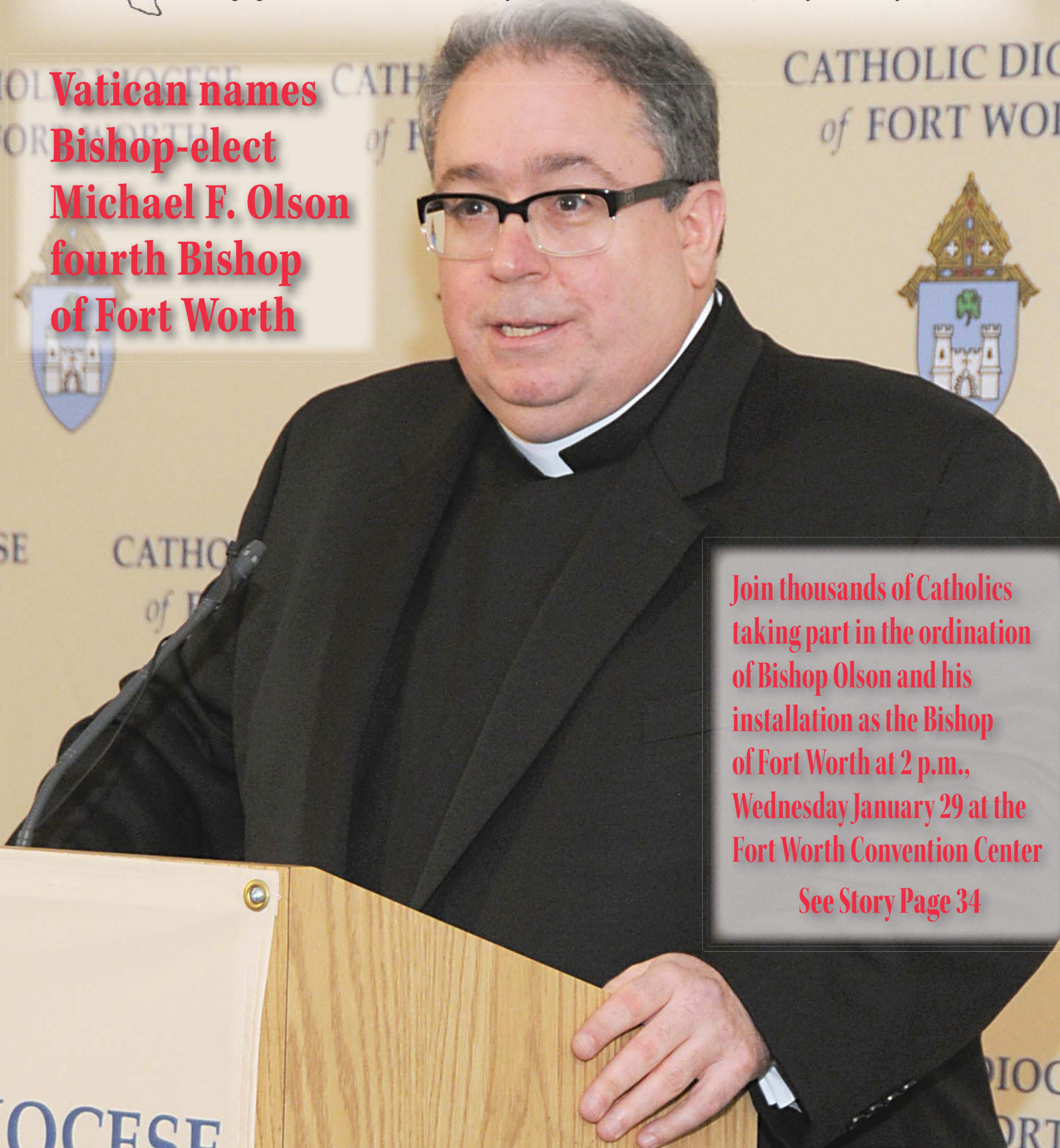




NEWSMAGAZINE North Texas Catholic

Bringing the Good News to the Diocese of Fort Worth Vol. 26 No. 1 January / February 2014

**Vatican names
Bishop-elect
Michael F. Olson
fourth Bishop
of Fort Worth**



**Join thousands of Catholics
taking part in the ordination
of Bishop Olson and his
installation as the Bishop
of Fort Worth at 2 p.m.,
Wednesday January 29 at the
Fort Worth Convention Center**

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WHEN WAS YOUR EPIPHANY? 15

Columnist Jeff Hedglen calls on each of us to use Epiphany to recall just how we were led to discover Jesus in our lives, as the wise men were led to Him by the Christmas star.

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Columnist Denise Bossert moves us all the way to February and Catholic Press Month when she recalls how her local diocesan newspaper was the only means of communication that could non-threateningly enter her home to evangelize her family.

MOTHER MARIA OF JESUS CRUCIFIED CELEBRATES JUBILEE 32

Friends of Carmel, family members, and supporters gathered at Arlington's Carmelite Monastery of the Holy Trinity to honor Mother Maria of Jesus Crucified Oct. 12 as she observed the 50th anniversary of her profession of final vows as a Carmelite. She entered the order when it was located on Sunset Terrace in a secluded neighborhood in the shadow of downtown Fort Worth.

COVER PHOTO: Bishop-elect Michael F. Olson addresses the press and members of the diocesan staff in the Conference Room of The Catholic Center Nov. 19. Earlier that day Archbishop Carlo Maria Viganò, Apostolic Nuncio to the United States, had announced in Washington that Pope Francis had named Msgr. Olson the fourth Bishop of the Diocese of Fort Worth. (NTC Photo / Donna Ryckaert)

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21 KNIGHTS AND LADIES INVESTED
Bill and Tessy Ross, who chaired the October meeting of nearly 1,000 members of the Southwest Lieutenancy of the Equestrian Order of the Holy Sepulchre of Jerusalem, process into Vietnamese Martyrs Church. At the Mass there, new members were invested into the papal order. (NTC Photo / Donna Ryckaert)



24 CHANGING LIVES THROUGH EDUCATION IN BOLIVIA
When Fr. Robert Thames began Nuestra Señora del Carmen School in Bolivia in 2004, he was expecting 100 students, but 250 showed up. Now its vocational program is a model for Bolivia. (Photo courtesy of Henry del Castillo, Jr.)



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When the Sisters of St. Mary of Namur gathered at St. Patrick's to celebrate 150 years in the U.S., they brought their heritage as educators, healthcare workers, and ministers to the poor. (NTC Photo / Joan Kurkowski-Gillen)



28 OUR LADY OF LEBANON MARONITE CATHOLIC CHURCH WELCOMES TWO EPARCHS HOME
Bishop Abdallah Zaidan, MLM, and Bishop Paul Tabet, MLM, visited Our Lady of Lebanon Maronite Catholic Church in Lewisville recently. Both had major roles in establishing the local church. (NTC Photo / Jerry Circelli)



30 GUADALUPANOS FROM ACROSS DIOCESE CELEBRATE AT CATHEDRAL
They gathered before dawn, braving the winter chill to sing and dance and honor Our Lady of Guadalupe, Patroness of the Americas, on her feast day, December 12. (NTC Photo / Joan Kurkowski-Gillen)

North Texas Catholic

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We have a bishop-elect, and he's from among us...

One of the perks of being the editor is that I get to see all the photos, not just the ones that make it onto the pages of the magazine, or even just the ones that make their way into a SmugMug album on the North Texas Catholic website



northtexasatholic.org.

And that's why the Juan Guajardo photo here is making its way onto the page.

Juan was one of three photographers we had covering the news conference where our new Bishop-elect Michael F. Olson was

announced publicly Nov. 19.

And later in the day, there was the joy of a family reunion following the first public Mass he celebrated at St. Patrick Cathedral. Bishop-elect Olson beamed as he greeted old friends and new, in familiar surroundings, sharing the moment with many of his family members present, as well as with friends he'd known for decades, people who had been in parishes he had served in, people who had come to the noon Mass simply to meet the priest who was to become their new bishop.

It was a joyous occasion. We had been without a bishop to lead our diocese for more than a year, and we, as the people of God in this place were hungry to have someone to move the local Church forward. You could feel it.

But as we prepared to go to press, just a month before Bishop-elect Olson becomes Bishop Olson on Jan. 29 at the Fort Worth Convention Center, I got to look at all of the pictures, and once all the choices were made about which to use to convey the events of the day, I looked again at Juan's photos and realized he had taken the position of third photographer Nov. 19, yielding the best spots for each photo to the other two photographers, so his photos had a quality of snapshots to them, photos not taken from the most advantageous angle, but conveying the warmth and feeling of what was going on. That's why this picture is here. I wanted you to feel a bit of what it felt like to be there at this joyous time in our shared history.

P.S. — Thank you Monsignor Berg for shepherding the Diocese through this time of transition as diocesan administrator.

Jeff Hensley
Editor

The toddler in the sunbonnet with the calf is Sharon Perkins at age three.



This is 'The Farm Wall' at Sharon's mom's house after 'reframing'

Reframing the Christmas Season

by Sharon K. Perkins

I've been engaged in some delightfully creative work for my mother lately — although it's been far from easy. After my Dad went to be with the Lord a few years ago, my parents' house pretty much remained as it had looked for the last twenty years, except for the gradual acquisition of even more family photos and mementos as the children and grandchildren got older and lives changed. When Mom decided to remodel the house last fall, the task of emptying shelves and readying the walls for painting made her realize just how many items had accumulated. That's where I came in.

My threefold mission was this: help Mom sort through the items that were most important to display, purge those things to which she had no lasting emotional ties, and incorporate her selections in such a way that they complemented the home's new décor and color scheme. Simple? Hardly. Although I tried to repurpose as much as possible the things she already owned, I still found myself making numerous shopping trips to buy new picture frames.

I was most apprehensive about what I called "The Farm Wall": an 8x4 foot space previously decorated with a magazine cover and a jumble of photos about our farming family's history — varied in size, brilliantly colored or faded black and white, some recent, some old—most of which were not framed at all or which sported dented metal frames that were probably picked up in a dime store some 30 years ago. They may have been related thematically, but visually the photos had little connection with each other. I decided that an overhaul was in order. Mom was adamant about not taking up precious wall space with more frames; I convinced her to trust me while I juxtaposed photos that belonged together, omitted or cropped some, supplemented with a few new ones, and found a frame for every single one, arranging everything into one large grouping that told a story. The final effect was a pleasant surprise, even to me. The photos hadn't changed at all — but the new frames had done their magic. The jumble now made sense, and the story, once easily missed, came alive again.

The seasons of Advent and Christmas are sort of like that — a jumble — if we're really honest with ourselves. No matter how many years I've vowed to slow down the pace of Christmas preparations, celebrate Advent properly, and enter prayerfully into the mystery of Christ's birth and its significance for my life personally, it always rushes by in a blur. I leave up my holiday decorations until the end of January, joking that I'm resisting the secular cultural tendency to have Christmas over and done with, when it's really because I simply haven't had the time to retrieve the boxes from storage and put things away (but of course, that's just me!). I needed to reframe the whole Christmas thing, and I think I've discovered how to do it. I call it taking the "long view" of Christmas.

The past few years I've been doing more group Bible studies from a Catholic perspec-

T*he story of the Holy Family is my story, the account of a newborn King whose parents must flee those who wish to thwart his mission before it even begins. How often do I vow to fully trust the Lord in a situation, only to take back control of my life before He even has an opportunity to work things out for his glory and my highest good?*

tive, and the more I ponder the Old Testament, the more I realize that the four weeks of Advent compress liturgically the experience of hundreds of years of waiting for a Messiah. Those beautiful, hope-filled passages from the prophet Isaiah and the Psalms all tell the story of human longing for deliverance from the ravages of sin and death, and it's *my* story, a narrative that continues long after the Baby Jesus is packed away in tissue paper.

And what about those feasts that come after December 25? In different Christian churches, the Christmas season might end on January 6 (the traditional date of the Feast of the Epiphany), or it might last until the Feast of the Baptism of the Lord (traditionally eight days or the Sunday after Epiphany), or might even culminate on February 2 (the Feast of the Presentation of the Lord, forty days after December 25). Tucked in during that week we call the "Octave of Christmas" are the Feast of the Holy Family and the Solemnity of Mary, the Mother of God (known by many as a day for nursing a hangover, watching football, and eating black-eyed peas). Truthfully, except for the familiar story of the three Magi bringing gifts to the Christ Child, those feasts barely receive our attention (except at Mass), so quickly are they overtaken by New Year's Eve and Super Bowl parties and Valentine's Day merchandise in the stores. What's the "long view" of those? How do I reframe stories I've

heard so many times that I don't really grasp their beautiful connection to each other and to my own life today?

For me, the first step is to read the Gospels for those feasts — I mean, *really* read them — with new eyes, and to hear their proclamation with new ears. The story of the Holy Family is *my* story, the account of a newborn King whose parents must flee those who wish to thwart his mission before it even begins. How often do I vow to fully trust the Lord in a situation, only to take back control of my life before He even has an opportunity to work things out for his glory and my highest good?

Jesus' mother Mary, whose title "Mother of God" was decreed at the Council of Ephesus in 431 because her Son's two natures, both fully human and fully divine, are united in one person — is *my* mother, too. She is the mother of all who receive "second birth" through water and the Spirit. She will *always* be our mother "in the order of grace," according to Vatican II's *Dogmatic Constitution on the Church* (#61). So why did I all but ignore her maternal role in my life for so many years? If Jesus saw fit to bestow his mother to each of us from the Cross, why did I not try to get to know her as personally as I tried to know her Son? (I'm happy to relate that my relationship with Mary, and her Son, is deepening dramatically as I've consecrated myself to her care in recent months).

The feasts of the Epiphany, the Baptism, and the Presentation of the Lord are really about the importance of seeking Him with all my heart and honoring Him with all I have, to see beyond mere appearances and to discover that Jesus is nearer to me than I ever imagined. They're about taking seriously the promises of my own Baptism. Many of Isaiah's descendants didn't recognize Him when He came — maybe because they stopped looking? — and I'm reminded that too often I'm either looking in all the wrong places, or in my self-righteous conceit I've simply stopped looking for Him altogether.

Taking the "long view" of Christmas isn't merely about prolonging the season on the calendar. That's the easy part. It's the recognition that these ancient stories, dusted off, reframed, and considered together, are powerfully connected, timelessly fresh, and relevant not only for me but for all those who came before and those who will come after me. And they're your story, too.

2014 CELEBRATION OF CATHOLIC SCHOOLS

THRESHOLDS OF FAITH

Fort Worth Convention Center Ballroom
Saturday, January 25, 2014

6:00pm social | 7:00pm dinner/program

KEYNOTE SPEAKER

Dr. Mary C. McDonald
Founder and CEO of MCD Partners

\$85.00 per person

RSVP by January 15, 2014



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Judge says employer objections to HHS mandate based on religious rights

NEW YORK (CNS) — A spokesman for the New York Archdiocese said the archdiocese “welcomes and applauds” a Dec. 13 ruling by a federal judge granting Catholic organizations in the archdiocese and the neighboring Diocese of Rockville Centre a permanent injunction on having to comply with the federal contraceptive mandate in the health care law.

Adele Keim, counsel at the Becket Fund for Religious Liberty, which tracks suits challenging the mandate, said it was “we believe, the first permanent injunction that has been issued against the HHS mandate in any case.”

The 41-page ruling issued by Judge Brian Cogan of the U.S. District Court for the Eastern District of New York in Brooklyn said the Affordable Care Act mandate violates the religious freedom of the four nonprofit plaintiffs — two Catholic high schools and two health care systems, one of which is ArchCare, an umbrella group of nonprofits based in New York that provide health care to the poor and disabled.

Under final rules issued in June to implement the mandate, there is an exemption for some religious employers that fit its criteria.

But Catholic entities, including those in the New York Archdiocese and Rockville Centre Diocese, say the exemption is too narrowly drawn and the accommodation still does not solve their problem over being involved in providing coverage they reject for moral reasons.

“The court has correctly cut through the artificial construct which essentially made faith-based organizations other than churches and other houses of worship second-class citizens with second-class First Amendment protections,” said Joseph Zwilling, a spokesman for the New York Archdiocese, in a Dec. 16 statement.

Cogan ruled that the HHS contraceptive mandate violates the Religious Freedom Restoration Act and said that even the third-party accommodation to provide the coverage violate the groups’ religious rights.

The judge said the plaintiffs consider complying with the mandate “an endorsement of such coverage,” which also “compels affirmation of a repugnant belief.”

“It is not for this court to say otherwise,” he added.

Archbishop Joseph Kurtz, new USCCB president, is rooted in simple values

BALTIMORE (CNS) — The newly elected president of the U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops has been a bishop for nearly 14 years, but it’s as priest, family member, and social worker that he describes himself.

By way of introduction to American Catholics, Archbishop Joseph E. Kurtz of Louisville, Ky., talked about his upbringing in northeastern Pennsylvania, of spending most of his priesthood as a social worker, and of caring for his older brother, George, who had Down syndrome, for 12 years after their mother died.

He takes obvious pride in his identity as a coal-town native and a transplanted southerner, after serving as bishop of Knoxville, Tenn., from 1999 to 2007, when he became archbishop of Louisville.

Archbishop Kurtz, 67, was elected to serve a three-year term as president of the conference, succeeding New York Cardinal Timothy M. Dolan in the post. He has been vice president of the USCCB for the past three years and was elected with a 125-vote win on the first ballot Nov. 12.

Shortly after his election, Archbishop Kurtz spoke of seeing the example of Pope Francis as a model for outreach, listening and collegiality. “He’s asking us to go beyond what we’ve been doing,” he said. “If it was a car, I guess we’re



Archbishop Joseph E. Kurtz, new president of the U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops (CNS photo/Nancy Phelan Wiechec)

moving in to high gear.”

Asked about his long-term plans for the conference, he suggested there might be a thread to consider in his intervention in October 2012 at the world Synod of Bishops on the new evangelization.

There, he used his allotted five minutes to focus on parish observances, particularly the Rite for the Blessing of a Child in the Womb.

The ceremony is a “pastoral moment of first evangelization of the child and new evangelization of the family,” Archbishop Kurtz told the synod.

He told CNS Nov. 12 that he sees the rite as a way of “reaching out to people on the margins, especially a woman who is pregnant, especially if they’re distant from Christ, distant from the church.”

Pope Francis calls for action against scandal of hunger in a world of plenty

VATICAN CITY (CNS) — People must stand united against the scandal of hunger while avoiding food waste and irresponsible use of the world’s resources, Pope Francis said.

People should “stop thinking that our daily actions do not have an impact on the lives of those who suffer from hunger firsthand,” he said in a video message Dec. 9, launching a global campaign of prayer and action against hunger.

Organized by Caritas Internationalis, the Vatican-based federation of

Catholic charities, a global “wave of prayer” was to begin at noon Dec. 10 on the South Pacific island of Samoa and head west across the world’s time zones.

Pope Francis offered his blessing and support for the “One Human Family, Food For All” campaign in a video message released on the eve of the global launch.

With about 1 billion people still suffering from hunger today, “we cannot look the other way and pretend this does not exist,” he said in the message.

There is enough food in the world

to feed everyone, he said, but only “if there is the will” to respect the “God-given rights of everyone to have access to adequate food.”

By sharing in Christian charity with those “who face numerous obstacles,” the pope said, “we promote an authentic cooperation with the poor so that, through the fruits of their and our work, they can live a dignified life.”

Pope Francis invited all people to act “as one single human family, to give a voice to all of those who suffer silently from hunger, so that this voice becomes

a roar which can shake the world.”

The Caritas campaign is also a way to invite people to pay attention to their own food choices, “which often lead to waste and a poor use of the resources available to us,” the pope said.

Caritas Internationalis invited its 164 member organizations and local churches to pray for an end to hunger and malnutrition, by acting on a local, national or global level against food waste and in favor of food access and security worldwide.

Bishop Deshotel encourages youth to 'persevere in prayer' at annual WYD Mass

DIOCESAN, LOCAL & STATE NEWSBRIEFS

By Jacqueline Burkepile
Correspondent

ARLINGTON — More than 6,000 youth from the dioceses of Fort Worth, Dallas, and Tyler filled Six Flags Over Texas Oct. 20 for the annual World Youth Day. In addition to being celebrated internationally by the Church every few years, many dioceses across the world hold their own annual celebrations. Since the 1990s, World Youth Day at Six Flags has provided community and fellowship for thousands of Catholic youth in North Texas.

The day began with amusement park attractions before youth gathered in the park's Music Mill amphitheater for community-building and faith-enriching activities. Dallas Auxiliary Bishop Douglas Deshotel celebrated the closing Mass at 5 p.m. with Fort Worth Diocesan Administrator Monsignor Stephen Berg concelebrating.

Bishop Deshotel's homily em-

phasized the importance of prayer in everyday life. He discussed prayers of petition, repentance, and thanksgiving, and encouraged youth to "always persevere in prayer."

"God sees all eternity and He knows what is good for us, what will help us to grow in our relationship with Him, and also what will separate us from Him," said Bishop Deshotel. "When we think about true prayer, we have to remember what the goals of our prayer must be."

At the end of the Mass, Msgr. Berg thanked the youth for participating in World Youth Day, and for being witnesses of Jesus Christ to the world. He humbly expressed his pride in the youth, and asked them to remember God's presence in their everyday challenges.

He asked the assembly to be ready to respond to the surprises God offers them in their lives, and encouraged them, as they re-entered their daily lives, to "show up for Jesus, show up for the poor, and show up for each other."

Diocesan RCIA Conference to be held Jan. 25

Immaculate Conception Church in Denton will host the 2014 Diocesan RCIA Conference, "Spreading the Joy of the Gospel" Saturday, Jan. 25 from 8:30 a.m. to 3:30 p.m.

Keynote speakers will include Jack Mooney in English and Marlon De La Torre in Spanish. Mooney is the former director of adult religious formation for the Diocese of El Paso, and currently serves as an adjunct faculty member with that diocese's Tepyac Institute, a lay ministry formation program. De La Torre currently serves as the director of Children's Catechesis and Catechist Formation for the Diocese of Fort Worth.

Workshops will cover areas in catechetical, liturgical, and pastoral ministry. A detailed list of workshops and presenters will be available Jan. 15.

Special activities at the conference are designed to accent and ritualize the RCIA team members' roles as "priest, prophet, and king." There will also be a special track for RCIA adapted for children.

The registration fee is \$20 and includes lunch, if paid by Friday, Jan. 17. The fee will increase to \$25 for any payment made after that date, or at the door. To pre-register, contact Melissa Loza 817-560-2452, ext. 255, or by e-mail at lloza@fwdioc.org.

Speaker discusses vocation of being male, female at YA ToB conference

By Juan Guajardo
Correspondent

KELLER — Nearly 60 young adults from around the diocese attended a Theology of the Body conference at St. Elizabeth Ann Seton Parish Nov. 23, which featured two keynote speakers and guy and girl gender sessions.

Using examples from Scripture, religious artwork, medicine, science, and everyday life, keynote speaker Sister Jane Dominic Laurel, OP, broke down one of the more complex and heavier theological works of our time, Blessed John Paul II's 129-part *Theology of the Body*, into more relatable terms for her young adult audience.

Sr. Laurel, a 17-year theology professor at Aquinas College, used many examples to explain the differences between men and women and how those differences — biological and psychological — were instilled by God into our bodies and souls to inform us of what it means to be masculine or feminine. She discussed how the entire female body says "active receptivity" and how the entire male body says "life giving initiative" and how the designs of our bodies communicate this to us. One of those key differences is in the brain, Sr. Laurel said. More white matter in the female brain makes them better at understanding emotions, and at communicating, nurturing, and relationships. Men's brains, meanwhile, contain more gray matter, which makes them better at finding order and working toward a common goal.

"Our bodies say we came from love but our bodies also say we came *for* love," Sr. Laurel said.

She explained to the young people in the audience, many of whom were couples, that strong marriages create



Photo by Michael McGee / NTC
Sister Jane Dominic Laurel, OP, was the keynote speaker at a young adult Theology of the Body conference held at St. Elizabeth Ann Seton Parish in Keller Nov. 23.

strong families, and strong families create strong societies. But Sr. Laurel reminded her audience that there is a vocation that is being attacked and mocked in society today that is key to creating those strong marriages, families, and societies.

"We have an even more fundamental vocation," Sr. Laurel said. "The vocation to masculinity and femininity."

She went on to outline some of the archetypes surrounding femininity and masculinity and explained that one of the ways the devil attacks us is by using fear — which can lead to perversions of masculinity and femininity.

"God did not intend for man and woman to hold their fears against one another," Sr. Laurel said. "He intended for man and woman to hold each other in their fear — he protecting and providing, and she encouraging, nurturing, and supporting."

She added, "The joy and love between them and their children reflects the love between the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit."

St. Elizabeth youth minister Gabe Gutiérrez, who coordinated the conference, was pleased with the conference and hopes to do it again next year.

"I think people are hungry for truth," he said. "When you offer them, 'Hey let me tell you something different. Let me tell you something real.' It resonates. That hits to the core of who we are as people."

Austin VG, former A&M pastor, named bishop of San Angelo

DIOCESAN, LOCAL & STATE
NEWSBRIEFS

Renowned researcher discusses Shroud of Turin

EDITOR'S NOTE: This story is adapted from press releases from the Austin and San Angelo dioceses.

SANANGELO—Pope Francis named Monsignor Michael Sis, vicar general of the Austin Diocese, to succeed Bishop Michael Pfeifer as the sixth bishop of San Angelo. He will be ordained and installed as bishop Jan. 27.

Msgr. Sis was born Jan. 9, 1960, in Mount Holly, New Jersey, and ordained to the priesthood for the Diocese of Austin July 19, 1986.

Since ordination, he has served as associate pastor of Christo Rey Church in Austin and St. Mary's Cathedral in Austin; associate pastor and pastor of St. Mary's Student Center at Texas A&M University in College Station; pastor of St. Thomas More Church in Austin; Austin diocesan vocations director; and vicar general.

While pastor of St. Mary's Student Center 1993-2006, he oversaw a capital campaign to build a new student center, chapel, and activity center, and led the parish to become one of the most ac-



NNS Photo Courtesy of Diocese of Austin

Bishop-elect Michael Sis

tive Catholic campus ministries in the country, according to campus minister Marcel LeJeune's "Aggie Catholic" blog. On the blog, LeJeune added that the parish averages 10 students entering formation or seminary annually, a "wave started when [Msgr. Sis] was pastor."

At a Dec. 12 press conference Msgr. Sis discussed Pope Francis' recent apostolic exhortation, *Evangelii Gaudium*.

"As a diocese we will discern how best to respond to that exhortation ... in our circumstances here in San Angelo," he said. "I look forward to coming to serve you here in our diocese. I will love you and I will walk with you in our pilgrimage of faith."

Catholic Schools Office announces free / reduced-price lunch and milk programs

The diocesan Office of Catholic Schools has announced its policy for free and reduced-price meals for children who are unable to pay for meals served under the National School Breakfast, Free Milk, or Commodity School programs.

The following parochial schools will participate in the National School Lunch Program: All Saints, St. George, Our Mother of Mercy, and Our Lady of Victory, St. Rita, and St. Peter the Apostle, all in Fort Worth; Sacred Heart, Muenster; Notre Dame Elementary, Wichita Falls; St. Mary's, Gainesville.

St. Maria Goretti School in Arlington will participate in the free and reduced-price milk program.

Under current guidelines, applicants for the free and reduced-price lunch program must list the Social Security numbers of all adults living in the household. All incomes must also be listed by source, such as Social Security, wages, child support, and pension.

Everyone wanting to participate in the program must apply again this year at their respective schools, including children who had tickets for the last school year. A child must be registered in school before an application will be accepted. Participants will be notified within one week after applying if their children qualify for free or reduced-price lunches or milk.

In the operation of child-feeding programs, no child will be discriminated against because of race, color, sex, national origin, age, or handicap.



Photo by Jerry Circelli / NTC

Renowned Shroud of Turin expert Dr. John Jackson shared his knowledge and some theories about the Shroud Nov. 23 with more than 1,000 people at St. Maria Goretti Church in Arlington.

**By Jerry Circelli
Correspondent**

ARLINGTON — Dr. John Jackson, the physicist who led a 40-person team of international scientists to examine the Shroud of Turin in 1978, addressed a crowd of more than 1,000 at St. Maria Goretti Parish in Arlington Nov. 23.

Jackson and his research team were granted access to the cloth and conducted exhaustive examinations. Now as director of the Turin Shroud Center of Colorado, Jackson is dedicated to continuing research on the Shroud, publishing his findings, and educating the public on scientific data and forensic evidence about the cloth. The Church has not authenticated the Shroud.

Jackson began his discussion with a reference to Scripture that describes apostles arriving at Jesus' tomb and discovering no body, but finding burial cloths.

"Here, at the tomb of Christ, science and religion are being blended together," Jackson said. "In Scripture, we see that they can be united. Science can serve faith."

Through scientific research, it was discovered that:

- The Shroud itself is actually a negative image: the best way to view it is on a photographic negative from a picture taken of the Shroud, where a natural looking image appears.
- A 3-dimensional image of the Shroud

emerges from a special 3-D mapping device when it analyzes a photograph of the Shroud, providing additional proof to scientific studies that the Shroud is not a painting or photograph. Scientists determined that this detailed 3-D imagery could not be derived from paintings and photographs.

- Blood depicted on the Shroud was determined to be real: The Shroud shows evidence of a crown of thorns, a laceration on the side of the body, wrist and foot wounds, and scourge marks on the back.

Jackson and the Shroud Center of Colorado have also developed one of the most fascinating hypotheses on how the Shroud was formed, and one that underscores the death and Resurrection narratives in the Bible.

Named the "Radiation Fall-Through Hypothesis," it suggests that the body wrapped in the Shroud became instantaneously radiant and mechanically transparent, with no resistance to the cloth. This could have allowed the Shroud cloth to collapse and fall through the radiant body space under the influence of gravity. The irradiated cloth aged and the image later developed.

Jackson left his audience with facts and hypotheses to ponder and predicted, "I think that as time goes on, the Shroud is going to be something that is going to be more and more important to Christianity and the Church."

Respect Life Office encourages Catholics to attend events surrounding *Roe* anniversary

By Michele Baker
Correspondent

“We want people to know that Respect Life in our diocese is alive and well; vibrant and ongoing,” said Mike Demma, director of the diocesan Respect Life Office, in a recent interview. With Jan. 22 marking 41 years since *Roe v. Wade* legalized abortion in the U.S., the office is encouraging pro-lifers throughout the diocese to participate in a number of events, including the Dallas March for Life and Rally Jan. 18, the Annual Respect Life Mass to be celebrated 7:30 p.m. Jan. 24 at St. Patrick Cathedral in Fort Worth, and the Texas Rally for Life in Austin Jan. 25.

ANNUAL RESPECT LIFE MASS

At the center of the activities being promoted by the Respect Life Office is the Annual Respect Life Mass. It will be celebrated at 7:30 p.m. at St. Patrick Cathedral, 1206 Throckmorton St., in downtown Fort Worth. A reception will follow in the cathedral’s Pastoral Center.

“The reason that the Mass is so important,” Demma explained, “is that *prayer* is the foundation of everything we do. It supports us and gives witness to the fact that we are of one mind and one heart.”

The Mass includes a special candlelight procession and presentation of the *Book of the Innocents*. Rachel Ministries Coordinator Betsy Kopor explains: “Each candle represents 1 million children killed by abortion. This year we will light 55 candles for the 55 million children killed in the U.S. since *Roe v. Wade*.”

The *Book of the Innocents* contains the names of all the children memorialized on a Rachel’s Vineyard retreat and represents all the children aborted in the diocese, said Kopor, adding, to reassure past retreatants, that the book remains closed and its contents are kept confidential.

PRO-LIFE MARCHES IN DALLAS AND AUSTIN

Pro-lifers throughout the Diocese of Fort Worth are encouraged to participate in the Dallas March

for Life and Rally Jan. 18 at the Kay Bailey Hutchison Convention Center in downtown Dallas and culminate in a march to the Earle Cabell Federal Courthouse where the original *Roe v. Wade* case was filed in 1971. A youth rally kicks off the event at 12:30 p.m. followed by Mass celebrated at 1 p.m. by Bishop Kevin Farrell of Dallas. The march will begin after the Mass.

“Marches like this are an important witness to the larger secular community,” said Demma, adding that one of the biggest problems facing pro-life programs is that most people in the general public do not understand the scope of this tragedy.

According to Demma, “1.2 million — *that’s one million two hundred thousand* — children are killed each year in the United States alone,” he said, adding that of these children, a disproportionate number of them (64 percent in Texas) are Black or Hispanic. “We must get across that this is a wrong being perpetuated in our country and by our culture — that we accept the death of another human being as a *right*. This is a fal-lacy that *must* be remedied.”

The Texas Rally for Life will take place at the State Capitol in Austin, Jan. 25, from 1 to 3 p.m. Demma said the Respect Life Office is organizing bus transportation to Austin for those from the diocese who wish to attend. Volunteers are needed to facilitate the operations and can contact Mike Demma at 817-560-2452 ext. 257 or by e-mail at mddemma@fwdioc.org for additional information.

“This is a great opportunity for people to get involved,” Demma said.

OTHER EVENTS

Youth for Life Coordinator Sue Laux is once again coordinating with youth ministers throughout the diocese to bring a contingency youth to the National March for Life in Washington, D.C., Jan. 22.

“Right now we have about 100 youth and chaperones signed up to make the trip,” Laux said. That number represents participants from at least 12 parishes. Laux, who has made the trip with Fort Worth youth many times, talked about the impact the experience has on those who attend.

“The kids are always moved by the sheer number of people there,” she said. Last year’s National March drew about 600,000 participants, about 75 percent of whom were 25 years old or younger.

“So often the youth feel alone at home,” Laux explained. “So when they see that there are other young people who are willing to stand up and speak out for life, they are overwhelmed by a sense of one-ness and joy.”

In addition to the marches, Masses, and rallies being held throughout January, Rachel Ministries will present a Rachel’s Vineyard Weekend Retreat for Healing after Abortion Jan. 17-19 in Fort Worth.

Rachel Ministries will also sponsor a number of training sessions for clergy, licensed mental health professionals, and social workers Feb. 7-8.

“Abortion trauma is a very specific type of trauma,” explained Kopor. “Most often clergy are among the first to hear about past abortions. We want to provide them with training to know how to talk to those who come to them and to educate them about Rachel Ministries so that they are comfortable referring people to us.”

For information about the events memorializing the lives lost since ROE V. WADE, or for the ministries of the Respect Life Office, visit www.fwdioc.org/pages/respect-life-about.

For information about the Dallas March for Life and Rally, visit www.dallasmarch4life.org. For information about the Texas Rally for Life in Austin, visit www.texasrallyforlife.org.

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Sister Magdalen Hession, CCVI, humble servant and 'baseball nun' dies at 85

By **Joan Kurkowski-Gillen**
Correspondent

They were both members of the Congregation of Sisters of Charity of the Incarnate Word and longtime friends. But it's the baseball reference Sister Frances Evans used that best describes the death of Sister Magdalen (Maggie) Hession, CCVI, on Nov. 20 from Alzheimer's Disease.

"Maggie crossed home plate and is now with Jesus," Sr. Frances said of her cherished companion and fellow Texas Ranger baseball enthusiast.

Born on Oct. 20, 1928, in County Galway, Ireland, Bridget Hession entered the Congregation of Sisters of Charity of the Incarnate Word on Aug. 15, 1948, and was given the religious name of Magdalen. She professed her first vows Aug. 15, 1951, and perpetual vows Aug. 15, 1956. Mass of Christian Burial was held Monday, Nov. 25, at St. Andrew Church in Fort Worth.

After earning a degree in nursing from Incarnate Word College (now University of the Incarnate Word) in San Antonio, Sr. Maggie began a career in healthcare and worked at Santa Rosa Hospital in San Antonio, Incarnate Word Hospital in St. Louis, and St. Joseph Hospital and Plaza Medical Center, both in Fort Worth. Her longest period of service was 31 years at St. Joseph Hospital where she was in charge of the surgical unit.

Known throughout the Fort Worth/Dallas Metroplex as the "Rangers Nuns," the sisters gained widespread renown for their fan loyalty. They sat in the same seats at every Rangers home game, and when the Ballpark at Arlington opened in 1994, they were the first fans through the turnstiles. Former owner Tom Schieffer and Hall-of-Fame pitcher and former owner Nolan Ryan are among their friends.

The sisters' fascination with

Texas Rangers baseball started when both were working at the now-closed St. Joseph Hospital. When the Washington Senators relocated to Texas and scheduled their first home game for April 21, 1972 in Arlington, Sr. Frances had a friend who worked near the stadium's box office pick up a \$10 ticket for her. She was instantly smitten by the excitement of big league baseball and coaxed Sr. Maggie into coming to the games with her.

"Sr. Maggie didn't know anything about baseball and Sr. Frances, who grew up a tomboy, taught her all about the game," said Patrice Parks, one of many volunteers who drove the sisters to the baseball stadium for games. "They knew all about the Texas Rangers pitching, line-up, and injuries."

Parks formed a friendship with the sisters after they helped her get a baseball signed for a little boy dying from a brain tumor. The four-year-old, the son of a friend, caught the foul ball during a Rangers game and wanted the player who hit the ball, Julio Franco, to sign it.

Sr. Frances and Sr. Maggie not only got the baseball signed by Franco, they brought a treasure chest full of bats, caps, t-shirts, and other special items for the sick youngster.

"During his last few days at Cook Children's Hospital, Sr. Frances and Sr. Maggie went to see him and prayed with the family," Parks recalls. "They felt a connection to the little boy."

Two years ago, Parks started a Facebook page titled the "Ranger Nuns" to honor the pair. The picture-filled site now includes tributes to Sr. Maggie.

One part of the "dynamic duo," Sr. Maggie was known for her quiet presence and constant smile.

"She had the sweetest-sounding giggle. I'll miss that," Parks said.

Barbara Clarkin met Sr. Maggie



Photo courtesy of Patrice Parks

Sister Maggie Hession, CCVI, one half of the famous "baseball nuns" duo, sits in a movie theater with her trademark Texas Rangers T-shirt during a World Series watching party. Sr. Maggie passed away Nov. 20 at 85.

and Sr. Francis 45 years ago during a Christmas party at St. Joseph Hospital.

"I would call Sr. Maggie a humble servant. She would do anything anyone asked of her," the St. Andrew parishioner said. "I never saw her without a smile on her face."

When Clarkin's son was being treated for ALS, both sisters would visit him, "and I'm grateful for that," she said.

After St. Joseph closed its chapel, Sr. Maggie and Sr. Frances began attending daily Mass at St. Andrew Church.

"St. Andrew became their parish home, and the whole congregation became their family," Clarkin added.

After retirement Sr. Maggie continued to volunteer wherever she perceived a physical or spiritual need. She frequently ministered to nursing home residents and shut-ins.

After her Alzheimer's Disease diagnosis, Sr. Maggie stopped attending baseball games because of

the noise and heat. But her room in the assisted living center continued to reflect her love of the Texas Rangers.

"She had a Texas Rangers bedspread, tablecloth, and pictures of the coaches and players everywhere," Parks explained. "Even the bathroom had baseball mitts and bats on the wall."

Sr. Maggie was preceded in death by her parents, Bridget and Patrick Hession; siblings, Michael Hession, Mary Connell, James Hession, and Patrick Hession. Survivors include her sister, Nora Murphy of Hudson, New Hampshire; nieces and nephews in the United States and Ireland; longtime friend, Sr. Frances Evans; and the Sisters of Charity of the Incarnate Word.

Memorials can be made to the Sisters of Charity of the Incarnate Word Retirement Fund, 4530 Broadway, San Antonio, Texas 78209 or the Alzheimer's Association, 2630 West Freeway, Fort Worth, Texas 76102.

Catholic Charities plans service hub in Wichita Falls to serve Northwest region

By **Jenara Kocks Burgess**
Correspondent

Catholic parishes in the nine-county Northwest region of the Diocese of Fort Worth are working with Catholic Charities Fort Worth (CCFW) to establish a permanent facility or “service hub” in Wichita Falls in the next few years.

“This expansion is necessary because the rural counties are underserved, usually due to their remoteness and relatively sparse populations,” said Father Jack McKone, pastor of Sacred Heart Church in Wichita Falls.

For the past few months, representatives of several parishes in the area have participated in the Northwest Services Strategic Planning Committee. CCFW Director of Parish Relations Laura Sotelo told

the *North Texas Catholic* that CCFW formed this committee of parish and community leaders to help develop a business plan for its future location.

“We have pastors, deacons, and community leaders from Wichita Falls and Young County, who have helped us identify gaps in services within the Northwest region so we can truly focus on coming in and filling those gaps,” she said.

The Northwest region includes the eight counties in the Northwest Deanery plus Young County, which is in the Southwest Deanery of the diocese.

Planning committee member Liliana Samuelson said she is very excited about CCFW establishing a service hub in Wichita Falls. “I had the dream of a center for the needy and the immigrant that would bring the Catholic presence into Wichita

Falls,” she said.

Sotelo said the organization’s vision for the location is a “one stop, Catholic shop” that will provide a Catholic response to help people in need.

“The permanent facility will include Catholic Charities’ offices, which will offer an array of services aimed at moving families toward self-sufficiency and our ultimate goal of ending poverty within our diocese,” she said, adding that it will also include a St. Vincent de Paul Thrift Store.

Father Richard Kirkham, pastor of St. Jude Thaddeus Church in Burkburnett, Christ the King Church in Iowa Park, and St. Paul Church in Electra, said the new offices would better help meet the needs of the people in his parishes.

Though CCFW serves the entire diocese, Fr. Kirkham said it’s a challenge for the people in the area to make the two-hour drive for services.

Sotelo added that Catholic Charities serves anyone regardless of faith tradition. “We serve because of our Gospel call to do so and are privileged to be able to serve anyone who comes through our doors,” she said.

CCFW currently offers limited services in the Northwest region including clinical counseling, the St. Joseph Health Care Trust Program, TXU Energy Aid, and immigration consultations through a video site. Since Catholic Charities doesn’t currently have Wichita Falls area offices, it partners with various parishes in the deanery using their space.

“We take advantage now of the St. Joseph Healthcare Trust Fund, which works through Catholic Charities. That’s been going on a good while,” said Deacon Jim Novak, parochial administrator for Sacred Heart Parish in Seymour, St. Mary of the Assumption Parish in Megargel, Santa Rosa Parish in Knox City, and St. Joseph Parish in Rhineland.

Dcn. Novak added that he is excited that Hispanics in his parishes will have a closer location allowing them to take advantage of Catholic Charities’ immigration services.

Once they are able to establish a permanent location in Wichita Falls, CCFW hopes to expand services already offered to the region to include Financial Stability/Education, Community Connections (general

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- Call Judy Locke, victim assistance coordinator, (817) 560-2452 ext. 201 or e-mail her at jlocke@fwdioc.org
- Or call the Sexual Abuse Hot-line (817) 560-2462 ext. 102 and ask for the moderator of the curia, Msgr. Stephen Berg

To Report Abuse

Call the Texas Department of Family Protective Services (Child Protective Services) at (800) 252-5400

Workshop helps LPRs work for citizenship



Photo courtesy of Catholic Charities
Approximately 300 Legal Permanent Residents (LPRs) attended the Mega Citizenship Workshop held Nov. 2 in Arlington.

Approximately 300 Legal Permanent Residents (LPRs) came to the Sam Houston High School in Arlington Nov. 2 to participate in the North Texas Mega Citizenship Workshop, an event designed to offer a variety of resources and to offer free assistance to legal immigrants in preparing citizenship applications.

The event, co-sponsored by Catholic Charities Fort Worth (CCFW), Catholic Charities of Dallas, and the Proyecto Inmigrante organization, was part of the ongoing New Americans Campaign, a national, nonpartisan effort to encourage and assist eligible LPRs on their path to citizenship.

“Hser,” a 23 year-old participant at the event, said she was eager to become a citizen as soon as possible, now that she had met the first requirement: living in the U.S. for five years as a legal resident. She and her 22 year-old brother were born and raised in a refugee camp in Thailand after her parents fled Burma, she said. “It was terrible for them there, and then we spent those years in Thailand, hoping to come to America. Now we all live here together, and there are so many opportunities for a better life. We love America. We want to become citizens.”

After graduating from a

Fort Worth high school, she is now taking classes at Tarrant County College with plans to become a nurse. The hardworking young woman is typical of many of the LPRs in North Texas, said Xergio Chacin, program manager for CCFW’s Immigration Services department.

“As of 2012, Texas has the third highest number of Legal Permanent Residents in the nation, with approximately 1.2 million living in the state,” he said. Eligible immigrants face barriers to citizenship, including high application fees, a complex legal process, and unscrupulous attorneys who take advantage of individuals seeking assistance, he explained. “This workshop offered the opportunity to meet with trained caseworkers and volunteers as [workshop participants] prepare their paperwork,” he added. Eligible workshop participants who began their process at 8 a.m. had their forms, completed and ready for them to mail to the U.S. Citizenship and Immigration department, by noon.

“It’s a great day for me and my brother,” said Hser, beaming. “I’m really thankful for the help.”

For more information about CCFW and its Refugee Services program, visit the website at www.ccdofw.org or call 817-534-0814.

case management program), homeless services, Enrollment Solutions, and potentially services aimed at assisting veterans, as well as a vocational program, Sotelo said.

CCFW will need both volunteers and people who can help provide financial resources to help make the agency’s presence in Wichita Falls a reality, she added.

“We have been so excited by the support and response we have received from people throughout the Northwest region of the diocese, as we have begun to share our vision for this project,” said Sotelo.

Fr. McKone said there are many good reasons for parishioners of the Northwest region to get involved with Catholic Charities’ new project, but the most important is that by virtue of the sacrament of baptism, every Catholic is called to be a missionary.

“The new project will offer our parishioners a much broader spectrum of services and a central location,” said Fr. McKone. “For example, someone coming in to apply for help with utility bills will be

able to pick up some school or work clothes at St. Vincent de Paul.... We will have a very visible Catholic outreach presence in our community. This is part of our Catholic mandate to witness to the Gospel, in avenues far too great for any one parish to tackle on their own.

“Few of us will go to Africa or Central America...” he added. But whether serving those, “across the street or across the ocean, we are called to solidarity with all our brothers and sisters. In this sense ... the opportunities for service are not only for the benefit of the needy, the broken-hearted, the alien, or the sick, but they are also for our parishioners and clergy. Those opportunities are literally a gift to us from God, a way to make vibrant the faith that He has given us.”

For more information on how to help Catholic Charities establish a permanent location in Wichita Falls, contact Laura Sotelo by phone at 817-413-3904 or by e-mail at lsotelo@ccdofw.org.

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Pope Francis talks with men who live on the streets near the Vatican. The pope celebrated Mass and had breakfast with the men as part of celebrating his 77th birthday. (CNS photo/L'OSSERVATORE ROMANO) via Reuters)

Katherine Russell, dressed as an angel, tells 4-year-old Nori Bellucci-Mattice about the night Christ was born during a living Nativity Dec. 7 at Sacred Heart Cathedral in Rochester, N.Y. (CNS photo/Mike Crupi, CATHOLIC COURIER)

Pope Francis holds a bronze reliquary containing the relics of St. Peter the Apostle during a Mass concluding the Year of Faith in St. Peter's Square at the Vatican Nov. 24. (CNS photo/L'OSSERVATORE ROMANO)



This Nativity set is one of 193 Verna Bechard displays in her New London, Wis., home. She purchased her first set for her mother in 1950 to replace an older one. (CNS photo/Sam Lucero, THE COMPASS)



A girl in St. Peter's Square holds baby Jesus figurines for Pope Francis to bless during his Angelus at the Vatican Dec. 15. Children observed an annual tradition by bringing their Nativity figurines for the pope to bless. (CNS photo/Paul Haring)



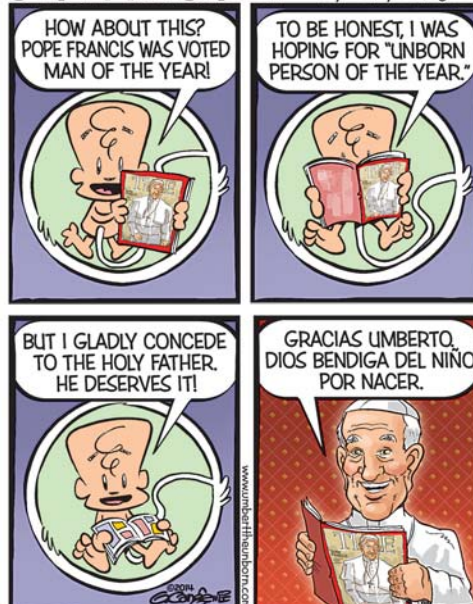
Cross-Words

By Mark Simeroth
Across & Down:

1. Hebrew warrior;
2. Famous Texas mission
3. Airplane locator name means lightning
4. Astonish
5. Asian divided nation

1	2	3	4	5
2				
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Umbert the Unborn by Gary Cangemi



The FLOCK by Jean Denton



GROWING AS A CHRISTIAN

How was Jesus born in you? When was your epiphany?

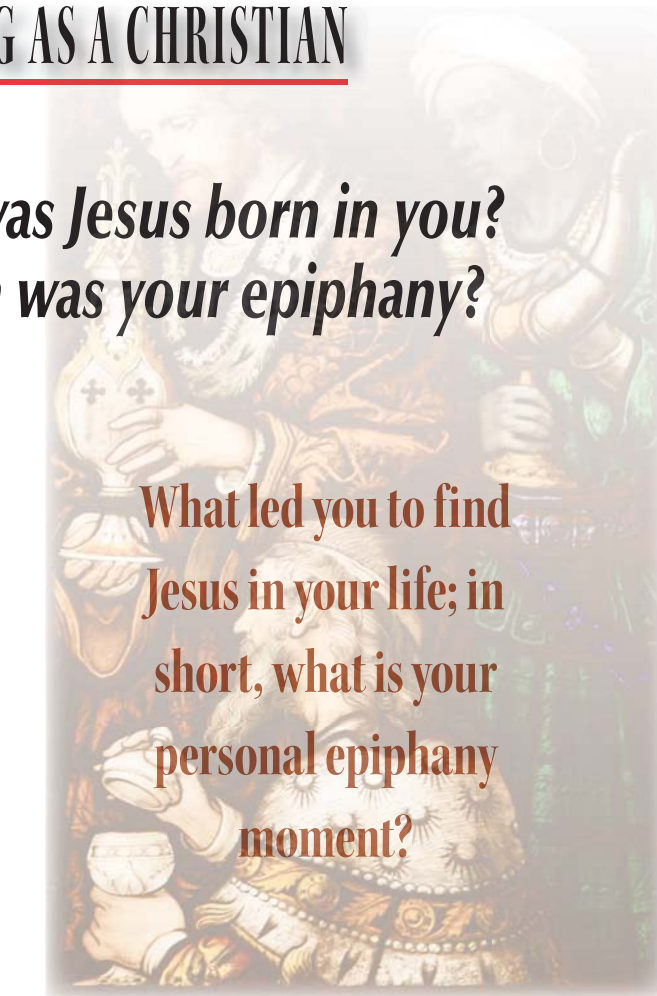
I RECENTLY SAW AN EXPLANATION OF ADVENT THAT SAID SOMETHING TO THE EFFECT THAT “IF YOU’RE TIRED OF CHRISTMAS BY THE 25TH OF DECEMBER YOU ARE DOING ADVENT WRONG.”

This is because Christmas, as per the Liturgical Calendar (the schedule of the seasons of the Church year) doesn’t begin until Dec. 24 and lasts all the way to the Feast of the Baptism of the Lord, which this year is not until January 12.

Christmas is all about the birth of Jesus, in time, almost 2,000 years ago and in our lives all the time. Because the secular observance of Christmas seems to last until Dec. 26 when all the stores re-open, so people can return all the gifts they opened the day before, we can lose sight of the opportunity to really celebrate, contemplate, and enjoy the reality of God’s love for humanity revealed in the sending of his Son to save us for all eternity.

In the middle of the Christmas Season is the Feast of Epiphany, the remembrance of three visitors from the East who came bearing gifts for the newborn King of the Jews. This feast is a perfect opportunity to more deeply reflect on the coming of Jesus in our own lives.

Years ago on the Feast of Epiphany the homily at my parish was pretty much given by the congregation. My pastor began by reminding us that the Magi traveled a great distance follow-



Catholic News Service file photo of a stained-glass window at St. Michael Cathedral in Toronto depicting the visit of the Magi bringing gifts to the infant Jesus. (CNS photo/Nancy Wiechec)

What led you to find Jesus in your life; in short, what is your personal epiphany moment?

ing a star so they could find Jesus. He then asked the people in the church what was our “star,” what led us to find Jesus in our lives; in short what was our personal epiphany moment?

For the next 20 minutes Father Beaumont scurried all over the church with the microphone as people shared about the people who helped them grow in faith, or the retreat they attended that changed their life, or the way the Scriptures had impacted their faith, or about a specific moment in prayer, or at Mass or in nature or in silence when they encountered the living God.

The stories were as varied as they were numerous. Each in their own way revealing the countless ways that God reveals himself to humanity. I can remember that Mass like it was yesterday, even

though it was close to 20 years ago.

All of the decorating and cooking, and wrapping and unwrapping are important parts of celebrating Christmas, but if we are to successfully avoid the trap of kicking Christmas to the curb along with our Christmas tree a few days after Dec. 25 we have to intentionally find ways to make Christmas about the Incarnation.

If God had not emptied himself to embrace humanity, life, not just Christmas, would lose its meaning. The Incarnation is the seminal moment in creation. It simultaneously raised the dignity of the human person, opened the door for salvation, gave us a mediator and direct connection to the Father, and paved the way for the indwelling of the Holy Spirit.

Jesus the God-man is the fo-



Jeff Hedglen is the Campus Minister at UTA and associate director of Young Adult Ministry for the diocese. He is also the primary convener of Camp Fort Worth’s many editions.

cal point of our lives, even if we do not consciously think about it all that often. The season of Christmas is the perfect time to seriously consider our relationship with the Lord.

So, whether it is on the Feast of the Mother of God (Jan. 1) or Epiphany (Jan. 6) or the Baptism of the Lord (Jan. 12) or even someplace in between, I encourage you to take a few moments to think about your “star.” What led you to find Jesus in your life; in short what is your personal epiphany moment?

Then, once you know what it is, share it with someone, post it on Facebook, Twitter, Tumblr, or find a way to Instagram it. Knowing your story is one thing; sharing it is what we are called to do. Like the great Christmas song says: “Go tell it on the mountain that Jesus is Christ is born” (in your life).

But don’t stop there, be like Pope Francis, live the words you speak. Put into action the love you have received from God. For when we do this, the truth of Christmas impacts the world around us every day of the year.

What is that geranium doing here?

Against all the odds, sometimes we continue to bloom

By Kathy Cribari Hamer

I WALK IN THE FRONT DOOR AND THERE ON THE PORCH, IN MY HUGE CLAY PLANTER, IS A BRIGHT RED GERANIUM BLOOM THAT SHOULD HAVE LONG AGO DIED AND BEEN THROWN IN THE TRASH. But it is sitting there, growing, thriving, lighting up the brown and gold seasonal décor carefully arranged around it.

It is biting cold that day — reminiscent of a late fall Colorado morning. A crisp, cheek-stinging wind is blowing, and there are paper-thin leaves all over the porch, and even blowing into the entry hall of our home.

To me it feels like the morning my last final is over and I walk down the hill to my house, where Mom is cooking a mid-day meal for Daddy. He is ill and will be gone in a few days, but I don't know that then. I simply know the Christmas tree is lit, the house smells like an Italian restaurant, and the semester is over.

But this is not Colorado in 1965; it is my grown-up home in Fort Worth, where brilliant orange pumpkins I have carefully placed on hay bundles are in their assigned seats around the pot. Beautiful, shivering, they wait for their graduation to my son-in-law, Matt's compost heap. Like everything else on that porch, they have passed their better days.

Except for that one geranium bloom.

Funny. There is a bright red summer flower blossoming in December, the day before a deadly ice storm. My friend Marcie would call it a "God thing."

I had met God earlier that week at a book club luncheon, to which I unexpectedly received an invitation, even though I don't belong to the club and had never heard of the book they had just finished. Book-club qualifications made my attendance as unlikely as a tap-dancing chicken at marching band practice.

When I arrived at the event — fortunately I was late — the discussions had been digested, as had most of the wine. I managed a glass of the beverage, and a share

Funny. There is a bright red summer flower blossoming in December, the day before a deadly ice storm. My friend Marcie would call it a 'God thing.'

of the chicken casserole and apple dessert, as well as scrumptious conversations.

How deliciously odd. I was sharing lunch with people I knew — well. We had been sitting in pews together for more than a generation, and in the middle of all that time, I mused silently, we had tasted more than just lunch. Some had given birth. We all had dealt with death. Consequently, throughout our meal we detailed tragedies in our lives and managed abundant laughter about shared memories and missteps.

"I remember when David, in fifth grade, forgot to do a science project, and at the last minute needed moldy bread," my friend and neighbor Barbara said. "I thought, 'I'll call Kathy. Surely she has some.'" Barbara was, predictably, correct about that.

I had never been in a book club, because my life took a turn that changed what I did with my spare time (and apparently how frequently I cleaned my kitchen). But I do remember the science project, as well as the times our sons fell off their bikes, or the Christmas tree fell down. We all had endured similar frets, and we had shared jolly days as well as worries and tears.

Now we were older and suddenly seemed to be in the same book club.

Later that chilly week I met fellow clubbers Sarah and Barbara at morning Mass. "Come to our Bible study today," Barbara said, and for the second time in four days I

found myself wondering what I would do there. I imagined that particular group as something like an "Oxford University Fort-nightly Theology Discussion Forum," where white-haired professors shared insights over generous glasses of brandy.

I wouldn't have minded the brandy.

But it wasn't like that at all. I knew these people too!

We were all alike, it seemed, as we passed cookies around and watched a video about Pope Francis. What joyful moments, in a week that seemed to be full of them.

I wonder what this all has to do with the surprises God gives us in our lives. The book club thing and the Bible study thing were both handed to me by old friends, and were things I never would have expected to do. Why was I there?

These Advent invitations were meaningful in ways I didn't understand, because I was nowhere near as profound as the people who had extended them. Because of their welcomes, I felt like I was a flower that should have long ago died, but hadn't.

The gifts of these events were too early for Christmas, and yet they shone as though they were wrapped in foil, the kind I learned to put under the tree with my mom. "The shiny wrap sparkles under the lights," Big Kate taught me.

It made me smile. Christmas was just weeks away, and there was a bright red flower on my front porch. It would be there until the ice storm.

Were my girlfriends the geranium still blooming in my pot? Or was I, perhaps, the geranium in theirs?



Kathy Cribari Hamer and her husband are members of St. Andrew Parish. Her family life column has been honored for excellence repeatedly by the Catholic Press Association of the United States and Canada.

What could your mission be?

Maybe it involves listening as well as proclaiming

By David Gibson

WHAT CHRISTIAN “MISSION” MEANS IS SIMPLE AND CLEAR, RIGHT? IT IS A GIVEN THAT CHRISTIANS ARE FOLLOWERS OF JESUS, CALLED TO THINK, PRAY, AND LIVE AS HE DID. IT SEEMS, THEN, THAT WE KNOW WHAT OUR MISSION IS.

Yet, we do not know it fully at every given moment. In times when life grows more complicated by the day and technology alters even our customary communication patterns, Christians often must go in search of their mission.

What does it take to live as Jesus did when our world differs so greatly from the world 2,000 years ago? Responding to questions about life’s meaning as they are presented today can be a challenge. The causes and shapes of contemporary human predicaments can leave some doubting their ability to serve as caring companions for wounded people.

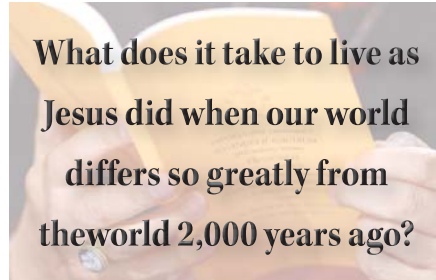
It remains clear, however, that their mission pulls Christians closer to God. It pulls them closer to themselves, too, inviting them to recognize their potential to grow up in the life of Christ. Finally, their mission pulls Christians closer to the citizens of the world around them.

Closeness, you might say, is a defining characteristic of Christian mission and vocation.

The mission priority that invites Christ’s followers to draw closer to the world around them is currently the object of intense scrutiny by the Christian community. Archbishop Jean-Louis Brugues spoke in a 2012 speech about “a principle of benevolence toward the world as it is” taught by the Second Vatican Council.

“This world is loved by God,” he said. So “how could we possibly not feel concerned about it?”

In this concrete world “and not in the idealized world of utopias,” the Holy Spirit “continues to write the wonderful story of salvation,” said the archbishop, who heads the



Vatican Secret Archives and Vatican Library.

Whatever “mission” implies today, mission is absolutely essential for Christians in the mind of Pope Francis.

He makes that clear in “The Joy of the Gospel,” his fall 2013 apostolic exhortation on proclaiming the Gospel today.

He says, “I am a mission on this earth; that is the reason why I am here in this world.”

The pope’s document calls attention to the purposes and means of sharing faith, a mission fulfilled not only with words but by living in a manner that allows faith’s value to become visible in us.

Speaking last October to young people in Assisi, Pope Francis analyzed two vital goals of Christian mission. The Gospel, a “message of salvation,” has two aims, he said. The first aim is “to awaken faith, and this is evangelization.” The second is “to transform the world according to God’s plan.”

These, the pope clarified, are not separate aims. Instead, “they form one mission: to carry the Gospel by the witness of our lives in order to transform the world.”

St. Francis of Assisi did both these things, the pope reminded his youthful audience. “Francis made faith grow, and he renewed the Church, and at the same time he renewed society, he made it more fraternal, but he always did it with the Gospel and by his witness.”

People grow when they take the mission of evangelization seriously by drawing near to others in caring ways, according to Pope Francis’ apostolic exhortation.

“The work of evangelization enriches

the mind and the heart,” he says. “It makes us more and more sensitive to the workings of the Holy Spirit, and it takes us beyond our limited spiritual constructs.”

Notably, Pope Francis suggests that self-awareness is an invaluable aid to meet the demands of mission. By recognizing the role faith has played in our lives, we also recognize what we might share with others.

“In your heart you know that it is not the same to live without” the Lord, Pope Francis explains. “What has helped you to live and given you hope,” he adds, “is what you also need to communicate to others.”

Because dialogue is part and parcel of mission in the 21st century, however, it not only is important to know what we might communicate to others, but to be open to what they might communicate to us.

“In their daily lives people must often struggle for survival, and this struggle contains within it a profound understanding of life that often includes a deep religious sense,” Pope Francis comments in the apostolic exhortation.

He recommends examining this reality closely. Why? So we can “enter into a dialogue” with others resembling “that of our Lord and the Samaritan woman at the well where she sought to quench her thirst.”

Mission in contemporary times, then, involves two-way patterns of communication. Christians have gifts from God to share. Christians realize, nonetheless, that due to God’s unrestricted gift-giving, others have gifts to share, too.

As a form of communication, dialogue accents listening to others and respecting them. It thus allows the parameters, shape, and demands of mission to emerge surprisingly before our very eyes. This is how Christians today go in search of their mission.

David Gibson served on Catholic News Service’s editorial staff for 37 years. This article is part of the Faith Alive! package from CNS.

Why seek life beyond Earth so desperately?

God Himself keeps us from being 'alone' in the universe

By David Mills

THE UNIVERSE CONTAINS ALMOST NINE BILLION PLANETS THAT MIGHT SUPPORT LIFE, REPORTS A STUDY PUBLISHED BY THE NATIONAL ACADEMY OF SCIENCE.

Most people who care about these things argue that with so many planets like ours, there's just got to be other beings like us out there. "Surely one or more is home to ET. The mathematical probability forbids flat denial of ET's existence," as Russell Saltzman puts it, writing on *First Things's* website.

I don't know about that. We can't calculate the odds until we know how life begins. The odds might turn out to be, ten billion to one, or twenty billion to one. There might be no odds at all, because only God can bring creatures to life.

But I also don't really care. If other planets far, far, far away from earth contain beings like us, God will have his reasons. Their being out there doesn't affect what we're supposed to be doing here. If God loves you and your neighbor, he can love our most distant neighbors.

Many people do seem to care and to care a lot. As I wrote in *First Things*, just when my son and I walked into the Smithsonian's Air and Space Museum a month ago, the first announcement we heard was: "Every discovery of an exoplanet brings us one step closer to finding a world just like ours!" Exoplanets are planets circling stars not our own. We were obviously supposed to find this exciting.

The American Museum of Natural History in New York had an exhibit last year called "Beyond Planet Earth" and almost every part of it was directed to the possible discovery of a microbe here or there. Whoever wrote the exhibit seemed to think the main purpose of exploring space was to find life, even if all we find is a germ deep beneath the ice of one of Jupiter's moons.

The religious believer knows we're not alone even if man is the only sentient species on all the millions of planets that probably exist. And if God doesn't exist, the fact that somewhere out there are other beings in the same situation we're in isn't really comforting.

We're still alone in the universe.

A friend, having attended a meeting on exoplanets at the American Association for the Advancement of Science in Washington, told me that the lecturers were very concerned with, and in fact excited by, the possibility that some of planets somewhere might contain life.

It's an interesting question why some people care so much about finding life somewhere else in the universe. If it's true, where does it get us? What difference does it make? We still enjoy the things we enjoy, we still suffer, we still die.

I suspect that this search for alien life is driven not so much by intellectual curiosity as by the desire to feel that we're not alone in the universe. The people I've read who hope most intently that somewhere out there someone like us is sitting around doing the things we do are atheists and half-atheists.

They often seem a little desperate about it, like the awkward young man looking for a date for the prom and worried he'll be spending the evening by himself. They may say they're happy to be alone in the universe, but then they keep looking for friends.

The religious believer knows we're not alone even if man is the only sentient species on all the millions of planets that probably

exist. And if God doesn't exist, the fact that somewhere out there are other beings in the same situation we're in isn't really comforting. We're still alone in the universe.

That's why the Mass at Christmas is so moving. It's not just the candles and the carols and everything else. It's not just the fact that the whole thing's about a baby. It's that the baby was the Son of God, "who for us men and our salvation came down from heaven, and by the Holy Spirit was incarnate of the Virgin Mary, and was made man."

God didn't just send a message telling us "I'm here." The Father sent the Son to be here with us and then the Son left us his Church and the Mass as ways He is still here with us. We're not alone in the universe. God is over there in the Tabernacle, and in the priest's hands as we walk to the front of the church.

David Mills is executive editor of First Things. A longer article on this subject can be found at tinyurl.com/Readingthestars. David can be reached at catholicsense@gmail.com.

February is Catholic Press Month

And in many homes, the diocesan press is the only means of evangelization

By Denise Bossert

ONE MORNING LAST SPRING, I CAUGHT MY OLDER DAUGHTER FLIPPING THROUGH A DIOCESAN NEWSPAPER WHILE EATING BREAKFAST. I had to smile. On that particularly morning, she wasn't officially Catholic. She entered the Church later that day at the 2:30 Mass at the Cathedral Basilica in St. Louis, Missouri. It was Pentecost Sunday and soon, my second child would be entering the faith I had chosen less than a decade earlier.

"Did you read the diocesan newspapers when you lived here? Or is this a new thing for you?" I asked her.

She looked up from the paper and smiled. "When there was no catalog or magazine on the table, I would read it. It was something to do." She laughed and closed the paper.

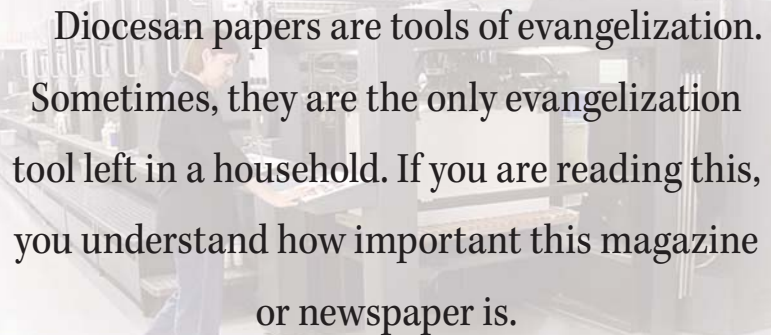
Those were rough years. She had moved into our house with her little boys and was trying to juggle them and full-time employment. She was also trying hard to avoid God.

But on this particular Sunday, the fight against God ended. On that day, she was received into Mother Church.

My husband also used to scan diocesan newspapers and magazines before he converted. He's the kind of guy that goes through withdrawal when he doesn't have a book to read. In the years after my conversion (before his own conversion), he would read the Catholic papers that were on the table — the random complimentary copies I received as a columnist. This is the same man who promised he would never become Catholic. He was born Southern Baptist, and he would die Southern Baptist.

He's been Catholic since 2008.

I don't know if there is a cause and effect relationship between conversions



Diocesan papers are tools of evangelization. Sometimes, they are the only evangelization tool left in a household. If you are reading this, you understand how important this magazine or newspaper is.

and subscriptions to diocesan periodicals, but at the very least, there is some correlation. I believe families that have subscriptions to diocesan papers are the very families most likely to experience conversion and ongoing conversion — even among families in which some members actively resist God. There are times that the diocesan newspaper on the kitchen table is the only remaining voice for Mother Church in the lives of those who stubbornly resist grace.

I am blessed to write for diocesan papers and magazines, but I am even more blessed to have those periodicals in my home and on my kitchen table. There was a time when my husband told me to stop talking about my new-found faith — but he would still read the diocesan newspaper. My daughter tuned me out for years. But last spring, she entered the Church.

Diocesan papers are tools of evangelization. Sometimes, they are the only evangelization tool left in a household.

If you are reading this, you understand how important this magazine or newspaper is. You know that it assists you in your journey — and you know that it assists those who live under your roof and sit at your kitchen table.

In a world that is filled with many voices and so many words, it is a blessing to have faithful media coming to into our homes, sharing words that matter — words that bring life.

Denise Bossert entered the Catholic Church Aug. 14, 2005. Her journey began 18 months earlier with the death of her father, a Presbyterian minister. She inherited her father's personal library and discovered a book by St. Augustine in the bottom of one box. That book broke through her bias against Catholic saints and changed her life. She went on to read St. John of the Cross and St. Teresa of Avila. She had fallen in love with Catholic saints and her life as a Protestant was over at that point. Denise is a member of Immaculate Heart of Mary in New Melle, Missouri. She writes for the ST. LOUIS REVIEW and has been published in 50 diocesan newspapers. She has been a guest on "The Journey Home," "Women of Grace," "The Sunrise Morning Show," and has been interviewed by numerous Catholic radio show hosts, including St. Joseph Communications. She is the mother of four and grandmother of three.

Cardinal Rodríguez discusses role of G8 at UDMC press conference

By Michele Baker
Correspondent

Cardinal Óscar Rodríguez Maradiaga, SDB, archbishop of Tegucigalpa, Honduras, addressed attendees at the seventh annual University of Dallas Ministry Conference (UDMC) Friday, Oct. 25 at the Irving Convention Center.

Cardinal Rodríguez, whom Dallas Bishop Kevin Farrell introduced as “one of the most sought-after speakers in the Catholic world today,” spoke about “The state of the Church and the importance of the New Evangelization.” One of Pope Francis’ closest advisers, the cardinal emphasized the Church as the People of God, saying, “The function of the Church hierarchy is the function of Jesus Christ; the hierarchy is a ministry of service.”

Referring to the increased involvement of the laity in the life of the Church, he drew heavily on ideas put forth in the documents of Vatican II. “There is the common priesthood of the Faithful,” he said. “In Christ, the priesthood is changed. He had to be made like his brothers.”

After his keynote, Cardinal Rodríguez met with the press for a brief question-answer session. Since his visit to North Texas came on the heels of the first meeting of Pope Francis’ newly formed Council of Cardinals (dubbed the “G8”), many questions centered on its role. While initial reports from the Vatican gave the impression that this hand-picked group of cardinals would work primarily on making reforms to the Roman Curia, Cardinal Rodríguez, who serves as chair of the commission, shed further light on its broader purposes and goals.

“The origin of our commission is that in the beginning of the pre-conclave meetings there was a great feeling that sometimes many things did not arrive to the Pope directly and it was necessary to have a grassroots base,” Cardinal Rodríguez explained. He described a recent trip to New Zealand to illustrate the cultural and geographic diversity of the Universal Church and the need for a mechanism for dialogue with the Holy Father. “This is the wish of the Pope. We will not only work for the reformation of the Vatican Curia. This was the first subject. But this will be a permanent commission. It means that after that we will continue advising the Pope (as) he will ask us to do.”

The cardinal also discussed the intersection of reform in the Church and the role of the laity as it related to the expanded function of the G8, putting forth some surprising possibilities.

“In our work we have started collecting sug-



Photo by Juan Guajardo / North Texas Catholic

Cardinal Óscar Rodríguez Maradiaga, SDB, archbishop of Tegucigalpa, Honduras, and chairman of Pope Francis’ advisory Council of Cardinals (dubbed the “Group of 8”), addresses members of the press at a press conference held at the University of Dallas Ministry Conference Oct. 25. Cardinal Rodríguez delivered the keynote address in English and Spanish that day to those attending the conference, held this year at the Irving Convention Center, and co-hosted by the dioceses of Fort Worth and Dallas.

gestions from all around the world,” he said. “One of the suggestions regarding the laity is — and I believe it is going to be done — to create in the Roman Curia a dicastery for the laity. Now there is a council for the laity but there is a difference between a dicastery and a council.” The dicastery, he said, has “the possibility of having law status: the possibility of making laws.” He went on to state that dicasteries for the bishops, clergy, and religious life already exist and that such a body for the laity was a viable option that would facilitate the development of a distinct spirituality for the laity.

“I think this is one of the desires of Vatican II — to develop a true spirituality for the laity that is not imitating only the spirituality of the priest or the bishop or the religious [but] its own spirituality that is coming up from the ordinary life,” he said.

As the discussion once again turned to the laity Cardinal Rodríguez happily responded to a request to share some of his impressions of Pope Francis’ message of reaching out to those on the fringes of society.

I think this is one of the desires of Vatican II — to develop a true spirituality for the laity that is not imitating only the spirituality of the priest or the bishop or the religious [but] its own spirituality that is coming up from the ordinary life.

— Cardinal Óscar Rodríguez

“You know, he (Pope Francis) started talking of the periphery because there are many people who maybe were baptized but never participated fully in the life of the Church,” the cardinal said. “And he is encouraging the lay people and the ministers to go out of the rectories and look for these people. This is the new missionary call.”

Finally, the media gathered wondered if there were any signs that past negative media attention on the Church had begun to wane somewhat since Pope Francis’ election. Cardinal Rodríguez said that he sees this in the sheer volume of material from Pope Francis’ homilies appearing in the media. He said that in the past there would be occasional quotations of the pope related to some social or political aspect, but that nowadays he finds that every homily every day seems to go to the media.

“... And this is beautiful because it is enriching a lot of people,” he said. “Traveling, I find many people that see me and say, ‘Listen, tell the Pope we love him!’ This is a new approach and a new sign of the times and it’s very good.”

After the conference, Diocesan Administrator Monsignor Stephen Berg said the UDMC has developed into an “outstanding forum for promoting and developing effective catechesis programs at all levels of the Local Church.”

He added that “Cardinal Rodríguez offered a unique insight into what a leader of the Catholic Church believes is the role of the Church in the 21st Century. As the leader of the ‘Council of Cardinals,’ ... it was heartening to hear Cardinal Rodríguez proclaim that the New Evangelization is leading the Church to ‘build up the culture of the Good Samaritan,’ that the least among us shall be first.”



Ladies and Knights of the Equestrian Order of the Holy Sepulchre of Jerusalem fill Vietnamese Martyrs Parish in Arlington for the investiture of new members within the order's Southwestern Lieutenancy. Celebrating the Mass are Cardinal Edwin O'Brien, the order's Grand Master, Cardinal Daniel DiNardo of Galveston-Houston, the lieutenancy's grand prior, and other priest and bishop members of the order from around the lieutenancy.

Cardinal O'Brien visits Arlington to invest new Knights and Ladies of the Holy Sepulchre

By JERRY CIRCELLI / CORRESPONDENT
PHOTOS BY DONNA RYCKAERT

IN THE HOLY LAND, A REGION MADE SACRED BY JESUS CHRIST DURING HIS LIFE ON EARTH, THE CHRISTIAN POPULATION HAS DECLINED FROM 30 PERCENT 60 YEARS AGO TO ONLY TWO PERCENT TODAY, ACCORDING TO A CHURCH REPORT. The area, now comprising modern-day Israel and Palestine, is best described by Cardinal Edwin O'Brien, as the "singular, unique part of the world where Christ walked, taught, performed miracles, and rose from the dead."

To preserve and promote Christianity in the Holy Land and to sustain the Catholic Church's charitable work there, the cardinal traveled recently from Rome to the Diocese of Fort Worth. Here, from Oct. 25-28, he led the annual meeting of the Equestrian Order of the Holy Sepulchre of Jerusalem (EOHSJ), Southwestern Lieutenancy of the United States. The gathering drew in nearly 1,000 knights, ladies, and clergy of the lieutenancy,

which includes Texas, Oklahoma, Arkansas, and New Mexico. This regional unit is one of 61 lieutenancies around the world that are part of the 23,000-member EOHSJ.

As Grand Master of the EOHSJ (a Vatican office), Cardinal O'Brien welcomed 140 new members to the order's Southwestern Region through a formal Mass and Rite of Solemn Investiture at Vietnamese Martyrs Church in Arlington. Among them were 22 clergy candidates, including Monsignor Michael Olson, recently-named bishop-elect of Fort Worth, Father Raymond McDaniel, parochial administrator of St. Philip the Apostle Parish in Lewisville, and Father Jeff Poirot, pastor of Holy Family Parish in Fort Worth. The newly invested laymen, laywomen, and clergy joined with fellow members at the gathering and filled every seat in the main worship area of the largest-capacity church in the diocese.

Concelebrating the Mass with Cardinal O'Brien was Cardinal Daniel DiNardo, grand prior of the Southwestern Lieutenancy, along with several clergy including archbishops, bishops, and priests who are members of the order.

As the order continues to flourish around the world, its members' resolve to help their brothers and sisters in the Holy Land remains strong.

According to John Pritchett, an EOHSJ knight from Fort Worth, from 2001 to 2010 the order sent nearly \$80 million to the Holy Land. EOHSJ provides financial support for Holy Land projects, including church and school construction, humanitarian aid, as well as repair and maintenance of holy sites such as the Basilica of the Holy Sepulchre in Jerusalem — the site of Christ's crucifixion, burial,

CONTINUED ON NEXT PAGE



Pictured above are spurs, a sword, and a reliquary containing a relic of the True Cross, all used in the Investiture ceremony. In the ceremony, the spurs are symbols of the Knights' role in the "Militia to the honor and glory of the Holy Sepulchre." The sword is a reminder of members' duty to defend the Church, though they are reminded that the "reign of God is not conquered with the sword, but with faith and charity." The sword is also used in the ritual of dubbing each new Knight. The reliquary is then used to bless the newly invested Knights and Ladies.

CONTINUED FROM PREVIOUS PAGE

and Resurrection. Pritchett said the order's Southwestern Lieutenancy has consistently ranked second of all lieutenancies worldwide in financial assistance to the Holy Land.

"The order is another apostolate for the faithful to humbly live the faith and follow the Lord's commandment to love God and to love our neighbor," Pritchett said, "and to do it in the land of his Incarnation."

The order's mission is actually four-fold, as it aims to:

- strengthen the practice of Christian life among its members;
- aid the charitable, cultural, and social works and institutions of the Catholic Church in the Holy Land;
- preserve and propagate the faith in the Holy Land; and
- uphold the rights of the Catholic Church in the Holy Land.

The order traces its origin back to the First Crusade in 1099, when its leader Godfrey de Bouillon, liberated Jerusalem and its holy sites, including the Holy Sepulchre, from Muslim forces.

Ben Doscocil of Arlington, who was knighted into the EOHSJ 40 years ago and took part in the recent meeting, said he considers himself and fellow members to be crusaders of another sort now.

"Our goal is still to keep a Christian presence in the Holy Land," Doscocil said. "Where people before us were crusaders with horses and swords, we are crusaders in a different way. We're doing it now through prayers and financial support." Doscocil and his wife, Mary Frances, have made a pilgrimage to the Holy Land and are proud to support Christian businesses there.

Mina Milburn, a member of the order for the past six years, has also visited the Holy Land with her husband, Tony. Like the Doscocils and the many other knights and ladies who have made the journey, they say the pilgrimage profoundly affected them. Although not a requirement for membership, a Holy Land visit is strongly encouraged.

"It's like experiencing the material and the immaterial," said Mina. "God gave us the world. He appeared in a particular place and did specific human things and God actions, and those places are important, just as the graces, the miracles, and the salvation are important."

Commenting on the strong attendance at the annual gathering in the diocese, Mina added, "I saw so many men being knighted and women becoming ladies. It is such a beautiful thing that we have an order that is thriving and growing at this time in the history of the Church. And its mission is at the root and the core of our faith."



Cardinal O'Brien processes into Vietnamese Martyrs for the Mass investing new members into the order.

New members Laura and Diaz Murray of Wichita Falls were among the new investees and look forward to their pilgrimage to the Holy Land. For now, however, they are thankful for the blessing of fellowship with multitudes of devout Catholics through the EOHSJ.

"This is like another layer of faith for us," said Laura. "The more you experience in your faith, the more you want to learn and grow in it. This is another part of our faith journey."

New investees Debbie and Rob Meyer of Keller were moved by their experience in much



Tessy and Bill Ross of Fort Worth, who played a key role in organizing the event, stand before the order's banner.



Newly invested Knights Rob Meyer (left) from St. Elizabeth Ann Seton Parish in Keller and Msgr. Michael Olson pose for a picture. Msgr. Olson has since been named bishop-elect of the Diocese of Fort Worth.

the same way, especially the investiture Mass. During the ceremony, Cardinal O'Brien formally knighted the men through the medieval ritual of dubbing — touching his sword to each shoulder.

"It was unbelievable," said Rob. "It was really an awesome experience. I've had ceremonies like this before. I was a naval officer, and I'm in the Knights of Columbus, but this was really something special."

Rob explained that when a friend encouraged him to consider membership in the EOHSJ, he and his wife became interested after learning more about the order's mission and its accomplishments.

"Both of us feel very strongly about supporting the Church in the Holy Land and the treasures of our faith," said Rob. "But it's not just that. We welcome the challenge to become better Catholics."

Debbie agreed, adding that one of the most important aspects for her involvement with the EOHSJ is "growing closer to the body of Christ, not only in the local Church but to the Church that was established in Palestine by Jesus."

Cardinal O'Brien told the *North Texas Catholic* that the large number of Knights and Ladies filling the church during the Mass and Rite of Solemn Investiture was impressive, adding that he was moved by the dedication of members in the Southwestern Lieutenancy.

"Their solidarity is so important for any endeavor, but certainly for the success of what we're trying to do in the Holy Land," Cardinal O'Brien said. "It sends a message to all our



Cardinal O'Brien poses with officers and friends of the Southwestern Lieutenancy.

members and to others that the Church is very concerned about the Holy Land."

The cardinal added, "This is a strong lieutenancy. The leadership and the enthusiasm of the Knights and Ladies are really contagious."

Cardinal O'Brien said he was also impressed that an overwhelming number of members gathered for the weekend had already made pilgrimages to the Holy Land. Earlier in the day, during one of the assemblies, he said he asked those in attendance to stand up if they had made a pilgrimage. "I looked out and about 90 percent of them were standing," he said.

"No one can go there and leave unaffected," said Cardinal O'Brien. "There is an

overflowing grace in that land, still. Christ is still very generous in distributing his gifts to those who are concerned about his own family, his own people, and are concerned about the work that He did and that it continue."

Through the work of thousands of current EOHSJ members, including those gathered in the Diocese of Fort Worth for the annual meeting and investiture, the order's mission continues now as it has for centuries.

"What we're saying is that you're not alone," Cardinal O'Brien said. "And this means a great deal to the diminishing number of Christians in the Holy Land and for all the people there who are looking for solutions."



Cardinal O'Brien shakes Msgr. Olson's hand after investing him into the Equestrian Order of the Holy Sepulchre.



Father Raymond McDaniel, parochial administrator of St. Philip the Apostle Parish in Lewisville, served as choir director and organist for the Mass. Fr. McDaniel was among three diocesan priests to be invested into the order that day.



FROM LEFT TO RIGHT: Fr. Thames with local students, in red shirts, and visitors from the Diocese of Fort Worth. • Fr. Thames enjoys a moment with vocational sewing students. • In addition to overseeing the school in Cabezas, Fr. Thames and his pastoral staff minister to 31 local villages.

Changing lives through education

Father Robert Thames' vocational school now a model for other schools in Bolivia

BY JERRY CIRCELLI / CORRESPONDENT
PHOTOS COURTESY OF HENRY DEL CASTILLO, JR.

IT STARTED OUT AS A TYPICAL SUNDAY FOR HENRY DEL CASTILLO, JR., IN FEBRUARY 2006 WHEN HE SET OFF FOR MASS AT ST. MICHAEL CHURCH IN BEDFORD. Little did Del Castillo realize, however, that this would be a day that God would touch his soul and transform his life.

A special guest at Mass that morning was Father Robert Thames, a priest from the Diocese of Fort Worth serving a long way from home in Bolivia — one of the poorest and least developed countries in Latin America. Fr. Thames talked about his mission to educate poor children in the impoverished nation. Del Castillo liked what he heard. In just a few short years, Fr. Thames had taken the concept of starting a school in Bolivia and turned it into a reality. Del Castillo wanted to know more and caught up with the priest after Mass.

"I never met the man before in my life," Del Castillo said. "I started talking to him, and the next thing you know, five months later, I'm in Bolivia."

Today, Del Castillo serves as committee chairman for Educate the Children – Bolivia, a Diocese of Fort Worth Mission Council program. He has sponsored several children through the initiative, traveled to Bolivia three times, and is dedicated to working with local Catholics to help Fr. Thames continue his tireless mission in South America.

Del Castillo said the mission priest has a God-given talent for recruiting volunteers and sponsors in the diocese, not through direct appeals, but through leading by example.

"You just want to follow him," said Del Castillo, "because you see all these great things he does and the difference he is making in the lives of so many children in Bolivia."

In 2004, when Fr. Thames started the Nuestra Señora del Carmen School in Cabezas, Bolivia, he made plans to accommodate 100 students, but 250 showed up. The school has been growing steadily ever since.

Today, according to Del Castillo, more than 1,000 people are a part of the Educate the Children – Bolivia program. The curriculum now includes 500 children in grades six through 12, an additional 130 students in technical training, 21 students receiving special education, and 300 people in adult education programs. The school also provides boarding for 50 children attending local elementary schools far from their rural homes. Also, 50 students are enrolled in advanced degree programs, with the school providing assistance.

In addition to offering curriculums and practical vocational training, the school offers lodging for 250 students. Nuestra Señora del Carmen School serves three meals a day, and provides uniforms, books, and school supplies for students. The school also offers medical attention and any necessary clothing for those in need.

The school's academic curriculum includes math, social science, physical science, biology, music, literature, chemistry, philosophy, algebra, language arts, physics, physical education, and Guarani — the local indigenous language.

Vocational training, now a requirement for graduation, offers students the opportunity to learn a trade before they leave school. These

Our aim was to provide service as followers of Jesus Christ. Our God has been intimately involved in this constantly by action.

— Father Robert Thames

trades include food preparation and nutrition, woodworking and carpentry, executive secretarial work, graphic design, automobile mechanics, automobile electronics, industrial electrician training, sewing, arts and crafts, computer science, natural medicine, agriculture, fish production, and welding. Also included is apiculture — beekeeping — that entails the manufacture of honey, soap, and shampoo.

Fr. Thames' concept of making vocational training an educational requirement has met with popular approval in Bolivia, including within Bolivia's education department, Del Castillo explained. That government body recognized Nuestra Señora del Carmen School as a model for high schools in rural areas and has adopted similar mandatory vocational training tracks in public schools, according to Del Castillo.

To date, more than 500 students have graduated from Nuestra Señora del Carmen.

The financial success of the school is tied directly to the generosity of parishioners in and around the Diocese of Fort Worth. Over the past 10 years, more than \$1.8 million has been raised in sponsor donations. To become a sponsor, donors give \$25 per month, adding up to \$300 annually.

Fr. Thames to visit area churches

Father Robert Thames will visit several parishes in the diocese in February and March, where he will address parishioners during the Masses and be available for discussions afterwards. Below is a list of parishes he will be visiting. To schedule a visit with Fr. Thames in February, contact Henry Del Castillo, Jr., at 817-946-7200 or by email at delcasth@aol.com.

DATE	PARISH
Feb. 1-2	St. Bartholomew, 3601 Altamesa Blvd., Fort Worth
Feb. 8-9	St. Michael, 3713 Harwood Rd., Bedford
Feb. 15-16	St. Vincent de Paul, 5819 W. Pleasant Ridge Rd., Arlington
Feb. 22-23	St. Joseph, 1927 SW Green Oaks Blvd., Arlington
March 1-2	Most Blessed Sacrament, 2100 N. Davis Dr., Arlington



Students in class at Nuestra Señora del Carmen School.

“One of the very good things about Educate the Children – Bolivia is that 100 percent of every penny contributed through this sponsorship program goes directly to the school,” Del Castillo said. “Everybody who is on our committee is a volunteer, there is no overhead, and we each pay our own way when we travel to Bolivia.”

In email correspondence with the *North Texas Catholic* from Cabezas, Bolivia, Fr. Thames deflected any credit for the success of the school away from himself. Instead, he directed it toward God and the generosity of sponsors. From the beginning, stated Fr. Thames, “our aim was to provide service as followers of Jesus Christ. Our God has been intimately involved in this constantly by action.”

Fr. Thames went on to explain that part way through 2004, during the school’s first year of operations, it seemed that all was lost, because start-up costs were too great. “I saw that we would not have money to pay salaries. ... I prayed a lot over this. Then, the diocese

sent me notice that someone unknown at the time had just sent a check for \$10,000. There have been so many times like this. God is very much alive and active in our world; so much proof of it is in our schools.”

In a recent interview, Fr. Thames said, “The hand of God has been in this from the beginning.” He explained that he talks to about 13,000 parishioners during his visits to the Diocese of Fort Worth to report on the progress of the educational program in Bolivia. Many end up donating to the mission.

“How can that many people contribute to something that they haven’t seen, but trust the word that we give them? That has to be an act of God,” said Fr. Thames.

Del Castillo agreed, emphasizing that God is providing tangible signs that the Educate the Children – Bolivia mission is building leaders and improving lives. One example, he said, involves a young man who graduated from the school and took vocational training in sewing. The student went on to work in Brazil to gain experience in clothing manu-

facturing. Recently, he returned to Cabezas to start his own business. “And he is now employing some local people and exporting 1,000 pairs of jeans a month,” Del Castillo said.

Another inspirational story centers on a student who lived and studied at Nuestra Señora del Carmen School in Cabezas. She graduated with honors and went on to obtain a bachelor’s degree and a master’s degree. The woman returned recently to Cabezas and was appointed director of a local school for special needs children.

“You see, Fr. Thames had this vision,” Del Castillo said. “He wanted to create opportunities for people and instill in them the desire to help others.

“He inspires people to be greater than they think they can be and to make God a part of their lives. That’s what he did for me. And that’s what he’s doing for these children,” Del Castillo said.

For more information, visit www.fwdioc.org/pages/etc-bolivia.



LEFT: Woodworking is part of the vocational training at Nuestra Señora del Carmen School. Fr. Thames visits with instructor Efrain Alanes Mansilla. **ABOVE:** Music is an important part of the academic curriculum at Nuestra Señora del Carmen School.

150 years in America

The Sisters of St. Mary of Namur came to the U.S. from Belgium in 1863, and to Texas 10 years later, leaving a mark everywhere they've been, including the Diocese of Fort Worth



STORY AND PHOTOS BY JOAN KURKOWSKI-GILLEN / CORRESPONDENT

ANN TILLERY EDMONDS WAS PART OF THE LAST GRADUATING CLASS TO RECEIVE A HIGH SCHOOL DIPLOMA FROM OUR LADY OF VICTORY ACADEMY — the Fort Worth school started by the Sisters of St. Mary of Namur in 1910. But that's not the only reason she attended a celebration marking the religious order's arrival in North America from Belgium 150 years ago. Three generations of her family are part of the sisters' long legacy of educating young people in Texas.

Her mother, Bernice Whitfill Tillery graduated from Our Lady of Victory Academy and College in 1930 along with her older sister, Lillian Whitfill Dubin. They followed in the footsteps of their aunt, Mary K. Whitfill, who boarded at the imposing, five-story red brick school built by the sisters on 21 acres of flat, prairie land south of Fort Worth. Edmonds believes her great aunt may have been a member of OLV's first graduating class in 1914.

"The sisters have been in this country 150 years, and my family was a large part of that history. This celebration is very special to me," said Edmonds, who joined 300 other alumni and friends of the Sisters of St. Mary for a Mass of Thanksgiving celebrated by Diocesan Administrator Monsignor Stephen Berg Nov. 16 in St. Patrick Cathedral.

To personalize the occasion, Edmonds

wore her mother's gold graduation pin. She thinks her mother's class was the last group to receive the rare, solid gold pins from the sisters — a tradition that probably ended with the 1929 stock market crash and ensuing Great Depression.

"I wanted a little bit of my mother to be here with me today," Edmonds said, touching the simple brooch.

The Mass and luncheon that followed in the parish hall gave participants time to share memories, renew friendships, and thank the Sisters of St. Mary of Namur for bringing their ministry to the United States 150 years ago. Sister Gabriela Martinez recounted for the gathering how five missionary sisters, led by Sister Mary Emilie, set out from the small town of Namur, Belgium in August 1863 to spread the word of God to Native Americans.

"But the Civil War put a hold on those plans, and they were invited to work in Lockport, New York," she explained. "A few years after their arrival, they began an academy for girls, started a business school, and prepared children for the sacraments."

Those achievements didn't come easy. Diaries written by the pioneer sisters describe their struggles with poverty, learning a new language, and adjusting to a different culture. They also had to contend with anti-Catholic sentiments which were prevalent in the United



Sr. Espérance Uwamahoro from Rwanda (left) and Sr. Rosemary Stanton look at a program before the Mass.



Sr. Mary Merdian, provincial superior for the sisters' Western Province, thanked and welcomed all attendees for joining them before the close of Mass.



Diocesan Administrator Monsignor Stephen Berg served as the homilist for the anniversary Mass.



Sisters stand during the procession at the beginning of the Nov. 16 Mass at St. Patrick Cathedral.



Srs. Ann Vincent Kucirek (far left), and Rita Clare Davis (2nd from right), laugh with friends Ruth Martin (2nd from left) and Ann Tucker (far right).



Sisters sitting in the front row sing along to the Offertory hymn during the Mass.

States at the time.

When a second group of sisters, led once again by Mother Emilie, journeyed to Waco, by train in 1873, a similar set of challenges greeted them. But the order not only survived, it flourished. Between 1893 and 1912, the sisters, known for their teaching skills, built seven large boarding and day schools in the Lone Star State.

Today, the Sisters of St. Mary of Namur are engaged in education, health care, parish ministry, helping refugees, extending pastoral care and counsel, evangelization, youth ministry, and “many other unseen and unnamed deeds of mercy and love,” Sr. Gabriela pointed out. “We are conscious that we stand on the shoulders of holy, good, and courageous women who for 150 years have gratefully heard and responded to God’s call to be of service to those in need.”

In his homily, Msgr. Berg thanked the order’s motherhouse in Belgium for “hearing the cry of Texas.”

“We bless you for bringing the sisters to the United States, for guiding and encouraging them, and, finally, bringing them

to Texas,” he said, before adding a personal thought. “I don’t know where I would be without the Sisters of St. Mary.”

Sister Donna Ferguson, who passed away in 2008, was director of seminarians when Msgr. Berg was studying for the priesthood.

“She got me through the seminary and made such an impression on my life,” he explained. “Lord, we bless and thank you for our sisters, and their sacrifice, teaching, and evangelization. We thank you for the gift they brought us — the gift of faith.”

Another deceased sister was on the minds of many people at the event. Before her death in 2012, Sister St. John Begnaud, SSMN, remembered for her sharp mind and advocacy for Catholic social teaching, wrote a book about her community’s history in Texas entitled *A Little Good*. Andrea Scanlon credits Sr. St. John for encouraging her to become involved in prison ministry.

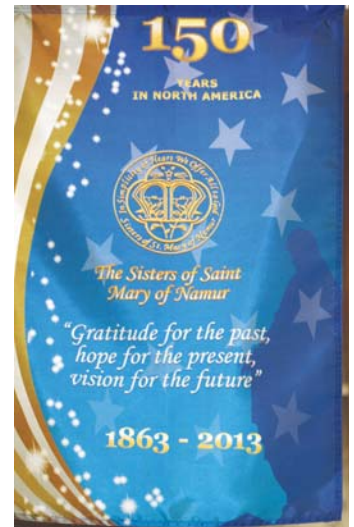
“Like many other sisters, she was a brilliant woman,” she said. “I believe the sisters across the United States are the backbone of the Church. They educated the priests. They educated the people.

They are staid and holy. They’re leaders.”

Speaking during the luncheon, Barbara Lamsens, a graduate of OLV Elementary School whose mother attended OLV College in 1930, told the audience the sisters have a long, productive history but don’t live for the past. They “hope” for the present. And their hope is not just wishful thinking but embodied in action.

“They hope for the poor and disadvantaged, they hope for an end to violence and the promotion of social justice. They hope all people will embrace the Word of God and share in this grace,” she said.

Although the average age of the local Sisters of St. Mary of Namur is 76 and many have retired, they continue to share their gifts and talents with the larger community. The Fort Worth sisters also have invested in the future by establishing a novitiate house for new members and helping the missionary sisters in Rwanda become self-sustaining. Sister Espérance Uwamahoro, SSMN, a native of Africa, is currently in Fort Worth studying intensive English at Texas Christian University.



A banner commemorating the sisters’ 150 year-presence in the U.S. was displayed at the Mass and reception.

“I hope you continue to inspire and share your beliefs and commitment for all that is good,” Lamsens said. “Congratulations on a job well done.”

Sister Bernice Knapek, who organized the anniversary celebration, is optimistic about the religious order’s future.

“We’re grateful to have re-connected with so many former students, friends, and benefactors,” she said. “I know our charism will continue because of the support of people.”



Members of the Sisters of St. Mary of Namur’s Western Province gather for a picture at a reception held in their honor at the St. Patrick Cathedral Pastoral Center Nov. 16.



Bishop Paul Tabet of the Eparchy of St. Maron (*with microphone*) leads a prayer at a reception after the Mass. Joining him were (*from left to right*) Maronite Lebanese Missionaries (MLM) superior the Very Rev. Elias Sleiman, Dallas Auxiliary Bishop Douglas Deshotel, Bishop Abdullah Zaidan, MLM, and Fr. Milad Yaghi, pastor of Our Lady of Cedars Parish in Houston.

Maronite Eparch Abdallah Zaidan (*center*) of the Eparchy of Our Lady of Lebanon based out of St. Louis, which covers Maronite parishes in the Western two-thirds of the U.S., including Our Lady of Lebanon, leads other priests and bishops in celebrating the Liturgy.

Homecoming

Maronite Eparchs Zaidan and Tabet return to the parish they helped establish as parish priests, Our Lady of Lebanon in Lewisville, to celebrate a Mass commemorating the parish burning its mortgage

STORY AND PHOTOS BY
JOAN KURKOWSKI-GILLEN / CORRESPONDENT

“IT’S AN HONOR TO HAVE THE BLESSING OF THREE BISHOPS.”

That’s how Rose Onoh described the history-making liturgy that brought together two bishops of the Eastern Rite of the Catholic Church with a Roman Catholic bishop from Dallas. The Dec. 1 Mass, celebrated by the prelates at Our Lady of Lebanon Maronite Catholic Church in Lewisville, capped off a weekend of Thanksgiving activities that included a mortgage burning by parishioners.

For Bishop Abdallah Elias Zaidan, MLM, newly ordained eparch of the Maronite Eparchy of Our Lady of Lebanon based out of St. Louis, and Bishop Paul-Marwan Tabet, MLM, eparch of the Maronite Eparchy of St. Maron of Montreal, the celebration was also a homecoming. Both bishops were instrumental in establishing the parish in the early 1990s when they were parish priests. They were joined by Dallas Auxiliary Bishop Douglas Deshotel for the Mass honoring Mary’s Visitation to Elizabeth.

Though located within the boundaries of the Diocese of Fort Worth, Our Lady of Lebanon is a parish of the Eparchy of Our Lady of Lebanon, a diocesan structure for Catholics of the Maronite Rite in the western two-thirds of the United States.

Pastor Father Assaad El-Basha, MLM, was grateful for Bishop Deshotel’s presence because it was former Dallas Bishop Charles Grahmann who had given the parish financial support to close its mortgage.

“When Bishop Zaidan was pastor of St. George Maronite Catholic Church in San Antonio, he traveled every month to Dallas to begin the Maronite Mission and celebrate the Divine Liturgy with the Leba-



Youth of the parish prepare to process in carrying (*from left to right*) the Lebanese, U.S., and Vatican flags, being led by a banner of Our Lady of Lebanon.



Our Lady of Lebanon pastor Fathar Assaad El-Basha, MLM, incenses (from left to right) Bishops Zaidan, Tabet, and Deshotel, before the Liturgy.



Bishop Zaidan greets Andre Makdissi after the Liturgy. As a parish priest, then-Father Zaidan helped establish the Lewisville mission.



Bishop Tabet greets his former parishioner Jihane Abihanna after the Mass. As a priest, then-Father Tabet was the first pastor of the parish.

nese families,” Fr. El-Basha explained.

When Fr. Tabet arrived in Dallas in 1990 to serve as pastor of the Maronite Mission, he helped secure the present 3.5-acre site where Our Lady of Lebanon is now located.

“We are an immigrant parish for Catholics from Lebanon seeking to have the freedom to worship the Lord and practice our faith in the Catholic Church,” he continued. “We sought to have a house to keep traditions of the Eastern Catholic Maronite Rite for future generations.”

During the early days of the parish, Fr. Tabet became a bi-ritual priest. While working as assistant pastor at All Saints Church in Dallas, he could celebrate the Maronite Divine Liturgy as well as the Roman Catholic Mass. Today, Our Lady of Lebanon serves 375 families. Half are of Lebanese heritage.

The Maronite Church is one of the Syrian rites of the Catholic Church most similar to Roman or Western Catholicism. It retains its Jewish roots more closely than any other Catholic rites. Priests sing the Consecration in Aramaic — the everyday language spoken by Jesus and the Apostles — and Holy Communion is given by intinction, the dipping of the Host in the consecrated wine. Communion is not distributed in the hand, and there is no need for extraordinary ministers of Holy Communion.

Roman Catholics may attend any Eastern Catholic Liturgy to fulfill their Sunday obligation. They can also regularly attend an Eastern Catholic parish and receive sacraments from an Eastern Catholic priest.

Bishop Zaidan was ordained as the third bishop of the Eparchy of Our Lady of Lebanon on Sept. 28 in his native Lebanon. The

Mass installing him as head of the eparchy, which encompasses all of the United States, except those states that touch the Atlantic Ocean and inland New England states, was celebrated Oct. 23 at St. Raymond Cathedral in St. Louis.

In his homily, the newly ordained bishop thanked the congregation for their warm welcome and reminded them that the day was about blessings.

“We bless God because we paid off a debt, and we bless God for what He does for us in many ways,” the bishop said.

Referencing the liturgy’s Scripture reading recounting Mary’s visit to her cousin Elizabeth, the bishop called the Blessed Mother the first missionary and most loyal disciple of Christ.

“Mary knew Elizabeth needed help and she went to serve. She is a beautiful example of service and humility,” he said. “Mary had to walk a long journey, and it was not easy, but she wanted to take Christ to others.”

Using Mary as an example of outreach, Bishop Zaidan challenged parishioners to find a family who no longer comes to church and find a way to coax them back.

“Knock on the door but do it with love,” he asked. “Don’t be judges. Be servants like the Blessed Mother. We have our Catholic faith. We have the holy truth. Share it with others.”

Chairman of the parish council Phil DelVecchio described the reception given to the new bishop as “warm and welcoming.”

“This is Bishop Zaidan’s first visit to the parish since becoming a bishop, and we’re just thrilled that both he and Bishop [Tabet] took the time to see us,” he said.



Bishop Abdullah Zaidan, MLM, served as the homilist for the Dec. 1 Liturgy. Bishop Zaidan is the newly-ordained eparch of the Eparchy of Our Lady of Lebanon based out of St. Louis, which includes the Lewisville parish. When he was a parish priest, he had served as pastor of St. George Maronite Parish in San Antonio, which established the Lewisville mission.



During their visit, Bishops Zaidan and Tabet distributed first Holy Communion to young members of the parish.



Serenading Our Lady

Devoted 'Guadalupanos' from throughout the diocese gather at St. Patrick to pay homage to Our Lady of Guadalupe, their mother

STORY AND PHOTOS BY JOAN KURKOWSKI-GILLEN / CORRESPONDENT

FOR ERICA AGUILAR, IT WAS A SACRIFICE WORTH MAKING. THE YOUNG MOTHER BUNDLED UP HER FIVE YOUNG CHILDREN AGAINST THE WINTER COLD AND TRAVELED FROM DECATUR TO ST. PATRICK CATHEDRAL in the wee hours of the morning to honor Our Lady of Guadalupe on her Dec. 12 feast day.

“Our family is from Mexico and she is our special saint,” explained Aguilar who manages the Danza Azteca Guadalupana with her husband, Jorge. The troupe of young Matachines — known culturally as soldiers of the Virgin — danced in her honor at the celebration. “My brother’s middle name is Guadalupe because he was born on Dec. 12. We grew up thanking her for everything we had.”

In 1531, Juan Diego was on his way to Mass when he found a beautiful Indian woman standing on top of Tepeyac Hill near Mexico City. The apparition, which occurred during the Aztec winter

solstice, became known as Our Lady of Guadalupe and the day her holy image appeared on Juan Diego’s tilma is celebrated as her feast day. A church built on the spot of the miracle, the Basilica of Our Lady of Guadalupe, is the most frequented Marian shrine in the world.

Centuries after the apparition, the feast of the Virgin of Guadalupe is observed in shrines and churches across the Americas with special liturgies, processions, and vigils. The 6 a.m. Mass at St. Patrick Cathedral was one of many Masses celebrated in parishes across the Diocese of Fort Worth to honor the mother of Jesus.

Dressed in red, Aztec-inspired costumes embellished with beads and feathers, the school-age Matachines from Assumption of the Blessed Virgin Mary Church in Decatur were part of the pre-dawn festivities that started with a serenade in front of the

ABOVE: A statue of Our Lady of Guadalupe is displayed on a side altar at St. Patrick Cathedral in Downtown Fort Worth.

BELOW: Devoted Guadalupanos typically place flowers before a statue or image of Our Lady.



CLOCKWISE FROM TOP: Ariel Morales (on knee) and Lizette Garcia from Ballet Folklorico Azteca de Fort Worth perform a dance at a reception after the Mass.

- Dancers from multiple dance troupes stand in the pews at the Mass.
- Traditional Mexican pastries were offered at the reception.
- Claudia Torres dances with her fellow “matachines” from Decatur before the beginning of Mass.



Virgin of Guadalupe statue. The Mariachi Real de Alvarez began the ceremony with “Las Mañanitas” a traditional Mexican song heard on birthdays and holidays.

“Mañanitas means morning so it’s the birthday morning song. It’s a serenade that’s done early in the day — sometimes at midnight,” said Tina Valdez, who served on the celebration’s organizing committee. “In the Hispanic culture, you sing ‘[Las] Mañanitas’ before the Happy Birthday song.”

Young members of Ballet Folklorico Azteca de Fort Worth, a Mexican folk dance organization, also paid homage to Our Lady of Guadalupe with a spirited performance of “Jalisco” and “Nuevo Leon” before the Mass. They danced the traditional “Jarabe Tapatio” — Mexican hat dance — during a post-liturgical reception in the parish hall.

Many worshippers drove from Arlington and Dallas to the cathedral to witness the early morning music and dancing tributes to Our Lady of Guadalupe. Their own parishes had scheduled an evening liturgy for the feast day.

“But they wanted to participate in a ceremony that was more traditional because in Mexico it’s done in the early morning,” Valdez added. “The celebration is part of our culture and very close to our heart. Our Lady of Guadalupe is our mother.”

A symbol of Mexican identity, ardent devotion to Our Lady of Guadalupe is ever-present in many Mexican-American households. Growing up, Martha Prud’homme, a parishioner of Our Lady of Guadalupe Parish in Fort Worth, could relate to the indigenous characteristics of the Marian image.

“She’s brown like me and has dark hair and eyes like I do,” says Prud’homme who attended the service with her 10-year-old niece, Audrianna Cardoza for a reason.

“It’s important for us to teach the next generation the values of our culture. Our Lady of Guadalupe is part of who we are as Mexican-Americans. She’s an icon.”

Prud’homme remembers how her childhood home had four or five pictures of the Virgin scattered in various rooms. It was a family tradition she continued after getting married.

“My husband thought he had walked into a church,” she laughs, recalling how her own décor includes a collection of Our Lady of Guadalupe images.

During the cathedral Mass, St. Patrick rector Monsignor Joseph Pemberton recalled the dedication and love for Our Lady of Guadalupe he witnessed while visiting the basilica dedicated to her in Mexico City.

“The first thing that struck me was watching the people crawl on their knees up to the basilica,” the celebrant recalled in his homily. “The profound simplicity of their faith was so innocent and childlike. I was moved by that.”

St. Juan Diego, the poor Indian who saw the apparition, represents all the broken, lost people of the world, he said.

“Our Lady of Guadalupe, came to Juan Diego and said to the world through him, ‘I am the mother of the lost. I am the mother of the broken. I am the mother of those who feel unwanted and unloved,’” Msgr. Pemberton added.

The Virgin continues to speak to her people centuries later. Proclaimed the Patroness of the Americas, Our Lady of Guadalupe champions the downtrodden and protects the unborn.

“When you feel a little broken in your life, and you feel that life has not been good to you, come to Our Lady of Guadalupe,” Msgr. Pemberton urged. “She is the mother of the sorrowful and broken. That is expressed so beautifully in the apparition of Our Lady of Guadalupe.”



Members of the Mariachi Real de Alvarez serenade a statue of Our Lady of Guadalupe with the “Las Mañanitas.”



Members of the Danza Azteca Guadalupeana dance troupe from Decatur process into St. Patrick Cathedral before the Mass begins.



A display in the back of church points out what the different aspects of the image of Our Lady of Guadalupe represent, and their significance to native culture at the time of the apparition.



LEFT: Jubilarian Mother Maria of Jesus Crucified, OCD, sits in her wheelchair behind the grate at her order's monastery during a Mass in her honor.

A consecrated heart devoted to God

For 50 years, the prayers and devotion of Carmelite nun Mother Maria of Jesus Crucified have borne much fruit to those around her and beyond

STORY AND PHOTOS BY KATHY CRIBARI HAMER / CORRESPONDENT

IT WAS A GOLDEN JUBILEE, YET THE HONOREE, IN WHITE CAPE, A CROWN OF FLOWERS, AND BRILLIANT SMILE, HAD THE AURA OF A YOUNG WOMAN AT HER FIRST PROM. Her face seemed far too young and radiant to have lived a half century in a Carmelite Monastery.

But it was true. Mother Maria of Jesus Crucified, the former Patricia Anne Brinkley, having entered in 1961, and professed her first vows in the Carmelite Monastery when it was located on Sunset Terrace in Fort Worth, was marking 50 years since her final vows.

"As a young girl you were called to be a bride of Christ," said the homilist and concelebrant, Father C.M. Trinkle of the Diocese of Arlington, Virginia, and Mother Maria's first cousin. "Your life before you went to Carmel was anything but routine." He retold many stories of his cousin. "One of the most interesting

was that you played on the CYA team, and that was tackle football. As you know, young girls just didn't do that at that time.

"That's why she's in a wheelchair," he quipped, and the assembly exploded with laughter.

"You were the field general — the quarterback. I guess in some remote way, you were prepared to be the prioress of contemplative nuns. This is a stretch, but all things work for good for those who know God. When you took your helmet off, and your hair flowed down, your opponents were spellbound, and left the field. They had been beaten by a woman."

A sense of celebration always permeates Arlington's Carmelite Monastery of the Most Holy Trinity during the month of October. The nuns celebrate the feast days of two important patron saints: St. Thérèse of Lisieux, Oct. 1, and

St. Teresa of Ávila, Oct. 15.

But this year, Oct. 12, the monastery was extraordinarily joyous, because this event was spiritual, personal, and monumental. The nuns, lining up in the choir, were fairly bursting with happiness and visible affection for Mother Maria. The assembly, seated outside the grate, glowed with enjoyment of the moment, watching the ceremony unfold.

Many in that congregation remembered the nuns from their days near downtown Fort Worth, and they had supported the sisters' move to the larger monastery in Arlington. The Very Rev. Luis Castañeda, OCD, provincial for the Carmelites' Oklahoma Province, celebrated the Mass, and was joined by Diocesan Administrator Monsignor Stephen Berg, Fr. Trinkle, and other priests supportive of the nuns. Deacon Joseph Webber of the Diocese of Dallas, another of Mother Maria's cousins, assisted in the liturgy.

The Jubilee Mass included the jubilarian's renewal of the solemn vows of obedience, chastity, and poverty, professing them in the hands of the prioress, Mother Anne Teresa.

The ceremony included three symbols. The celebrant blessed a candle, lit from the Paschal candle, and the prioress presented it to the jubilarian, saying, "... accept this candle as the wise virgin's lamp of watchful faith..." A wreath of flowers was blessed and placed on Mother Maria's head, as the prioress said, "I give you this crown as a sign of God's tender love ..." Finally, a flowered staff was handed to the jubilarian as Mother Anne Teresa said, "I give you this staff as a sign of hope..."

Mother Maria's older sister, Barbara Powell was present for the liturgy, along with her sons Stephen and David Powell. Barbara and Patricia and their younger brother Edward, Jr., (Sunny) were all 17 months apart; Patricia turned 80 July 14, and Sunny passed away in 2000 at the age of 65. Their mother was Episcopalian and their father Southern Baptist, converting to Catholicism in the 1920s.

The children went to Catholic schools, and Barbara said "My little sister was so talented! She was like the Pied Piper — so many friends followed her around. We were in awe of the priests and nuns, and my sister was always at the church door."

Barbara recalled how her sister told her family she planned to be a nun.



LEFT: Carmelite sisters place a wreath of flowers on Mother Maria's head, serving as a crown that would be a sign of "God's tender love."

RIGHT: Mother Maria greets friends and well-wishers on the occasion of her 50th Jubilee following the Mass held in her honor.



"I was married in 1955," Barbara said, "and that Christmas my sister recorded a Christmas carol for each member of the family." Then she made it known to the family that she was going to the Carmelite Monastery in Kentucky. We drove her to Louisville in 1956, and she stayed there until 1958, Barbara said. She needed foot surgery and went home, later teaching at Our Lady of Nazareth Elementary School until 1961 when she went to the Carmelite Monastery in Fort Worth.

"My little sister stays close to me in spirit all the time," Barbara said, "through the wonderful prayer system the nuns have.

In his homily, Fr. Trinkle spoke directly to his cousins, "I would like to say it's a privilege to be here with my cousin [Dcn.] Joe Webber and his wife Kay. They are very dear to me, and you know God does have a sense of humor. He called three characters like us to us to the diaconate, the Carmelites, and the priesthood! So, God doesn't always choose the strongest to be those who proclaim his word."

The Gospel for Mother Maria's Jubilee, was from *John 15:1-8*: "I am the vine, you are the

branches. He who abides in me and I in him bears much fruit, for apart from me, you can do nothing."

In his homily, Fr. Trinkle spoke seriously about this, directly to Mother Maria. "Your body in Christ, was to bear fruit in me," he said, "a branch that was withering on the vine. It is probably true that what I am about to say, you will defer and say you didn't. But then, there are some things that need to be told for all to hear: that a life lived for God and others does bear fruit. Your love for me in Christ has helped me to be what I am today.

Fr. Trinkle shared his vocation story, how when he was in high school, his cousin sent him a book, *The Ascent of Mount Carmel*. After reading the book, he said a great desire of a contemplative life formed in his own heart. That desire led him to discerning the priesthood, but during that time, he recalled a darkness setting in. While in that darkness, he shared how he called the monastery and asked to speak to his cousin.

"The prioress at the time was Mother Mary Margaret. She let me call here to, at that time,

Sister Maria, and I would pour my heart out to her, because I didn't know what to do," he recalled. "And during one of the many conversations we had, when my life was on the verge of despair, she suddenly stopped talking and paused and said, 'CM, if necessary I would give my life for you.'

"And she did."

"Your many sufferings," he told his cousin, "over the years have helped me carry my crosses, and the countless crosses of others, as well.

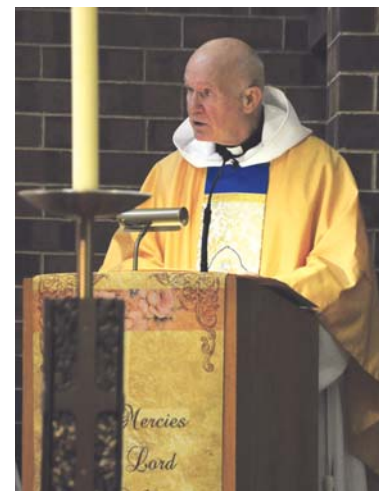
"Words could never adequately convey the gratitude I have for what God's Son has done for me, and all of us, in his passion, death, and Resurrection. And that He has consecrated hearts [like Mother Maria's] who are willing to do the same, in imitation of her spouse."



Mother Maria's cousin Deacon Joe Webber proclaims the Gospel at her Jubilee Mass.



The Very Rev. Luis Castañeda, OCD, provincial for the Carmelite's Oklahoma Province (center), is joined by his brother Carmelite priests, priests of the Diocese of Fort Worth, and other supporters of the nuns, in celebrating the Jubilee Mass.



Father C.M. Trinkle, Mother Maria's other cousin, delivered the homily at the Mass.

Appointment of diocese's first home-grown

By Joan Kurkowski-Gillen
Correspondent

Father Christopher Stainbrook still remembers the trepidation his parishioners felt when St. Timothy, an Anglican congregation, decided to join the Catholic Church as part of the Ordinariate of the Chair of St. Peter.

"People were unsure and feared leaving the familiar for the unknown," the pastor explains.

Monsignor Michael F. Olson, who instructed parish members on the Sacrament of Confirmation, eased their anxiety.

"He made a whole room full of people feel relaxed and welcomed," Fr. Stainbrook recalls. "My parishioners are going to be very happy that he's their new bishop. He's a teacher — a real people person."

Appointed to his new ministry by Pope Francis, Bishop-elect Olson is the first priest ordained



Bishop-elect Michael F. Olson addresses the press and the staff of the diocese at a news conference at The Catholic Center Nov. 19. It was a joyful occasion.

(NTC Photo / Donna Ryckaert)

to serve in the Diocese of Fort Worth to become a bishop. At the age of 47, he is also the second youngest man to currently lead a Catholic diocese in the U.S., the youngest being his seminary classmate, Bishop Oscar Cantú of Las Cruces, New Mexico.

"I am consoled by the fact being a bishop means experiencing the fullness of the priesthood," Bishop-elect Olson said during a Nov. 19 press conference that introduced him to the Fort Worth media. "It means I can use this ministry for the good of all."

As soon as the history-making announcement was released on

Nov. 19, Bishop-elect Olson's sister, Patty Tucker's phone chimed with text messages.

"I'm just so proud of what he's accomplished with his life so far," she told the *North Texas Catholic*. "Knowing that he will be the bishop here, where I live, is a little surreal right now."

Born on June 29, 1966 in Park Ridge, Illinois, the bishop-elect is the eldest child and only son of Ronald and Janice Fetzer Olson. Two of his younger sisters, Patty Tucker and Mary Elizabeth Rogers, reside in Fort Worth. A third sister, Lizbeth Schweizer, lives in Maryland.

"We were surprised and happy for him. He's always enjoyed being a priest," Ronald Olson said as the family gathered inside St. Patrick Cathedral for a Nov. 19 Mass celebrated by the bishop-elect. "Whatever they asked him to do, he loved. So I know he will like being a bishop — especially of Fort Worth."

A very young Michael Olson told his parents he wanted to be a priest while still in grammar school. He served as an altar boy for years but surprised his father when he chose to attend Quigley Preparatory Seminary in downtown Chicago for high school. Af-

Bishop-elect Olson shakes hands with Catholic Schools Superintendent Don Miller following the news conference. (NTC Photo / Joan Kurkowski-Gillen)



Bishop-elect Olson receives applause from those gathered to hear his remarks to the news conference Nov. 19. Diocesan Administrator Msgr. Stephen Berg applauds at right. (NTC Photo / Donna Ryckaert)



Bishop, a pleasant surprise to local Catholics



Bishop-elect Olson celebrates noon Mass at St. Patrick Cathedral with many of his fellow priests concelebrating, following the news conference Nov. 19. This was the first public liturgy he celebrated as bishop-elect. (NTC Photo / Donna Ryckaert)

ter graduating in 1984, he began studying for the priesthood for the Archdiocese of Chicago.

When a corporate relocation

moved his family to North Texas, the young seminarian transferred to the Diocese of Fort Worth.

The late Bishop Joseph Delaney,

Bishop-elect Olson incenses the altar as he celebrates noon Mass at St. Patrick Cathedral following the news conference announcing his appointment as the fourth Bishop of Fort Worth Nov. 19. (NTC Photo / Donna Ryckaert)



BELOW: Sitting in the front pew as Bishop-elect Olson celebrated his first public liturgy were his mother and father, Ronald and Janice Fetzer Olson and his sister, Patty Tucker, her husband Tom and their two children Katy and Matthew. (NTC Photo / Joan Kurkowski-Gillen)



Bishop-elect Olson approaches his mother Janice Fetzer Olson to minister the Eucharist to her at his first Mass as bishop-elect of the Diocese of Fort Worth. (NTC Photo / Donna Ryckaert)



the second bishop of the diocese, ordained him to the priesthood June 3, 1994.

Having a priest in the family is an honor, Tucker said.

“He’ll be a great bishop,” she said. “One of his best assets is a sense of humor, but he also be-

lieves strongly in his faith. That’s something he’s had from a young age. He set a good example for us then, and he still does, especially for my children.”

After his ordination he

Continued on page 36

Ordination and Installation of Bishop-elect Michael F. Olson

Wednesday, January 29, 2014 2:00 p.m.- 4:30 p.m.

Bishop-elect Michael F. Olson, S.T.D., M.A. will be ordained a bishop and installed as the fourth Bishop of Fort Worth. January 29, 2014 at the Fort Worth Convention Center in downtown Fort Worth. The ordination Mass will begin at 2:00 p.m.

More details will be made available soon.

PLEASE SAVE THIS DATE.

Reception Immediately following the Mass at the Fort Worth Convention Center

The public is welcome

Continued from page 35

served as associate pastor of St. Michael Parish in Bedford 1994-97, as formation adviser at St. Mary's Seminary in Houston 2001-06, as vicar general of the Diocese of Fort Worth and pastor of St. Peter Parish in White Settlement 2006-08, and since July 2008 as rector of Holy Trinity Seminary in Irving. From 1997 to 2001, he attended St. Louis University Center for Health Care Ethics for doctoral studies.

He succeeds Bishop Kevin Vann who left Fort Worth to become Bishop of the Diocese of Orange, California in December 2012. Bishop-elect Olson said he had received a congratulatory call from his predecessor.

"Bishop Vann said he was very happy for me and very proud," the bishop-elect said, describing the conversation. "I learned a lot from Bishop Vann

by working at his side during his ministry here. I hope to continue moving forward from where he left off."

Michael Heaton, Holy Trinity Seminary director of advancement, said the bishop-elect's presence and example will be missed by the 74 young men attending the seminary where Bishop-elect Olson not only served as rector but taught formation classes, too.

"The seminarians have a tremendous amount of respect for him. We're losing a phenomenal person but everyone is very excited," he said. "Everyone knew this day would come. We just didn't think it would be this soon."

Once the Vatican posted the 5 a.m. announcement, news of the rector's appointment as bishop spread like wildfire, he explained. Many seminarians watched the bishop-elect's press conference later that morning as it was live-streamed on their computers.



Bishop-elect Michael F. Olson poses with family members present for his first Mass as the bishop-elect of the Diocese.

FROM LEFT, ABOVE: Niece Katy Tucker; sister Patty Tucker; Bishop-elect Olson; dad, Ronald; mom, Janice; nephew Matthew and brother-in-law Tom. *NTC Photo / Donna Ryckaert*



Bishop-elect Michael Olson gives a hug to his niece Katy Tucker in front of St. Patrick's, following the noon Mass, as his mother and father look on, thoroughly enjoying this momentous event in their family's life. *(NTC Photo / Donna Ryckaert)*



Bishop-elect Olson greets friends and wellwishers in front of St. Patrick Cathedral, following the noon Mass *(NTC Photo / Joan Kurkowski-Gillen)*



Bishop-elect Olson offers an observation to young Ignatius Gill as he greets Matt and Angela Gill and their children, following the celebration of noon Mass at the Cathedral. *(NTC Photo / Joan Kurkowski-Gillen)*

When he toured the campus of Our Mother of Mercy School in near Southeast Fort Worth following his celebration of the noon Mass at St. Patrick Cathedral, the students greeted the bishop-elect with smiles and cheers. A banner, signed by the school's 85 students, welcomed Bishop-elect Olson and Diocesan Administrator Monsignor Stephen Berg to the historically black Catho-

lic school.

"We're thrilled and feel very blessed," said school principal Erin Vader who got to know Msgr. Olson when he was pastor of St. Peter the Apostle and she was principal of the parish school.

The Our Mother of Mercy principal feels the visit to the school was an indication of the bishop-elect's commitment to

Bishop-elect Olson visits long-time friend Chuck Pelletier in front of St. Patrick's, following the noon Mass *(NTC Photo / Joan Kurkowski-Gillen)*





Bishop-elect Olson greets Sister Francesca Bui, OP. (NTC Photo / Joan Kurkowski-Gillen)



Bishop-elect Olson shakes hands with well-wishers in front of St. Patrick Cathedral following the celebration of his first public liturgy after the public announcement that he would become the fourth Bishop of Fort Worth. (NTC Photo / Joan Kurkowski-Gillen)



Bishop-elect Olson shared his joy with all who came to noon Mass at St. Patrick's on the day it was announced he would become the fourth Bishop of Fort Worth. (NTC Photo / Joan Kurkowski-Gillen)



Bishop-elect Olson visits with Our Mother of Mercy School staffers Cynthia Sanford (left) and Marilyn Simington (middle). Michael Barks, president of the school looks on at right. (NTC Photo / Joan Kurkowski-Gillen)

children in general and Catholic education as a valuable tool of evangelization. The vast majority of youngsters attend-

Bishop-elect Olson greets friends and wellwishers in front of St. Patrick Cathedral, following the noon Mass (NTC Photo / Joan Kurkowski-Gillen)



ing Our Mother of Mercy are non-Catholic.

"I think he understood what we do involves the poor, the marginalized, and people not always recognized by society. What we do is a mission," Vader explained. "He's a thoughtful man and his decision to come to this school certainly made an impression on the children and staff."

At the press conference, the bishop-elect expressed his gratitude in the Holy Father's trust in him.

"I'm humbled by Pope Francis' trust in me," the bishop-elect said. "I feel gratitude to the Holy Father for this mission, to my parents for the gift of life and faith, and for the gift of my 20 years in the priesthood."

Before taking questions from reporters, Bishop-Elect Olson mentioned another message he received from the pontiff.

Bishop-elect Olson poses with Erin Vader, principal of Our Mother of Mercy School and Michael Barks, president of OMM. Vader was principal of St. Peter the Apostle School when Olson was pastor of St. Peter's (NTC Photo / Donna Ryckaert)



Bishop-elect Olson makes a teasing observation about an Our Mother of Mercy School student's artwork as his teacher looks on and smiles. (NTC Photo / Donna Ryckaert)



"The Apostolic Nuncio told me the Holy Father holds our diocese in great esteem as part of the New Evangelization," he continued. "It's part of a vital area of growth in the Church."

January 5, Solemnity of the Epiphany of the Lord.

Cycle A. Readings:

- 1) Isaiah 60:1-6
Psalm 72:1-2, 7-8, 10-13
- 2) Ephesians 3:2-3a, 5-6
Gospel) Matthew 2:1-12

By Sharon K. Perkins

This Christmas is an exciting one for our extended family — we get to welcome a newcomer to the clan. He'll actually be three months old by the time we get to meet him, since he is literally traveling from the East (his family lives in China).

Although we've seen baby Mateo in photos and on Skype, we're all anxious to meet him face to face, kiss his chubby little cheeks, and shower him with presents selected carefully to fit in a suitcase for the return trip overseas.

The Magi of the Epiphany are mentioned only in Matthew's



Gospel. They are popularly described as “kings” or “Wise Men” and assumed to be three (there could have been more). Most probably they were Persian priests who studied the stars and planets as a religious practice.

By the time they arrived, they found the child and Mary in a house, albeit a very modest one — meaning that Jesus was probably several months old and certainly not residing in a palace befitting a king.

In studying the text, I think the Magi are noteworthy for sev-

“Then they opened their treasures and offered him gifts of gold, frankincense, and myrrh.”

— Matthew 2:11

eral reasons: They were seeking the “newborn king of the Jews,” they came from afar to personally give him homage, and they brought with them a few carefully selected gifts.

Although the gifts' symbolic meaning has been debated, the general consensus is that gold, a rare precious metal, signifies Jesus' kingship. Frankincense, long used in ritual worship, visually reminds adorers of their prayers and sacrifices rising up to God. Myrrh, derived from tree resin for making medi-

cine and embalming ointment, was also referenced at Jesus' burial, reminding us that, though divine, he took on human flesh, suffered, and died, all for love of us.

The solemnity of the Epiphany (the word literally means “the revealing”) certainly gives me pause. How far away have I wandered from the Lord? Do I desire to encounter the King of Kings as keenly as our family looks forward to seeing baby Mateo? Do I adore and worship Him faithfully? Am I willing to give him my life in return for his gift of suffering and dying for my sake?

The Magi didn't travel hundreds of miles simply to visit a baby. They, like us, are now “co-heirs” of and “co-partners” in the great promise of Christ Jesus. Let the Christmas celebration continue.

QUESTIONS:

What is one gift, carefully selected, that you can offer the Lord in adoration and love?

January 12, Feast of the Baptism of the Lord.

Cycle A. Readings:

- 1) Isaiah 42:1-4, 6-7
Psalm 29:1-4, 3, 9-10
- 2) Acts 10:34-38
Gospel) Matthew 3:13-17

By Jeff Hensley

The images of the Messiah offered in both Isaiah and Matthew emphasize the gentle yet powerful nature of Jesus. The Isaiah passage is a study in contrasts, and we humans have a hard time wrapping our minds around this very thing. It's such a contrast that it seems an oxymoron:

“He shall bring forth justice to the nations, not crying out, not shouting, not making his voice heard in the street. A bruised reed he shall not break, and a smoldering wick he shall not quench, until he establishes justice on the

“And a voice came from the heavens, saying, ‘This is my beloved Son, with whom I am well pleased.’”

— Matthew 3:17



earth; the coastlands will wait for his teaching.”

We've heard all this said so many times that we likely no longer hear it at all. This is NOT the way we think of rulers making their way in the world.

But it is the way that Jesus came to us to bring his kingdom.

Perhaps many would fault our

new pope, Pope Francis, because he fits this model, but many are attracted to this approach of gentle strength.

But popes are not the only ones who can act with a gentleness that attracts or with a seeming contrast of strength and meekness.

A few nights ago, I dreamed of an old friend, Ralph, who was strong and meek, a man who spoke seldom and smiled often. In my dream I approached him and his wife Gilberte. When I turned and hugged my friend, I noted that he was wearing a new purple

winter jacket — finer than any off-the-rack product I'd seen, but of a style that seemed fitting to this man who had retired from a career as a meat inspector before his death only a few years ago.

It was a delightful moment, but I didn't realize his purple coat represented his royal status as a child of the King of Kings until a day or two later.

God — Ralph's and our Father — doesn't see as we see. When he sees his children who have taken on his nature, he doesn't see a meat inspector and a mechanic or an engineer and an administrative assistant. He sees his royal children, clothed in purple, full of gentleness and goodness and power.

QUESTIONS:

Who do you know who shows contrasting gentleness, meekness, and strength? How can you and I learn from them?

**January 19, Second Sunday
in Ordinary Time.**

Cycle A. Readings:

- 1) Isaiah 49:3, 5-6
Psalm 40:2, 4, 7-10
- 2) 1 Corinthians 1:1-3
Gospel) John 1:29-3

By Jean Denton

God told Isaiah, “You are my servant. . . I will make you a light to the nations, that my salvation may reach to the ends of the earth.” In this week’s Scripture, the prophet, in turn, spoke the promise to all the Lord’s servants.

“The ends of the earth,” in some ways, describes the remote hamlet of St. Charles, population 250, in the coalfields of Virginia. In fact, the main road does actually dead end into a mountainside.

In nearby Jonesville is Holy Spirit Parish, where about 25 people faithfully attend Mass

*“You are my servant, Israel,
through whom I show my glory.”*
— Isaiah 49:3



every weekend. Last summer, a parishioner who teaches at St. Charles Elementary School explained to fellow church members that the children who live in St. Charles’ impoverished coal camps depend on a free school lunch as their only full meal each day. When school wasn’t in session, she pointed out, they went hungry.

Holy Spirit parishioners

responded as God’s servants, providing for those in need. Every week, they brought food, prepared hundreds of sack lunches, and

took them to the St. Charles community center.

A volunteer at the center explained, “People in those hollers don’t come out. Maybe they don’t have a car or only have one car that’s

not available because somebody has to take it to work during the day. So we deliver the lunches to the coal camps.”

“The kids come running out to the road to meet us,” she said. “You can hear them yelling, ‘Lunch is here!’ as you drive up.”

QUESTIONS:

Where do you see faithful servants of God as lights of salvation?

Sixty years ago, St. Charles was a thriving industrial town. Locals recall busy shops, movie theaters, and mansions of the executives of several large coal companies. But eventually, the big companies left. So did the wealth gained by taking the region’s valuable resource away to drive economies elsewhere. Only a few small mines — and a lot of poverty — remain.

Still, the families in the coal camps know their summer lunches come from the small Catholic community up the road. It has become a light of salvation to them.

Their excitement at the sight of the delivery car is like that of John the Baptist in the Gospel, when he pointed to the Savior coming toward the people, “Behold the Lamb of God, who takes away the sin of the world.”

**January 26, Third Sunday
in Ordinary Time.**

Cycle A. Readings:

- 1) Isaiah 8:23-9:3
Psalm 27:1, 4, 13-14
- 2) 1 Corinthians 1:10-13, 17
Gospel) Matthew 4:12-23

By Jeff Hedglen

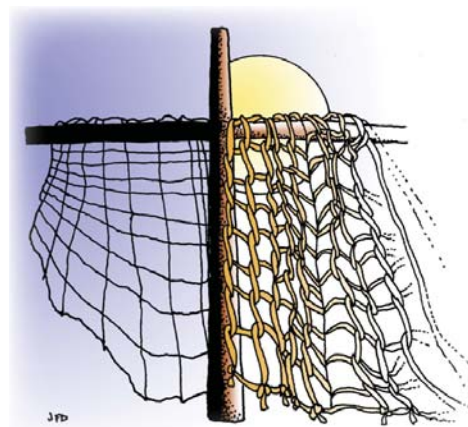
Two years ago my life changed. In some ways it was a very common change, one that happens to people all the time. In other ways it was a meteoric shift. In short, I changed jobs, but the story is more involved than that.

Changing jobs meant leaving what had been my dream job in 1986. I had longed to be a youth minister at my home parish, and, at 21, I had my dream come true. I stayed in that job for 25 years.

I suspected the change was coming. For a few years, I had been feeling a tug in my heart for a new challenge and a call to

“He called them, and immediately they left their boat and their father and followed him.”

— Matthew 4:22



the mission field of young adult ministry. But when the call came, I was not “all in” at the beginning.

Saying yes to this call would mean leaving, in many ways, all I had known. It would mean leav-

ing a place that was very much home, a team of individuals who had labored beside me for years, a church family that loved and supported me beyond belief, and, most of all, I would be leaving a very comfortable place and going off into unfamiliar surroundings.

After much prayer and conversation with my ever-encouraging wife, I decided to take the plunge and answer the call of the Lord to minister to the young adult church. After all, for 25 years I had been sending youth into

young adulthood where there is slim pickings when it comes to

QUESTIONS:

Have you ever had a really tough decision to make in your life? Have you ever felt called by God to do something? What was it like?

opportunities for faith growth. Two years into this ministry, I not only have no regrets, I feel I’m exactly where I need to be.

I imagine the disciples in this week’s Gospel were in a similar situation. They had a comfortable life as fishermen, family men, and faith-filled men. But then Jesus offered them a new way to fish, a new kind of family, and a mind-blowing expansion of what they understood as faith.

To be sure, not every call requires drastically life changing circumstances, but every call entails some risk. As the saying goes: God does not call the qualified; He qualifies the called. Our part is to say yes to the prompting of the Spirit, knowing that God will be faithful to do his part as we answer the call.

February 2, Presentation of the Lord.

Cycle A. Readings:

- 1) Malachi 3:1-4
Psalm 24:7-10
- 2) Hebrews 2:14-18
Gospel) Luke 2:22-40

By Sharon K. Perkins

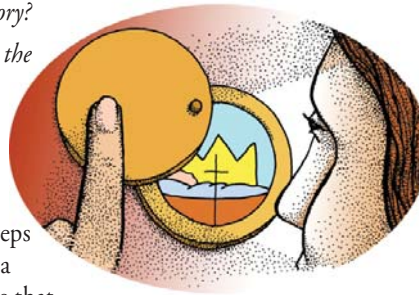
We don't get many visitors to our home, so I'm always startled when the doorbell rings when I'm not expecting company. Since chances are good that the visitor is not someone I know or recognize, I'm pretty cautious about opening the front door before I've used the peephole to assess the person and the situation. The assumption is that I — like most other people with closed front doors — have the final say about who gains entry.

It's a different story at my office, where the open door policy reigns supreme, and the only

*"Who is this king of glory?
The Lord of hosts; he is the
king of glory!"*
— Psalm 24:10

advance notice I get of a visitor is the sound of footsteps in a hallway seconds before a face appears. There I assume that 90 percent of the time the face belongs to someone I know, so no peephole is necessary. (The other 10 percent are screened by the receptionist before they make it down the hall). Open doors mean that coworkers and visitors are welcome and even interruptions are accepted as a normal part of the day's work.

In the Gospel for the feast of the Presentation of the Lord, an unassuming Nazarene couple comes to the Jerusalem temple to present their firstborn son to the Lord, according to the law of Moses.



They're hardly distinguishable from any other new parents, but therein lies the irony. According to the prophet Malachi, that newborn is "the messenger of the covenant" who comes to purify the temple and its priests, so that the sacrifice they offer is once more pleasing to the Lord. It's a disruption of the status quo, surely — but one that is welcomed joyfully by Simeon and Anna, who recog-

nize the salvation of the Lord in the child who is presented.

Psalm 24 states it clearly, "Lift up, O gates, your lintels; reach up, you ancient portals!" commanding Jerusalem to let the "king of glory" in and even proclaiming his identity ("It is the Lord!"). No peephole necessary, no receptionist screening visitors, just a simple declaration that remains largely ignored by those either expecting someone else or not expectant at all.

If Simeon and Anna recognized him, it is because they both were people of prayer and single-minded expectation, filled with the Spirit and eager to speak about whom they had seen. Let us follow their example and so recognize the King of Glory when he comes.

QUESTIONS:

What are your expectations of the King of Glory? Do you recognize the Lord when he comes in the disruptions of your life?

February 9, Fifth Sunday in Ordinary Time.

Cycle A. Readings:

- 1) Isaiah 58:7-10
Psalm: 112:4-9
- 2) 1 Corinthians 2:1-5
Gospel) Matthew 5:13-16

By Jeff Hensley

The passage from Isaiah 58 is one of my great favorites. God has caused me to turn to it at times of change in my life over the past 25 years. I have notes in the margins of my Bible making reference to many of these new beginnings. It is a touchstone for me.

But the point of the Scripture has to do with living justly, taking care of the poor and those without food, clothing and housing.

Given the Catholic perspective on Scripture, we should interpret this Isaiah passage in light of the Gospel reading from Matthew.



*"You are the salt
of the earth."*
— Matthew 5:13a

We must be salt and light, says Jesus. He lays out a choice and a challenge: If we are salt, we must not lose our savor, or we are good for nothing; if we light a light, we must put it where everyone can see it, not under a basket.

All should see us and know that the love of God permeates us,

as salt does a good dish. All should see the light of Christ when they see us and know that our love is available to them.

Many years ago, I was having a discussion with my friend Ruth, an advocate for social justice recognized for her work in establishing parish justice ministries.

But this was just a simple con-

versation about charity and justice. I offended Ruth by referring to giving assistance to others as charity. Ruth said, with fierceness, that when we were talking about everyone having access to an adequate living — food, clothing, and shelter — we were talking about justice, not charity.

I struggled with her statement, but came to agree with her. As admirable as it is to give so that others may eat and be clothed, it is also our obligation as Christians to make sure that the structures of the economy make it possible for people to provide a decent living for themselves, whether they are giving their work in kitchens, fields, factories, offices, schools or drive-through windows.

QUESTIONS:

Do you seek to remember that the light of Christ lives in you because he loves you? Is there some small way you can assure God's justice reigns in society?

February 16, Sixth Sunday in Ordinary Time.

Cycle A. Readings:

- 1) Sirach 15:15-20
Psalm 119:1-2, 4-5,17-18, 33-34
- 2) 1 Corinthians 2:6-10
Gospel) Matthew 5:17-37

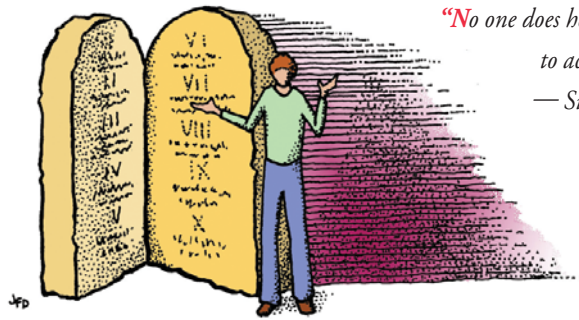
By Jean Denton

This week's admonition from the wisdom of Sirach is a stiff challenge: "Before man are life and death, good and evil, whichever he chooses shall be given him."

It's an unblinking statement of personal responsibility: You decide and you live with it.

For someone who can't even choose whether to order the turkey melt or the barbeque burger in less than three visits by the waiter, this is a jarring message.

For a long time, I believed that my reluctance to make decisions



*"No one does he command to act unjustly."
— Sirach 15:20*

was simply part of my nature and I was fine with "letting" others make choices for me.

My husband would inquire, "Do you want to go to the ball game, or would you rather stay home and watch a movie?" My response: "I don't care. Whatever you want to do."

Or he'd ask: "Do you think we should go ahead and take this trip, or save the money so we can replace our old car?" My response (I'm not making this up): "I'm okay either way. You decide."

It eventually dawned on me that my reluctance to make deci-

sions was a bad habit, at best. More accurately, it was dishonest. Given choices, I knew I actually had a preference. But subconsciously, I didn't want to take responsibility for possible negative consequences.

What if we took the trip and then our car promptly died, and we had to squeeze payments out of our budget for the next three years? If my husband was the one

who made the decision, I could blame him for the bad result. Realizing what I'd been doing (and how annoying it must've been), I knew I had to change. I've come to understand that not deciding is itself a poor choice.

In the Gospel, Jesus explains that choosing to keep the commandments is more than simply following the rules. It's the basis for life in God's kingdom where we constantly must make decisions to treat others with compassion and respect.

In matters of salvation, not to choose is not an option. Each of us must decide. Sirach even reveals the consequences: "If you choose you can keep the commandments, they will save you."

QUESTIONS:

When faced with the choice, what tempts you not to follow God's commandments? Which of the commandments are most difficult for you to keep? Why?

February 23, Seventh Sunday in Ordinary Time.

Cycle A. Readings:

- 1) Leviticus 19:1-2, 17-18
Psalm 103:1-4, 8, 10, 12-13
- 2) 1 Corinthians 3:16-23
Gospel) Matthew 5:38-48

By Jeff Hedglen

I will admit that I am not very susceptible to external motivation. My wife, on the other hand, can hear an inspiring story and be filled with new energy and motivation to make changes in her own life.

Usually, I hear those stories and think, "Aw, that's nice," and that's about as far as it goes. But every once in awhile inspiration breaks through my thick head.

My friend Mike posts on Facebook nearly every day that he is working out. Often that post comes at midnight or even later. I



*"Be holy, for I, the Lord, your God, am holy."
— Leviticus 19:2*

am always shocked at his commitment to his workouts. I usually see these posts when I am sitting on the couch, watching TV and checking Facebook between handfuls of potato chips.

But day after day, month after month I have seen his commitment and the results of his hard work, and it is paying off in my life, as I

am making more trips to the gym — not daily, but it's a start.

Another source of inspiration comes to me from a guy named Steve. He travels the country as a singer and keynote speaker for youth conferences. He is extremely inspiring, but his greatest impact on me is through short videos of him with his ukulele, either singing to his wife or a short song to Jesus. I do not know what it is about these videos that challenges me to be a better, more

heartfelt minister, husband, and friend.

These kinds of inspirations came to mind when I read from this week's readings: "Be holy, for I, the Lord, your God, am holy," and, "So be perfect, just as your heavenly Father is perfect."

Admittedly, Mike's and Steve's examples are a bit more achievable than being as perfect or as holy as God. But I think part of what the authors of Leviticus and Matthew are trying to say is that we are going to be influenced by whomever we spend time with and by whomever we want to imitate. So why not choose people who call us to be better and, furthermore, why not strive to be more like the one in whose image we all are created?

QUESTIONS:

Who are people who inspire you? In what ways can you be holy and perfect as God is? What are the biggest obstacles to achieving this?

Misal en español aprobados por los obispos

NOTICIAS

BALTIMORE (CNS) — La primera edición estadounidense del *Misal Romano* en español se acercó más a estar disponible quizás el año entrante, ya que los obispos de los Estados Unidos aprobaron el 12 de noviembre varios pasos hacia la adaptación del *Misal Romano mexicano* para uso en este país.

La traducción del misal tendrá los propios de la Misa para el calendario estadounidense y podría ser publicado tan pronto como el otoño del 2014.

La versión española del *Misal Romano* se convertirá en la única versión autorizada para uso en el EU. Actualmente, sacerdotes u obispos escogen una edición española entre cualquiera de las versiones aprobadas para uso por la conferencia episcopal de algún país.

Los propios que se usarán para adaptar el misal incluyen celebraciones estadounidenses tales como el *4 de Julio* y *Acción de Gracias*, así como días festivos de santos estadounidenses y por lo menos un día de fiesta asociado con cada país de América Latina.

El *Misal Romano mexicano*, que será lanzada este noviembre, se basa en la versión latina del 2002 de la tercera edición

típica, traducción que se convirtió en la base para la versión inglesa presentada para uso en el EU hace dos años.

Con la aceptación de las adaptaciones del *Misal Romano* mexicano por la *Conferencia Estadounidense de Obispos Católicos (USCCB)*, estas ahora serán enviadas al Vaticano para su aprobación. Puesto que el texto principal ya ha fue aprobado por Roma, juntar las adaptaciones con un misal ya terminado debe ser relativamente fácil, dijo el Obispo Auxiliar Octavio Cisneros de Brooklyn, quien preside el subcomité de liturgia española para el *Comité de culto divino*.

Explicó que no hay una contraparte internacional en español del *Comité Internacional de Inglés en la Liturgia*, el cual supervisa las traducciones inglesas usadas mundialmente. No obstante, no todos los países de habla hispana producen su propia traducción del misal, en gran medida debido a los recursos que eso requiere, dijo el obispo Cisneros. Por ejemplo, México y España tienen cada uno el suyo propio, mientras que el de Argentina es una colaboración con Chile y otros países de la región sureña de América del Sur.



CNS foto / L'Osservatore Romano a través de Reuters
El Papa Francisco habla con tres hombres el 17 de diciembre que viven en las calles cerca del Vaticano. Como parte de una celebración modesta de su 77º cumpleaños, el Papa celebró Misa en la mañana y después desayunó con ellos.

El papa dice en audiencia que Navidad ofrece lección de humildad

CIUDAD DEL VATICANO (CNS) — El papa Francisco dijo que la Navidad es una ocasión de alegría pero que también es una lección de humildad en que los fieles son llamados a imitar el ejemplo de Dios hecho hombre, durante su audiencia pública semanal en la *Plaza de San Pedro* el 18 de diciembre.

“Dios se baja, desciende a la Tierra como alguien pequeño y pobre, lo que significa que para ser como Él no debemos ponernos por encima de los demás, sino por el contrario, bajarnos, darnos al servicio, hacernos pequeños con los pequeños y pobres con los pobres”.

Un cristiano está obligado a servir, dijo el Papa, porque la encarnación significa que Dios ha de ser encontrado en todas las personas, y “que le hayamos hecho a un hermano o hermana se lo hemos hecho” a Dios, dijo.

“El nacimiento de Jesús es la evidencia de que Dios se ha puesto del lado de los hombres de una vez por todas, para salvarnos, para levantarnos del polvo de nuestras miserias, de nuestras dificultades, de nuestros pecados”, dijo.

Él señaló el hecho “sorprendente” que Dios no escogió se hombre “en un mundo ideal ni idílico, sino en este mundo real matizado por tantas cosas buenas y malas, matizado por divisiones, maldad, pobreza, arrogancia y guerra”.

Pero “la Navidad, la natividad de Jesús, (es) una fiesta de confianza y esperanza que supera la incertidumbre y el pesimismo”, dijo el Papa. “La Tierra ya no es solamente un valle de lágrimas, es el lugar donde Dios mismo levantó su carpa, el lugar de encuentro de Dios con el hombre, de la solidaridad de Dios con los hombres”.

Conferencia Diocesana sobre RICA, se celebrará el 25 de enero

La *Iglesia Inmaculada Concepción* en Denton será sede de la *Conferencia Diocesana sobre RICA del 2014*, “Difundiendo la Alegría del Evangelio” sábado, 25 de enero de 8:30 a.m. a 3:30 p.m.

El principal orador en español es Marlon De La Torre, el director de *Catequesis y Formación de Catequistas de Niños* para la *Diócesis de Fort Worth*.

Talleres cubrirán áreas en el ministerio catequético, litúrgico y pastoral. Una lista detallada de los talleres y presentadores estará disponible el 15 de enero.

Actividades especiales en la

conferencia están diseñadas para acentuar y ritualizar los roles de los miembros del equipo de RICA “como sacerdotes, profetas y reyes.” También habrá presentaciones especiales para RICA adaptado para los Niños.

La cuota de inscripción es de \$20 e incluye el almuerzo, si se paga antes del viernes 17 de enero. La cuota se incrementará a \$25 por cualquier pago realizado después de esa fecha, o en la puerta. Para pre-registrarse, póngase en contacto con Melissa Loza 817-560-2452, ext. 255, o por correo electrónico a lloza@fwdioc.org.

Mecanismos para reportar la conducta sexual inapropiada

Si usted o alguien que conozca es víctima de conducta sexual inapropiada por parte de cualquier persona que trabaje para la iglesia, sea voluntario, empleado, o miembro del clero, puede reportarlo de las siguientes maneras:

- Llamar a Judy Locke, Coordinadora de asistencia para víctimas, al número (817) 560-2452, Ext. 201, o, mandarle correo electrónico a jllocke@fwdioc.org
- Llamar al número de emergencia para el abuso sexual: (817) 560-2452, Ext. 900
- o llamar al Centro Católico al número: (817) 560-2452, ext. 102 y preguntar por el canciller/moderador de la curia, el monseñor Stephen Berg.

Mecanismo para reportar abuso

Llamar al Ministerio de familias de Texas Servicios de protección (Servicios de protección de niños) al número: (800) 252-5400.

Los retos para el obispo nuevo

POR EL PADRE CARMELO MELE, OP

EL 29 DE ENERO DEL 2014 SERÁ LA ORDENACIÓN DE MONSEÑOR MICHAEL OLSON COMO EL CUARTO OBISPO DE LA DIÓCESIS DE FORT WORTH. SERÁ UN MOMENTO SIGNIFICATIVO PARA TODA LA DIÓCESIS, TANTO COMO PARA MONSEÑOR OLSON. Pues, la diócesis tendrá a un obispo joven y docto para dirigir su crecimiento robusto (gracias en su mayor parte a la inmigración de latinos). Además, llamará la atención porque esta región — el suroeste de los Estados Unidos — es como una muestra para la Iglesia universal de la integración exitosa de culturas. ¿Cómo está preparándose Monseñor Olson para los retos de dirigir la *Iglesia de Fort Worth*? Sólo él sabe por cierto, pero se pueden mencionar algunos temas dignos de nuestra más profunda consideración.

Según el *Catecismo de la Iglesia Católica* el obispo es el fundamento de la unidad en su diócesis. Siempre cuesta mantener el mismo pensar y el mismo sentir, dada la diversidad étnica existente en la mayoría de las diócesis norteamericanas. Particularmente, en lugares como Fort Worth, en donde hay pueblos tan diversos como los europeo-americanos y los hispano-americanos, la unidad surge como una preocupación central. Por supuesto, la diversidad aquí es aún más amplia. Hay vietnamitas y otras culturas del oriente, afro-americanos y africanos, hombres de la ciudad y del campo, etcétera. Monseñor Olson tendrá que buscar modos para transcender los prejuicios antiguos y las diferencias de lenguaje, tradición y recursos económicos para mantener nuestra diócesis unida.

La primera responsabilidad del obispo es anunciar el evangelio a su grey. Esta tarea no puede ser cumplida simplemente por subir al púlpito los domingos. Las asechanzas del mundo son tan atractivas para los jóvenes que muchas veces el evangelio les parece como una mala noticia y los ofrecimientos del mundo — plata, placer y poder — les roban el corazón. Además, particularmente entre los hispanos, hay alternativas de culto en la forma de comunidades evangélicas muy llamativas. Ciertamente, Monseñor Olson, que tiene un doctorado en la moral, reflexionará mucho en



Como el primer ministro de la diócesis, el obispo ha de santificar al pueblo. Lo hace con su oración y su trabajo asiduo, particularmente con los sacramentos y la predicación.

Monseñor Olson incienso el altar mientras se celebra la Misa del mediodía en la CATEDRAL DE SAN PATRICIO después de la conferencia de prensa para anunciar su nombramiento como el cuarto obispo de Fort Worth el 19 de noviembre.

(FOTO POR DONNA RYCKAERT / NORTH TEXAS CATHOLIC)

cómo desenmascarar las seducciones del mundo. Querrá también demostrar a los hispanos que la Iglesia Católica es la mejor manera para mantenerse fieles a sus antepasados y, mucho más importante, a Jesucristo.

Como el primer ministro de la diócesis, el obispo ha de santificar al pueblo. Lo hace con su oración y su trabajo asiduo, particularmente con los sacramentos y la predicación. El catecismo especifica que los obispos santifican con su ejemplo, no tiranizando a los encomendados a su cuidado, sino mostrándoles siempre paciencia y el amor. Sin duda, esta prioridad del obispo tiene en cuenta a los sacerdotes de la diócesis tanto como a los feligreses. De hecho, el obispo necesita de la santidad de sus presbíteros para alcanzar al pueblo sirviéndoles como es debido. Como antiguo miembro del presbiterio de Fort Worth, a lo mejor el Monseñor Olson va a encontrar este menester como retador. Sin embargo, como ha estado involucrado en la formación de los sacerdotes por los últimos cinco años, sin duda, comprende la necesidad de entregarse para la santificación del presbiterio y encontrará diferentes estrategias para realizarlo.

Durante este año el Papa Francisco ha dado su propio matiz a los retos que los obispos enfrentan. Les ha dicho que no debieran quedarse en sus oficinas ni hacer muchos viajes al extranjero. Más bien, el Papa Fran-

cisco les ha exhortado a que anduvieran entre la gente para que, en sus palabras, huelan como su grey. Monseñor Olson tendrá como modelo valioso para ejercer este menester a su predecesor, Monseñor Kevin Vann. Con toda certeza, fuimos bendecidos por el modo en que Monseñor Vann atendía tanto a los pobres como a los ricos, tanto a los hispanos como a los europeo-americanos y a los indefensos, y en particular, a los no nacidos y los encarcelados.

Toda la diócesis se siente aliviada, ya que se ha anunciado el nombre del nuevo obispo de la diócesis. Aunque no hay tanta emoción como si fuera un hombre no conocido aquí, ciertamente, Monseñor Michael Olson nos va a traer nuevas ideas con su mente brillante, su sentido de humor encantador y su gran afecto hacia la gente y Dios. Ahora, durante el intervalo entre su nombramiento y su instalación, es nuestro menester rezar por él para que cumpla con esmero todas sus responsabilidades.



El Padre Carmelo Mele, OP, es el director interino del DEPARTAMENTO DE CATEQUESIS para la DIÓCESIS DE FORT WORTH.

Serenata a Nuestra Señora

Guadalupanos devotos de toda la diócesis se reúnen en San Patricio para rendir homenaje a Nuestra Señora de Guadalupe

ESTORIA Y FOTOS POR JOAN KURKOWSKI-GILLEN / CORRESPONSAL

PARA ÉRICA AGUILAR, FUE UN SACRIFICIO QUE VALIÓ LA PENA. LA JOVEN MADRE ABRIGÓ A SUS CINCO PEQUEÑOS HIJOS CONTRA EL FRÍO DEL INVIERNO Y VIAJÓ DESDE DECATURA LA CATEDRAL DE SAN PATRICIO en las primeras horas de la mañana en honor a Nuestra Señora de Guadalupe el día de su

ABAJO: Imagen de la Virgen de Guadalupe en un altar lateral de la Catedral de San Patricio en el localizado en el centro de Fort Worth.



fiesta el 12 de diciembre.

“Nuestra familia es de México y es nuestra santa especial”, explicó Aguilar, que gestiona la *Danza Azteca Guadalupana* con su esposo, Jorge. El grupo de jóvenes, los Matachines — conocidos culturalmente como soldados de la Virgen — bailaron en su honor en la celebración. “El segundo nombre de mi hermano es Guadalupe porque nació el 12 de diciembre. Crecimos dándole las gracias a ella por todo lo que teníamos”.

En 1531, Juan Diego se dirigía a Misa cuando se encontró con una hermosa mujer indígena colocada en la cima del Tepeyac, una colina cerca de la Ciudad de México. La aparición, que se produjo durante el solsticio de invierno azteca, se conoce como la Virgen de Guadalupe y el día en que su santa imagen apareció en la tilma de Juan Diego se celebra como el día de su fiesta. La iglesia construida en el lugar del milagro, la *Basilica de Nuestra Señora de Guadalupe*, es el santuario mariano más frecuentado en el mundo.

Siglos después de la aparición, la fiesta de la Virgen de Guadalupe se observa en los santuarios y las iglesias de todos los continentes americanos, con liturgias especiales, procesiones y vigiliat. La Misa de las 6 a.m. en la *Catedral de San Patricio* fue una de las muchas misas celebradas en las parroquias de la *Diócesis de Fort Worth* en honor a la Madre de Jesús.

Vestidos con trajes rojos, de inspiración azteca, adornados con cuentas y plumas, los Matachines, de edad escolar, procedentes de la *Iglesia de La Asunción de la Santísima Virgen María* de Decatur, fueron parte de las festividades antes del amanecer que se



Members of the Mariachi Real de Alvarez serenade a statue of Our Lady of Guadalupe with the “Mañanitas.”

iniciaron con una serenata frente a la imagen de la Virgen de Guadalupe. *El Mariachi Real de Álvarez* comenzó la ceremonia con las “Mañanitas”.

Los jóvenes miembros del *Ballet Folklórico Azteca de Fort Worth*, una organización de danza folklórica mexicana, también le rindieron homenaje a la Virgen de Guadalupe con una enérgica presentación de bailes típicos de Jalisco y Nuevo León antes de la Misa. Durante una recepción después de la liturgia en el salón parroquial bailaron el tradicional “Jarabe Tapatío” ante todos los asistentes.

Muchos fieles manejaron desde Arlington y Dallas a la Catedral para presenciar la música y los bailes ofrecidos por la madrugada a la Virgen de Guadalupe. Sus propias parroquias habían programado una liturgia nocturna para el día de la fiesta.

“Ellos querían participar en un acto que era más tradicional, porque en México se hace por la mañana temprano”, dijo Tina Valdez, quien sirvió en el comité organizador de la celebración. “La celebración es parte de nuestra cultura y está muy cerca de nuestro corazón. Nuestra Señora de Guadalupe es nuestra madre”.

Un símbolo de la identidad mexicana, la ardiente devoción a Nuestra Señora de Guadalupe está siempre presente en muchos hogares estadounidenses de origen mexicano. Al crecer, Martha Prud’homme, feligrés de la *Iglesia de Nuestra Señora de Guadalupe* en Fort Worth, se identificó con las características autóctonas de la imagen mariana.

“Ella es morena como yo y tiene el pelo oscuro y los ojos como yo los tengo”, dice la señora Prud’homme

que asistió al servicio con su sobrina de diez años, Audrianna Cardoza por esta razón. “Es importante que nosotros le enseñemos a la próxima generación los valores de nuestra cultura. Nuestra Señora de Guadalupe es parte de lo que somos como mexicano-americanos. Ella es un icono”.

La señora Prud’homme recuerda cómo en la casa de su infancia habían cuatro o cinco imágenes de la Virgen esparcidas en varios cuartos. Fue una tradición familiar que ella continuó después de casarse.

“Mi marido pensó que había entrado a una iglesia”, dijo riendo, recordando cómo su propia decoración incluye una colección de imágenes de Nuestra Señora de Guadalupe.

Durante la Misa en la catedral, el rector de la catedral, Monseñor Joseph Pemberton, recordó la dedicación y el amor que el pueblo le tiene a la Virgen de Guadalupe, y de la cual fue testigo, durante su visita a la *Basilica* dedicada a ella en la Ciudad de México.

“Lo primero que me llamó la atención fue el ver como varias personas se iban de rodillas hasta la basílica”, el celebrante recordó en su homilía. “La profunda simplicidad de su fe era tan inocente y tierna. Esto me conmovió”.

“San Juan Diego, el indio pobre que vio la aparición, representa todas las personas heridas y perdidas en el mundo”, dijo el monseñor.

“Nuestra Señora de Guadalupe se apareció a Juan Diego y le dijo al mundo a través de él, ‘Yo soy la

CONTINUADO EN LA
PÁGINA SIGUIENTE

Cardenal Rodríguez discute el papel del G8 en la conferencia de prensa en UDMC

Por Michele Baker
Corresponsal

El Cardenal Óscar Rodríguez Maradiaga, SDB, Arzobispo de Tegucigalpa, Honduras, se dirigió a los asistentes en la Séptima Conferencia Anual de Ministerios de la Universidad de Dallas (UDMC) el pasado viernes, 25 de octubre en el Centro de Convenciones de Irving.

El Cardenal Rodríguez, a quien el Obispo Kevin Farrell de Dallas presentó como “uno de los oradores más codiciados en el mundo católico de hoy”, habló sobre “El estado de la Iglesia y la importancia de la Nueva Evangelización.” El prelado, uno de los asesores más cercanos del Papa Francisco, destacó a la Iglesia como Pueblo de Dios, diciendo: “la función de la jerarquía de la Iglesia es la función de Jesucristo, la jerarquía es un ministerio de servicio.”

Refiriéndose a la creciente participación de los laicos en la vida de la Iglesia, que se basó en las ideas presentadas en los documentos del Concilio Vaticano II, dijo “Existe un sacerdocio común de los fieles”. “En Cristo, se cambia el sacerdocio. Él tuvo que ser hecho semejante a sus hermanos”.

Después de su charla, el Cardenal Rodríguez se reunió con la prensa



Foto por Juan Guajardo / North Texas Catholic

El Cardenal Óscar Rodríguez celebra una conferencia de prensa en la UDMC el pasado 25 de octubre.

para una breve sesión de preguntas y respuestas. Ya que su visita al Norte de Texas se produjo inmediatamente después de la primera reunión del nuevo Consejo Cardenalicio del Papa Francisco (apodado el “Grupo de ocho” o el “G8”), muchas preguntas se centraron en su papel. Si bien los informes iniciales en que el Vaticano dio la impresión de que este selecto grupo de cardenales trabajaría principalmente para hacer reformas a la Curia Romana, el cardenal Rodríguez, quien se desempeña como presidente de la comisión, arrojó más luz sobre sus más amplios propósitos y objetivos.

“El origen de nuestra comisión es que en el inicio de las reuniones

previas al cónclave había un sentir generalizado de que a veces muchas cosas no llegan directamente al Papa y que era necesario tener una base popular”, explicó el Cardenal Rodríguez. Él describió un reciente viaje a Nueva Zelanda para ilustrar la diversidad cultural y geográfica de la Iglesia Universal y la necesidad de un mecanismo de diálogo con el Santo Padre. “Este es el deseo del Papa. No sólo vamos a trabajar por la reforma de la curia vaticana. Éste fue el primer tema. Pero esto va a ser una comisión permanente. Esto significa que después de esto continuaremos asesorando al Papa como él nos pida que lo hagamos”.

El Cardenal también discutió la intersección de la reforma en la Iglesia y el papel de los laicos en su relación con la función ampliada del G8, proponiendo algunas posibilidades sorprendentes.

“En nuestro trabajo hemos empezado a recoger las sugerencias de todo el mundo”, dijo. “Una de las sugerencias con respecto a los laicos —y creo que se va a hacer— es crear en la Curia romana un dicasterio para los laicos. Ahora hay un Consejo para los Laicos, pero hay una diferencia entre un dicasterio y un consejo”. El dicasterio, dijo, tiene “la posibilidad de tener un estatuto de derecho: La posibilidad de hacer leyes”. Él llegó a afirmar que ya existen dicasterios para los obispos, el clero y la vida

religiosa y que tal cuerpo de los laicos sería una opción viable que facilite el desarrollo de una espiritualidad distinta para los laicos.

“Creo que éste es uno de los deseos del Concilio Vaticano II— desarrollar una verdadera espiritualidad para los laicos que no está imitando sólo la espiritualidad del sacerdote o del obispo o el religioso, sino su propia espiritualidad que surge de lo ordinario de la vida”, dijo.

Al volverse la discusión una vez más hacia los laicos, el Cardenal Rodríguez respondió alegremente cuando se le pidió que compartiera algunas de sus impresiones sobre el mensaje del Papa Francisco de llegar a los marginados de la sociedad.

“Usted sabe, él [el Papa Francisco] empezó a hablar de la periferia, porque hay muchas personas que tal vez fueron bautizados, pero nunca participaron plenamente en la vida de la Iglesia”, dijo el cardenal. “Y él está animando a los laicos y los ministros a salir de las rectorías y buscar a estas personas. Este es el nuevo llamado misionero”.

Por último, los medios de comunicación allí reunidos se preguntaban si había indicios de que la atención negativa que los medios han estado manifestando hacia la Iglesia había comenzado a decaer un poco desde la elección del Papa Francisco. El Cardenal Rodríguez dijo que él ve un cambio en la gran cantidad de material de las homilias del Papa Francisco que ahora aparece en los medios de comunicación. Dijo que en el pasado habría citas ocasionales del Papa en relación con algún aspecto social o político, pero que hoy en día la homilía de cada día parece publicarse en los medios de comunicación.

“... Y esto es hermoso porque es muy enriquecedor para mucha gente”, dijo. “Viajando, encuentro a muchas personas que me ven y dicen: ¡Escucha, dile al Papa que lo amamos! Éste es un nuevo enfoque y una nueva señal de los tiempos, y esto es muy bueno”.

ABAJO: Claudia Torres baila con sus compañeros Matachines de Decatur antes de la Misa.



CONTINUADO DESDE LA PÁGINA ANTERIOR

madre de los perdidos. Yo soy la madre de los heridos. Yo soy la madre de aquéllos que se sienten rechazados y sin amor”, añadió Monseñor Pemberton.

La Virgen sigue hablándole a su pueblo siglos después. Proclamada como la Patrona de las Américas, Nuestra Señora de Guadalupe, campeona de los oprimidos, protege a los no nacidos.

“Cuando te sientas un poco herido en tu vida, y sientes que la vida no te ha tratado bien, ven a la Virgen de Guadalupe”, instó Monseñor Pemberton. “Ella es la madre de los tristes y heridos. Eso se expresa bellísimamente en la aparición de Nuestra Señora de Guadalupe”.



Foto por Donna Ryckaert / NTC

Monseñor Olson celebra la Misa del mediodía en la *Catedral de San Patricio* con muchos de sus compañeros sacerdotes concelebrantes, después de la Conferencia de Prensa del 19 de noviembre. Esta fue la primera liturgia pública que celebró como obispo electo.

CONTINUADO DESDE PÁGINA 48

Una tercera hermana, Lizbeth Schweizer, vive en Maryland.

“Estamos sorprendidos y muy felices por él. Siempre ha disfrutado el ser sacerdote”, dijo Ronald Olson al reunirse la familia en la *Catedral de San Patricio* para una Misa celebrada por Monseñor Olson el pasado 19 de noviembre. “Todo lo que le pidieron que hiciera, lo ha hecho con amor. Por eso sé que le va a gustar ser obispo — especialmente de Fort Worth”.

Muy joven, cuando aún estaba en la escuela primaria, Michael Olson le dijo a sus padres que quería ser sacerdote. Sirvió como monaguillo durante varios años, pero sorprendió a su padre cuando decidió asistir a *Quigley Preparatory Seminary* en el centro de Chicago para la escuela secundaria. Des-

pués de graduarse en el 1984, comenzó a estudiar para el sacerdocio en la *Arquidiócesis de Chicago*.

Cuando una reubicación corporativa mudó a su familia al Norte de Texas, el joven seminarista se trasladó a la *Diócesis de Fort Worth*. El fallecido Obispo Joseph Delaney, el segundo obispo de la diócesis, lo ordenó al sacerdocio el 3 de junio de 1994.

“Tener un sacerdote en la familia es un honor,” dijo Tucker.

“Será un gran obispo”, dijo. “Una de sus mejores cualidades es su sentido del humor, pero también cree firmemente en su fe. Eso es algo que ha tenido desde muy joven. Él nos dio un buen ejemplo a nosotros entonces, y todavía lo hace, sobre todo, para mis hijos”.

Después de su ordenación se desempeñó como párroco asociado de la *Parroquia de San Miguel* en

Bedford del 1994-1997, como asesor de formación en el *Seminario de Santa María* en Houston del 2001-06, como vicario general de la *Diócesis de Fort Worth* y párroco de la *Parroquia de San Pedro Apóstol* en White Settlement del 2006-08 y desde julio del 2008, como rector del *Seminario de la Santísima Trinidad* en Irving. Del 1997 al 2001 asistió a *St. Louis University Center for Health Care Ethics* para sus estudios doctorales.

Monseñor Olson es el sucesor del Obispo Kevin Vann que salió de Fort Worth al ser nombrado Obispo de la *Diócesis de Orange, California*, en diciembre del 2012. Monseñor Olson dijo que había recibido una llamada de felicitación de su predecesor.

“El Obispo Vann dijo que estaba muy feliz por mí y que se sentía muy orgulloso”, dijo Monseñor Olson al describir la conversación. “Aprendí mucho del Obispo Vann, trabajando a su lado durante su ministerio aquí. Espero poder seguir avanzando a partir de donde él lo ha dejado”.

Michael Keaton, del *Seminario de la Santísima Trinidad*, dijo que la presencia y el ejemplo del recién nombrado obispo no serán olvidados por los 74 jóvenes que han asistido al seminario. Monseñor Olson ha servido como rector del seminario desde julio del 2008 y dio clases.

“Los seminaristas tienen un gran respeto por él. Estamos perdiendo una persona fenomenal, pero todo el mundo está muy emocionado”, dijo. “Todo el mundo sabía que este día llegaría. Simplemente no pensamos que sería tan pronto”.

Una vez que el Vaticano publicó a las 5 a.m. el anuncio del nombramiento del rector como Obispo, la noticia se extendió como un reguero de pólvora, explicó. Muchos seminaristas vieron la conferencia de prensa de Monseñor Olson más tarde esa mañana, ya que se transmitió en vivo en sus computadoras.

Cuando realizó una gira por el campus de la *Escuela Nuestra Madre de la Misericordia* en el



Foto por Donna Ryckaert / NTC

Monseñor Olson se acerca a su madre Janice Fetzer Olson para ofrecerle la Eucaristía en su primera Misa como obispo electo de la *Diócesis de Fort Worth*.



Foto por Joan Kurkowski-Gillen / NTC

Monseñor Olson saluda a todos los que le felicitan frente a la *Catedral de San Patricio* tras la celebración de su primera liturgia pública después del anuncio de que se convertiría en el cuarto obispo de Fort Worth.



Foto por Juan Guajardo / NTC

Monseñor Olson está con las Hermanas Catequistas Guadalupeanas Diana Rodriguez (IZQUIERDA) y Maria Patricia Gonzalez (A LA DERECHA) de la Parroquia de Nuestra Señora de Guadalupe afuera de San Patricio.



Foto por Juan Guajardo / NTC

Monseñor Olson está con la Hermana Maria Hinojosa, MAG, de la Parroquia Inmaculado Corazón de María después de su primera Misa pública al ser nombrado obispo electo de Fort Worth.



Foto por Donna Ryckaert / NTC

Monseñor Olson recibe aplausos luego de ser presentado por el Administrador Diocesano Monseñor Stephen Berg (derecha), en una conferencia de prensa el 19 de noviembre.

sureste de Fort Worth después de su celebración de la Misa del mediodía en la Catedral de San Patricio, los estudiantes saludaron a Monseñor Olson con sonrisas y aplausos. Una pancarta, firmada por 85 alumnos de la escuela, le dio la bienvenida a Monseñor Olson y al Administrador Diocesano Monseñor Stephen Berg a la escuela católica históricamente afroamericana.

“Estamos encantados y nos sentimos muy bendecidos”, dijo la directora de la escuela Erin Vader quien conoció a Monseñor Olson cuando era párroco de San Pedro Apóstol y ella era directora de la escuela parroquial.

La directora de Nuestra Madre de la Misericordia siente que la visita a la escuela era una indicación del

compromiso de Monseñor Olson a los niños en general y a la educación católica como una valiosa herramienta de la evangelización. La gran mayoría de los jóvenes que asisten a Nuestra Madre de la Misericordia no son católicos.

“Creo que él entiende que lo que hacemos es para los pobres, los marginados y las personas no siempre valorizadas por la sociedad. Lo que hacemos es una verdadera misión”, explicó Vader. “Él es un hombre reflexivo y su decisión de venir a esta escuela, sin duda, hizo una impresión en los niños y el personal”.

En la conferencia de prensa, Monseñor Olson expresó su agradecimiento por la confianza del Santo Padre en él.

“Me siento muy honrado por la

confianza que el Papa Francisco ha puesto en mí”, dijo Monseñor Olson. “Le agradezco al Santo Padre por esta misión, a mis padres por el don de la vida y la fe y por el don de mis 20 años de sacerdocio”.

Antes de tomar las preguntas de los periodistas, Monseñor Olson

mencionó otro mensaje que recibió del Pontífice.

“El Nuncio Apostólico me dijo que el Santo Padre tiene nuestra diócesis en gran estima, como parte de la Nueva Evangelización”, continuó. “Es parte de un área vital del crecimiento de la Iglesia”.

Ordenación e Instalación de Obispo Electo Michael F. Olson

Miércoles, 29 de enero de 2014 2:00 p.m.- 4:30 p.m.

El Obispo Electo Michael F. Olson, S.T.D., M.A. será ordenado obispo e instalado como el cuarto Obispo de Fort Worth. 29 de enero de 2014 en el Centro de Convenciones de Fort Worth, localizado en el área central de la ciudad de Fort Worth. La Misa de ordenación comenzará a las 2:00 p.m.

Más detalles estarán disponibles en breve.

POR FAVOR, GUARDE ESTA FECHA.

Recepción inmediatamente después de la Misa en el Centro de Convenciones de Fort Worth

El pueblo será bienvenido.



Foto por Donna Ryckaert / NTC

Monseñor Michael F. Olson posa con miembros de su familia (de izquierda a derecha) su sobrina Katy Tucker, su hermana Patty Tucker, su padre Ronald, su madre Janice, su sobrino Mateo, y su cuñado Tom.

El Vaticano nombra a Monseñor Michael F. Olson como el cuarto Obispo de Fort Worth

POR JOAN KURKOWSKI-GILLEN / CORESPONSAL

PADRE CHRISTOPHER STAINBROOK **TODAVÍA RECUERDA EL TEMOR QUE SUS FELIGRESES SENTÍAN CUANDO SAN TIMOTEO, UNA CONGREGACIÓN ANGLICANA,** decidió unirse a la Iglesia Católica como parte del *Ordinariato de la Cátedra de San Pedro*.

“Las personas estaban inseguras y temían salir de lo conocido a lo desconocido”, explica el párroco.

Monseñor Michael F. Olson, quien instruyó a los miembros de la parroquia en el Sacramento de la Confirmación, calmó su ansiedad.

“Hizo que toda la gente reunida se sintiera relajada y acogida”, recuerda el Padre Stainbrook. “Mis feligreses van a estar muy felices de que él sea su nuevo obispo. Él es un maestro — verdaderamente es una persona del pueblo”.

Nombrado en su nuevo ministerio por el Papa Francisco, Monseñor Olson es el primer sacerdote ordenado para servir en la *Diócesis de Fort Worth* que ha sido nombrado obispo de la diócesis. A la edad de 47 años, es también el segundo hombre más joven en dirigir una diócesis Católica en los EE.UU., el más joven es su compañero de semi-

nario, el Obispo Oscar Cantú de Las Cruces, Nuevo México.

“Me consuela el hecho de que ser obispo significa experimentar la plenitud del sacerdocio”, dijo Monseñor Olson durante una conferencia de prensa el pasado 19 de noviembre presentada a los medios noticiosos de Fort Worth. “Esto significa que puedo utilizar este ministerio para el bien de todos”.

Tan pronto como el anuncio de la histórica decisión se publicó el 19 de noviembre, la hermana de Monseñor Olson, Patty Tucker, recibió innumerables mensajes de texto.

“Estoy muy orgullosa de lo que ha logrado con su vida hasta ahora”, le dijo al *North Texas Catholic*. “Sabiendo que él será el obispo aquí, donde vivo, es un poco surrealista en estos momentos”.

Nacido el 29 de junio de 1966 en Park Ridge, Illinois, Monseñor Olson es el hijo mayor y el único varón de Ronald y Janice Fetzer Olson. Dos de sus hermanas menores, Patty Tucker y Mary Elizabeth Rogers, residen en Fort Worth.

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