Staff Meeting, Mass & Lunch
 10-12 Deacon Formation
 18 ASU Newman Center Gala
 20 Diocesan Mission Council Meeting
 24-26 Engaged Encounter/Natural Family Planning
 27 Heart of Mercy Prayer Group

May 2026

- 7 OEC Day of Reflection
 11 Heart of Mercy Prayer Group
 25 CKRC Offices Closed for Memorial Day
 29-31 Small Town Women's ACTS

Special Collections

April 26, 2026 Catholic Home Missions Appeal

The bishops' Subcommittee on Catholic Home Missions is a grant-making agency. It offers financial support to missionary activities that strengthen the Catholic Church in the United States and in its territories and former territories. Through its annual fundraising campaign, the Catholic Home Missions Appeal, Catholic Home Missions educates American Catholics about mission needs and invites them to assist fellow Catholics in the practice of the faith.

May 17, 2026 Catholic Communication Campaign

Through websites, social networks, television, radio, and print, the Catholic Communication Campaign (CCC) helps the Church spread the Gospel message through the media locally and nationally. Half of all donations to the CCC collected in our diocese stay in our diocese to support our local communication needs, such as diocesan publications like the *West Texas Angelus*.

Noah Hernandez installed as acolyte

On March 1, 2026, 33 seminarians studying at the Pontifical North American College in the Vatican were installed as acolytes in a Mass at the school's Chapel of the Immaculate Conception. Among this group was Noah Jakub Hernandez, a seminarian for the Diocese of San Angelo.

The installation was conferred by Archbishop Samuele Sangalli, Adjunct Secretary of the Dicastery for Evangelization.

In his homily on the second Sunday of Lent, when the Installation of the Ministry of Acolyte took place, Archbishop Sangalli preached on the Gospel passage of Matthew 17:1-9: "As Jesus brought the disciples to the high mountain to witness his transfiguration as a beloved Son, he has brought you to Rome to be transfigured by his glory that is revealed in you as beloved sons." Arch-

bishop Sangalli continued to address those who would be receiving the Ministry of Acolyte and encouraged them to live out the Gospel by evangelizing through the example of their lives: "Remember, that it is the Lord who has chosen you for this ministry to serve at his altar, and you are called to respond by giving of yourself completely in service of his body and blood." He went on to exhort those who were to be installed as acolytes, "Give of yourselves as bread to the Church as Jesus gave of himself as bread for the world. The portion that has been given to you is to be shared with others."

In the rite of the Institution of Acolyte, Archbishop Sangalli placed the paten, which contains the hosts for the celebration of Mass, in the hands of each candidate. He then said, "Take this vessel with bread for

the celebration of the Eucharist. Make your life worthy of your service at the table of the Lord and of his Church."

The seminarians, currently in their second year of formation at the college, have two additional years of theological studies before being ordained to the priesthood in their home dioceses.

The Pontifical North American College serves as the American seminary in Rome. Founded in 1859 by Blessed Pius IX, the college has formed over 5,000 priests in the heart of the Church for service in dioceses around the United States and Australia. The college strengthens the bonds between Rome and local Churches worldwide, and it allows its students a first-hand encounter of the Church's rich religious and cultural heritage.



Noah Hernandez

DATA

Continued from Page 2

GSS data since 1972, he said.

Still, Gray told OSV News, "there is a narrowing" between Catholics and Protestants in the younger age cohorts.

"Protestants have really seen their affiliation rates decline over time, much more than Catholics," Gray said, speaking by phone with OSV News. "In fact, Catholics have remained relatively stable, between 20% and 25%."

CARA found that in 2024, 36% of adult Catholics attended Mass at least once a month, 65% prayed at least once a week, and 76% said their religion is "somewhat" or "very" important to them.

Gen-Z adult Catholics were more likely to attend Mass at least once a month (39%) than Gen-X (30%) and Baby Boomer (35%) Catholics.

At the same time, Gray wrote, "Gen-Z were less likely than older Catholics to pray at least weekly and to say that their religion is 'somewhat' or 'very' important to them."

Data indicates those in Gen-Z who are raised Catholic are less likely than other age cohorts to retain that identity in adulthood.

Gray observed that since 2021 — when Gen-Z

numbers became "visible in large enough numbers in the GSS" to be statistically significant — their retention rates in the Catholic faith have "fallen each year to 52% in 2024."

In other words, "only about half of Gen-Z who are raised as Catholic remain Catholic as adults," he said.

However, Gray told OSV News he "would expect that number to rise" over time, since many young adults raised Catholic often distance themselves from their childhood faith before eventually returning to it.

By comparison, between 2014 and 2024, higher retention rates of the Catholic faith were seen in Baby Boomers (68% to 62%), Generation X (70% to 60%) and Millennials (64% to 53%) even as those cohorts saw overall declines during that decade.

Adult conversions to the Catholic faith after the age of 16 remain in the range of 2% to 3% of the share of U.S. adults across all age cohorts, said Gray.

Conversions among Gen-Z adults in the U.S. increased from 0.4% in 2021 and 0.3% in 2022. In 2024, that share rose to 2.9%, consistent with other generations in recent years.

"A 2.9% convert percentage in 2024 is not an outlier from other generations in recent years and brings Gen-Z in line with prevailing patterns," Gray wrote.

Gray said the low rates in 2021 and 2022 may have

been due to two factors.

First, as a younger generation, the Gen-Z cohort has had "less time" to "make a religious switch," he said.

Secondly, he said, the period "overlaps with the COVID-19 pandemic," when potential converts may have been unable to enroll in OCIA (Order of Christian Initiation for Adults) classes.

He also pointed out that "significant change" could be seen across generations in "racial and ethnic diversity."

Data shows that 40% of Gen-Z Catholics self-identify as Hispanic or Latino, compared to 18% among their Baby Boomer counterparts, he wrote.

Less than half of Gen-Z (47%) and Millennial (46%) Catholic adults identify themselves as white and non-Hispanic, Gray noted. He added that "the number of Catholics who self-identify as something other than Hispanic or non-Hispanic white is also larger among Millennials and Gen-Z than older Catholics."

Gray told OSV News that statistical evidence of an overall rise in Catholics is not yet available.

"It could be true. We hope it's true; we hope that there's this big influx of new Catholics," he said. "We won't know until next year."

Gina Christian is a multimedia reporter for OSV News. Follow her on X @GinaJesseReina.

DATOS

Continúa de Página 3

dentro del margen de error de la encuesta. Los datos de la CES anteriores y posteriores a 2023 no concuerdan con ese hallazgo, y la GSS tampoco mostró "ningún aumento similar en la afiliación católica" en esas generaciones.

"Las encuestas son siempre imágenes borrosas en lugar de retratos nítidos", explicó en su publicación.

En el caso de las generaciones mayores, "los católicos van a la zaga de los protestantes en todas las observaciones" de los datos del CES y la GSS desde 1972, señaló.

Aun así, Gray declaró a OSV News que "se está reduciendo la brecha" entre católicos y protestantes en los grupos de edad más jóvenes.

"Los protestantes realmente han visto disminuir sus tasas de afiliación con el tiempo, mucho más que los católicos", dijo Gray, hablando por teléfono con OSV News. "De hecho, los católicos se han mantenido relativamente estables, entre el 20% y el 25%."

CARA reveló que, en 2024, el 36% de todos los católicos adultos asistía a Misa al menos una vez al mes, el 65% rezaba al menos una vez a la semana y el 76% afirmaba que su religión era "algo" o "muy" importante para ellos.

Los católicos adultos de la Generación Z eran más propensos a asistir a Misa al menos una vez al mes (39%) que los católicos de la Generación X (30%) y los de la generación de los baby boomers (35%).

Al mismo tiempo, escribió Gray, "la Generación Z era menos propensa que los católicos de más edad a rezar al menos una vez a la semana y a decir que su religión es

'algo' o 'muy' importante para ellos".

Los datos indican que los miembros de la Generación Z que han sido criados como católicos son menos propensos que otros grupos de edad a conservar esa identidad en la edad adulta.

Gray observó que desde 2021 --cuando las cifras de la Generación Z se hicieron "lo suficientemente visibles en la GSS" como para ser estadísticamente significativas-- sus tasas de retención en la fe católica han "caído cada año hasta el 52% en 2024".

En otras palabras, "solo alrededor de la mitad de la Generación Z que se crió como católica sigue siendo católica en la edad adulta", dijo.

Sin embargo, Gray dijo a OSV News que "esperaría que esa cifra aumente" con el tiempo, ya que muchos adultos jóvenes criados como católicos a menudo se distancian de la fe de su infancia antes de volver finalmente a ella.

En comparación, entre 2014 y 2024, se observaron tasas de retención más altas de la fe católica en los baby boomers (del 68% al 62%), la Generación X (del 70% al 60%) y los millennials (del 64% al 53%), incluso cuando esos grupos experimentaron descensos generales durante esa década.

Las conversiones de adultos a la fe católica después de los 16 años se mantienen en el rango del 2% al 3% de la población adulta de EE.UU. en todos los grupos de edad, señaló Gray.

Las conversiones entre los adultos de la Generación Z en EE.UU. aumentaron del 0,4% en 2021 y del 0,3% en 2022. En 2024, ese porcentaje subió al 2,9%, en consonancia con otras generaciones en los últimos años.

"Un porcentaje de conversión del 2,9% en 2024 no es un valor atípico en comparación con otras generaciones

en los últimos años y sitúa a la Generación Z en línea con los patrones predominantes", escribió Gray.

Gray señaló que las bajas tasas en 2021 y 2022 pueden haberse debido a dos factores.

En primer lugar, al ser una generación más joven, la cohorte de la Generación Z ha tenido "menos tiempo" para "cambiar de religión", afirmó.

En segundo lugar, señaló, ese período "coincide con la pandemia de COVID-19", cuando es posible que los posibles conversos no hayan podido inscribirse en los cursos de la OCIA (Orden de Iniciación Cristiana para Adultos).

También destacó que se observaba un "cambio significativo" entre las generaciones en cuanto a la "diversidad racial y étnica".

Los datos muestran que el 40% de los católicos de la Generación Z se identifican a sí mismos como hispanos o latinos, en comparación con el 18% de sus homólogos de la generación del baby boom, escribió.

Menos de la mitad de los adultos católicos de la Generación Z (47%) y de la generación del milenio (46%) se identifican como blancos y no hispanos, señaló Gray. Añadió que "el número de católicos que se identifican como algo distinto de hispanos o blancos no hispanos también es mayor entre los millennials y la Generación Z que entre los católicos de más edad".

Gray dijo a OSV News que aún no se dispone de evidencia estadística de un aumento general de los católicos.

"Podría ser cierto. Esperamos que sea cierto; esperamos que haya esta gran afluencia de nuevos católicos", dijo. "No lo sabremos hasta el próximo año".

Gina Christian es reportera multimedia de OSV News. Sígalala en X en @GinaJesseReina.

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 Angelo 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 Angelo, 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).

Charismatic Corner:

Koinonia and common witness — the path of unity today

By Matteo Calisi

The Conversations between Catholics and Orthodox in the Holy Spirit, which are taking place this year on the eve of the Week of Prayer for Christian Unity, take place at a time of particular historical and spiritual significance for ecumenical dialogue. They are intended not only to be a space for theological reflection, but above all a place of real encounter lived in the Spirit between Christians belonging to different ecclesial traditions, called to rediscover one another as brothers and sisters in the same apostolic faith.

The objective that animates these Conversations is to foster an authentic *koinonia*, a lived communion that translates into common witness in the contemporary world. It is not simply a doctrinal confrontation, but a shared spiritual journey, in which the Holy Spirit is recognized as the principle of communion and bond of unity of the Church.

In this perspective, we can understand the profound link between the Bari Conversations and the recent Apostolic Journey of Pope Leo XIV to Turkey and Lebanon. This pilgrimage represented a return to the roots of the Christian faith and an encounter with churches that, in complex and often wounded contexts, live ecclesial plurality daily as a vocation to dialogue. In particular, the stop in Turkey took on a symbolic value of extraordinary importance, since it was linked to the memory of the first great event of unity of the Church: The Council of Nicaea in 325.

The Holy Father's pilgrimage together with the Ecumenical Patriarch of Constantinople Bartholomew I, 1700 years after that founding event, recalls the origin of the faith professed together and invites the churches to rediscover what unites them more deeply than what divides them. Nicaea remains the theological and spiritual place where Christians have unanimously confessed the one faith in the Son consubstantial with the Father, recognizing in the unity of faith the foundation of ecclesial unity. Returning to Nicaea today means recognizing that unity precedes all divisions historically and theologically.

A similar message emerges from the Lebanese stage of the apostolic journey. Lebanon, for centuries, has been a living laboratory of coexistence between Christian confessions and different religions. In a fragile and conflict-ridden context, Christians are called to offer a daily witness of dialogue, communion, and fidelity to the Gospel. The pope's presence in Lebanon reaffirmed the value of Christian witness in situations of historical suffering, but also of extraordinary spiritual richness.

It was not a merely diplomatic gesture, but rather a pastoral and prophetic act, which shows how ecumenism is built by walking together, by meeting people and the churches in the concreteness of their history.

In this sense, Pope Leo XIV, in meeting the churches of the East and the different Christian communities, makes visible a unity already at work in the Holy Spirit, although not yet fully realized. It is a gesture that speaks to all the churches as an encouragement not to remain prisoners of the wounds of the past, but to direct our gaze towards a unity that belongs to God's future.

In the apostolic letter *In Unitate Fidei*, promulgated on the occasion of the 1700th anniversary of the Council of Nicaea, the pope forcefully recalled the value of the Nicene Creed as the basis and criterion of the ecumenical journey, pointing to the Trinitarian dynamic as the very model of unity in legitimate diversity. This unity, founded in the Holy Spirit, is not a compromise between differences, but a real communion that respects and assumes multiplicity without dissolving it.

Beyond ethnic, cultural, and ritual differences, Christians truly participate in the one paschal mystery of Christ. Diversity, when reconciled in the Spirit, does not constitute an obstacle to unity, but can become a richness, as multiple expressions of the one apostolic faith. What the Spirit asks as the indispensable foundation of the journey towards unity is the common profession of faith contained in the Councils of Nicaea and Constantinople.

The link between the apostolic journey and the concrete life of Christian communities is direct and vital. It invites us to live unity not only in official texts, but in



Matteo Calisi (standing, second from right) gave a talk March 10 at Sacred Heart Parish in Abilene on "Unity in the Holy Spirit" during the Hearts in One Accord prayer meeting. He is pictured here with the music team for the prayer meeting. COURTESY

common prayer, mutual acceptance, and pastoral collaboration, starting from the particular church in which each one lives and bears witness to the Gospel.

In the light of all this, one understands the profound meaning of today's Conversations between Catholics and Orthodox in the Holy Spirit. Unity is not an ideal abstraction, but is born of encounter, shared memory, and common hope. These conversations constitute a prophetic and concrete sign of the ecumenical journey of the churches, showing that ecumenism is not static, but dynamic, in continuous pilgrimage. Conversations translate that message into lived experience. In Bari what the pope indicates is done: mutual listening, common prayer, sincere confrontation between Catholics and Orthodox.

The profound symbolic value of Bari is inscribed in this theological horizon, a city that for centuries has been configured as a privileged bridge between the Christian East and West. The custody of the relics of St. Nicholas of Myra (in present-day Turkey), a thaumaturgic bishop universally venerated by the churches of East and West and who, according to a medieval hagiographic tradition attested by the Golden Legend (thirteenth century), is said to have participated in the Council of Nicaea (325 A.D.), represents an eloquent and concrete sign of the possible communion between the different ecclesial traditions. St. Nicholas thus offers himself as an eminent witness of a Church called to breathe with two lungs.

"Happy Bari, a city that preserves the bones of St. Nicholas, a land of encounter and dialogue with our Christian brothers and sisters of the East." This is how Pope Benedict XVI expressed himself during his pastoral visit, strongly reaffirming his ecumenical commitment: "I am aware that for this the manifestation of good feelings is not enough. Concrete gestures are needed that enter into souls and stir consciences, urging each one to that interior conversion which is the prerequisite for all pro-

gress on the path of ecumenism. ... I ask all of you to take the path of that spiritual ecumenism which, in prayer, opens the doors to the Holy Spirit, the only one who can create unity."

It is no coincidence that, precisely in continuity with this vision, Pope Francis defined Bari as the "Capital of Unity" during the Meeting with the Bishops of the Mediterranean, held in the Basilica of St. Nicholas in 2020, recognizing in the city a prophetic sign of communion between East and West and an ecclesial vocation rooted in prayer and dialogue.

The Bari Conversations want to translate this message into concrete paths, locally and internationally. The message is clear: Christian unity is not an abstract idea, but a concrete journey. In Bari, different churches meet to pray, dialogue, and bear witness together, putting the Holy Spirit at the center. Here ecumenism is not theory, but a living tradition that continues to generate common encounters and paths.

The greatest fruit that is hoped for from these Conversations, and which we wish to leave as a lasting legacy, is a renewed ecumenical spirituality: Christians capable of recognizing one another as brothers and sisters, of walking together and of offering the world a credible witness of unity, especially in a time marked by divisions and deep wounds.

This essay is an excerpt of Matteo Calisi's presentation at Conversations Between Catholics and Orthodox in the Holy Spirit, held Jan. 17-18, 2026, in Bari, Italy.

Go to CatholicCharismatic.com to find our San Angelo diocesan prayer groups and events.

Mission of Catholic Charismatic Renewal: BRING baptism in the Holy Spirit to the whole Church; BUILD unity in the Body of Christ; SERVE the Poor.

Obstetrician and pediatrician needed for Honduran medical mission

Last year, the Diocese of San Angelo — under the banner of San Rafael Expeditions — completed its first-ever Medical Brigada to Honduras, and it was a tremendous success. Our providers treated nearly 600 patients, and the experience was deeply rewarding for everyone involved.

As we prepare for our 2nd annual Medical Brigada, we are seeking an Obstetrician and a Pediatrician to join our team. These specialties were among the most in-demand last year, and we are committed to offering these vital services to our patients once again.

Are you feeling a calling to medical mission work? This is a remarkable opportunity to use your gifts in service to those who need them the most. You would be joining a dedicated 14-member mission team in Roatan and the highlands of Honduras, where access to specialized medical care is scarce.

Trip Details:
Dates: July 1-8
Cost: ~\$2,500 (all-inclusive)

We believe this work is a true expression of our

faith — serving the Lord by serving those in need.

"And the King will answer, 'Truly I tell you, whatever you did for one of the least of these brothers and sisters of mine, you did for me.'" — Matthew 25:40

If you are interested or would like more information, please don't hesitate to reach out immediately. We would be honored to have you join us.

Please contact Janelle (325-668-3397) or Dennis (325-669-6283) with questions and to sign up for what will be a life-changing experience for you and those you meet.

Five young adults 'Shaping the Future'

By Angela Garcia

All great things begin with a single step. In alignment with our newly established Pastoral Plan, the theme is brought to life: "Called to Flourish: Growing into Our Full Potential." Our diocese has formed a meaningful partnership with the Mexican American Catholic College to launch an inspiring program titled "Shaping the Future." This initiative reflects our commitment to nurturing the spiritual and leadership potential of young adults within our diocese, leading them on a journey that strengthens their faith and empowers them to serve the Church.

This program specifically caters to young adults aged 18 to 35 across our diocese, providing them with an impactful opportunity to engage with the teachings of the Church while developing their leadership skills in a supportive environment. The diocese is immensely grateful to the esteemed Lily Foundation Endowment for fully funding this transformative leadership development initiative.

We firmly believe that the young adults participating in this program will emerge as passionate and transformative leaders within the Catholic Church. By intentionally focusing on their potential contributions in key areas — such as pastoral leadership, theological reflection, cultural identity, apostolic vision, and formation activities — we aim to ignite a strong sense of confidence and purpose in their hearts, empowering them to become true disciples of Christ.

To date, five enthusiastic young adults from diverse backgrounds across our diocese have immersed themselves in this program, participating in a series of on-line classes over the past seven months. To support the program and accompany the young adults, the diocese provided a companion to guide them on their journey. Oscar Masga is a member of Holy Family Catholic Church in Abilene, where he serves on the parish council, assists with youth ministry, teaches a faith formation class, and serves as an OCIA teacher. These classes are designed to conclude in June 2026, setting these young adults on a path of faith and leadership development.

Throughout their studies, the participants have gained profound insights into longstanding theological questions. This has deepened their understanding of the rich traditions of the Catholic faith. They are cultivating essential leadership competencies that will serve them both in their local parishes and in the broader community. Most importantly, they are discovering the specific pastoral ministry to which Jesus is calling them. By fostering a solid foundation in their Catholic faith, they are learning to discern how to fulfill their God-given potential in service to others.



COURTESY

The young adults in the "Shaping the Future" program recently held a retreat at St. Vincent Pallotti Parish in Abilene, one of two retreats to be held this year. The retreat was led by Oscar Masga. Pictured, left to right, are: Leanna Garcia of St. Mary Parish San Angelo, Angelica Armas of San Miguel Arcángel Parish in Midland, Rebecca Arredondo of St. Francis of Assisi Parish in Abilene, Bishop Michael J. Sis, Elijsa Hernandez of Holy Family Parish in Abilene, and Wes Neinast of Holy Family Parish in Abilene.

Moreover, the young adults are dedicating time to reflect on the unique challenges of youth and young adult ministry. They are earnestly embracing the message of *Christus Vivit*, which calls for a genuine and dynamic participation of young people in the life of the Church. Through prayer, mentorship, and support, they are developing an apostolic vision that resonates with their peers' lived experiences — ensuring that the Church remains a relevant and welcoming space for all.

One participant shared, "'Shaping the Future' is giving me the tools and confidence to live out my faith as a leader. I now see myself as part of something bigger — a Church on mission."

"Shaping the Future" is not just a program; it is a journey of faith that empowers our young adults to grow into their full potential as leaders and witnesses of the Gospel. We look forward to witnessing the fruits of this transformative experience as they take their next steps in service to the Church and the world. If you would like to sign up for the next cohort, which begins in September 2026, contact Angela Garcia at 325-651-7500 or angela.garcia@sanangelodiocese.org.

Angela Garcia is Coordinator for Youth, Young Adult, and Campus Ministry for the Diocese of San Angelo's Office of Evangelization and Catechesis.

Diocese updates adult faith formation format

By Kelly Tyler

The Office of Evangelization and Catechesis has a long history of offering various formation classes to help those interested grow in their knowledge of our Catholic faith. The format, topics, and even names of the programs have been different over the approximate 40-year history. Most recently, you may have heard of our Basic and Advanced Formation programs.

One of the goals of the Office of Evangelization and Catechesis is to regularly evaluate our offerings, solicit feedback, and make changes and adjustments as needed. One area we have been evaluating for a few years is our formation program. After much consideration and consultation, we are excited to share the ways that our formation offerings will be

changing with the 2026–2027 academic year.

Like most of our offerings, our formation program is, and will continue to be, open to all adults in the Diocese of San Angelo. Our goal is to provide an opportunity for anybody who is interested not only to learn more about the faith, but also to understand how to live out our faith in our daily lives and how to share it with others.

We are continuing this great tradition of providing formation opportunities for the Diocese of San Angelo with our new program called Foundations of Faith. This will be a three-year program, and upon successful completion participants will receive a certificate of completion from the Office of Evangelization and Catechesis. This new three-year Foundations of Faith program will replace our existing

Basic and Advanced formation programs.

We will be continuing to cover topics that were included in Basic and Advanced Formation such as Church history, morality, sacraments, Bible basics, and others. An added component will also allow individuals to obtain more specialized certificates in topics such as catechesis, youth ministry, disabilities in ministry, adult formation, and leadership in ministry.

Classes will be offered in both English and Spanish. The classes will be a mix of synchronous classes taught live over Zoom on particular Saturdays and asynchronous classes offered through the University of Dayton's online offerings in their Virtual Learning Community for Faith Formation (VLCFF).

With our new program there is more flexibility offered to help manage learn-

ing about the faith amidst our busy schedules. For example, if there is a singular topic that interests you, there will be the possibility of signing up for just that one class. For those interested in receiving the certificate of completion, you will have four years from beginning the courses to complete the three-year program. This allows flexibility in when you take the VLCFF courses through the University of Dayton.

More information and registration will be available soon on our website. For more information contact Kelly Tyler in the Office of Evangelization and Catechesis by email at ktyler@sanangelodiocese.org or by phone at 325-651-7500.

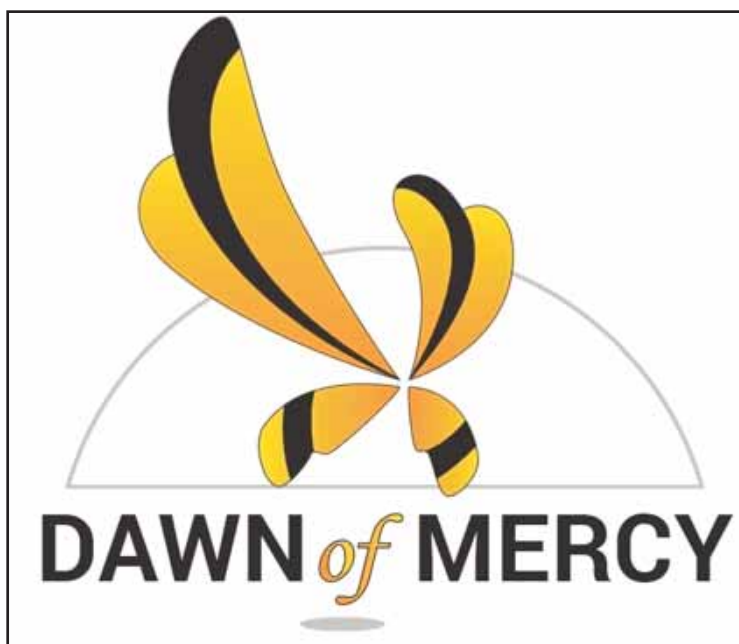
Kelly Tyler is Coordinator of Formation in the Diocese of San Angelo's Office of Evangelization and Catechesis.

Does true healing seem out of reach?

Want to let go of some past hurts and live a happy healthy life?

Does a sexual abuse of your past still haunt you or someone you love? Consider giving yourself or someone you love the gift of a weekend surrounded by love and healing. Dawn of Mercy, a ministry registered with the Dallas Diocese that provides healing after sexual abuse or assault, is offering a three-day faith-based healing retreat for women in Spanish April 17-19, 2026.

To learn more visit us at www.DawnOfMercy.org, call 469-613-DAWN (3296) or email healing@dawnofmercy.org.



**¿Parece que la verdadera sanación está fuera de alcance?
¿Quiere dejar atrás algunas heridas del pasado y vivir una vida feliz y saludable?**

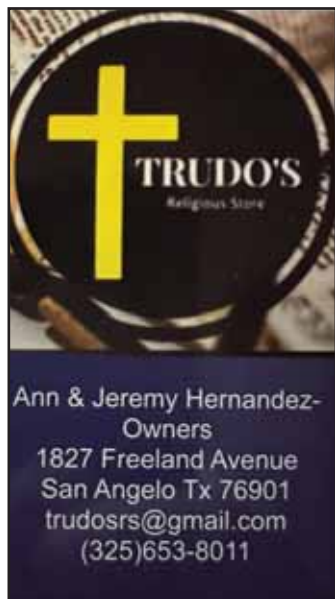
¿Un abuso sexual de su pasado todavía lo persigue a usted o a alguien que ama? Considere darse a usted mismo o alguien que ama el regalo de un fin de semana rodeado de amor y sanación. Dawn of Mercy, un ministerio registrado en la Diócesis de Dallas que brinda sanación después de abuso o agresión sexual, está ofreciendo un retiro de sanación basado en la fe de tres días para mujeres en español del 17 al 19 de abril de 2026.

Para saber más, visítanos en www.DawnOfMercy.org, llame al 469-613-DAWN (3296) o envíe un correo healing@dawnofmercy.org

SAVE THE DATE
Rural Life Mass

The 25th annual **Rural Life Mass** of the **Diocese of San Angelo** is scheduled for Friday, May 15, 2026, in St. Lawrence at 6:00 p.m. The Mass will be held at the Hoelscher Quarry followed by a meal at the St. Lawrence Hall. This year's theme is: "The Lord Is My Rock" (Psalm 18:2).
More information coming soon!

Trudo's Religious Store



Shop Trudo's for great gift ideas and supplies for these upcoming special occasions:

- OCIA
- First Communion
- Confirmation
- Mother's Day
- Father's Day
- Greeting Cards
- Gift Cards

Congratulations to all OCIA Candidates. Your team and sponsors, along with the entire Catholic Church, are so proud to have you as a part of our worship community.

Free gift wrap available with purchase.

Ann & Jeremy Hernandez-
Owners
1827 Freeland Avenue
San Angelo Tx 76901
trudosrs@gmail.com
(325)653-8011

Spring Cleanup
Calvary Cemetery

It's that time again for our spring cemetery cleanup at Calvary Catholic Cemetery.
This year's spring cleanup is scheduled for APRIL 25, 2026.
From 8 a.m. to 2 p.m. the gates will be closed while we work to tidy up and refresh the beauty of our cherished space to ensure it remains a serene place for everyone.

We kindly ask for your help in preparing for this day.

If there are personal mementos you'd like to keep, flowers, or any items you've placed on or around graves, grave markers, or in trees such as: garden decorations, solar lights, rosaries, wind chimes, statues, or any other heartfelt items, **please make sure to collect them by 6 p.m., April 24, 2026.** This includes items in vases, borders, bricks, gravel/rocks, garden ornaments, and unauthorized benches.

We understand how important these items are to you and the memories they represent. However, to maintain the cemetery's beauty and respect for all, items that don't follow our guidelines will need to be removed and won't be saved. We encourage everyone to take a moment to familiarize yourselves with the cemetery rules posted at the main cemetery entrance, on our website, and Facebook page.

Thank you for your understanding and cooperation. Together, we can keep Calvary Cemetery a beautiful, peaceful place for reflection and remembrance.

Calvary Cemetery
325-651-7500
sanangelodiocese.org/calvary-cemetery

GUEST SPEAKER:
FR. FELIX ARCHIBONG



Father Felix Archibong is the pastor of Our Lady of Guadalupe Parish in Eldorado & St. Ann Parish in Sonora. He was a seminarian at Assumption Seminary in San Antonio and was ordained by Bishop Sis on May 30, 2015, at Sacred Heart Cathedral in San Angelo. Father Felix is a native of Calabar, a coastal city in southeastern Nigeria. "My desire to become a priest began when I was a little boy. I was about seven years old when I had feelings to be a priest to serve God's people. My father was quick to notice this interest in me and did all he could to nurture it."

Come & bring a friend and enjoy a catered breakfast by Charlie Blane Catering, fellowship, praise & worship music by Sacred Sound, intercessory prayer and Fr. Felix's testimony.

3 ways to purchase tickets: 1. Eventbrite 2. Fill out the form below, submit by mail, & postmark by 4/8/26. 3. Contact a service team member with the numbers provided.



St Mary's Catholic Church Hall
7 W. Avenue N
San Angelo, TX 76903

Our Lady of Fatima, San Angelo

April 11, 2026

9:00 a.m. to 12:30 p.m.

Communion Service will be celebrated @ 7:30 a.m.

Tickets are \$25 per person, if purchased by April 8th.
TICKETS WILL NOT BE SOLD AT THE DOOR.
After 4/8/26, the cost is \$30. Call Mary Padilla at 325-245-6663 to check availability and to make reservations.

Our Lady of Fatima Service Team

Roxanne Adame, Coordinator	325-650-0172
Isabel Gonzalez, Assistant Coordinator	325-227-2137
Vickie Rivero, Secretary	325-812-3852
Mary Padilla, Treasurer	325-245-6663
Elvira Gonzales, Historian	325-315-5978

Please Print Legibly

Mail Registration Form

Your Name _____

Guest Name _____

Additional Guest names may be written on back of this form.

Address _____

City _____ State _____ Zip _____

Phone (____) _____ Parish _____

E-Mail Address _____

Enclosed is \$ _____ for _____ reservations.

Mail Reservation Form and Check payable to: Magnificat
1629 East Harris
San Angelo, Texas 76905



• Int'l Ministry based on "The Visitation" Luke 1:39

• Diocesan Approval by Bishop Michael Sis

• Spiritual Director: Deacon Mike Lopez

• All Clergy & Religious are Complimentary –

• Call 325-245-6663 by 4/8/26 to confirm attendance.

• Your check (payable to Magnificat) is your receipt.

• **OPEN SEATING** - Doors open at 8:00 am.

• Scan the QR code for Eventbrite tickets \$25 + fee

• Donation to help someone attend \$ _____

For more information about Magnificat, visit
www.magnificat-ministry.net/chapters/tx-san-angelo/

Rev. Msgr. Droll Scholarship taking applications

The Rev. Msgr. Larry J. Droll Scholarship, worth between \$1,000 and \$3,000, will be awarded to Catholic lay men or women pursuing graduate degrees in theology or religious studies and in need of tuition assistance. This scholarship is geared toward those who have already obtained their bachelor's degree and are either enrolled or want to enroll in a Catholic graduate school.

Students must be enrolled, in-person or remotely, in an accredited graduate program at a Catholic university in the United States. Scholarships are paid only to the university for tuition and other needs. The applicant must also be a practicing Roman Catholic who resides in a state in which Catholic Life Insurance is licensed to operate. These states include Texas, Alabama, Arizona, Arkansas, Colorado, Florida, Georgia, Indiana, Iowa, Kansas, Kentucky, Louisiana, Mississippi, Missouri, Nebraska, New Mexico, Ohio, and Oklahoma.

The deadline to apply is July 15, 2026.

Applications are available at www.cliu.com. Founded in 1901, Catholic Life Insurance offers life insurance, IRAs, and annuities to individuals and businesses.

OCP Parish Grants available

The Oregon Catholic Press (OCP) Parish Grants Program is now in its 25th year, having awarded over \$3.8 million in grants to parishes seeking to enhance their worship experience.

The Parish Grants Program is open to all Roman Catholic parishes and campus ministries in the United States and U.S. territories.

Awarded grants must be used for liturgical and/or musical purposes that strengthen parish worship. Typical uses include purchasing new music and worship resources; repairing or replacing musical instruments; supporting the formation of musicians and liturgical ministers through attending or hosting conferences and workshops; and enhancing multicultural ministries through training and the purchase of bilingual or multilingual resources. Funds may also be applied to other music-related needs that directly support the liturgy.

Applications are due by May 30, 2026. To apply, a representative of the parish must complete the application at ocp.org/parish-grants. Recipients will be announced in August.

**DIOCESAN INTER-PAROCHIAL
BILINGUAL ULTREYA**

APRIL 18TH. 10AM -1PM

ST. VINCENT IN ABILENE

BILINGUAL:

- TALKS
- MUSIC
- FOOD

**POTLUCK!
BRING
A
DISH!**

**CONTACT JESSE RICO:
325-725-6578**

FOR GOD SO LOVED THE WORLD... John 3:16

PLEASE SAVE THE DATE FOR

2026 Women's Small Town ACTS Retreat
May 28-31, 2026, Christ the King Retreat Center

For More Information contact Karla Hoelscher 432-268-3891

**Are you struggling after an abortion?
Are you seeking healing and hope?**

The Project Rachel Ministry of the Diocese of San Angelo is here for you. Our team has been praying for you, and you are not alone. Jesus offers healing and mercy to all who desire peace and self-forgiveness. Please reach out to our confidential helpline or email to learn more about healing retreats, counseling, and compassionate support.

Project Rachel Ministry – Diocese of San Angelo

Call or text: (432) 236-9883

✉ projectrachel@sanangelodiocese.org

**¿Está sufriendo después de un aborto?
¿Necesita sanación y esperanza?**

El Ministerio Proyecto Raquel de la Diócesis de San Angelo está aquí para usted. Nuestro equipo ha estado orando por usted, y no está sola. Jesús ofrece sanación y misericordia a todos los que desean paz y perdón interior. Por favor comuníquese con nuestra línea confidencial por correo electrónico para obtener información sobre retiros de sanación, consejería y apoyo compasivo.

Ministerio Proyecto Raquel – Diócesis de San Angelo

Llame o envíe un texto: (432) 236-9883

✉ projectrachel@sanangelodiocese.org

Read the Angelus online

Sign up for DOSA Mail (see below) to get the WTA and other news from the diocese in your inbox. Past issues available at: sanangelodiocese.org/west-texas-angelus



A Mass celebrating the gifts of individuals with disabilities

St. Margaret of Castello
Pray for us

Take this opportunity to attend Mass as a family

St. Elizabeth Ann Seton Catholic Church
Sunday, April 19th
at 4:00 pm

- All people are encouraged to attend
- Sensory friendly environment
- A blessing will be given to caregivers and those with disabilities

Contact : Cheryl Brooks 817-980-4707

Stay Connected with the Diocese of San Angelo

DOSA Mail

The official Flocknote of the Diocese of San Angelo. Receive texts or emails with important news, updates, and messages from the diocese.

Two ways to join:
1) Text DOSA to 84576
OR
2) Visit <https://app.flocknote.com/dosamail>

Social Media

Diocese of San Angelo on Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/DiocesefofSanAngelo>

Bishop Michael Sis on X (formerly Twitter): @SABishopMike

On the Web

www.sanangelodiocese.org

Neighbors helping neighbors

Men surrender during Lent



COURTESY

COURTESY

COURTESY

The Knights of Columbus, Council #13824, from Brady traveled to Eden Feb. 28, 2026, to trim trees around the church building of St. Charles Borromeo Parish.

After the hard work was completed, Father Johnrita Adegboyega (front) treated the Knights to a meal.

The Family Warrior men's ministry held a Lenten workshop at St. Mary Parish in San Angelo March 14. Speaker Alex Gotay's presentation was titled "Surrender: A call for men who refuse to stay the same."

Chrism Mass 2026

By Gloria Johns

On Tuesday, March 31, 2026, the Tuesday of Holy Week, the San Angelo Catholic Diocese celebrated the annual Chrism Mass, one of the most solemn and important liturgies of the Catholic liturgical calendar — a celebration beautifully appealing and spiritually vibrant. During the ceremony, the holy oils used for sacraments and rituals are blessed or consecrated. This includes the chrism oil which is used in the sacraments of baptism, confirmation and holy orders, as well as for the consecration of altars and the dedication of churches; the oil of catechumens which is also used in the sacrament of baptism; and the oil of the sick which is used only in the sacrament of the anointing of the sick.

Holy chrism, the oil for which the Mass is named, is a mixture of olive oil and balsam which when blended produces a sweet, pungent scent. The bishop breathes the Holy Spirit over the chrism vessel and each oil in turn is dedicated in prayer according to its designated purpose.

In addition to the blessing of oils, Bishop Michael J. Sis was accompanied by priests from parishes and missions throughout the diocese to celebrate the institution of the priesthood with Jesus' words at the Last Supper: "Do this in memory of me." Dressed in the white liturgical colors of the Chrism Mass, priests reaffirmed their ministry by renewing the promises made at their ordination.

Once the holy oils are blessed, they are dispensed in three smaller vessels with each priest or parish representative taking responsibility for the supply they will use within their parish for sacraments and rituals in the coming year. In a continued spirit of unity, a meal took place after the Chrism Mass in the parish hall.

The gathering is truly a beautiful, yearly tribute to the ancient rituals of Catholicism and the continuing homage paid to our respected aspects of faith and unity today.



GLORIA JOHNS

The priests of the diocese renewed their priestly promises at the Chrism Mass March 31.



The annual Chrism Mass of the Diocese of San Angelo was held at the Cathedral Church of the Sacred Heart March 31, 2026.



GLORIA JOHNS

Bishop Michael J. Sis mixed the sacred chrism, a combination of oil and balsam perfume.

GLORIA JOHNS

Great American Catholics — Mother Cabrini: First U.S. citizen canonized a saint, dedicated life to New York's Italian immigrants

By Russell Shaw
OSV News

Before the great wave of Hispanic immigration that swept the U.S. in the last several decades, historians spoke of four main periods of Catholic immigration linked to four ethnic groups: the Irish (peaking in the 1850s), the Germans (1880s), the Italians (early 1900s), and the Poles and other Slavs (1920s). The immigrant experience, including entry into the Catholic Church as they found it in the new country, was in some ways different for each.

And for none more difficult than for the Italians.

Between 1880 and 1920, as many as 4 million of them came to America, mostly from poverty-ridden southern

Italy. Many were temporary workers — "builders of bridges, tunnels and subways, longshoremen and factory workers," as one writer said — who came to earn money and, that done, hastened home. But many stayed and made new homes in America. Or tried.

Early in those years, Frances Cabrini had met with Pope Leo XIII and told him of her dream to go to China as a missionary. "No," Pope Leo answered, "not to the East but to the West." He wanted her and her new Missionary Sisters of the Sacred Heart to go to America and do pastoral work among the Italian immigrants.

What happened after that is a bright page in the sometimes tumultuous story of Italian-American Catholicism. The heroic love of God and neighbor that motivated her was formally recognized in 1946 when Frances Cabrini was declared a saint. That made her the first U.S. citizen to be canonized — even though she remained, in the words of a historian, "Italian ... to the very marrow of her bones."

Francesca Cabrini was born July 15, 1850, in Sant'Angelo Lodigiano, a town in Lombardy, youngest of 13 children in a well-off farming family. A pious child — the "little saint," neighbors called her — she longed to be a missionary and played at sailing paper boats filled with violets representing the sisters she meant to send all over the world.

But her father had other ideas, and after studying to be a teacher, Francesca taught school. On two occasions, she sought admission to religious orders but was turned down — ostensibly for poor health, but in fact because a local monsignor had other ideas: He wanted her to take over direction of a troubled orphanage.

After she had run the orphanage for six years, the bishop of the diocese asked her and her companions to form a religious community. The Missionary Sisters were born, with the foundress taking Frances Xavier as her religious name — "Xavier" for the 16th-century Jesuit missionary to the Far East, Francis Xavier.

Although the new order was at first only a diocesan institution, Mother Cabrini had larger plans from the start. After establishing new convents in Cremona and Milan, she went to Rome to seek papal approval and, she hoped, open a convent there. At first the cardinal in charge of such matters said "no" — Rome had enough convents already — but this determined woman of great charm per-

sisted, and the cardinal ended by allowing her to open not just one convent but two.

It was around then that she had the interview with Leo XIII that sent her on her way to the United States. Already in 1884, the American bishops at the Third Plenary Council of Baltimore had discussed the desperate pastoral situation of the Italian immigrants. Little came of it, except that "the Italian problem" was by now recognized as a problem for the Church at large.

New York already had some 50,000 Italians, but only a handful ever went to church. The newcomers' situation included poverty, a critical shortage of Italian-speaking priests, habits of anticlericalism, and spotty religious practice that accompanied them from the old country. There were also pervasive anti-Italian feelings, not only outside, but within the American Catholic community.

Over time, a pastoral strategy began to take shape, bolstered by the arrival of new Italian religious communities like the Scalabrinian Fathers and the Pallottines as well as by training American priests to work with the Italians. The first parish in the U.S. specifically for them had been founded in Philadelphia in 1852, and now these spiritual enclaves retaining the language and devotional traditions of Italy multiplied. Mother Cabrini and her sisters were part of the increasingly effective response to a situation of obvious need.

Mother Cabrini arrived in New York March 31, 1889, and, after a short-lived period of tension with the local archbishop over where to set up shop, she and her companions got to work. Within a month, they were running an orphanage. In less than three years, they had a hospital as well. (Mother Cabrini called all her hospitals — two in New York, two in Chicago — Columbus Hospital.)

There's not enough room here to list here all the orphanages, schools, hospitals, and clinics these women were responsible for establishing and operating. But numbers at least suggest the magnitude of what they achieved. By the time Mother Cabrini died 34 years after her arrival, the 2,300 Missionary Sisters of the Sacred Heart working in the United States and throughout the Western Hemisphere had launched 67 institutions devoted to the physical, moral, and spiritual welfare of people in need. Italians were not the only ones they served, but

See CABRINI, 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, KLPF
- Midland-Odessa - 90.9 FM (Español)
- San Angelo - 91.5 FM, KPDE

POPULAR ENGLISH PROGRAMS

6:00-7:30 AM - *Morning Joy* (877-757-9424) - Keith Downey, Adam Blai & Debbie Georgianni

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 - *Beacon of Truth with The Divine Mercy Chaplet* - Deacon Harold Burke-Sivers

4:00 PM - *The Quest* (877-757-9424) - Live call-in show for questions/comments

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

8:00 PM - *EWTN Nightly News*

To promote your business or events, please call our local office at 432-682-5476.

For a complete schedule or to listen live, go to our website at: GRNOnline.com. Download our free Apps for English or Spanish programming.



The Guadalupe Radio Network is a proud Affiliate of the EWTN Global Catholic Network



Does my ex have to be involved in the annulment process?

Q: I've recently decided to return to my childhood Catholic faith after many years away, and my priest told me I need to get an annulment. When I called the marriage tribunal, they said they needed to contact my ex-husband for this. But I don't see any need to drag him through this whole process. Does my ex absolutely have to be involved, or is there some way around this?

A: The short answer is yes, the marriage tribunal really would need to contact him about your case.

For some background, a declaration of nullity — which is often popularly, but somewhat less accurately, called an "annulment" — is a formal statement from the Catholic Church that a marital union which initially appeared to be valid actually had some sort of defect that prevented a true marriage from ever being contracted in the first place. A few examples of such defects are: psychological issues that prevented a person from being able to consent to marriage, the lack of a proper intention, or using deception to bring about the wedding.

If a person's marriage truly was null, the Church owes them official clarity on their marital status as a matter of justice. But at the same time, the Church also needs to uphold and defend our Catholic teachings on the permanence of a valid marriage bond. And so to ensure that the truth of the matter will be discerned accurately and fairly, the Church's canon law gives us a legal process for ascertaining whether or not a given marriage should be declared null.

In a marriage nullity process, the petitioner is the individual who is actively seeking the declaration of nullity. The respondent is the other spouse in the case. Some respondents want the declaration of nullity just as much as the petitioner, sometimes they are indifferent to whatever the Church decides, and some respondents feel that despite their civil divorce their marriage was indeed valid, and that they therefore wish to argue against a declaration of nullity.

The nullity process begins with the petitioner telling the tribunal the story of why they think their marriage might be invalid, in the form of a written "libellus" (the technical term for a formal petition for a canonical trial investigating their marriage). But in order for the nullity process to go any further, the Church strictly requires that the respondent be "cited." This means that the respondent is officially informed of petitioner's request for a marriage



Jenna Marie Cooper
OSV News

Question Corner

nullity trial, is able to read a copy of the petitioner's libellus, and is invited to participate and make their case in the ensuing trial. (See *Dignitas Connubii*, articles 126-128, for reference.)

There are a few reasons tribunals need to cite the respondent. The first and most foundational reason is as a matter of basic natural justice. That is, marriage is always between two equal parties, and it would be grossly unfair for the Church to declare a marriage invalid "out from under" the other spouse without giving them the chance to tell their side of the story.

Practically speaking, when a respondent is willing to participate in the nullity process, this greatly helps the canon lawyer judges in a trial come to a fair and accurate decision, insofar as hearing from the respondent gives the judges a fuller picture of what actually happened. Often this works in the petitioner's favor. For instance, if a marriage is allegedly invalid due to a problem on the respondent's end, the evidence is much stronger if we have the respondent's own testimony.

Finally, as a matter of canon law, if a tribunal fails to cite the respondent properly — or if the tribunal somehow prevents an engaged and willing respondent from participating fully in their own nullity trial — this makes the case itself invalid. This means that a declaration of nullity granted under such illicit circumstances wouldn't actually "count." (See Canon 1620, subsection 7, of the *Code of Canon Law*.)

Jenna Marie Cooper, who holds a licentiate in canon law, is a consecrated virgin and a canonist whose column appears weekly at OSV News. Send your questions to CatholicQA@osv.com.

St. Bernadette's visions at Lourdes

"She is so beautiful that to see her again one would be willing to die." This is how Bernadette Soubirous described the lady who appeared to her near a cave known as Massabille in Lourdes, France, in 1858.

What happened to this peasant girl in the woods near the River Gave de Pau was an event so unusual that it transformed her life, her family's life, and changed Lourdes from a sleepy country town into a mega pilgrimage site.

The first vision occurred on Feb. 11, 1858. Bernadette was 14, the oldest of six children. The family was extremely poor, and Bernadette was often sick with asthma. On that memorable day, she and her sister and another friend were gathering firewood along the banks of the river.

Bernadette lingered behind the other two girls when they waded into the cold waters of the river. Suddenly she heard the sound of rushing wind and saw a brilliant light near the grotto. Bernadette described what happened next: "I saw at one of the openings of the rock a bush — only one — moving as if it were very windy. Almost at the same time, there came out of the interior of the grotto a golden-colored cloud, and soon after a Lady, young and beautiful" (*God-Sent* by Roy Abraham Varghese).

Bernadette and the Lady prayed the rosary together. Then the Lady told Bernadette to come to the grotto every day for 15 days.

The daily visions continued from Feb. 18 through March 4. As news of Bernadette's visions became known, people thronged to Lourdes. On Feb. 25, the Lady instructed Bernadette to drink from a spring — but



Mary Lou Gibson

Speaking of Saints

as yet, there was no spring at that spot, only mud. People watched as Bernadette dug in the ground and soon water was flowing from the spot. Many miraculous healings have been attributed to the spring.

On March 25, the Lady told Bernadette that she was "the Immaculate Conception." This dogma was established four years earlier by Pope Pius IX. When Bernadette told Church officials that the Lady wanted a chapel built on the site, they were extremely skeptical and hostile. Ruth Cranston wrote (*The Miracle of Lourdes*) that from the first, the country people believed in Bernadette. They followed her implicitly, praying with her at the grotto during each of the apparitions. It was only after the Empress Eugenie of France became interested that a chapel was built.

Bernadette experienced the last apparition of the Blessed Virgin, as everyone now knew the Lady to be, on July 16, the feast of Our Lady of Mount Carmel. During the apparitions, the Lady gave Bernadette messages for the world — prayer and penance

After the apparitions ended, things changed for Ber-

nadette and her family. People became interested in them and found work for her father who had been a miller but had not done well in his trade. As for Bernadette, the visions caused her much embarrassment. Editor Michael Walsh (*Butler's Lives of the Saints*) wrote that she was bombarded by people, and their ceaseless questioning gave her no peace.

In 1862, the Catholic Church authenticated Bernadette's visions and issued a statement that said, "the faithful are justified in believing it certain."

In 1864, Bernadette applied to the sisters of Notre-Dame de Nevers, but illness delayed her from entering the novitiate until 1866. When she grew stronger, she received a dispensation to take her first vows. She lived a quiet life in the convent for the next 13 years. Bernadette suffered from ill health all her life and was bedridden for the last three years. She died 21 years after the apparitions. She was canonized in 1933 and is the patroness of the sick and those in poverty. Her feast day is April 16.

Today, Lourdes attracts nearly five million pilgrims a year, more than any other healing site in the world, according to Joe Nickell (*Looking for a Miracle*).

Note: As of April 2025, the Catholic Church has officially recognized 72 medical miracles at the Sanctuary of Our Lady of Lourdes in France. While over 7,000 people have reported cures since 1858, the Church applies a rigorous, multi-year scientific investigation to certify cases as inexplicable, spontaneous, and immediate.

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

Doubt

When I was 15 years old, Dad was diagnosed with cancer. It came from smoking. It started on his lip and spread to his lymph node under the right side of his chin. On the Monday after Thanksgiving, the surgeon removed half of my father's jawbone and part of his tongue. From that point on, he wore a face mask like the kind people wore during the COVID outbreak, only to the side, like a big bandage to hide his disfigurement.

For the next 15 months, each night I prayed on my knees for one to two hours before getting into bed that the cancer would not come back and Dad would be cured. It did come back, however, and with a vengeance. My prayers intensified as I begged God to let my dad live until I was 21 because I knew he wanted to see me graduate from college and be a man. On the last day of Dad's life, I promised God that if he just gave Dad five more years, I would not have the family that I always wanted and would become a priest. At the moment the nurse told me and Mom that Dad died at 4:20 a.m. that Jan. 19, as we sat outside the Intensive Care Unit, I felt I had lost both of my fathers. "I've done nothing to deserve this," I cried out. "WHY ME?!" I doubted everything I thought I knew about God and his love for me. I doubted I could ever forgive God for taking my father from me. I was an only child, and Dad was my best friend. I doubted ... everything.

Doubting God is nothing new. In Matthew we read, "Then he made the disciples get into the boat and precede him to the other side, while he dismissed the crowds. After doing so, he went up on the mountain by himself to pray. When it was evening he was there alone. Meanwhile the boat, already a few miles offshore, was being tossed about by the waves, for the wind was against it. During the fourth watch of the night, he came toward them, walking on the sea. When the disciples saw him walking on the sea they were terrified. 'It is a ghost,' they said, and they cried out in fear. At once [Jesus] spoke to them, 'Take courage, it is



James R. Sulliman, PhD

I; do not be afraid.' Peter said to him in reply, 'Lord, if it is you, command me to come to you on the water.' He said, 'Come.' Peter got out of the boat and began to walk on the water toward Jesus. But when he saw how [strong] the wind was he became frightened; and, beginning to sink, he cried out, 'Lord, save me!' Immediately Jesus stretched out his hand and caught him, and said to him, 'O you of little faith, why did you doubt?'" (Mt 14:22-31).

While Thomas, singularly, is the apostle that earned the dubious "doubting" descriptive before his name, the narrative of the post-resurrection appearance of Jesus to the other apostles gathered in the upper room suggests otherwise, when the reality of Jesus was again attributed to a "ghost." After his resurrection, news of Jesus' appearance made its way to the apostles, and, "While they were still speaking about this, he stood in their midst and said to them, 'Peace be with you.' But they were startled and terrified and thought that they were seeing a ghost. Then he said to them, 'Why are you troubled? And why do questions arise in your hearts? Look at my hands and my feet, that it is I myself. Touch me and see, because a ghost does not have flesh and bones as you can see I have.' And as he said this, he showed them his hands and his feet. While they were still incredulous for joy and were amazed, he asked them, 'Have you anything here to eat?' They gave him a piece of baked fish; he took it and ate it in

front of them.

"He said to them, 'These are my words that I spoke to you while I was still with you, that everything written about me in the law of Moses and in the prophets and psalms must be fulfilled'" (Lk 24:36-44). Really?! Thomas is the apostle who earned the "doubting" identifier when the other apostles HAD seen the nail marks and apparently were still not 100 percent convinced! I can imagine a frustrated Jesus saying, in essence, "My gosh, what do I have to do for you to stop doubting! Give me something to eat ... a ghost can't eat!"

There are, undoubtedly, many people who doubt God's love for them from time to time, especially in times of great loss, terrible tragedies, and emotional distress. Now, after all these years, I cannot imagine how different my life would have been if God had not taken my father when he did. There is no way I can communicate to you the indescribable, extraordinary gifts that God has given to me and how he has led me. I've done nothing to deserve this, I cry out ... "WHY ME?!"

While it is, indeed, our human nature to question why God allows bad things to happen, our extremely limited perspective cannot possibly see God's indescribable love for each and every one of us, regardless of the trials we may face. He loves each of us if we were his only child. Regardless of our human doubt, He will NEVER abandon us. Our Blessed Mother knows that it is sometimes difficult for us to trust without understanding and remains always by our side.

God is merciful. He understands without being understood ... he trusts without being trusted ... but most of all, he loves without being loved ... WITHOUT A DOUBT!

Dr. James Sulliman has 50 years' experience in individual, marriage, and family therapy.

Pope: 'In this dark hour of history,' do not shy away from your mission

By Josephine Peterson
Catholic News Service

VATICAN CITY — Pope Leo XIV urged Catholics to reject comfort, power, and domination and instead embrace a mission rooted in self-giving love, even when it requires risk, vulnerability, and suffering.

As Catholics prepare for Easter on Holy Thursday, Pope Leo also called on the faithful in his homily to overcome fear and a sense of powerlessness in responding to the world's crises.

"In this dark hour of history, it has pleased God to send us to spread the fragrance of Christ where the stench of death reigns," he said April 2 at St. Peter's Basilica during Mass. "Let us renew our 'yes' to this mission that calls for unity and brings peace."

While grounding his remarks in the teaching of his predecessors, saints, and clergy, the pope in this homily placed particular emphasis on the Church's mission through his own eyes as a missionary.

The first step of accepting the Christian mission, he said, is to risk leaving behind what is familiar and certain, in order to venture into something new.

"Every mission begins with that kind of self-emptying in which everything is reborn," he said.

It is through this self-emptying that Christians encounter the love of Christ, the pope said.

At the heart of his first Holy Thursday homily as pope, he reflected on the nature of Christian love, saying it is rooted not in power, but in self-giving.

"Jesus' journey reveals to us that the willingness to lose oneself, to empty oneself, is not an end in itself, but a condition for encounter and intimacy," Pope Leo said. "Love is true only when it is unguarded."

He said true peace is not found in remaining comfortable, but in embracing the risk and detachment that mission requires. Calling it a "fundamental secret of mission," the pope said "everything is restored and multiplied if it is first let go, without fear," a process repeated "in every new beginning, in every new sending forth."

God calls upon the faithful to take risks, so "no place becomes a prison, no identity a hiding place," he said. Every mission requires reconciliation with the past, with the "gifts and limitations of the upbringing we have received," the pope said.

Once the faithful are able to detach from what is fa-

miliar and comfortable, Pope Leo said they must then "encounter" the other through selfless service and the sharing of life. This detachment, he said, creates the conditions for authentic encounter rather than control.

He emphasized that it is a priority that "neither in the pastoral sphere nor in the social and political spheres can good come from abuse of power."

He pointed to the example of missionaries, a role he held as an Augustinian in Peru, whose work must be rooted in service, dialogue, and respect.

"The great missionaries bear witnesses to quiet, unobtrusive approaches, whose method is the sharing of life, selfless service, the renunciation of any calculated strategy, dialogue, and respect," Pope Leo said.

Rather than seeking to "reconquer" increasingly secular societies, the pope said Catholics must approach as guests, not to impose, but to listen and accompany.

The Church's mission, the pope said, is guided by the Holy Spirit, and the faithful must not try to control it but instead follow its lead, entering each culture with humility and "respecting the mystery that every person and every

Catholic Voices

Deportation and the conscience of a nation

A short history of America's fascination with deportation may help us understand the present situation and correct some of its excesses.

Daniel Kanstroom, author of the definitive work on outsiders in America and their deportations from colonial times to the present, said, "In the modern view, it is a lack of citizenship status in a particular nation-state that allows one to be deported from it."

After the American Revolution, the Alien and Sedition Acts were imposed for the sympathizers of British control, and soon followed the removal of the native Indian populations to reservations.

The advent of slavery in the United States occasioned the fugitive slave laws and prompted a discussion of deportation plans for African Americans who did not wish to be part of the nation and wanted to return to Africa.

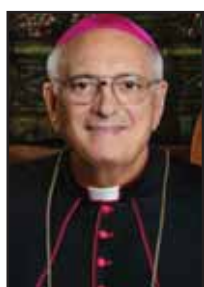
Chinese exclusion laws included the type of deportation for workers who had been imported and subsequently exported after their labor was no longer needed.

The post-World War I political deportations against radical citizens sometimes became a means of racial cleansing. Soon after WWI, the new Mexican aliens who came to do agricultural work were subsequently subject to deportations.

Another set of deportations had to do with labor organizing, which sparked the Palmer raids. In 1919 and 1920, the targets were socialists, anarchists, and communists. Deportation was always an instrument of control for high-profile crime figures, for example, mafia bosses. What followed was a series of ideological exclusions in an attempt at social control.

The relocation and internment of Japanese Americans was another blight on our attempted deportation history. There were also German and Italian aliens who were subjected to arrest and detention.

Forcible removal of Mexicans continued during the



**Bishop
Nicholas DiMarzio**
OSV News

Walking with Migrants

depression, with the deportation of over one million people. Following the Depression years and the end of the Bracero Program, a labor agreement with Mexico from 1942 to 1964 that allowed millions of Mexican workers to work temporarily in our agriculture and railroad industries, came the opening of "Operation Wetback." This transpired when the same needed workers returned, traversing the Rio Grande to harvest the necessary crops.

From 1965 immigration law to the present, our nation has seen crackdowns, but always with discretion. No massive roundups, akin to the present, were carried out, although many people were deported, including many who had just crossed the border into America.

Deportation has always been an instrument of social control, but the use of discretion by officials and the use of registry provisions for long-term residents made it somewhat tolerable before the 1970s.

The present situation, although it has precedents, is certainly unique.

Never has the United States attempted to deport 12 to 14 million people at one time. Bishop Brendan Cahill of Victoria, Texas, chair of the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops' Committee on Migration, recently said the following: "The thought of holding thousands of families in massive warehouses should challenge the conscience of every American."

This attempt at intimidation by incarcerating families aims at forcing self-deportation and the loss of assets. Initially, it seemed the aim was fugitive criminals. However, it then became anyone with a serious criminal (felony) record, and now anyone with any type of misdemeanor.

Then it seems any infraction of immigration law or regulation is a reason for exclusion — for example, loss of status, even if that loss was by means of government action in removing provisional statuses, such as Temporary Protected Status and parole.

The United States has a long history of deportations, but our nation has never deported people without some justification. The present situation leaves many questions unanswered. For example, are these aliens a drain on our economy, or is there some other reason they need to be excluded? The appetite in our culture for law-abiding citizenship makes deportation a likely instrument of control and exclusion.

The prospect of massive incarceration in converted warehouses and the deportation of aliens, including entire families, is a terrible cloud over the United States.

In my own experience in refugee situations, when refugees were detained prior to being deported, the families suffered, and most especially the children. Being incarcerated took away the parents' ability to control their children because the only control was the guards. There will be irreparable damage to families if the plans presently drafted are implemented.

We can do better as a nation, leaving behind prejudices and misconceptions, to find a workable solution for our nation, especially for its low-wage and low-skilled workers and their families.

Bishop Nicholas DiMarzio is the retired bishop of the Diocese of Brooklyn, New York. He writes the column "Walking With Migrants" for OSV News.

Abortion is No. 1 cause of death in U.S; Nellie Gray offers guidance

According to reputable sources today there are more abortions now than before *Roe v. Wade*, at least 1.1 million every year. Many assumed since the *Dobbs* decision abortion would drop, instead the opposite has happened.

Sadly, more than 60 percent of those deaths are caused by abortion drugs sent through the mail with little to no medical oversight. That's more deaths annually than fentanyl, cocaine, and heroin combined. Our home, which should be the sanctuary for the caring and protection of children, is now, with the easy availability of abortion pills, the major center for abortion. The words of dear St. Mother Teresa that she spoke many years ago are sadly very true today: "Abortion is the greatest destroyer of peace in the world." She knew that abortion was the greatest evil of the day.

The U.S. bishops teach that among the many important life issues, abortion is the preeminent one of our day for several reasons. Abortion is a direct and intentional destruction of human life in its most fundamental condition. The right to life is the basis of all other human rights. The bishops sadly recognize that the number of human lives lost in abortion, more than 1 million each year, is catastrophic. Bishop James Conley, who celebrated the vigil Mass for the National Day of Prayer and before the great March for Life in the Basilica of the National Shrine, reminded us that "Pre-born are considered the most vulnerable and voiceless members of society, unable to speak and defend themselves. [Abortion] is an attack on the family itself, which is meant to be a sanctuary of life."

In view of the ever-increasing abortions in our society, we bishops, along with our priests and pro-life leaders need to take more prayerful, spiritual, and pastoral action to confront this ever-increasing number of the destruction of these precious, unborn children of God. We need to remind ourselves of the words of two of our recent popes that abortion is murder. We need to continue to pray and work to change hearts as the measure of society is how we treat the weakest members. Only God can change hearts. No matter what happens politically, we as Catholics must always be there to lovingly serve women and welcome them with their new life.

One way the Church does this is through the program Walking with Moms in Need, where Catholic parishes are stepping up services, support, and accompaniment to vulnerable pregnant and parenting mothers. And the Church does not abandon those who chose abortion. We want to serve their spiritual and emotional needs so that they can find mercy, freedom, and healing in Christ. Project Rachel Ministry offers confidential, compassionate support for both women and men after abortion. We need many more pro-life Masses, and continued prayer in front of Planned Parenthood and other facil-



**Bishop Emeritus
Michael D. Pfeifer, OMI**

Diocese of
San Angelo

ities which promote and sponsor abortion.

According to Pro-Life America president Marjorie Dannenfelser, "Our movement is strong. There is a flourishing of new, courageous, and convincing voices at all levels: our churches, local communities, digital influencers, strong advocates in state and federal government — and all this is very good. But there is still a reality that we must acknowledge. The other side is never going to give up. As long as they have a grip on institutions, on power, on funds, on political officials, much of the media, we must — and our pro-life elected officials must — keep working and fighting and speaking. Never be silent." To stop the ever-increasing number of precious little children of God destroyed in abortion, I encourage all pro-life leaders with our bishops to work with our lawmakers to promote and put into practice the Life at Conception Act. This act will strike a death blow to the bloody business of abortion.

The Life at Conception Act would ensure that every person would be granted the God-given right to life they deserve from the moment of conception. This act, recognizing the scientific fact that since human life begins at the moment of conception, would extend the 14th amendment protection to pre-born children at all stages of life; provide stiff penalties to those abortionist who violate the law; and save every year hundreds of thousands of preborn babies, our precious unborn little sisters and brothers. I strongly and urgently encourage all pro-lifers to sign the Life at Conception Act petitions, urging congressional leaders, our politicians, to promote and vote for the Life at Conception Act.

**Nellie Gray, founder of the March for Life,
is a dynamic model of leadership**

Dear Nellie was a woman of prayer and deep faith, was guided by the Holy Spirit, and with the cooperation of a few Knights of Columbus and pro-life friends, began the famous March for Life in 1974, which she organized. She was chosen by her friends to lead this march, which is now the largest in the world, until her death in 2012. This national March for Life draws hundreds of thousands to Washington each year. This pro-

life stalwart is founder of the largest and longest running pro-life demonstration in the world. Nellie Gray started the annual March for Life parade to protest the 1973 Supreme Court decision legalizing abortion nationwide.

When she died, I learned that Nellie was born in Big Spring, Texas, which is part of the Diocese of San Angelo, where I served as bishop for some 28 years. And I learned from the records that Nellie was baptized in Stanton, Texas, which was a mission of the parish in Big Spring and by a member of my Community of Oblates of Mary Immaculate. I have a copy of her baptismal record. Nellie served in WWII as a corporal in the Women's Army Corps. Following this service she served in the State Department. Early in her Catholic life, Nellie was not fully involved in the Church, but she met a dedicated priest who encouraged her to use her baptismal gifts by being fully involved in the Church. And she gave her life to express her love and concern for the precious unborn by dedicating her life to the March for Life. She became a very active member of St. Mary, Mother of God Parish in Washington. The lasting, loving mark she has left in this world can be seen in the generations of lives saved as a result of her dedicated and constant service on behalf of the unborn. She had a strong, loving heart that valued all people — born and unborn. Fearlessly working to create a picture worth a thousand words, she strongly encouraged thousands of peaceful Americans to call on their courts and their legislators to defend human life and God's law. Nellie was horrified at the large number of unborn babies that were killed. She referred to abortion as genocide. She stated that these innocent ones were being murdered and that these babies have the same rights to life that you and I have. A colleague of hers said she saw in Nellie a woman of great integrity, who was determined to do something to end abortion. She said Nellie had a very strong faith and her pro-life views were very strong.

As we reflect on the prayerful and holy life of Nellie and her total commitment to save the precious unborn through her some 40 years of compassionate and dedicated service to the March for Life to show respect and honor for the precious unborn, I believe as I am presently doing, that we need to reach out to our Catholic leaders, especially in Washington, to have Nellie proclaimed blessed and one day, God willing, a saint for our beautiful Catholic Church. I strongly encourage all pro-lifers, especially those who knew Nellie and cooperated with her, to support this effort for her cause. The March for Life is Nellie Gray's main legacy. Cardinal Sean O'Malley, who was a close friend of Nellie, and served with her to lead many Marches for Life as a priest, bishop and cardinal, has called her the Joan of Arc of the Gospel of Life.

Voces Católicas

¿Cuáles son los tres óleos sagrados?

Por D.D. Emmons
OSV News

La Iglesia utiliza tres óleos sagrados: el óleo de los enfermos, el óleo de los catecúmenos y el santo crisma. Los dos primeros son bendecidos, y el obispo consagra el tercero, generalmente durante la Misa crismal anual. Cada uno se utiliza para un fin específico dentro de la vida de la Iglesia.

Óleo de los enfermos

El óleo de los enfermos, que es aceite de oliva puro, se utiliza en el sacramento de la unción de los enfermos. Aunque lo ideal es celebrarlo en comunidad, durante una Misa por los enfermos, este sacramento puede administrarse en cualquier momento y lugar. El sacerdote impone las manos sobre la persona enferma o anciana, reza oraciones propias del rito y la unge trazando una cruz con el óleo en la frente y en las manos.

A través de este sacramento, Dios le concede al enfermo la gracia y la fortaleza para sobrellevar la enfermedad o la debilidad. Además, muchos católicos han sido testigos de cómo esta unción puede traer alivio y sanación espiritual, emocional e incluso física.

Óleo de los catecúmenos

Tanto los adultos como los niños, antes de recibir el bautismo, son ungidos con el óleo de los catecúmenos, que también es aceite de oliva puro. En el caso de los adultos, esta unción previa suele realizarse durante una celebración especial de iniciación, cuando la persona comienza a prepararse para el sacramento del bautismo. Al inicio del proceso conocido como Orden de Iniciación Cristiana de Adultos (OCIA, por sus siglas en inglés), cada candidato es ungido con este óleo.

Este rito generalmente se lleva a cabo

durante la Misa, antes de la Sagrada Comunión. El sacerdote o el diácono unge a los catecúmenos y luego pide a Dios que les conceda sabiduría para discernir y la fortaleza necesaria para evitar el mal, mientras profundizan en la fe católica y se preparan para una vida con Cristo.

De manera similar, los niños son ungidos poco antes de recibir el agua del bautismo. Esta unción tiene como objetivo ayudar al niño a rechazar el mal, resistir la tentación y recibir la fe necesaria para cargar con la cruz de Cristo a lo largo de su vida.

Santo crisma

El tercer óleo, el santo crisma, es una mezcla de aceite de oliva y bálsamo. El aceite simboliza la fortaleza, mientras que el perfume del bálsamo evoca "la fragancia de Cristo" (2 Cor 2,15). La unción con este crisma representa el don del Espíritu Santo y se utiliza para consagrar a una persona o algo al servicio de Dios.

Cada año somos testigos del uso del santo crisma cuando los jóvenes reciben la confirmación, y también en la Vigilia Pascual, cuando los adultos son confirmados después del bautismo. El obispo traza la señal de la cruz con el crisma en la frente del confirmado y dice: "(Nombre), recibe por esta señal el don del Espíritu Santo".

El crisma también forma parte del rito del bautismo. Después de bautizar al niño con agua y antes de imponerle la vestidura blanca, se traza una cruz con el crisma en la cabeza, marcándolo como cristiano. De manera similar, cuando un adulto recibe el bautismo, también se realiza esta unción si no recibe inmediatamente el sacramento de la confirmación.

El santo crisma se utiliza además en la ordenación de los sacerdotes (sacramento del orden sagrado) y en la consagración de los obispos. También se emplea al consagrar



FOTO CNS | LOLA GÓMEZ

Durante la Misa Crismal celebrada en la Basílica de San Pedro del Vaticano el 17 de abril de 2025, se exhiben los recipientes de plata que contienen los aceites sacramentales.

una iglesia, así como en la bendición del altar y de los objetos litúrgicos que se utilizan en la Misa.

Misa Crismal

Durante la Misa Crismal de cada año, el obispo de la diócesis bendice la cantidad de óleos necesaria para todas las parroquias. Luego, estos óleos se distribuyen a cada comunidad para su uso a lo largo del año. Aunque el obispo no puede estar físicamente en cada bautismo o confirmación de su diócesis, puede estarlo de manera simbólica a través de los óleos que ha bendecido.

Después de la Liturgia de la Palabra tiene lugar la bendición de los óleos. En una procesión solemne, se presentan los recipientes con aceite de oliva: primero el óleo de

los enfermos, luego el de los catecúmenos y, por último, el destinado al santo crisma. El obispo reza y bendice cada uno por separado.

El rito para preparar y consagrar el santo crisma es distinto. Para ello, el obispo mezcla el aceite de oliva con bálsamo, sopla sobre la mezcla como signo de la presencia del Espíritu Santo y luego pronuncia la oración de consagración.

Una vez bendecidos de este modo, el crisma y los demás óleos dejan de ser aceites comunes. Se convierten en un don sagrado y valioso de Dios para la Iglesia, signo de purificación y fortaleza, de sanación y consuelo, y de la gracia vivificante del Espíritu Santo.

D.D. Emmons escribe desde Pensilvania.

Proteger el hogar: cómo formar familias santas en la era de las pantallas

Por la Hermana Nancy Usselman
OSV News

Hoy los padres crían a sus hijos en un mundo muy distinto al de cualquier otra generación. Los videojuegos, las redes sociales, las plataformas de streaming, los chatbots basados en inteligencia artificial y el acceso instantáneo a la información han transformado la vida cotidiana.

Las herramientas del mundo digital ofrecen numerosas oportunidades para aprender, crear y disfrutar. Los medios de comunicación transmiten ideas, valores y formas de ver el mundo que van moldeando la manera de pensar de las personas. Si se utilizan correctamente, pueden abrir la mente y el corazón de los niños y enriquecer su imaginación.

Sin embargo, los avances tecnológicos no solo conllevan beneficios, sino que también implican riesgos. Los contenidos perjudiciales pueden afectar negativamente la salud emocional y espiritual de los niños. Sin orientación, los chicos pueden, de forma intencional o no, verse expuestos a espacios digitales peligrosos, donde el contenido puede debilitar su fe y su bienestar.

Por eso, los padres están llamados a supervisar el uso de la tecnología y a ayudar a sus hijos a desarrollar una mirada crítica frente a los medios. Esta responsabilidad no consiste solo en poner reglas o establecer límites: también tiene una profunda dimensión espiritual.

Usar la tecnología, sin dejar que ella nos use

La tecnología en sí misma no es el enemigo. Las redes sociales, los videojuegos y la inteligencia artificial son fruto de la creatividad humana. Sin embargo, como cualquier herramienta, pueden utilizarse para el bien o para el mal.

El Papa León XIV subraya que la tecnología debe estar al servicio de la persona humana, y no reemplazar la sabiduría ni las relaciones humanas. Los padres, arraigados en la fe, son quienes tienen la misión de formar y guiar a sus hijos hacia lo bello, lo verdadero y lo bueno.

Como los jóvenes no tienen la madurez suficiente para comprender plenamente los mensajes que transmiten los medios, no siempre pueden distinguir entre contenidos útiles y perjudiciales que encuentran en internet. Sin embargo, son precisamente esos mensajes los que van

moldeando su mente y su corazón. Por eso, la crianza de los hijos también debe incluir una guía espiritual en el mundo digital.

Formar el carácter digital de los hijos

Ser un padre responsable en lo que respecta a los medios no significa simplemente controlar el tiempo que los hijos pasan frente a las pantallas. Si bien eso es importante, también es necesario jugar y ver contenidos juntos en familia. Acompañar a los hijos en el uso de la tecnología y compartir en familia permite conversar sobre lo que se ve y se escucha. Esto ayuda a los niños a interpretar esos contenidos a la luz de la fe. Hablar con los hijos sobre su experiencia digital también les permite desarrollar la capacidad de discernimiento, algo fundamental a medida que crecen.

Los padres deberían proponerse formar la conciencia de sus hijos, no solo asegurarse de que cumplan reglas. Es bueno animarlos a hacerse preguntas sobre lo que consumen en los medios. Por ejemplo: ¿Cómo me hace sentir esta historia? ¿Refleja algo bueno? ¿Me acerca más a Dios?

Cuando los padres ayudan a sus hijos a distinguir entre lo bueno y lo perjudicial en el mundo digital, les dan herramientas para cuidar su vida interior y crecer en su relación con Dios.

Proteger a la familia mediante la oración

Ayudar a fortalecer la vida espiritual de los hijos es una de las maneras más eficaces de protegerlos en la era digital. Cuando las familias rezan juntas, invitan a Cristo a entrar en su hogar y a ocupar un lugar central en sus relaciones y actividades.

La oración fortalece interiormente a los niños y ayuda a formar su conciencia. Les recuerda que son hijos amados de Dios. Cuando una familia reza el rosario o bendice los alimentos, o cuando presenta al Señor sus intenciones relacionadas con el uso de la tecnología, la gracia de Dios fortalece los lazos familiares. Estos momentos enseñan a los niños que Dios está presente en todos los aspectos de la vida, incluso en su vida digital.

Quizás el factor más importante en la formación de los hijos sea el ejemplo de los padres, ya que los niños tienden a imitar lo que ellos hacen. Si los padres se dis-

traen constantemente con los dispositivos, los hijos interiorizan ese comportamiento; pero cuando los padres rezan juntos y guían a la familia en la oración, los niños aprenden el valor y la belleza de la fe.

Transformar la tecnología en un camino hacia la santidad

La tecnología no tiene por qué debilitar la fe. Las familias pueden fortalecer su vida de fe si usan la tecnología de forma consciente. Pueden ver juntos contenidos inspiradores y conversar sobre lo que ven, escuchar grabaciones de la Sagrada Escritura, aprender sobre la vida de los santos y utilizar herramientas digitales para profundizar su vida espiritual.

Educar a los hijos en la era digital supone un desafío. Sin embargo, al establecer límites claros, prohibir el uso de pantallas en los dormitorios, establecer momentos sin tecnología y fomentar otras actividades, incluida la oración, los padres pueden crear un ambiente de equilibrio y paz en sus hogares.

Para más consejos e ideas sobre cómo formar hijos que se desenvuelvan con seguridad en el mundo digital y crezcan en santidad, se recomienda la serie Digital Age Family Safety, producida por Family Theater Productions y Pauline Media Studies, disponible en *DigitalFamilySafety.org* o en su canal de YouTube.

Los videos son breves y están pensados para ayudar a los padres católicos, que muchas veces tienen poco tiempo, a acompañar a sus hijos en la cultura digital con herramientas prácticas e ideas sencillas. Las guías descargables permiten acceder al contenido en cualquier momento.

Los padres buscan educar hijos que no le tengan miedo a la tecnología, sino que la utilicen con madurez y responsabilidad; hijos que sepan aprovechar las herramientas digitales sin ser dominados por ellas. Cuando las familias rezan juntas, disciernen juntas y usan los medios de manera consciente, el hogar se convierte en un espacio sagrado donde la fe se vive, los corazones se fortalecen y Cristo ocupa un lugar central. En hogares así, la santidad puede florecer.

La hermana paulina Nancy Usselman es directora del Pauline Center for Media Studies en Los Ángeles y especialista en educación en alfabetización mediática.

Catholic Voices

10 truths every Christian man should understand before looking for a wife

Looking for a wife is one of the most important choices a Christian man will ever make. Yet many men begin that search with a checklist of outward traits while ignoring the inner work they need to do first. The Bible teaches that marriage is much more than a partnership. It is a covenant. It reflects the relationship between Christ and his Church.

Before you go looking for the woman God may have for you, focus on becoming the man God calls you to be. The strength of your future marriage will not depend mainly on the woman you marry. It will depend on the man you are when you stand at the altar.

Here are 10 important truths every Christian man should understand before he starts looking for a wife. Each one is rooted in the wisdom found in Catholic Scripture.

1. Know who you are in Christ. Your identity, worth, and sense of wholeness must come from your relationship with Jesus Christ. Do not look for a woman to fill an empty place in your heart or to complete you. Only God can do that. A wife is meant to walk beside you and support your mission, not define who you are.

“So whoever is in Christ is a new creation: the old things have passed away; behold, new things have come” (2 Cor 5:17).

2. Learn to lead yourself with discipline. Before you can lead a family, you must be able to lead yourself. That means facing your sins, handling your money wisely, training your mind, and building a steady prayer life. If your desires control you now, it will be hard to love your future wife with real sacrifice later.

“No, I drive my body and train it, for fear that, after having preached to others, I myself should be disqualified” (1 Cor 9:27).

3. Choose holiness before happiness. The true purpose of marriage is to help each other grow closer to God and reach heaven. If you are only looking for feelings or temporary happiness, your marriage will struggle when life becomes difficult. Make virtue and holiness your first goal.

“Like obedient children, do not act in compliance with the desires of your former ignorance but, as he



Robin Miller

The Family Warrior

who called you is holy, be holy yourselves in every aspect of your conduct, for it is written, ‘Be holy because I [am] holy’” (1 Pt 1:14–16).

4. Start practicing sacrificial love now. You will not suddenly become a self-giving husband on your wedding day. Learn to put others before yourself now. Practice this with your friends, your family, and the people you serve. These habits prepare you for the responsibility of loving a wife well.

“Husbands, love your wives, even as Christ loved the church and handed himself over for her” (Eph 5:25).

5. Know your mission in life. A Christian man should have a sense of the work and purpose God has placed in his life. A good wife joins a man who is already moving forward with that purpose, not someone still drifting without direction.

“Anything you can turn your hand to, do with what power you have; for there will be no work, no planning, no knowledge, no wisdom in Sheol where you are going” (Eccl 9:10).

6. Look for character, not just charm. The world focuses on looks and personality, but Scripture points us to deeper things. Look for a woman who fears the Lord, shows kindness, and lives with integrity. Those qualities will hold a family together through hard times.

“Charm is deceptive and beauty fleeting; the woman who fears the Lord is to be praised” (Prv 31:30).

7. Build a strong prayer life. A husband is called to lead his family spiritually, and that begins with prayer. Learn to pray regularly now. Pray for your future wife even before you meet her. Ask God to guide

and protect her.

“Pray without ceasing. In all circumstances give thanks, for this is the will of God for you in Christ Jesus” (1 Thes 5:17–18).

8. Stay close to good men who hold you accountable. Trying to live the Christian life alone is dangerous. Surround yourself with faithful men who will speak honestly to you, challenge you when needed, and help you stay committed to purity and faithfulness.

“Iron is sharpened by iron; one person sharpens another” (Prv 27:17).

9. Learn to forgive quickly. Every marriage will face disagreements. Before seeking a wife, learn how to handle conflict well. Be quick to forgive, quick to apologize, and more interested in healing the relationship than winning an argument.

“[And] be kind to one another, compassionate, forgiving one another as God has forgiven you in Christ” (Eph 4:32).

10. See marriage as a lifelong covenant. Marriage is not a temporary agreement that can be broken when things get hard. It is a lifelong promise built on faithful love. Enter it with the intention of giving your whole life, just as God gives his love faithfully.

“Therefore what God has joined together, no human being must separate” (Mk 10:9).

These truths are not meant to hold you back. They are meant to help shape you. A strong marriage starts long before a man ever meets his future wife. It begins with the quiet work of prayer, discipline, and personal growth. When a man prepares his heart now, he is laying the foundation for the family he hopes to lead one day. Do not rush into searching for a wife while ignoring the work God wants to do in your life.

Let him build your character, strengthen your faith, and guide your purpose. When a man walks closely with Christ, he becomes the kind of husband a faithful woman is praying for. And when two people who love God come together, their marriage can reflect his love to the world.

Robin Miller is the founder and executive director of The Family Warrior, a men's ministry based in San Angelo. See www.thefamilywarrior.org.

The Word that closed the lion's mouth

I have always dealt with anxiety. I can get in my head and run down a million rabbit holes following each "what if." It feels overwhelming and scary, even though I know the thoughts aren't rational. Worst case scenarios dance around with worries about what I would do in each situation. Past fears come back in, and for some reason all I can focus on are the negatives coming at me. Does this resonate with you, too?

I remember clearly one morning, I woke up from a fitful sleep around 6:30 a.m. Actually, let me start over. That night I went to bed at 3:00 a.m., after caring for my daughter who was sick. Yes, I mean that kind of sickness. Hair holding, cleaning up after, grabbing a change of clothes kind of illness. My heart was breaking for her. I had purposely stayed awake instead of going to bed, because my mom instinct was pretty sure she'd need me. And it's better to just be awake than fall asleep and be woken up that way. Am I right?

Needless to say, going to bed at 3:00 a.m. was one thing, but we all know that I was not sleeping soundly. Mom radar had me jolting at each sound, waiting for another call. Even though none came, by the time I started to become more aware of birds chirping and the early hours of a quiet house calling me, my anxiety was kicking in full force. And the frustrating part was that I really had done a great job of conquering this particular fear. Or so I thought.

For years, after my second son had been hospitalized with some kind of bone infection that took so long to diagnose, I would get over-anxious at even the thought of one of the kids being sick. What if it was serious? What if it spread to all the kids? To my husband and I? How do I help them if I don't know what's wrong? Do we go to the doctor yet? If we go to the doctor, will we catch something else? What if they are allergic to the medications? What if I give it to them and then they throw up and it doesn't have a chance to work? Do I give them more? Will that poison them? I told you there were a lot of rabbit holes.

That morning, I was lying in bed with the darkness surrounding me like a cold blanket. I felt shaky inside. I kept worrying about how she was. Did she have something contagious and others in the house would be falling next? I tried praying. I really did. In the small part of my brain that was still logical, I knew that I needed to be serious in claiming victory over the neg-



Barbara Moore

ative and fearful thoughts and replace them with his Word and his grace. But I was struggling. It couldn't seem to penetrate the wall. So, I did what I always do in those situations. I made myself get up and change my environment. I sought out the company of someone else whom I knew would pray with me and speak truth into me.

I stepped into the living room to find my husband up early working, and he could tell I wasn't doing well. He had walked me through this valley many times. He had the words, the calming voice, the reminder and invitation to pray.

Have you ever opened the bible or a devotional, and a passage jumps off the page and says, "Hey ... I wrote this JUST FOR YOU!" Well, that morning I opened the daily readings and found a Lenten meditation from EWTN. And God came to me, truly present, answering my prayer for strength and peace. It wasn't like the reflection I read had anything to do with what I was feeling. It was about a totally different topic. I was thinking at first that this wasn't going to be one of those ah-ha moments. But, then right at the end ...

1 Peter 5:8 “Be sober, be watchful. Your adversary the devil prowls around like a roaring lion, seeking someone to devour.”

Wait, there it was. This was how I was feeling. Like someone or something was trying to devour my peace with fear. I grabbed my Bible to read the rest of the passage. I'm kind of a "gotta know the context" type of gal.

1 Peter 5:6–11: "So humble yourselves under the mighty hand of God, that he may exalt you in due time. Cast all your worries upon him because he cares for you. Be sober and vigilant. Your opponent, the devil is prowling around like a roaring lion looking for [some-

one] to devour. Resist him, steadfast in faith, knowing that your fellow believers throughout the world undergo the same sufferings. The God of all grace who called you to his eternal glory through Christ [Jesus] will himself restore, confirm, strengthen, and establish you after you have suffered a little. To him be dominion forever. Amen"

Oh, yes and yes! This passage was for me! And, then as I went back to the daily readings that I'd already studied and prayed over, new phrases began jumping off the page. The pattern became clear.

In Isaiah 55:10–11, he speaks of how the rain falls and "gives seed to the one who sows and bread to the one who eats." He goes on to compare this to his Word and how it will not "return to me void, but shall do my will, achieving the end for which I sent it." I remember thinking, “Ok, Lord, your Word will accomplish that which you sent it to do. It will feed me, plant seeds within me that will grow.” Then wait, I just found 1 Peter 5. I began to understand that God sent that passage to me and I felt peace. I gained strength to stand against the enemy who would steal my joy and make me want to be sad and fearful. Oh no, this lion can't touch me!

In Psalm 34 it says, "I sought the Lord, and he answered me and delivered me from all my fears."

And, finally, Matthew 6:8: "Your Father knows what you need before you ask him."

Can you see what he did? He reminded me that his Word will always be there for me and that it is powerful. He said that he will save me, if I seek him. And catch the words of Jesus. There we go. The final clue. He knew what I needed before I even asked. He was prepared to give me 1 Peter 5.

But, even with all God did to let me know he was there, I had to be willing to fight the voices in my head. I had to take the step to pray. I had to remember to open the Scriptures to hear him speak, and I needed to go sit at his feet and listen. If you suffer with all the “what ifs” too, focus on this one instead. What if you turn to him and let him speak his truth over you? He can't wait to close the lion's mouth with a single Word.

Barbara Moore is Parish Communication and Engagement Manager at Holy Family Catholic Church in Abilene.

Catholic Voices

Guarding the heart and home: Raising holy families in a screen-saturated world

Parents today raise children in a world unlike any previous generation. Video games, social media, streaming platforms, AI chatbots and instant information transform daily life.

The tools of the digital world offer many remarkable opportunities for learning, creativity, and enjoyment. Media messages educate and form audiences through ideas, values, and worldviews. When used well they can expand the minds and hearts of children and enrich their imaginations.

Along with the benefits of technology, risks are also a reality. Harmful content can adversely affect a child's emotional and spiritual health. Without guidance, kids can, intentionally or not, find themselves in dangerous digital spaces where the content may undermine their faith and well-being.

Because of this, parents are called to monitor technology use and help children become critical engagers of media. This responsibility is not only practical — it is profoundly spiritual.

Use technology — don't let it use you

Technology itself is not the enemy. Human ingenuity created social media apps, video games, and artificial intelligence. However, like any tool, they can be used for good or for harm.

Pope Leo XIV emphasizes that technology must serve the human person rather than replace human wisdom or relationships. Parents, rooted in faith, are the ones who form and guide children toward the beautiful, true, and good.

Youngsters cannot always distinguish helpful from harmful content online because they lack the maturity to apply discernment to the messages they encounter in the media. Yet these are the messages that shape their young minds and hearts. Therefore, parenting should include spiritual guidance in the digital world.

Shape your child's digital character

Being a responsible parent when it comes to media does not simply mean setting limits for screen time, although that is necessary. It also involves playing and viewing together as a family. Being present to one another and engaging media together allows for the chance to enter into conversations about media content. This helps children interpret what they see and hear through the lens of faith. Talking with children about their digital experience helps



Sister Nancy Usselmann
OSV News

Media Mindfulness

them develop discernment skills, which are essential as they grow into adulthood.

Parents should aim to form their children's consciences, not just enforce the rules. Encourage children to ask questions of the media, such as: How does this story make me feel? Does it reflect goodness? Does it draw me closer to God?

By forming children in digital discernment, this equips children to safeguard their interior lives and grow in their relationship with God.

Defend your family through prayer

Helping strengthen their spiritual core provides the most effective way to protect children in the digital age. When families pray together, they invite Christ into their home, making him the center of their relationships and activities.

Prayer strengthens children interiorly and helps to form their consciences. Prayer reminds them that they are God's beloved children. When a family prays the rosary or grace before meals together or brings their intentions about their online experiences to God, God's grace bonds the family together. These moments teach children that God is present in every aspect of life — including their digital lives.

Perhaps the most important factor in forming children is the example of the parents. Children see what their parents do and imitate them. When devices constantly distract parents, children internalize that behavior, but when parents pray together and lead the family in prayer, the children learn the value and beauty of faith.

Transform your tech into a path to holiness

Technology does not have to weaken faith. Families

See USSELMANN, Page 19

4 things I learned from my first month of daily Mass

By André Escalera
OSV News

It was a quiet Saturday afternoon. I found myself in my parish's chapel, yelling at God, angry at him for calling a dear friend to move away.

Between tirades came a reply that echoed in the silence: "What if you loved me this much?"

Now, I wish I could say I piously realized the error of my ways, repented, cried tears of joy.

Even though I may not have responded well that day, the Lord's question haunted me in the weeks that followed.

What if I did love the Lord that much?

What if I did give him my all?

What would that look like?

As the month ended, I decided to give it a shot, to go "all-in." I'd started praying the rosary daily a few weeks prior, so I committed to stepping it up by going to daily Mass every day.

After a 31-day Mass streak — better than any Duolingo streak I ever had, for the record — God has shown me a ton. Here are just a few lessons I learned from going to Mass every day for a month.

There will always be more work to do. Take a break

I'll admit, I fell into the "I'm too busy to go to Mass" camp far too often. The length of my to-do list, the howl of deadlines, and the chirp of email notifications drowned out the gentle, quiet call of God to spend time with him on most days.

No matter who you are, what job you have or what state of life you find yourself in, there will always be more work to do.

Now, 31 days of Mass later, I see the value of taking a break and a breath and turning to the Lord. And I'm grateful for the peace, clarity, and stability that's given me.

God wants a relationship with us

It's not just that Jesus came and dwelt among us.

See ESCALEIRA, Page 19

School's in session

St. John Henry Newman, writing in the 19th century, wanted a Catholic laity "who know their religion ... who know what they hold and what they do not." Whatever the challenges Newman faced in the 19th century, one could argue that the challenge of educating adult Catholics in the faith is that much more significant in the 21st century.

For too many adults, their religious education stopped after they received the sacrament of confirmation, usually around junior high. That leaves many of us in a complex and challenging world with a child's education in the faith. We try to glean what we can from homilies. If we have the initiative to learn more, we wander into the jungle of YouTube videos and podcasts, trying to steer between the fringe influencers selling their own gospels and the professional skeptics challenging belief itself.

Where do we go to get an adult education in the faith?

Two long-running Catholic gatherings on opposite sides of the country have come up with unique and successful ways to answer that question.

The first is an extraordinary Lenten "university" offered annually in the northern reaches of the Archdiocese of Los Angeles. Founded 25 years ago by Father Dave Heney, The University Series is a vast web of courses ranging from "Bible Study: Connecting Scripture to Life Today" to "Faith and Science: Friends or Foes?" In 2026 it offered 88 presentations on 15 parish campuses on marriage, morality, current events, faith in music, and more.

Father Heney's genius was to focus on accessibility and practicality while at the same time betting that "people will make a big commitment for a short time."

His bet has paid off. An estimated 15,000 Catholics and their friends attend one or more sessions each Lent. The program is cleverly designed to encourage connections. Someone who pays 10 dollars to enroll in a class can bring a friend for free. The program is described as "friend-raising, not fund-raising." The nominal cost makes sure the student has a little skin in the game and is more likely to show up.

On the other side of the country is a quite different model called the New York Encounter. Sponsored by Communion and Liberation, an Italian renewal movement now growing in the United States, it is usually held on the weekend of the Rev. Martin Luther King Jr. holiday in New York City. It is free for everyone. No tickets, no reser-



Greg Erlandson
OSV News

Amid the Fray

ventions, just wide-open access to a panoply of speakers and topics. This year's topic was "Where 'Everything is Waiting for You,'" an extended reflection on belonging.

The New York Encounter relies on 400 volunteers to keep things on schedule and accessible. It features not just panels on various topics, but musical presentations and Mass (this year celebrated by New York's emeritus archbishop Cardinal Timothy M. Dolan). The auditoriums and exhibit halls are teeming with people of all ages, but an inspiring number are college students.

February's speakers included the Bishop of Kharkiv, Ukraine, who described the horror of Russia's aggression in stark terms: "We are in the middle of a tempest of suffering and pain."

Other speakers addressed Catholic teaching regarding just war, the crisis of globalization, the Church and A.I., and what some are calling a new religious revival in the West.

Exhibits included a tribute to the Algerian martyrs and to the Catholic founder of Bank of America.

The New York Encounter is not so much a university as a smorgasbord of fascinating people and topics. It is meant to provoke and explore, to lead to further conversations and further reading.

Two different models of educating the faithful and the interested. Two different signs of hope that St. Newman's educated laity are being formed today.

For more information: www.theuniversityseries.org and www.newyorkencounter.org.

Greg Erlandson is an award-winning Catholic publisher, editor and journalist whose column appears monthly at OSV News. Follow him on X @GregErlandson.

Cartoon Corner



**2026 Historic Beginnings
The Lady in Blue Celebration**

**May 16, 2026
9AM - 4PM**

*Save the
Date*

**Cathedral Church of
the Sacred Heart, San Angelo**

**Speakers, lunch, our beloved
Jumano Indians
More Information Coming**



OEC award nominations open

Every year, the Office of Evangelization and Catechesis grants awards to youth and adults that represent the best of the Diocese of San Angelo.

This year, we will be bestowing the awards during the Easter season.

The Office of Evangelization and Catechesis will recognize one catechetical leader and one youth ministry leader with the Companions on the Journey Award for their commitment and service to their ministry. Adults can be nominated by pastor, parish staff, or parishioners.

One youth (7th-10th grade) will be recognized with the Timothy Award for their exceptional witness of the faith and leadership in their communities. One youth (11th-12th grade) will be recognized with the Christus Vivit award for the ways they have helped bring Christ to life in their parish, school, and local community. Youth must be nominated by pastor, DRE, CRE, or CYM. Parishes/missions are limited to one nomination per youth award.

One young adult (ages 19-35) will be recognized with the Blessed Chiara Young Adult Award for being an exceptional witness of the faith and contributing to their faith and civic communities. Young adults can be nominated by pastor, parish staff, or parishioners.

All those nominated for the Timothy Award, the Christus Vivit Award, and the Blessed Chiara Award will receive a certificate of recognition.

We will also assist with awarding any religious awards/emblems earned by any young person participating in scouting. Scout leaders should contact the office as soon as possible to ensure medals, patches, or emblems are obtained in time for the presentation.

FMI: 325-651-7500.

MISSION

Continued from Page 13

community carries within them."

In his third point, the pope explained that this mission is not a "heroic adventure" reserved only for a few, but rather the "living witness of a Body with many members," and every mission includes rejection and suffering.

He recalled that the people of Nazareth were filled with rage when they heard Jesus' words and drove him out of the town. Every Christian must "pass through" a trial just as Jesus did, the pope said.

"The cross is part of the mission: the sending becomes more bitter and frightening, but also more freeing and transformative," he said.

Throughout life, Pope Leo said the faithful may be called to experience many "resurrections," as they immerse themselves in service. He pointed to the hope of many witnesses, one of whom "is particularly dear to me."

That witness is St. Óscar Romero of San Salvador, El Salvador, who wrote a month before his assassination that Jesus helped martyrs and if the need arose, "I entrust my last breath to him."

"But, more than the final moment of life, what matters is to give him one's whole life and to live for him," he wrote.

He continued, saying that "despite my sins, I have placed my trust in him and I shall not be disheartened." St. Romero, remembered as a martyr for defending the poor and speaking out against injustice, was canonized by Pope Francis in 2018.

A successful mission is not about the results, but rather about the disciple's faithfulness and hope in God. Jesus embarked on a journey "in a world torn apart by the powers that ravage it," Pope Leo said.

"Within it arises a new people, not of victims, but of witnesses," he said.



EN ESPAÑOL

**engaged
encounter**

La Boda es un día... El Matrimonio es para toda la Vida



**¿Están pensando
casarse por la Iglesia?**

¡Este es el momento!

- 👉 **Son novios y desean casarse por la Iglesia?**
- 👉 **Llevan varios años juntos y quieren formalizar su matrimonio ante Dios?**
- 👉 **Desean construir un matrimonio guiado por Dios?**

Vengan a vivir una experiencia maravillosa tú y tu pareja a través de un encuentro intenso para novios, diseñado para fortalecer su relación y prepararlos espiritualmente para el sacramento del matrimonio.



Fechas:

Marzo 6-8

Junio 19-21

Noviembre 6-8

Más información / Registro:

(432) 202-8056

Abilene-area pro-life rosary schedule

The Pro-Life Committee for the Abilene Deanery has released their weekly Pro-Life Rosary schedule.

Join us in prayer for the sanctity of all human life.

MONDAY

St. Vincent Pallotti Parish, Abilene
Rosary at 11:30 AM, followed by daily Mass

TUESDAY

St. Francis of Assisi Parish, Abilene
Rosary at 6:00 PM, followed by daily Mass

WEDNESDAY

Holy Family Parish, Abilene
Rosary at 9:30 AM after daily Mass, during weekly Adoration Hour

THURSDAY

Perpetual Adoration Chapel, Abilene
Rosary at 5:00 PM, followed by daily Mass

FRIDAY

St. Mary Queen of Peace Parish, Brownwood
Rosary at 11:40 AM, followed by daily Mass

Catholic speed dating back for round 2

The Vocation Office of the Diocese of San Angelo is hosting a second Catholic speed dating event. The office held their first event in November.

The Vocation Office of the Diocese of San Angelo hopes to encourage happy and holy families in West Texas. As part of this effort, the office will be hosting a Catholic speed dating event this May.

This time there are two events: one for Catholic singles ages 25–39, and one for Catholic singles ages 35–50. Both events will take place on the same day:

May 2, 2026, 1-4 p.m.: ages 25–39

May 2, 2026, 5-8 p.m.: ages 35–50

For more information or to register for one of the events, visit

<https://sanangelodiocese.org/catholic-speed-dating>.

US-Chinese Catholic Association and University of St. Thomas Announce 2026 International Conference

The US-Chinese Catholic Association (USCCA) and the University of St. Thomas (UST) in Houston are pleased to announce that UST will host the USCCA 2026 International Conference, July 31 — Aug. 2, 2026, titled “Nourishing Trust & Friendship: Following the Way of Christ.”

The conference will bring together Catholic leaders, educators, scholars, students, and members of the Chinese Catholic diaspora from across the United States and abroad for a multi-day gathering centered on faith, friendship, culture, and community.

Registration opens Tuesday, March 10.

The USCCA serves as a bridge between Chinese culture and the Catholic faith in both the United States and China, creating spaces where individuals and communities can deepen their spiritual lives, celebrate cultural heritage, and participate more fully in the mission of the Catholic Church. The 2026 conference continues this mission by fostering dialogue, mutual understanding, and solidarity among Chinese Catholics worldwide.

For more information, visit <https://www.uscatholicchina.org/conference-30-faq>.

The U.S.-Chinese Catholic Association is a faith-based organization dedicated to fostering understanding, dialogue, and solidarity among Chinese Catholics in the United States, China, and around the world.

ESCALEIRA

Continued from Page 17

It's that he still comes and dwells among us — present tense. He does so in the Eucharist.

At any given moment, on any given altar, in any given place across the world, Jesus comes to meet his people. Heaven touches earth. God is made food to nourish, sustain, and bless his people. He not only gave us everything necessary to know, love, and serve him in his earthly life, death, and resurrection. He gives, now, all that we need to follow him.

In this month of Mass, the God of the universe has met little old me right where I'm at, every single day, and called me closer to him.

God speaks to us every day

Well, if God wants a relationship with us, of course God would communicate with us! That's what any good therapist will tell you — relationships are built on communication.

I realized that communication happens most often,

most effectively, and most powerfully through the Scriptures, through the daily readings.

More often than not, I'd walk into Mass to piously prepare and forget to check out the day's readings. Then, when the lector would begin proclaiming the living Word of God, my heart would be pierced.

It was as if God was speaking directly to me — whether in the first reading, the psalm, the second reading on Sundays, or the Gospel. No matter what I thought of the homily, either. (But y'all are doing great, Fathers!)

Daily prayer isn't a talisman

Partway through the month, I was feeling good — close to God, holier, peaceful, and maybe a bit more patient. Things were going well!

Then, the winds changed and the storm came.

What was this all about? God, I'm praying more than I have in a while! I'm going to Mass every day! Why isn't everything going well?!

Then it hit me. I was trying to "earn" goodness and grace by putting together an impressive spiritual resume.

But prayer isn't a talisman. Just because we do a li-

tany of laudable things doesn't mean we've earned comfort. In fact, Jesus promises us the exact opposite (see Jn 16:33).

It was a hard pill to swallow, but I'm grateful for the reality check. It might just bring me closer to Jesus in the next 31 days.

Take the next right step

Whether you find yourself in shoes like mine or you're much holier than I, I'd invite you to consider taking the next step in your spiritual journey today.

It's worth it to enter into the discomfort, the inconvenience, and try to figure it out with God.

I say that not as a saint or a pillar of peaceful prayer but as a guy who's still figuring this whole Christian life thing out.

But on only day 32 of daily Mass-going, I can tell you: There's peace, security, and joy in the arms of the Father. It won't be easy. It won't always be fun. But it will be worth it.

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André Escaleira Jr. is managing editor of Denver Catholic and El Pueblo Católico.

USSELMANN

Continued from Page 17

can support their faith by using technology intentionally. Families can watch inspiring content together and discuss what they see, listen together to a recording of Scripture, learn about the saints, and use digital tools to deepen their spiritual life.

It is a challenge to parent in the digi-

tal age, but by setting boundaries, keeping bedrooms screen-free, establishing tech-free times, and encouraging other activities including prayer, parents can help bring balance and peace to their homes.

For further tips and ideas of how to form digitally safe and holy kids, watch the Digital Age Family Safety series by Family Theater Productions and Pauline Media Studies at DigitalFamilySafety.org or on its YouTube channel.

These short videos are designed to help busy Catholic parents navigate the digital culture for their kids with practical tools and fun ideas. The downloadable guides make the series' content accessible and lasting.

Parents aim to raise children who do not fear technology, but instead demonstrate maturity and integration — who know how to use digital tools without being controlled by them. When families

pray together, discern together, and live intentionally with their media, the home becomes a sacred space where faith is lived, hearts are formed, and Christ reigns at the center. In such homes, holiness can flourish.

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Sister Nancy Usseilmann, a Daughter of St. Paul, is director of the Pauline Center for Media Studies in Los Angeles and a media literacy education specialist.

CABRINI

Continued from Page 12

Italians remained the special focus of the sisters' efforts.

As early as September 1891, Mother Cabrini took 14 sisters to Nicaragua to start an academy. Returning to the United States by way of New Orleans, she discovered that a year earlier a mob there had lynched a number of Italians accused of crimes. Her response was to summon several sisters from New York to begin

work among the Italians of the Crescent City.

Like the little girl who years before had dreamed of dispatching missionaries all over the world, Mother Cabrini carried on a ministry of expansive horizons. Argentina and Chile, France, Spain, England — Missionary Sisters went to all these places to work. In the U.S., the order spread west across the United States — to Chicago, to the mining camps of Colorado and Sing Sing prison in New York, Mississippi, New Jersey, Pennsylvania, and Washington state.

In 1909, Mother Cabrini became a naturalized citizen. The following year, knowing her strength was failing, she announced her intention to resign as superior general of her order and devote herself exclusively to prayer. But the houses of the Missionary Sisters voted unanimously in favor of her staying on. Observing those results, the cardinal-prefect of the Vatican's congregation for religious told her, jokingly, "Mother Cabrini, though up to now you have governed your institute badly, I have decided to give you another chance. You are to remain superior gen-

eral." The foundress wasn't fazed. "Well, I warn you that I shall be just as severe as in the past," she replied.

She died Dec. 22, 1917, at Columbus Hospital in Chicago. After the unusually brief interval of 21 years, Pope Pius XI declared her blessed. Pius XII canonized her in 1946 and in 1950 designated her "Patroness of the Immigrants."

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Russell Shaw, a longtime journalist and writer, was the author of more than 20 books, including three novels. He died in January 2026.

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PILGRIM

Continued from Page 1

Goliad and Refugio, Texas. Last year, the route from Indy to LA took pilgrims through the Diocese of San Angelo, including the city of San Angelo, where Martinez was able to participate.

"I've had the opportunity to meet the pilgrims, to talk with them, and to be in these processions and hear some of their talks," Martinez said. "I always kind of had interest to be a pilgrim." He received permission from Bishop Sis and Father Ryan Rojo, director of seminarians for the diocese, to apply to be an official perpetual pilgrim this time.

"As I've experienced these past pilgrimages, I've been able to see what good works the Lord has done through [them], and I want to continue sharing that with others," he said.

After a three-stage application process, the nine who were selected to be perpetual pilgrims were brought to Indiana for a retreat, where they met for the first time and started to prepare logistics for this summer's pilgrimage. "I think it's a great group," Martinez said. "I'm excited to travel with our Lord this summer with them, and to get to know them better and, through them, get to know our Lord better."

As the only seminarian in the group, "I'll get to see how these pastoral experiences can shape my priesthood," Martinez said. "God willing, one day when I become a priest, some of these experiences I'll be able to use to help others." He also looks forward to serving as an altar server during Masses along the route. As a seminarian, he also will be serving as a sacristan during the pilgrimage, helping to handle liturgical vessels along the way.

"The seminary has prepared me for this in various ways, in various capacities," Martinez said. "We're going

to have various points where we're going to give our testimony or give a talk about the Eucharist and how that has shaped our lives," he said. "In that, I think the seminary has prepared me to be a public person and to be able to share our Lord with others in an articulate way."

"I look forward to allowing the Lord to work in me, and then hopefully he can work through me throughout the pilgrimage," Martinez said.

This year's pilgrimage was given the theme "One Nation Under God," coinciding as it does with the 250th anniversary of the founding of the United States. Much of the pilgrimage route was planned with American history in mind. "We're going to be starting in St. Augustine, Florida, where the first Mass that has been continually held has been. ... There's been a Mass consistently there since the mid-1500s," he said, which is a "wonderful testament to our faith."

The pilgrims will also hold Eucharistic processions in Washington, D.C. "Where better to go than our nation's capital for a celebration of the 250th anniversary, and to get to allow our Lord into that celebration through adoration and Mass?" Martinez asked. The pilgrimage wraps in Philadelphia on the weekend of the Fourth of July, the site of the signing of the Declaration of Independence. The route also takes the pilgrims through most of the original 13 colonies, including crossing the Delaware River on a boat with Jesus, evocative of the famous painting of George Washington doing the same during the Revolutionary War.

In a March 25 press conference, Jason Shanks, CEO of the National Eucharistic Congress — the organization overseeing the pilgrimage — noted that "before there was a Constitution, there was a consecration," reflecting that Catholicism was here before there was a country known as the United States. He also debuted a new feature for this year's pilgrimage: a "prayer bouquet" so people can participate without walking. They are hoping to secure 250,000 holy hours from faithful around the country to

help in this Eucharistic celebration.

In the same press conference, Martinez spoke about prayer intentions. "I have a lot of intentions that have been entrusted to me," he said, each a unique and special "intention from the heart of the individual."

The perpetual pilgrims will all be praying for intentions throughout the pilgrimage, which will also be presented at the altar during the final Mass. Scan the QR code on this page to submit an intention. "I would like to invite the people of the Diocese of San Angelo to join me on this pilgrimage by praying for my team and me, and by sending their prayer intentions," Martinez asked.

To learn more about this year's perpetual pilgrims, visit <https://www.eucharisticpilgrimage.org/pilgrims>.



Submit prayer intentions

Seder meal at Holy Angels



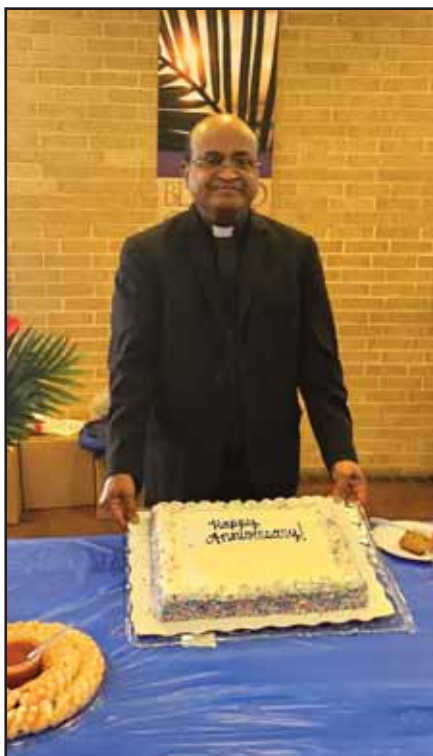
JON BAILEY

A "family photo" from the Seder meal: Daniel Vasquez, pastor Father Santiago Udayar, Bishop Michael J. Sis, Lacy Bailey, Rhett Bailey, and Maurice Fortin

DANIELLE EMERSON

Holy Angels Parish held a Seder meal on Palm Sunday, March 29. The Seder commemorates the Passover from Jewish tradition.

37 years a priest



DANIELLE EMERSON



DANIELLE EMERSON

Father Santiago Udayar celebrated the 37th anniversary of his priestly ordination with a reception March 31. Father Santiago is the pastor of Holy Angels Parish in San Angelo and its mission church of Immaculate Conception in Knickerbocker; he also serves as the vicar general of the diocese. Among the many people helping him celebrate was the Holy Angels Womens' Group.