

North Texas Catholic

Bringing the Good News to the Diocese of Fort Worth

Vol. 25 No. 2

January 23, 2009



Bishop Kevin Vann celebrated the annual diocesan Respect Life Mass Friday, Jan. 16, at St. Patrick Cathedral in downtown Fort Worth, remembering the 49 million unborn children killed in the U.S. since the *Roe vs. Wade* Supreme Court decision of Jan. 22, 1973. Each of the 49 red votive candles arrayed before the altar represents one million unborn babies to die in abortions since *Roe*. Assisting Bishop Vann at far left is Deacon Len Sanchez. Priests concelebrating are (L. to R.) Holy Trinity Seminary Rector Fr. Michael Olson, St. Patrick Rector Fr. Richard Flores, Fr. Carmen Mele, diocesan Chancellor Fr. James Hart, and Fr. Robert Strittmatter. The Mass honored those working to defend human life at all its stages, and Bishop Vann encouraged participants to send postcards to their senators and representatives in Congress opposing FOCA and related legislation. For the story on the Mass, see page 10. (Photo by Joan Kurkowski-Gillen)

Keep policies protecting unborn, Cardinal George urges Obama

By Nancy Frazier O'Brien
Catholic News Service

WASHINGTON — It would be “a terrible mistake” for President Barack Obama to reverse current policies on embryonic stem-cell research, conscience protection, and other life-related matters, the president of the U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops told him in a new letter.

Such actions “could introduce significant negative and divisive factors into our national life, at a time when we need to come together to address the serious challenges facing our people,” said Cardinal Francis E. George of Chicago in a letter dated Jan. 16 and made public Jan. 19.

The letter came less than a week after Cardinal George sent another letter to Obama, Vice President Joseph Biden and each member of Congress outlining the bishops’ broad policy agenda as the new administration and Congress begin their work.

“I expect that some want you to take executive action soon to reverse current policies against government-sponsored

SEE CARDINAL, P. 16

Dallas March for Life doubles attendance, draws crowd of 3,000

By David Sedeño
Editor, TEXAS CATHOLIC
Diocese of Dallas

With a call to march peacefully to change the minds and hearts of those who do not believe in life, a record number of more than 3,000 Catholics and Protestants undertook the annual journey through downtown Dallas Jan. 17 for the March for Life.

Organizers of various events that coincided with the annual Mass and march credited Bishop Kevin J. Farrell for his call last year to double the number of faithful at the events marking the Supreme Court’s decision of *Roe vs. Wade* that legalized abortion on Jan. 22, 1973.

“It is not just a procession or a march to commemorate,” Bishop Farrell said in preparing the overflowing worshippers at

the Mass at the Cathedral Shrine of the Virgin of Guadalupe.

“This is a prayerful event,” he said. “We give greatness to God and we give greatness to life and we should invoke God as the Israelites did as they marched out of slavery and into the Promised Land.

“It is a march invoking God to change the minds and the hearts of those who do not respect life,” he said, acknowledging that abortion has claimed nearly 50 million lives in the United States since 1973.

The Dallas march coincided with numerous events across the country, including pro-life rallies and the annual March for Life in Washington, D.C., that attracted hundreds of thousands of people on Jan. 22, the 36th anniversary of the Supreme Court ruling.

SEE BISHOP, P. 25

Principal Dr. Yusuf to share firsthand impressions on her return

OMM students relish historic inauguration

Denecia Green sat with her 7th and 8th grade classmates at Our Mother of Mercy School on Jan. 20 and waited for history to unfold.

Moments later Barack Obama was sworn in as the 44th president of the United States becoming the first African-American to hold the highest political office in the country. For youngsters at Our Mother of Mercy, a predominantly black school, the occasion generated applause, cheers, and optimism.

“He’s going to change America,” enthused eighth grader Green. “He’s going to help people become better people for the community and the whole world.”

Linda Inglehart, who teaches history, English, and reading at the school, says watching the presidential inauguration was an opportunity for youngsters to participate in a once-in-a-lifetime event. Her classes watched the coverage with pencils in hand to



File photo of OMM Principal Dr. Carolyn Yusuf and one of her students. (photo by Kathy Cribari Hamer)

write down questions and their impressions.

“They’re living this experience,” the teacher explained. “They won’t have to pick up a book and read about it. This is a piece of history they can tell their

children and grandchildren.”

The 90 boys and girls enrolled in the school will also benefit from a first person account of the inauguration. Dr. Carolyn Yusuf, their principal, traveled to Washington D.C. for the event and promised to share what she saw and heard with the students on her return. They’re also hoping she brings back a few Obama souvenirs.

“They really seem to understand the historical significance of this event,” Inglehart said. “And I’m encouraging them to ask questions about the dignitaries they see.”

Seventh grader Ida Mingo enjoyed the pomp and circumstance of the ceremony, but she was eager for the speeches and cheering to end.

“I’m just looking forward to seeing Barack Obama walk into the White House,” explained the 12-year-old who had never seen an inauguration before. “This is a really exciting event.”

U.S. Conference of Bishops addresses opportunities and challenges for new president and Congress

Editor's Note: Given the significant public policy issues facing our nation at this point, the *North Texas Catholic* is publishing Cardinal George's letter to the then President-Elect Barack Obama outlining the U.S. Catholic Bishops' willingness to work with the new administration, but cautioning Obama and his administration to respect the right to life of the unborn and the disabled and terminally ill, as well as the rights of conscience of those in the medical field.

January 13, 2009

The Honorable Barack Obama
President-elect
Presidential Transition Team
Washington, D.C.

Dear Mr. President-elect,

As our nation begins a new year, a new Administration and a new Congress, I write to outline principles and priorities that guide the public policy efforts of the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops (USCCB). As President of the Bishops' Conference, I assure you of our prayers, hopes and commitment to make this period of national change a time to advance the common good and defend the life and dignity of all, especially the vulnerable and poor. We continue to seek ways to work constructively with the new Administration and Congress and others of good will to pursue policies which respect the dignity of all human life and bring greater justice to our nation and peace to our world.

As Bishops, we approach public policy as pastors and teachers. Our moral principles have always guided our everyday experience in caring for the hungry and homeless, offering health care and housing, educating children and reaching out to those in need. We lead the largest community of faith in the United States, one that serves every part of our nation and is present in almost every place on earth. From our experience and our tradition, we offer a distinctive, constructive and principled contribution to the national dialogue on how to act together on issues of economic turmoil and suffering,

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war and violence, moral decency and human dignity.

Our nation now faces economic challenges with potentially tragic human consequences and serious moral dimensions. We will work with the new Administration and Congress to support strong, prudent, and effective measures to address the terrible impacts and injustices of the economic crisis. In particular, we will advocate a clear priority for poor families and vulnerable workers in the development and implementation of economic recovery measures, including new investments while strengthening the national safety net. We also support greater accountability and oversight to address irresponsible abuses of the system that contributed to the financial crisis.

The Catholic Bishops of the United States have worked for decades to assure health care for all, insisting that access to decent health care is a basic human right and a requirement of human dignity. We urge comprehensive action to ensure truly universal health care coverage which protects all human life including pre-natal life, and provides access for all, with a special concern for the poor. Any such legislation ought to respect freedom to choose by offering a variety of options and ensuring respect for the moral and religious convictions of patients and providers. Such an approach should seek to restrain costs while sharing them equitably.

On international affairs, we will work with our leaders to seek a responsible transition in an Iraq free of religious persecution. We especially urge early, focused and persistent leadership to bring an end to violent conflict and a just peace in the Holy Land. We will continue to support essential U.S. investments to overcome poverty, hunger, and disease through increased and reformed foreign assistance. Continued U.S. leadership in the fight against HIV-AIDS and other diseases in ways that are both effectively and morally appropriate have our enthusiastic backing. Recognizing the complexity of climate change, we wish to be a voice for the poor and vulnerable in our country and around the world who will be the most adversely affected by any dramatic threats to the environment.

We will work with the new Adminis-

tration and Congress to fix a broken immigration system which harms both our nation and immigrants. Comprehensive reform is needed to deal with the economic and human realities of millions of immigrants in our midst. It must be based on respect for and implementation of the law. Equally it must defend the rights and dignity of all peoples, recognizing that human dignity comes from God and does not depend on where people were born or how they came to our nation. Truly comprehensive immigration reform will include a path to earned citizenship with attention to the fact that international trade and development policies influence economic opportunities in the countries from which immigrants come.

We stand firm in our support for marriage which is a faithful, exclusive, lifelong union of a man and a woman and must remain such in law. In a manner unlike any other relationship, marriage makes a unique and irreplaceable contribution to the common good of society, especially through the procreation and education of children. No other kinds of personal relationships can be justly made equivalent to the commitment of a man and a woman in marriage.

With regard to the education of children, we will continue to support initiatives which provide resources for all parents, especially those of modest means, to choose education which best address the needs of their children.

We welcome continuing commitments to empower faith-based groups as effective partners in overcoming poverty and other threats to human dignity. We will work with the Administration and Congress to strengthen these partnerships in ways that do not encourage government to abandon its responsibilities, and do not require religious groups to abandon their identity and mission.

Most fundamentally, we will work to protect the lives of the most vulnerable and voiceless members of the human family, especially unborn children and those who are disabled or terminally ill. We will consistently defend the fundamental right to life from conception to natural death. Opposed to abortion as the direct killing of innocent human life, we will encourage one and all to seek common ground that will reduce the



Chicago Cardinal Francis E. George looks out at the crowd during a Mass for U.S. pilgrims at World Youth Day in Sydney, Australia, July 19. (CNS photo/Paul Haring)

number of abortions in morally sound ways that affirm the dignity of pregnant women and their unborn children. We will oppose legislative and other measures to expand abortion. We will work to retain essential, widely supported policies which show respect for unborn life, protect the conscience rights of health care providers and other Americans, and prevent government funding and promotion of abortion. The Hyde Amendment and other provisions which for many years have prevented federal funding of abortion have a proven record of reducing abortions. Efforts to force Americans to fund abortions with their tax dollars would pose a serious moral challenge and jeopardize the passage of essential health care reform.

This outline of USCCB policies and priorities is not complete. There are many other areas of concern and advocacy for the Church and the USCCB especially: religious freedom and other civil and human rights, news media and communications, and issues of war and peace. For a more detailed description of our concerns please see *Forming Consciences for Faithful Citizenship (USCCB 2008)*, pages 19-30.

Nonetheless, we offer this outline as an agenda for dialogue and action. We hope to offer a constructive and principled contribution to national discussion over the values and policies that will shape our nation's future. We seek to work together with our nation's leaders to advance the common good of our society, while disagreeing respectfully and civilly where necessary for preserving that same common good.

In closing, I renew our expression of hope and our offer of cooperation as you begin this new period of service to our nation in these challenging times. We promise our prayers for you, that the days ahead will be a time of renewal and progress for our nation and that we can work together to defend human life and dignity and build a nation of greater justice and a world at peace.

Sincerely yours,
† Francis Cardinal George, OMI
Archbishop of Chicago,
President, USCCB

Pope congratulates Obama on his Inauguration Day, offers prayer for wisdom

VATICAN CITY (CNS) — Pope Benedict XVI, congratulating Barack Obama on his inauguration as U.S. president, prayed that he would remain steadfast in his dedication to promote understanding, cooperation and peace in the world.

The pope, in a Jan. 20 telegram, told Obama that he prayed God would “grant you unfailing wisdom and strength in the exercise of your high responsibilities.”

Popes traditionally send a telegram of congratulations to new presidents of the United States on the day of their inauguration.

In his message to Obama, Pope Benedict said he prayed, under the new president’s leadership, “may the American people continue to find in their impressive religious and political heritage the spiritual values and ethical principles needed to cooperate in the building of a truly just and free society.”

The pope said he hoped the future of the United States would be “marked by respect for the dignity, equality, and rights of each of its members, especially the poor, the outcast and those who have no voice.”

“At a time when so many of our brothers and sisters throughout the world yearn for liberation from the scourge of poverty, hunger, and violence, I pray that



Barack Obama takes the oath of office as the 44th president of the United States Jan. 20 in Washington. He was sworn in by Chief Justice John Roberts. Michelle Obama held the Bible President Abraham Lincoln used at his 1861 inauguration. (CNS photo/ Jim Young, Reuters)

you will be confirmed in your resolve to promote understanding, cooperation, and peace among the nations, so that all may share in the banquet of life which God wills to set for the whole human family,” the pope said.

Pope Benedict also asked God to bless the Obama family and all the people of the United States.

The pope had also sent a personal message of congratulations Nov. 5 on what he called the “historic occasion” of Obama’s election, the first time a black man has been elected president of the United States.

*Responding
to God's Call*

Calling on a new generation of ‘heroes’

By Father Kyle Walterscheid

“**B**e a different kind of Hero!” is the theme the Vocation Office will be promoting to help children look up to those who have pursued the religious life: brothers, sisters, priests, and bishops.

We have 300 posters in English and another 300 in Spanish ready, even now, to be sent out to all of our classrooms throughout our diocese.

When you see the poster you will see that it is a strong positive message, even “over the top,” but that’s my intention. Catholic children and teenagers need to see religious men and women as spiritual heroes, fighting the good fight, planting seeds so that they may consider joining a religious community as an adult.

At the same time I am very aware of the internal scandals that have occurred, especially within the priesthood. But I hope everyone will keep a few things in mind.

Men and women of my generation and the next generation are entering the religious life despite knowing about the wretched acts of sexual misconduct with children by some priests (4.3 percent of all priests from 1960 to 2002 according to the John Jay Report) all of whom when reported, thanks be to God, have been removed from priestly ministry.

The U.S. bishops met in Dallas in June of 2002 and established the Charter for the Protection of Children and Young People to begin

to look at what caused the scandals and to take all the measures necessary to prevent sexual abuse in the Church in the future.

Now we are blessed with two things to help in this endeavor. First, we have a very strict screening process and entrance requirements for anyone entering the seminary or religious life, including psychological exams, criminal background checks, driving records, and credit reports, as well as requiring the stated testimony of a multitude of people to attest to the character of the person in a four-page questionnaire.

Then, once in the seminary, a formation team is prompt to detect signs of character flaws unbecoming a future priest, removing those who seem unfit from seminary.

Secondly, we have had in full force for several years now the Keeping Children And Youth Safe Program that all priests, religious, church employees, and lay volunteers must attend regularly to know what signs to look for in a sexual predator. All children and teenagers, too, go through our annual training for them to do likewise and to learn how to speak out when abuse occurs or to recognize the signs that might identify a predator.

As a young priest of six years, I look up to the older priests of this diocese. They have many battle scars from every decade, going back sometimes to the 1950s. They remained faithful and holy priests in the 1960s as many of their brother priests left active ministry because of the changes of Vatican II.

They remained faithful and holy priests when a new church theology that sometimes tried to eliminate the necessity for their unique ministry swept our country in the 1970s. They remained faithful and holy priests in the 1980s even as masses of

Father Kyle Walterscheid, director of the Office of Vocations, is shown walking out of Sacred Heart Parish in Muenster following his ordination to the priesthood in May 2002. Even then, he appeared to be inviting people to ask if they were being called to a vocation.

people left the Church, her sacraments, and her teachings, to seek “feel good churches.” They remained holy and faithful priests in the 1990s even as many seminaries closed and hope diminished that anyone would follow them to move forward the cross of Christ. They remained holy and faithful priests in this decade as they were crucified as if between two criminals (like Jesus) every time they went out in public, due to the sexual abuse perpetuated by wolves in priests’ clothing.

These older priests have won their crown of glory and are true imitators of Christ. They have walked in his footsteps and heralded the Good News. They have baptized the masses and have fed them with the Body of Christ. They have absolved the sinner from his sins, healed the sick and the brokenhearted, and they have blessed young couples in holy matrimony. They are my heroes, true pastors of the flock.

The pasture is beginning to green up. Outstanding men are entering the seminary in increasing numbers. New parishes need to be opened because so many faithful are returning to the Church, her sacraments, and her teachings. Because of all this and much more, they are true heroes in our midst. They have fought the good fight, they have finished the race, and they have kept the faith (cf. 2 Timothy 4:7).

Let us thank the Lord for our many great priests and religious who have inspired us and pointed us toward the cross and our salvation. Let us encourage the next generation to look at the religious life and “Be a different kind of Hero.”

Father Kyle Walterscheid is the director of Vocations for the Diocese of Fort Worth. He can be reached by e-mail to kwalterscheid@fwdioc.org.

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Catholic Schools Banquet planned

The 22nd Annual Celebration of Catholic Schools will be held Saturday, Jan. 31 at the Fort Worth Convention Center.

This annual event in the diocese celebrates the mission of Catholic schools and honors outstanding individuals for their service to the Catholic school communities of the diocese. The Stephen Breen Memorial Foundation will receive the Diocesan Leadership Award.

The evening will include a social hour followed by dinner. Sister Carol Cimino, a national consultant for the William H. Sadler Company, will be guest speaker. Bishop Kevin Vann will also be in attendance.

Reservations are \$75 per person. Everyone is invited to the celebration to show their support and commitment to Catholic schools.

For ticket availability please contact the Catholic Schools Office at (817) 560-3300, or e-mail rvsp@fwdioc.org.

Cathedral to host Patriotic Rosary service

St. Patrick Cathedral will host a Patriotic Rosary for the United States as it assumes new leadership during a time of many difficulties and trials. The prayer service will be from 7 to 8 p.m. Tuesday, Jan. 27 at 1206 Throckmorton St. in Fort Worth.

"We must pray for wisdom and courage for our president and government officials; and that they will act according to the revealed will of God and the foundational principles of the Declaration of Independence and the Constitution of the United States," say event organizers.

The Patriotic Rosary is in the framework of traditional prayers, accompanied by spiritual reflections of America's forefathers.

For information call the Fort Worth Queen of Peace Center at (817) 244-7733 or (817) 558-9805.

OLGHS to hold open house

Our Lady of Grace High School will hold an open house from 9 a.m. to 4 p.m. on January 26 at 13517 Alta Vista Rd. in Roanoke. As the newest Catholic high school in the diocese, administrators encourage students to experience the "difference in Catholic Education." For more information, contact the school at (817) 933-6516, or visit its Web site at www.OLGHS.com.

St. Paul offers Divorce Care Series for children and adults

St. Paul Church in Fort Worth will offer a new Divorce Care Series and has added a companion series, Divorce Care for Kids (DC4K) to run with it, from 6:30 to 8:30 p.m. beginning Jan. 29 and continuing for 12 weeks. Church Initiative distributes the program.

Facilitators and helpers in both programs have been through divorce themselves, have been trained in the program, and have attended diocesan safe-environment training programs. Each session is age-appropriate. DC4K is geared towards children between ages five and 12, and the adult series is for those 13 and older. The program addresses the recovery process, and the desired outcome is the realization that it is possible to recover from separation and divorce.

"The help generated through this seminar, has no boundaries," says Deacon Ron Aziere, pastoral assistant from St. Paul. "We have helped persons divorced for over 15 years to get recovered, and in one case the couple reconciled a broken marriage. God's healing presence is visible by the end of the series. Although this program is a scriptures-based program, it is not a Bible study. There is input from professionals in pastoral care, entertainment, psychological, and social services featured in this seminar giving their personal and professional input to help the participant focus on the job of healing."

Though the program is free, pre-registration is preferred. For more information, call (817) 738-9925 and a team member will reply.

Men's Purity Group meets at three locations

The St. Augustine Men's Purity Group, a support group for men who struggle with sources of sexual impurity such as those found on the Internet, meets regularly at three locations within the Diocese of Fort Worth. The group offers meetings at St. Elizabeth Ann Seton School, 2016 Willis Lane in Keller, in Room 213; at the Padre Pio House, 1301 Paxton Ave. in Arlington; and at Immaculate Conception Parish, 2255 North Bonnie Brae St. in Denton. Those men interested in attending one of the upcoming sessions are asked to consult the group's Web site, www.sampg.com, for specific meeting dates and times.

For more information, e-mail to Markatseasmenspurity@yahoo.com or call the St. Elizabeth Ann Seton Parish office at (817) 431-3857.

People & Events

of Importance for the Church of Fort Worth



KNIGHTS OF COLUMBUS, DECATUR — Members of Knights of Columbus Council #9644 based out of Decatur, dedicated a pro-life monument to the unborn at Assumption of the Blessed Virgin Mary Church in Decatur on Sunday, Jan. 18 to mark the anniversary of *Roe vs. Wade*. Pictured is Father Sojan George, HGN, pastor of Assumption surrounded by members of Council #9644.

Tribunal Ministry offers free seminar for volunteers, Feb. 7

Father Hector Medina, pastor of St. Matthew Church in Arlington, will present an introduction to tribunal ministry from 10 a.m. to 3 p.m. Saturday, Feb. 7, at Good Shepherd Church in Colleyville.

The course is designed for those who are interested in learning about tribunal ministry, and the roles and tasks of parish tribunal volunteers. Attendance at this seminar, at this or any other time, is a prerequisite to enroll in tribunal volunteer training, which will be offered during the summer.

There is no charge, but pre-registration is required. To register, call Deborah Hawks at Good Shepherd at (817) 421-1387. For more information, contact the Tribunal Office at (817) 560-3300 ext. 200.

Knights of Peter Claver plan Mardi Gras dance Feb. 21

The Knights of Peter Claver Council #89 of Our Mother of Mercy Church in Fort Worth will hold their 19th Annual "Mardi Gras & Zydeco Dance" from 8 p.m. to midnight Saturday, Feb. 21 at the Meadowbrook Lions Club, 6013 Craig St. in Fort Worth.

Donations are \$20 per person and admission includes authentic Louisiana gumbo and red beans and rice.

Call (817) 253-0806, (817) 534-7652, or see any Knight at Our Mother of Mercy Church at 1007 East Terrell Ave. for more information about this event.

Proceeds from the event go towards funding the many charitable activities sponsored throughout the year.

Lay Carmelites invite others to join prayer gathering Feb. 8

"Would you like to deepen your relationship with Jesus and Mary?" ask the Third Order of the Blessed Virgin Mary of Mount Carmel (Lay Carmelites). The Lay Carmelites invite those in search of this deeper relationship to join them on the second and fourth Sundays of the month for a time of prayer and fellowship.

Those interested in participating are asked to gather at 2 p.m. Feb. 8 in the chapel of The College of St. Thomas More, 3017 Lubbock in Fort Worth. Formation will take place in the college library from 2:30 p.m. to 4:30 p.m. For more information, call Phyllis Poth at (817) 457-1746.

Sign language classes offered by the Deaf Ministry program

Sign Language classes will be offered this semester on Tuesday evenings at St. John the Apostle Church in North Richland Hills and sponsored by the Deaf Ministry Program from Jan. 27 through March 10.

There will be a Beginning class offered at 7 p.m. and an Advanced Beginning class offered at 8 p.m. Adults and children ages twelve and older who have always wanted to learn more about the deaf community and the language they use, are encouraged to come learn American Sign Language. Both classes will meet in Room 'C' of the Formation Center at 4101 Frawley Rd.

Students will learn the manual alphabet and signs for basic vocabulary. Cultural aspects of the deaf community as well as basic grammatical rules will be taught through fun hands-on activities and games.

Cost for the class will be \$50 per person, which includes the cost of the book. There is no pre-registration. Those interested are asked to come the first night of class a few minutes early. For more information contact Mary Cinatl, director of Deaf Ministry at (817) 284-3019 or mcinatl@fwdioc.org.

Deaf Ministry program seeking court reporter for CART services

The Deaf Ministry Program is in need of a court reporter who can help with CART (Computer Assisted Real-Time Translation) services.

The Deaf Community celebrates a special Deaf Community Mass on the first Sunday of each month at 1:45 p.m. at San Mateo Church on the near South Side of Fort Worth.

The ministry would like to provide CART services for deaf persons who do not sign, so they can read the simultaneous transcriptions and be a part of the special liturgy.

To help with this service, contact Mary Cinatl, director of the Deaf Ministry Program, at (817) 284-3019 (Voice or TDD) or e-mail to mcinatl@fwdioc.org.

Carmelite Auxiliary to host Irish-themed fundraiser

The Auxiliary to the Discalced Carmelite Nuns in Arlington will hold its annual "A Divine Affair" fundraiser, a St. Patrick's Day celebration to support the nuns, from 11 a.m. to 2 p.m. Saturday, March 14 at the Hilton Arlington's Grand Ballroom.

A short auction before lunch will include an exquisite petit point needlework done entirely by the Carmelite Nuns for this year's fundraiser. The Colonel Ceathar Irish Dancers will also perform.

Tickets are \$40 per person. For more information, contact Evelyn Breaux at (817) 738-8636 or Aileen Neil at (817) 923-9301.

Theology professor to speak about Catholic perspective on Rapture

Sister Dorothy Jonaitis, OP, will present "The Left Behind Alternative: A Workshop on Apocalyptic Literature" from 9 a.m. to 3 p.m. Saturday, Jan. 31 at St. Bartholomew Church at 3601 Altamesa Blvd. in Fort Worth.

Sr. Jonaitis is the author of *Unmasking Apocalyptic Texts: a Guide to Preaching and Teaching*, and an assistant professor at the University of Dallas School of Ministry. She will present the Catholic teaching of apocalyptic texts, especially related to the rapture and imagery of the Book of Revelation.

Sr. Jonaitis will sign copies of her book, which may be purchased at the workshop.

For more information, call Mary Castellon at (817) 293-5589.

Marriage Encounter weekend to be held Feb. 13-15

A Marriage Encounter weekend will be held Feb. 13-15 at the Catholic Renewal Center of North Texas, 4503 Bridge Street in East Fort Worth.

A marriage enrichment is a weekend program for married couples designed to help them deepen their relationship. Marriage Encounter is centered on three principles: building communication between husband and wife, nurturing the commitment of marriage vows, and strengthening the couple's faith.

"One year or fifty! No matter how long you've been married, a Marriage Encounter Weekend is a great way to breathe new life into your relationship. And it's just for the two of you (no group sharing)," say program organizers.

Reservations are required with a \$60 non-refundable deposit, and space is limited. The balance of \$175 per couple is due at the program. In case of financial needs, scholarship funds are available. A partial deposit is still required. For more information, visit www.ntexasme.org or to make a reservation, call (817) 451-6005 or e-mail mereregistration@sbglobal.net.

Calix support group meets Feb. 7 at Holy Family

Calix, a monthly support meeting for Catholics who are alcoholic and others who are struggling with addiction and seeking recovery, is offered the first Saturday of each month at 10 a.m. in the chapel of Holy Family Church, 6150 Pershing Ave. in West Fort Worth. The next meeting will be Saturday, Feb. 7.

Calix meetings focus on enhancing spiritual growth through sharing Eucharist, discussion, and fellowship.

For more information, call Deacon Joe Milligan at (817) 737-6768 ext. 105.

Official Assignments

The following assignment has been made by Bishop Kevin Vann:

Father Joseph Pemberton has been assigned as the parochial administrator of Holy Redeemer Parish, Aledo, effective Jan. 5, without prejudice to his role as pastor of Holy Family Parish in Fort Worth.

NTC deadlines for submission

The *North Texas Catholic* is published twice monthly, except during the months of June, July, and August when it is published monthly. The deadline to submit information is noon on the Wednesday of the week before the paper is published.

Items for the Feb. 6 issue must be received by noon on Wednesday, Jan. 28. Items for the Feb. 20 issue must be received by noon on Wednesday, Feb. 11.

People and Events

Pure Reality Rally in Alrington to promote chastity among teens

Pure Reality, a youth rally for eighth- through 12th-graders from the Metroplex and presented by the Catholic Pro-Life Committee and Catholics Respect Life, will be held Sunday, Feb. 8, from 4 to 9:30 p.m. at the Metro Center located at 1501 W. Pioneer Pkwy. in Arlington.

"Our mission is to present a Pure Reality to today's youth letting them know that chastity and abstinence are the true paths to freedom," says Sue Laux of Youth for Life Fort Worth.

Dallas Bishop Kevin Farrell will celebrate the opening Mass and guest presenters will include Chris Stefanick from Catholic Answers and the Archdiocese of Denver, Father

Stan Fortuna, CFR, a talented musician rapper from the Bronx, and members of the Theater of the Word evangelization troupe. Organizers expect 1,700 Catholic teens from the Metroplex to attend.

While a previous engagement prevents Bishop Kevin Vann from attending, he said he endorses the event and concept and wishes that he could join Bishop Farrell and "the young people to help witness to the virtue of chastity and the Culture of Life."

Dinner and a T-shirt are included in the \$20 price for attendance.

For more information, contact Sue Laux at (817) 939-8595, or visit www.purerealityrally.com.

Courage group affirms Church teaching on homosexuality

Courage was created in 1980 in New York City at the request of the late Cardinal Terence Cooke and now has chapters throughout the United States and in eight other countries.

Courage is not a "change" ministry, that is, it does not focus on any attempt to change one's "orientation." The focus is helping members, whether single or married, to live lives of interior and exterior chastity, which means living according to the teachings of the Catholic Church regarding sexual love as outlined in the *Catechism of the*

Catholic Church.

Courage D/FW was started in 1999 with the approval of Bishop Joseph Delaney of Fort Worth and Bishop Charles Grahmann of Dallas. Its spiritual adviser is Monsignor Mark Seitz of St. Rita Church in Dallas. The group's meetings include prayer, discussion of relevant topics, learning how to deepen spiritual lives, sharing struggles and successes, and occasional guest speakers, and fellowship.

For more information, contact (972) 938-LIFE (5433) or e-mail couragedfw@catholic.org.

Lubbock Knights to host 'Our Lady in Scripture' conference

The Lubbock Diocese Knights of Columbus will sponsor the 2009 Biblical Studies Conference, "Our Lady in Scripture," Feb. 14-15 in the Lubbock City Bank Auditorium.

Featured speakers at the event include Catholic theologians and Scripture scholars Scott Hahn, Brant Pitre, and Michael Barber. Spanish translation services are available by advance reservation.

A gala dinner with Lubbock Bishop Placido Rodriguez and conference speakers will be held Friday, Feb. 13. Dinner tickets are available for \$70 per person.

For information about hotel accommodations, tickets and the conference schedule, call (806) 698-6400, (806) 239-0804, or (806) 438-5253. Tickets are available at \$20 per person.

St. Joseph Covenant Keepers of Tarrant County announce Lenten Speaker Series at SEAS in Keller

St. Joseph Covenant Keepers of St. Elizabeth Ann Seton Church at 2016 Willis Ln. in Keller will sponsor their annual Lenten Speaker Series this year with guest speakers Steve Kellmeyer and Tim Staples.

Steve Kellmeyer will present six talks during each of the Fridays of the Lenten season (except Good Friday) beginning on Feb. 27. The talks will be at 8 p.m. following the Fish Fry and Stations of the Cross.

Kellmeyer will be discussing Pope John Paul II's Theology of the Body. Topics will include "The First Family" on Feb. 27, "Breaking Up Is Hard To Do" on March 6, "Flesh and Blood" on March 13, "Why Does God Allow Suffering?" on March 20, "Being the Best Spouse, Being the Best Parent" on March 27, and "Celibacy" on April 3.

Steve Kellmeyer is the director of Adult Formation at St. Francis of Assisi Church in Grapevine and is a noted author. For more infor-



Kellmeyer



Staples

mation on his books, visit www.bridegroompress.com.

In addition, Tim Staples, a well-known speaker from Catholic Answers will speak Saturday, Feb. 28. The program is from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. following the 9 a.m. Mass. A box lunch is available for \$5.

Staples will discuss "Repentance, Reconciliation, and Redemption." Included will be an opportunity to receive the sacrament of reconciliation during the event.

Both events will be free, but offerings will be accepted. For more information, contact Frank Laux at (817) 939-8594 or visit the group's Web site at www.sjcktc.org.



ST. JOSEPH, RHINELAND — Pictured above are members of the Junior Youth Group of St. Joseph Church in Rhineland, which performed its annual Christmas play, "Miracle on Bethlehem Street," in front of a large crowd Dec. 10 in the Rhineland Gym. Forty-two of the youth at St. Joseph's volunteered their time, assisted by parishioners Robert and Janet Dillard. A reception was held after the performance.

Magnificat breakfast to feature Catholic author Feb. 21

Magnificat, a ministry to Catholic women that draws participation from throughout the North Texas region, will sponsor a women's breakfast with praise and Eucharistic devotion from 9 a.m. to noon on Saturday, Feb. 21 at the DFW Hilton Lakes Conference Center and Hotel, located at 1800 Highway 26 East in Grapevine.

The opportunity to receive the sacrament of reconciliation and to meet with prayer teams will be available after the keynote presentation.

Author Patricia Treece will serve as keynote speaker for the event. Treece is described in press materials as a Catholic convert, author, and authority on modern-day saints. "The mission of my work is simply to share God's friends, the saints, with our human family because to know God's friends, the saints, is to come closer to God," Treece writes in describing her work as a writer and speaker.

Treece's first book, *A Man for Others*, was released in 1982, and chronicles the life of St. Maximilian Kolbe. Treece's latest publication, *Meet John XXIII: Joyful Pope and Father to All*, is based on Treece's interviews with the pope's private secretary, a retired archbishop who made the pope's letters and other personal documents available to Treece. Treece's other works have included biographies of Padre Pio and St. Therese of Lisieux.

For more information or to purchase admission at \$18 per ticket to the breakfast, call Nancy Ferri at (817) 498-7980 by Tuesday, Feb. 17, or obtain tickets at local Catholic bookstores, including Keepsakes in Arlington; Little Angels in Coppell; Catholic Arts and Gifts in Farmer's Branch and St. Anthony's Bookstore in Fort Worth.

TOBET co-founder Monica Ashour to visit St. Rita Feb. 21

Monica Ashour, a co-founding member of the Theology of the Body Evangelization Team (TOBET) will present "A Time Bomb Set to Go Off in the 21st Century: The Theology of the Body" on Saturday, Feb. 21 at the St. Rita Parish Center in Fort Worth.

The talk is for those 17 or older. Pizza, salad, and other snacks will be served at 6 p.m., followed by the talk from 6:30 to 7:30 p.m.

The Theology of the Body is Pope John Paul II's "integrated vision of the human person — body, soul, and spirit. The Theology of the Body promotes the Pope's revolutionary and life-transforming message of hope that counteracts societal trends. It encourages a true reverence for the gift of our sexuality and challenges us to live in a way worthy of our great dignity as human persons. His theology is not only for young adults and married couples, but for all ages and vocations since it sums up the true meaning of the human person," say members of the St. Rita Respects Life group.

Ashour holds a master's degree from the University of Dallas in theological studies and in humanities. She has traveled throughout the United States, giving talks about the Theology of the Body.

As an author of a curriculum on the Theology of the Body for religious education and Catholic schools, she seeks to spread the Gospel in the light of the Holy Father's profound understanding of the dignity of the human person made in the image and likeness of God.

Tickets are \$6 for adults and \$3 for children 10 and under. Free childcare is available. Tickets are an extra dollar at the door. For more information, call the church office at (817) 451-9395.

Ministry with gay, lesbian Catholics to meet Feb. 27

The Fort Worth diocesan Ministry with Lesbian and Gay Catholics, other Sexual Minorities and Their Families regularly meet the fourth Thursday of the month at 7 p.m. at the Catholic Renewal Center at 4503 Bridge St. in Fort Worth. For more information, contact Father Warren Murphy, TOR, at (817) 927-5383 or Do-reen Rose at (817) 329-7370.

Educate the Children gala Feb. 13

Bishop Kevin Vann will be the guest speaker at the Fifth Anniversary Gala for Friends of Educate the Children 6:30 p.m., Friday, Feb. 13 at the Tarrant County College Northeast Campus at 828 Harwood Rd., in Hurst.

The Gala will include a dinner and a silent auction. Father Robert Thames of Cabezas, Bolivia, will be the honoree.

For more information contact Hilda Flores at (817) 560-3300 ext. 112 or hlflores@fwdioc.org.



HOLY FAMILY SCHOOL, FORT WORTH — Holy Family School fifth-grader Sam Bradbury earned first place and fourth-grader Emma Whiddon earned second place in this year's Spelling Bee. Sam will move on to the area Spelling Bee.

Diocesan

Cartoonist to offer tips for stress-relief during Lenten program

National speaker, author, and cartoonist Jason Kotecki has been invited to two churches in the diocese to share key strategies for de-stressing life by renewing and embracing a childlike faith, specifically within the Lenten season.

Kotecki will speak at Holy Family Church at 6150 Pershing Ave. in Fort Worth on Thursday, Feb. 26, and Friday, Feb. 27, and at St. Vincent de Paul Church at 5819 W. Pleasant Ridge Rd. in Arlington on Sunday, March 1.

The Holy Family events are from 7 to 8:30 p.m. both evenings, for ages "5-105," according to a press release, with a soup supper prior to the event on Friday night. Reservations for baby-sitting are necessary.

"Both evenings will be different, so all are welcome to attend both evenings," says the release.

The event at St. Vincent De Paul will be from 7-8 p.m. Baby-sitting is available for those under age five.

Kotecki's presentation will feature humorous anecdotes, colorful artwork, and a bit of live cartooning, as he encourages participants of all ages to embrace and uncover strategies from childhood to help them grasp a deeper understanding of faith, family, and fellowship.

He will talk about the prevention and treatment of "Adultitis" — an epidemic affecting almost every household in the United States.

"Busy, stressed, and overwhelmed — that's someone with 'Adultitis.' Do you know anyone like that?" asks Kotecki, author of the book *Escape Adulthood: 8 Secrets from Childhood for the Stressed-Out Grown-Up*.

Kotecki asserts, "Life wasn't designed to be this way. It's time to start living life with less stress and more fun, for we are called to live life abundantly."

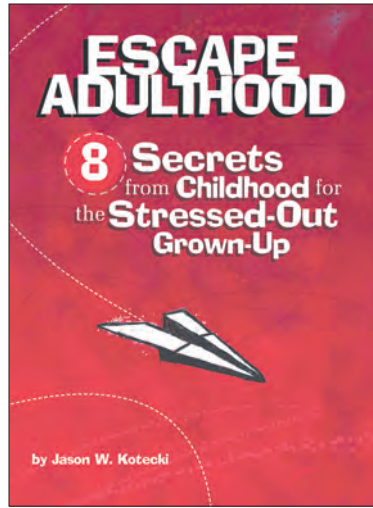
Since its debut in 2000, Kotecki's comic strip, "Kim & Jason," has appealed to worldwide readers of all ages with its humorous childlike look at life.

For more information about the events at Holy Family, call (817) 737-6768. For questions about the event at St. Vincent de Paul call (817) 478-8206, ext. 204.

Visit www.KimandJason.com for more about the comic strip and visit www.Adultitis.org for more about the "dangerous condition" of adultitis.



Jason Kotecki poses as "Superman" in a telephone booth. Kotecki is a nationally-known speaker, author, and cartoonist.



The cover of Kotecki's book *ESCAPE ADULTHOOD: 8 SECRETS FROM CHILDHOOD FOR THE STRESSED-OUT GROWN-UP*.



David Duffey, sixth-grade teacher at St. George Elementary School, plays with some of the members of the St. George Chess Club, one of the eight clubs that meet weekly that meet for after school activities. Others include the Gardening Club and the Jump Rope Club.

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Diocesan

Fort Worth Legatus inducts new officers at cathedral

Father Bill Bellrose, CPM, director of Seminarians for Life, was the guest speaker for the Jan. 8 meeting of the Fort Worth chapter of Legatus at the Fort Worth Club in downtown Fort Worth. The local chapter had earlier inducted their 2009 officers following a Mass celebrated by Father Michael Kmiotek, CFR, in St. Patrick Cathedral. Fr. Kmiotek also presided over the ceremony inducting the new officers.

Seminarians for Life, is an outreach of Human Life International formed as a worldwide pro-life educational apostolate for Catholic seminarians. Fr. Bellrose came to Human Life International from Most Sacred Heart Parish in Eureka, Missouri.

The Fort Worth Chapter of Legatus, one of over 60 chapters around the world, was chartered in May 2007. Each monthly event begins with the sacrament of reconciliation, a rosary and Mass, followed by a dinner and



From left to right are Director Bill Quinn, Treasurer Lynne Alpar, President Chuck Milliken, Historian Kim Koskay, Father Michael Kmiotek, Secretary Don Phifer, Membership Chair Sam Saladino, Programs Chair Lisa Fischer, and Liturgy Chair Dana Milliken.

a speaker with topics including apologetics, family, spiritual growth, and ethics. Members must be active Catholics in good standing and must meet

certain business requirements. For more details, visit www.Legatus.org, or contact chapter membership chair Sam Saladino at 817-529-0444.



Cindy Cummins (left), principal of St. John the Apostle School, and St. John's social studies teacher Marla Tatum traveled to Washington, D.C., to receive the 2008 National Blue Ribbon Award from Kerri Briggs, assistant secretary for the U.S. Department of Education (center).

CAMPION SPIRITUALITY PROGRAM

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March 3	Conversion Fr. Ron Boudreaux, SJ
April 7	Baptism & forgiveness Fr. José Fetzer, SJ
May 5	Salvation Fr. Edmundo Rodriguez, SJ
September 1	The Body of Christ, the Church Fr. Joe Tetlow, SJ
October 6	Righteousness & Justification Fr. Ron Boudreaux, SJ
November 3	Resurrection Fr. Edmundo Rodriguez, SJ

MONTSERRAT SATURDAYS

The Catholic Catechism: the spiritual theology for adults

FIRST SATURDAYS OF 2009
9:00 A.M. TO 3:00 P.M.
Lunch included

OFFERING: \$40 per Saturday
or \$200 for total series

February 7	Fr. José Fetzer, SJ
March 7	Fr. Joe Tetlow, SJ
April 4	Fr. Ron Boudreaux, SJ
May 2	Fr. Edmundo Rodriguez, SJ
September 5	Fr. Joe Tetlow, SJ
October 3	Fr. José Fetzer, SJ
November 7	Summary by the Jesuit Fathers

Each Montserrat Saturday will cover two chapters in *United States Catholic Catechism for Adults*, published by the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops.

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Our Lady of Victory school fundraiser to repair aging building

Our Lady of Victory School (OLV) will host an open house Tuesday, Jan. 27 from 6 to 8 p.m. at the school, located at 3320 Hemphill Ave. in Fort Worth. All are invited to attend.

The school will also sponsor "Mardi Gras Masquerade," the school community's sixth annual dinner and fundraising event, on Saturday, Feb. 7 from 6 p.m. to midnight in the Great Hall at St. Bartholomew Church, located at 3601 Altamesa Blvd. in Fort Worth. Tickets are available prior to the event at \$35 per ticket; the price of the ticket includes dinner, beverages, dancing, and entertainment for the evening.

Our Lady of Victory School, founded by the Sisters of Saint Mary of Namur in 1910, has a current student enrollment of 200 in pre-kindergarten through eighth grades.

"We are dedicated to continuing the mission of our founders to develop the whole child,

academically, spiritually, physically, and socially in a Catholic environment," wrote OLV faculty member and development director Rachael Garnett in a press release. "OLV was also the first school in Fort Worth to be fully integrated. This continues to be reflected in the faces of our culturally diverse student population... OLV is an inner-city school offering students an intellectually stimulating atmosphere."

The school has received exemplary accreditation by the Texas Catholic Conference Education Department, which is recognized by the Texas Education Agency, said Garnett.

All funds raised at the Feb. 7 event will be used for repairs and renovations to the school building, which was built in 1953. For more information about either upcoming event, call Rachael Garnett or OLV principal Trudy Miller at (817) 924-5123.

St. Peter students witness shuttle land from backyard



Students from St. Peter the Apostle School in White Settlement had the opportunity to watch the Space Shuttle Endeavor land at the Naval Air Station/JRB on Dec. 10. "Several of the parents from our school work at Lockheed and alerted us that the shuttle would be landing," said Erin Vader, school principal.

"We dismissed classes early so that the kids could stand on the playground and watch the shuttle come down, right in front of them. It was a perfect view. Only at St. Peter's can you get an air show at recess!"



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Diocesan / National

Fr. LeDoux challenges community to emulate Christ as MLK did

By Michele Baker
Correspondent
Photos by Donna Rykaert

About 250 people from around the diocese gathered at St. Joseph Church in Arlington on Saturday, Jan. 17 for the 23rd annual Martin Luther King, Jr. Memorial Mass. Bishop Kevin Vann presided over the liturgy in honor of the famed civil rights leader.

"I believe that this Mass we have to honor Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. reminds us of his love and commitment to faith and justice," said Bishop Vann. "We especially remember his lesson of not returning violence for violence but faith for faith."

Bishop Vann concelebrated the Mass with six priests from the diocese: Monsignor Joseph Schumacher, and Fathers Carmen Mele, OP, Tom Craig, Phillip Brembah, Paul Kahan, SVD, and Jerome LeDoux, SVD, who gave the homily.

Beginning with the hymn, "God Is Love," written by Father Clarence Rivers, the first African-American to be ordained a priest for the Archdiocese of Cincinnati, Fr. LeDoux explained, "Racism is against everything that God stands for." He went on to say that even as the country prepared to inaugurate its first black president, the dream that Dr. King put forth for the nation has not

yet been fully realized if the faithful continue to be apathetic about answering God's call.

"The components of the dream — freedom, justice, and equality of opportunity — are here, but we have squandered them," said Fr. LeDoux, who is pastor of Our Mother of Mercy Church in Fort Worth, the diocese's only historically African-American parish. "We have equal opportunity, but we are sitting on our hands. This is not a dream. This is a nightmare."

Fr. LeDoux urged the assembly to work toward building the dream by a return to the basics. "We must begin with faith, hope, and love and regain what we have lost," he said. "Martin Luther King, Jr. saw Christ as his prototype, and just as Martin did, we should make Christ our prototype."

The African Choir of St. Joseph Church, a ministry of the African Catholic Fellowship of Dallas Fort Worth (www.ACFDFW.org) echoed Fr. LeDoux's message in their offertory song, "Ngai Nazali," a song in Linguala, a Congolese language. The text says, "I am a servant of the Lord. I offer myself to him along with the fruits of my labor."

Throughout the Mass, gospel music, provided by the Our Mother of Mercy Choir, under the direction of Dorothea Menefee with Zenobia Collins at the piano, set the tone for a joy-filled celebration.

Deacon Len Sanchez, director of Pastoral and Community Services for the Diocese of Fort Worth said, "We are proud of our heritage: of all honorable men who do good, especially Martin Luther King, Jr. Through his life many have been touched and guided in the direction of peaceful solutions. He was truly a man of the Gospel."



ABOVE: Father Jerome LeDoux, SVD, pastor of Our Mother of Mercy Church in Fort Worth, concelebrates the Eucharist during the 23rd annual Martin Luther King, Jr. Memorial Mass. Fr. LeDoux delivered the homily.



RIGHT: A portrait of Martin Luther King, Jr., is placed at St. Joseph Church. The inscription at the top reads "From every mountainside, let freedom ring!"



ABOVE: Bishop Kevin Vann processes into Mass at St. Joseph Church in Arlington behind the parish's sacramental minister Fr. Phillip Brembah and pastoral administrator Deacon Dean Hermann.



Members of the Knights of Peter Claver Council #89 based out of Our Mother of Mercy Church in Fort Worth, stand during Mass. The Knights of Peter Claver is a traditionally African-American Catholic fraternal society.



ABOVE: Members of the St. Ann Altar Society stand together during Mass.



Students Xavier Grah and Jasmine Franklin sit during Mass.



Diana Roehl plays the tambourine for the OMM choir.

Diocesan

In face of potential pro-choice legislation, diocese reminds people to

Respect Life

Story and photos by
Joan Kurkowski-Gillen
Correspondent

The diocesan Respect Life Mass, held each January to mark the anniversary of the *Roe vs. Wade* Supreme Court decision legalizing abortion, concluded this year with an urgent plea. Bishop Kevin Vann, who celebrated the liturgy Jan. 16 in St. Patrick Cathedral, asked the crowd of 500 to "make our voices heard for those who cannot speak," by participating in a postcard campaign against the Freedom of Choice Act (FOCA).

"This legislation, which could very well be signed into law during the coming year, would erase any modest gains that have been made in past years for the protection of the unborn," the bishop said.

The concerted nationwide campaign, which kicks off locally Jan. 24-25, will urge parishioners to send postcards opposing FOCA and similar legislation to their U.S. representatives and senators.

"It's not being political," Bishop Vann explained. "It's engaging ourselves and living the Gospel of Life. We need to make our voices known and not just sit back."

Speaking up against violence and death when confronted with evil was a theme the bishop broached earlier in his homily. He challenged the gathering of pro-life ministers and supporters to consider what history will say about modern-day efforts to protect the defenseless.

"Will it be said that we lacked courage, that we were not precise, and afraid to speak up in the face of a seeming majority," he queried. "Or, will it be said, in those days, they spoke with clarity in the face of confusion about life, God, the Gospel, the most vulnerable, and those not yet born."

As America approached one more anniversary of legalized abortion, the bishop implored the assembly not to give up.

"With God's help and grace,

be messengers of life in the face of violence, to all people we meet," he said. "History is being written now. What will be said about us?"

Sponsored by the diocesan Respect Life Office, the Mass included a presentation of candles and the Book of Innocents. During the offertory procession, 49 members of the congregation placed lit, red votive candles on the altar to commemorate the 49 million unborn children killed in U.S. abortions since the practice was legalized 36 years ago. The Book of Innocents contains the names of some of those victims. Respect Life workers were also given a special blessing by Bishop Vann.

Lauren and Matt Warner were among the gathering of pro-life supporters. The St. Maria Goretti parishioners from Arlington are expecting their first baby in March.

"We're very passionate about the life movement and having our first child has made it all the more real for us," the expectant mother said. "We do everything we can to pray for an end to abortion."

Matt Warner, who has attended the National March for Life in Washington, D.C., and participated in the 40 Days for Life program last fall, encourages others to become publicly involved in pro-life activities.

"Standing outside an abortion clinic isn't easy, but it's a way of putting your faith out there," he says.

And the Warners say it's important to remember the miracle of life in your own family.

"A lot of couples are hesitant to have children because of their busy lifestyle," Lauren says. "It's important to support pro-life issues, but remember to be pro-life in your own family and realize the beauty children bring to your marriage."



A woman and her daughter place a votive candle on the altar to represent the number of abortions performed in the U.S. since 1973.



Lauren and Matt Warner speak with friends after the Respect Life Mass at St. Patrick Cathedral. Lauren is seven months pregnant.



Bishop Kevin Vann blesses the votive candles and the Book of Innocents at the annual Respect Life Mass at St. Patrick Cathedral.



Representatives from various pro-life organizations carried their group's banner during the procession of the Respect Life Mass Jan. 16. Pictured are representatives from Youth for Life and Rachel Ministries.

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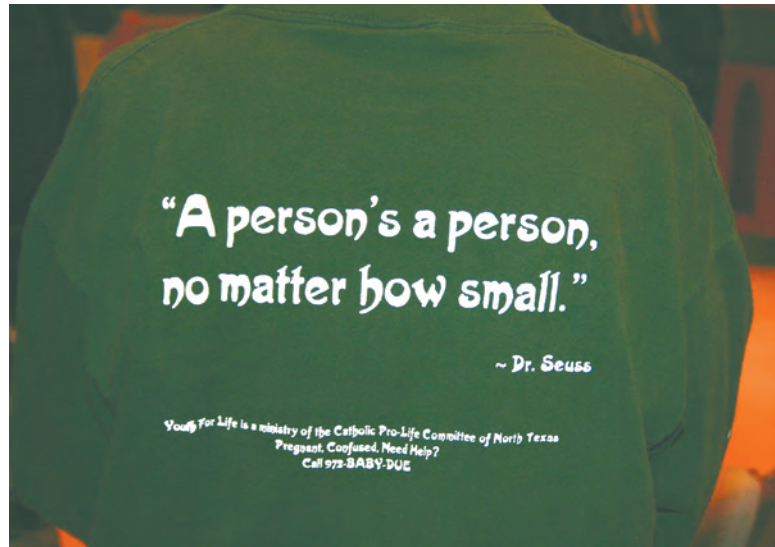
HIGH MASS SECOND AND FOURTH SUNDAYS

LOW MASS FIRST AND THIRD SUNDAYS



Diocesan

Nolan Catholic students spread pro-life message on campus



Toni Corbett, a Nolan theology teacher and moderator for the Lifesavers organization, wears a T-shirt promoting the pro-life cause.

Story and photos by Joan Kurkowski-Gillen Correspondent

The purple t-shirt Andrea Ordoñez wore over her Nolan Catholic High School uniform Jan. 16 meant more than just participating in a pro-life activity on campus. The keepsake holds special significance for the senior who is part of the student body's Lifesavers organization.

The shirt was designed by a

national movement dedicated to helping people who struggle with depression, addiction, self-injury, and suicide. Ordoñez wears the T-shirt in memory of a friend who killed himself last year.

"I saw how it affected another friend of mine who knew him well," she says, explaining how the "To Write Love On Her Arms" campaign started as a way to raise money for a young

"Students don't realize the huge numbers we're dealing with when it comes to abortion. We want to give them facts and information, so they can have a better understanding of the issue. The topic makes some students uncomfortable, but it's good for them to be exposed to it."

— Senior Susan Matassa, president of Lifesavers

woman's treatment and grew into a larger suicide prevention effort. "It definitely made me more aware."

Teen suicide was one of the issues included during a Jan. 12-16 Respect Life observance at Nolan that also highlighted abortion, euthanasia, and the death penalty. The school's Lifesavers Club sponsored several thought-provoking activities for students with help from the



Freshman Amanda Doyle contemplates the symbolism of the crosses on display at Nolan Catholic High School.

Diocese of Fort Worth Youth for Life group.

"The idea is to inform the kids and get them thinking and involved in the pro-life cause," explains Sue Laux, Youth for Life director. "This is the second year we've done a pro-life week at Nolan."

Because it coincides with the approaching anniversary of *Roe vs. Wade*, the landmark Supreme Court decision legalizing abor-

tion, many activities focused on abortion. One event featured one-third of Nolan's student population in black T-shirts. The gesture symbolized unborn members of the high school generation lost to abortion. Crosses were also erected in front of the school to illustrate the number of unborn children killed in Fort Worth clinics each week.

Members of the Lifesavers organization also distributed spiritual adoption cards and broadcast a pro-life video in classes. Many students attended a respect life prayer service in the chapel on Friday.

"Students don't realize the huge numbers we're dealing with when it comes to abortion," says Susan Matassa, a Nolan senior and president of Lifesavers. "We want to give them facts and information, so they can have a better understanding of the issue. The topic makes some students uncomfortable, but it's good for them to be exposed to it."

Toni Corbett, a Nolan theology teacher and moderator of Lifesavers, says the school's pro-life week activities challenge students "to see what they can do," to raise the profile of life issues in society. Prior to the weeklong events, freshman religion classes heard a presentation by Father Bill Bellrose, CPM, who spoke on the pro-life movement around the world and the impact abortion is having on global birth rates.


"A small group of committed students belong to Lifesavers, and we're always hoping to build our group," says Corbett, who hopes the club's work increases membership. "We're always asking students to step up and get involved."

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Viewpoints

FOCA's threat against human life challenges us to take a stand

By Lucas Pollice

Once again this month, we recall the anniversary of the Supreme Court's *Roe vs. Wade* decision that legalized abortion in the United States. Since that decision, more than 49 million innocent lives have been lost through abortion. Countless other lives of women and even men have been permanently scarred because of the spiritual and emotional side effects of having an abortion.

In addition, we face many new and emerging threats to unborn life through biomedical and fertility research and procedures such as embryonic stem cell research, attempts at human cloning, and *in vitro* fertilization.

All of these involve the direct and intentional destruction of innocent human lives. The Church has clearly and forcefully taught that the intentional killing of an innocent human being, from the moment of conception to natural death, is absolutely prohibited, even if some good may come of it.

Last month, the Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith issued a new document entitled *Dignitatis Personae* on certain bioethical issues and questions. In this timely and powerful document the Church upholds its constant teaching that human life must be respected and defended from the very moment of conception:

Although the presence of the spiritual soul cannot be observed experimentally, the conclusions of science regarding the human embryo give "a valuable indication for discerning by the use of reason a personal presence at the moment of the first appearance of a human life: how could a human individual not be a human person?" Indeed, the reality of the human being for the entire span of life, both before and after birth, does not allow us to posit either a change in nature or a gradation in moral value, since it

Do not underestimate the power of prayer. We must pray fervently that this legislation does not pass. Pray for our national leaders that they may see the truth about abortion and uphold the rights and dignity of the unborn. The rosary is an especially efficacious prayer not only for stopping this legislation, but ending abortion all together.

possesses full anthropological and ethical status. The human embryo has, therefore, from the very beginning, the dignity proper to a person. (Dignitatis Personae, 5)

Abortion claims many reasons and arguments. Many young women find themselves in very challenging and frightening, even dangerous situations with shaky home lives, unstable relationships, and limited resources. Many also face great fear in adverse prenatal diagnoses.

Any one of these would seem overwhelming, and yet we know of life's immeasurable value, and so we are called as Christians to aid those who are burdened, frightened, and overwhelmed. We are called to defend with maximum determination the dignity of each and every human life from conception until natural death while at the same time proclaiming to all the Good News and the promise of eternal life with our Creator and Redeemer.

A NEW THREAT

As we continue as a Church to tirelessly defend and protect life, a new and daunting threat is emerging in the form of federal legislation entitled the Freedom of Choice Act or FOCA. This bill states that every woman has a "fundamental right" to abortion and that no government can "interfere" or "deny" this right. According to a fact sheet provided by the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops (USCCB):

FOCA states that every woman has a "fundamental right" to have an abortion, and no government (federal, state, or local) may "deny" or "interfere with" this right. Moreover, no government may "discriminate" against the exercise of this right when regulating or providing "benefits, facilities, services, or information" to the public. In other words, abortion may not be treated differently from live birth — if a public program supports motherhood, it must equally support abortion. FOCA endangers a wide range of laws enacted by the people and their elected representatives

over 35 years — laws upheld under Roe and cases applying it. These include laws on informed consent, physician licensure, clinic safety, and taxpayer funding. FOCA's far-reaching rule on abortion is more radical than anything wrought by Roe.

Thus, FOCA would make a woman's so called "right" to an abortion permanent and all encompassing. Here are some of the consequences if FOCA is allowed to pass:

1. FOCA will require taxpayers to pay for abortions. The current language in FOCA states that the government cannot discriminate against abortion in publicly funded programs — in other words there cannot be any exemptions for our tax dollars funding abortions.

2. FOCA will require states to allow partial-birth and other late term abortions. The recent federal and state bans on partial-birth abortions will be removed by FOCA, and this hideous form of abortion will be made available at any time for any reason.

3. FOCA will overturn laws allowing the right of conscientious objection to abortion. FOCA will in essence force doctors and hospitals who are opposed to performing abortions to perform them — including Catholic hospitals. The U.S. bishops have already made it clear that they will shut down Catholic hospitals before allowing abortions.

4. FOCA will overturn and nullify parental notification laws. Parents can no longer be notified of a minor's decision to have an abortion or to be involved in that decision.

These are only a few of the consequences of this dangerous anti-life legislation. In addition, there is increased support for passing FOCA in the newly seated Congress, and President Obama has promised to sign FOCA if passed by

Congress.

How to Act

Therefore we must act now and act quickly, if FOCA is to be stopped. Here are three effective things we can do:

1. Pray: Do not underestimate the power of prayer. We must pray fervently that this legislation does not pass. Pray for our national leaders that they may see the truth about abortion and uphold the rights and dignity of the unborn. The rosary is an especially efficacious prayer not only for stopping this legislation, but ending abortion altogether.

2. Write or contact your representatives in Congress and your senators: The United States Catholic Bishops have called for a nationwide postcard campaign in all of the parishes the weekend of Jan. 24 and 25. Bishop Vann is asking all of our parishes in the diocese to also participate. Postcards are being made available to sign and send to our representatives and senators urging them to vote against FOCA.

3. Educate: Take the time to inform family, friends, and coworkers about FOCA. Many are ignorant of this legislation and do not know of the terrible consequences if it passes. We as a Church need to make others aware of these issues, as these are not just Catholic issues, but issues that involve and affect everyone in our country.

Now is the time to act, and we must act with a united voice to stop this legislation and to be the voice for those who do not yet have a voice.

For more information on FOCA, please go to our diocesan Web site www.fwdiocese.org and click on "Respect Life" or contact Chanacee Ruth-Killgore in the Diocesan Respect Life Office at (817) 560-3300 Ext. 257 or at cruthkillgore@fwdiocese.org. You can also go to the USCCB Web site for additional information, downloads, fliers, and more at www.usccb.org/prolife/issues/FOCA/index.shtml.



Lucas Pollice is director of Catechesis and Adult Faith Formation and RCIA for the diocese. Lucas holds a degree in theology from the Franciscan University of Steubenville and has a master's degree in theological studies from the Institute for Pastoral Theology of Ave Maria University. He is an adjunct professor of theology with the Cardinal Newman Institute in Fort Worth. Lucas and his wife, Mary, have five children, Cecilia, Nicholas, Timothy, Christian, and Julia.

Protecting the Earth

a matter of morality

By Fr. John S. Rausch

In 1988 James Hansen, a NASA scientist, testified before Congress that burning fossil fuels — coal, gas, and oil — was warming the earth.

At first the statement was met with scepticism, and public relations people from industry began actively sowing doubts about it. Yet, warm year followed warm year, until 2007 marked a watershed moment.

That year the earth experienced a dramatic surge in methane, a heat-trapping gas, from the melting permafrost that was accelerating further thawing. That same year the Northwest Passage stayed open all September for the first time in history.

Scientists now believe the earth has reached its “tipping point” for Arctic ice, which means the physical world on its own is taking command of the process that humans began. Some scientists predicted all Arctic summer ice would be gone by 2070, but now other scientists have revised the schedule for possibly 2012!

Further, the science community recognizes that the earth verges on crossing similar thresholds governing the reliability of monsoons, the acidification of the oceans, the availability of water from alpine glaciers, and the actual level of the sea.

For the past one thousand years the amount of carbon dioxide in the atmosphere hovered around 275 ppm (parts per million), but with the Industrial Revolution and the accelerated burning of fossil fuels, that number started to rise. Twenty years after testifying before Congress, James Hansen with several coauthors published their latest findings saying to preserve a planet capable of sustaining civilization, the

“Today the ecological crisis has assumed such proportions as to be the responsibility of everyone...I wish to repeat that the ecological crisis is a moral issue.”

— Pope John Paul II
1990 World Day of Peace Message

amount of carbon dioxide must “be reduced from its current 385 ppm to at most 350 ppm.” Standing at 385 ppm, the level of carbon dioxide is growing by more than 2 ppm annually!

John Paul II reminded us in early 1990: “Today the ecological crisis has assumed such proportions as to be the responsibility of everyone...I wish to repeat that the ecological crisis is a moral issue.”

Even with the weighty evidence from the scientific community clearly demonstrating the reality of global warming and its dire consequences, politicians and ordinary people hesitate to face the urgency of the situation. Some cling to denial, but others trust in science and technology to find a “silver bullet” to alleviate humanity’s rightful concern. Yet disasters happen because sometimes science can neither prevent a threat nor detect it early enough.

When the great tsunami hit Southeast Asia on December 26, 2004, a quarter of a million people died. In its aftermath, survivors were amazed at how few dead animals lay among the debris. Stories surfaced that hours before the deadly “Harbor Wave” struck, animals were fleeing to higher ground, even some elephants breaking their chains to escape. While

animals apparently sense the natural signs developed over thousands of years to help them survive, humans seem distracted by material things that keep them disconnected from the messages of nature.

“An education in ecological responsibility is urgent,” writes John Paul II, “responsibility for oneself, for others, and for the earth...a true education in responsibility entails a genuine conversion in ways of thought and behavior.”

Our economic system based on growth from burning fossil fuels is ruining our physical lives by destabilizing the climate and altering the sea level. We are burning not only the furniture, but the studs in the walls to fuel the furnace.

For the good of future generations and the survival of many poor today, we must somehow change our life styles and public policies and reduce the carbon dioxide levels to below the threshold number of 350 ppm.



Father John Rausch, a Glenmary priest, is a social justice educator and writer who has devoted himself to working with the working people of Appalachia for more than two and a half decades. His column appears in the Catholic press across the U.S.

Somewhere between his mouth and my ears, the words he was speaking and the waves in the air ...

Well, their

Paths Collided

By Kathy Cribari Hamer

The other day I met a gentleman standing in a repair shop line. He was a kind man with gentle eyes, and before we parted, he said something that had to do with paths.

The end of his sentence rhymed with “ide” or “ahd,” depending on the degree of your Texas accent. But I didn’t hear the whole thing. So, to avoid saying “Pardon?” too many times, I smiled and agreed.

But what did he say, exactly? If it was, “Some of our paths have collided,” that could be either prophetic or historical, since I have collided with many things in my life: posts, poles, columns, curbs, signs, fences, garage doors, my front porch, and once a grocery cart. That one wasn’t my fault, because I was the colliddee, while the errant metal monster, controlled by a careless shopper gone wild, was the collider.

None of those events had anything to do with this man. He wasn’t the recipient of any of my smashes. I hadn’t bumped the back of his pickup truck or even stepped on his toe while walking into the shop.

Maybe he’d said, “Sometimes our path’s disregarded,” which would be true. I didn’t know about him, but my own life had been a comical series of wrong turns and poorly-estimated moves. How would he have known that?

Driving home with my daughter Julie, I laughed, trying to figure out what the man had said.

“Maybe what he said was ‘Sometimes our lamps are lopsided,’” I said, “because that’s exactly why we went to the repair shop!”

It was my mother’s lamp. She gave it to me when I was 18 years old and my father had died. Mother’s goal was to replace her bedroom furniture, but she did it the way mothers frequently do, purchasing new furniture for me instead, while taking mine for herself.

She bought a chest, a dressing table with mirror, a cushy chair, and a beautiful canopy bed — all for me.

She also bought the lamp. It had a frilly, powder blue lampshade, and stood on a gold fillagree base. It belonged in a princess’s room, I knew, but now it was mine, and it touched off the bedroom with delicate style. I treasured it forever — until two months ago.

That night I was editing a video, and about 11 p.m. decided to quit for the night, so I got a snack, turned on my bath water and returned to my computer, to eat ice cream while reviewing the last section I had finished. Maybe I would make some corrections.

I put on headphones at 11:10 p.m., lost track of time

SEE HAMER, P. 26

Launching Workshops (in English)

Day	Date	Time	Church	City
Friday	March 6	6:45 p.m.	St. Francis of Assisi	Grapevine
Saturday	March 7	10 a.m.	Our Lady Queen of Peace	Wichita Falls
Sunday	March 8	3 p.m.	St. Stephen	Weatherford / Denton
Monday	March 9	6:45 p.m.	Immaculate Conception	Denton
Tuesday	March 10	6:45 p.m.	St. Vincent de Paul	Arlington
Wednesday	March 11	6:45 p.m.	St. Andrew	Fort Worth

Evangelization Workshops (in English)

Day	Date	Time	Church	City
Wednesday	April 22	7 p.m.	St. Michael the Archangel	Bedford
Thursday	April 23	7 p.m.	Most Blessed Sacrament	Arlington
Friday	April 24	7 p.m.	St. Ann	Burleson
Saturday	April 25	10 a.m.	Catholic Center	Fort Worth
Sunday	April 26	3 p.m.	Sacred Heart	Wichita Falls
Monday	April 27	7 p.m.	Immaculate Conception	Denton

Why Catholic? touches those who are ‘coming home’ to their Catholic faith

By Nicki Prevou
Correspondent

Hal Hughes, a former Methodist, converted to Catholicism several years ago, but when he left Iowa and came to Texas five years ago, he was hoping to reconnect with the church and to learn a great deal more about his Catholic faith. He joined St. Michael Church in Bedford, and, at the invitation of Deacon Harry Heinz, quickly became a part of the Re-Membering Church group at the parish.

Re-Membering Church offers baptized Catholics who have been estranged from the church the opportunity to meet regularly within a small faith community setting to share Scripture, examine the teachings of the church, discuss their beliefs, and to pray together, explains Hughes.

“I felt like I needed to learn more about what Catholics believe and why,” Hughes says.

He has now taken on a leadership role in the group’s weekly meetings, and has especially enjoyed using the *Why Catholic?* resource materials, which the St. Michael’s group has incorporated into the meetings since September of 2008.

Why Catholic?, a four-year program consisting of 48 sessions on Catholic beliefs, sacraments, morality, and prayer, is based upon Scripture and the *Catechism of the Catholic Church*. St. Michael Church is the first parish in the Diocese of Fort Worth to work with the materials, and the response has been overwhelmingly positive within the Re-Membering Church group, says Hughes.

“Using the *Why Catholic?* materials has actually improved our meetings,” he reflects. “It gives

more structure to the weekly presentations, and does an excellent job of teaching the faith. I would recommend [*Why Catholic?*] to anyone who wants to learn more about the church, and to learn why the Catholic Church is the universal church.”

Longtime St. Michael’s parishioner Eileen Ewell, a member of the Re-Membering Church leadership team, has been involved with the group since its inception six years ago. “Using the *Why Catholic?* materials has been very beneficial for the group,” says Ewell. “We have about 25 or 30 people coming together every Tuesday night for two hours. The faith-sharing questions offered in the booklet have been especially helpful.”

“I’m a senior citizen, and most people in our group are over the age of 30,” she says. “We never even looked at a Bible when we were growing up, but now, we enjoy examining Scripture and discussing our faith. It’s been wonderful, and we’ve really enjoyed using these new resources.”

Re-Membering Church member Monty Daigle agrees that *Why Catholic?* resources have been a spiritually enriching addition to the meetings. Daigle, who had been away from his Catholic faith for 35 years until 2007, suffers from chronic kidney disease and undergoes dialysis three times a week.

“Father Tom Kennedy heard my confession and anointed me after my diagnosis in June of 2007, and then he suggested that I surround myself with positive people who would support my Catholic faith, and he pointed me towards the Re-Membering Church group,” says Daigle. “I

was welcomed and have received so much help and support from the group. Now I go to daily Mass on the days I don’t have dialysis, I say the rosary, and I have become a Eucharistic minister.”

Daigle will take his turn as a leader at one of the upcoming Re-Membering Church sessions, he says. “If you had told me two years ago I would be doing this I would not have believed you, but the weekly meetings, especially because of the Scripture passages, the teachings, and the discussions that we have, have helped me tremendously in my faith,” he explains.

Jackie Weik, a parishioner at St. Michael’s for the past 26 years, is in her third year of ministry with the Re-Membering Church group. Each year, she serves as a “companion” to a returning Catholic within the group.

“It’s so rewarding to see people coming back to the church and to see God working in their lives after they have been away from their Catholic faith for awhile,” says Weik. “Right now I’m a companion to a young single mom with a 7-year-old boy. I stay in touch with her, attend the meetings with her; we often go to breakfast together, and I just try to walk with her. This was the first year for our group to use the [*Why Catholic?*] resource, and the materials have been very enlightening. The questions that we use at the end of the chapters get you to think about your faith and the rewards of having God in your life. I’ve been a lifelong Catholic, and these materials have helped me to think about how lucky we are to have our Catholic faith.”

WHY CATHOLIC? JOURNEY THROUGH THE CATECHISM

Launching plan for Why Catholic?

CURRENT WORKSHOPS

Launching *Why Catholic?* Provides the approach and assists in creating a tailored plan to implement *Why Catholic?* as a total parish experience. Workshop covers responsibilities of the *Why Catholic?* Parish Team, tools for involving maximum parish participation, invitational strategies, and how to plan and execute a successful *Why Catholic?* Night. **Target audience:** Pastor, pastoral staff, *Why Catholic?* Team, and catechetical leaders

Nuts and Bolts of Catholic Evangelization Deepens understanding of Catholic evangelization and explores the relationship between evangelization and catechesis. Offers practical concrete strategies for outreach to active and inactive Catholics. **Target audience:** Pastor, pastoral staff, *Why Catholic?* Team

THE NEXT STEPS

August/September 2009 Small Community Leader Formation: What we believe Provides a basic theological grounding in the core beliefs of our faith as expressed in the Apostles’ Creed, with special emphasis on the central mystery of our Christian faith — the Holy Trinity. Also offers practical skills to facilitate adult learning and to explore key elements of “Our Hearts Were Burning within Us.” **Target audience:** Small community leaders, *Why Catholic?* Team

October 2009 Faith Sharing Profession of Faith: Sessions 1-6

Winter 2009/2010 Faith Sharing — Faith Formation Workshop: Scripture and Tradition: The Braid of Revelation Centers around the Christian conviction that in Jesus Christ, God has fully revealed Himself to humanity. Through the braiding together of Scripture and Tradition, the presence and meaning of Christ in the world is discovered.

Target audience: Entire parish, *Why Catholic?* Team, small community leaders, participants in small communities, catechists, RCIA participants

Lent 2010 Faith Sharing Professions of Faith: Sessions 7-12

Spring 2010 Retreat: Discovering God in the Ordinary Provides an opportunity for reflecting on the infinite beauty of our Father Creator in creation. Explores the experience of encountering the God revealed in Jesus Christ in our everyday life. Participants are invited into silence, prayer, and ritual. **Target audience:** Entire parish

The program will continue for three more years, always including leadership formation and faith formation workshops as well as the two faith sharing seasons and the annual retreat.

There is no such thing as “maintenance-ministry” today. We either must listen to the Lord’s directive, “Set out into the deep,” or diminish. One of the most dynamic ways to build up your faith community is through small groups, and Why Catholic? is a small-group initiative, specifically designed by RENEW International.

— Bishop Joseph Estabrook
Military Ordinariate

Frequently Asked Questions About Why Catholic?

1. What benefits will *Why Catholic?* offer to my parish?

As parishioners deepen their experience and knowledge of their faith, they become more confident sharing their faith with family and friends. With more insight, liturgies become more meaningful. Being part of small communities strengthens parishioners’ feelings of belonging. RCIA and sacramental preparation is made richer. Catechists gain solid faith formation.

2. How is the program structured?

Why Catholic? mirrors the four pillars of the Catechism of the Catholic Church. Each pillar is covered in one book for faith-sharing in small communities, and supported with faith formation workshops and retreat experiences. By completing each book in two six-week seasons, the full series can be completed in 4 years. People can benefit joining at any point in the process.

3. Does *Why Catholic?* offer sound doctrine?

The materials for *Why Catholic?* include direct Catechism quotations and citations. They received the Imprimatur and Nihil Obstat and have been reviewed by the US Bishops’ Ad Hoc Committee to Oversee the Use of the Catechism.

The Why Catholic? process makes pastors’ continuing faith-education responsibility easy to do.

— Msgr. Kurt Kemo
Vicar General
Diocese of Steubenville

Why Catholic? equips and empowers our Catholic laity to own, articulate and live their Catholic faith and identity.

— Rebecca Titford
Director,
Office of Religious
Education
Archdiocese of Mobile

Although *Why Catholic?* materials and training sessions are only offered in English and Spanish, Bishop Vann has asked that all materials be translated into Vietnamese so that parishioners in Vietnamese-speaking churches may also participate. For more information, contact Father Carmen Mele, OP, coordinator of the *Why Catholic?* program for the diocese at (817) 560-3300, ext. 262 or by e-mail at cmele@fwdioc.org.

Fr. Mele urges parishes to take final steps for *Why Catholic?*

By Father Carmen Mele, OP
Coordinator of *Why Catholic?*

If builders came to our door with a load of wood, a box of nails, a bag of cement, and a flatbed of blocks but without a blueprint, we should not have confidence that he would build anything useful. Just so, after we receive the *Why Catholic?* Parish Kit, we need a plan to make the program work. Our plan may be found in the red-orange book of the Parish Kit sub-entitled: “An Implementation Resource.”

From now until the “Launching Workshops,” parishes should focus on the first 24 pages of the book. The

pastor and staff have to read the introductory material (pages 1-12) and then name members of the *Why Catholic?* Planning Team and choose a team coordinator (pages 13-18). Although we hope that pastors attend the Launching Workshop and the Evangelization Workshop, their basic tasks are finished at this point. Once team members are in place, they should conduct an initial meeting (pages 19-24) and plan on attending the one of the Launching Workshops (see schedule above). Participating in a Launching Workshop as a team will enable members to strategize its

next steps in implementing a successful program in their parishes. As indicated, there is still plenty of time to begin the implementation of *Why Catholic?* But please do not wait any longer in selecting team members, choosing a team coordinator, and having an initial team meeting. As all worthwhile endeavors, *Why Catholic?* requires attention and effort. We believe that it will bring fruits well beyond all the energy invested. For more information, contact Father Carmen Mele, OP, by phone at (817) 560-3300, ext. 262 or by e-mail at cmele@fwdioc.org.



WHY CATHOLIC?

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Developed by RENEW International, *Why Catholic?* offers a spiritual, guided tour of sacred scripture and the *Catechism of the Catholic Church* for small groups in parishes. With practical tools and training based on RENEW’s 25 years of experience, participants truly get to know their faith, strengthen their knowledge of the Catholic Church and gain the confidence to share their faith with others.

For more information, call: (908) 769-5400 or visit www.WhyCatholic.org



Cardinal George urges Obama to protect conscience rights

FROM PAGE 1
destruction of unborn human life," Cardinal George said. "I urge you to consider that this could be a terrible mistake — morally, politically, and in terms of advancing the solidarity and well-being of our nation's people."

Specifically, the USCCB president mentioned the recently issued Department of Health and Human Services regulation protecting the conscience rights of health care providers and institutions; the so-called Mexico City policy barring the use of U.S. family planning funds to promote or perform abortions in developing nations; and current embryonic stem-cell policy prohibiting federal funding of research involving embryonic stem-cell lines created after 2001.

Cardinal George said he hoped the new president would "consider these comments in the spirit in which they are intended, as an invitation to set aside political pressures and ideologies and focus on the priorities and challenges that will unite us as a nation."

"Again I want to express our hopes for your administration, and our offer to cooperate in advancing the common good and protecting the poor and vulnerable in these challenging times," he added.

The cardinal noted that dur-

ing his campaign Obama "spoke often about a need to reduce abortions" and had said he had no definite answer when asked at what point a baby has human rights.

"I think your remarks provide a basis for common ground," Cardinal George said. "Uncertainty as to when human rights begin provides no basis for compelling others to violate their conviction that these rights exist from the beginning. After all, those people may be right."

"And if the goal is to reduce abortions, that will not be achieved by involving the government in expanding and promoting abortions," he added.

Commenting specifically on the HHS conscience guarantees, Cardinal George said the regulation was "a long-overdue measure for implementing three statutes enacted by Congress over the last 35 years."

"An administration committed to faithfully implementing and enforcing the laws of the United States will want to retain this common-sense regulation, which explicitly protects the rights of health professionals who favor or oppose abortion to serve the basic health needs of their communities," he said.

"Suggestions that government involvement in health care will be aimed at denying conscience, or excluding

Catholic and other health care providers from participation in serving the public good, could threaten much-needed health care reform at the outset," the cardinal added.

He said the Mexico City policy, first implemented in 1984, "has wrongly been attacked as a restriction on foreign aid for family planning" but instead ensures that family planning funds "are not diverted to organizations dedicated to performing and promoting abortions instead of reducing them."

"Once the clear line between family planning and abortion is erased, the idea of using family planning to reduce abortions becomes meaningless, and abortion tends to replace contraception as the means for reducing family size," said the cardinal's letter to Obama.

On embryonic stem-cell research, Cardinal George said "recent startling advances in reprogramming adult cells," along with progress in research using adult and cord-blood stem cells, make any change in current policy "especially pointless."

"To divert scarce funds away from these promising avenues for research and treatment toward the avenue that is most morally controversial as well as most medically speculative would be a sad victory of politics over science," he said.

Bush proclaims Jan. 18 National Sanctity of Human Life Day

WASHINGTON (CNS)—Declaring that every life is "a gift from our Creator that is sacred, unique, and worthy of protection," President George W. Bush proclaimed Jan. 18, the Sunday before the 36th anniversary of *Roe vs. Wade*, as National Sanctity of Human Life Day.

On this day "our country recognizes that each person, including every person waiting to be born, has a special place and purpose in this world. We also underscore our dedication to heeding this message of conscience by speaking up for the weak and voiceless among us," he said in the proclamation issued Jan. 15.

Bush urged Americans "to recognize this day with appropriate ceremonies and to underscore our commitment to respecting and protecting the life and dignity of every human being."

On Jan. 22, 1973, the U.S. Supreme Court handed down the *Roe vs. Wade* decision, which legalized abortion, and the *Doe vs. Bolton* decision, which lifted state restrictions on abortion.

In his proclamation, the president noted that his administration had been "committed to building a culture of life by vigorously promoting adoption and parental notification laws, opposing federal funding for

"Our country recognizes that each person, including every person waiting to be born, has a special place and purpose in this world. We also underscore our dedication to heeding this message of conscience by speaking up for the weak and voiceless among us."

— from the proclamation

abortions overseas, encouraging teen abstinence, and funding crisis pregnancy programs."

Bush also noted the pro-life legislation he signed into law during his presidency, such as the federal law to protect infants born alive after an attempted abortion or other procedure, the federal ban on partial-birth abortion and the Unborn Victims of Violence Act.

"We aspire to build a society in which every child is welcome in life and protected in law," he said in the proclamation. "We also encourage more of our fellow Americans to join our just and noble cause. History tells us that with a cause rooted in our deepest principles and appealing to the best instincts of our citizens, we will prevail."

Bleach given to sterilize water, fight cholera in Zimbabwe

CAPE TOWN, South Africa (CNS)—A South African Catholic charity is raising money to buy household bleach to sterilize drinking water in neighboring Zimbabwe, where a cholera epidemic has killed more than 1,600 people.

About \$16,000 has been raised since the Cape Town-based Catholic Welfare and Development's Jik for Zim campaign was launched in mid-December, Sally Timmel, coordinator of the campaign, told Catholic News Service Jan. 5. Jik is a brand of bleach.

Zimbabwe's Catholic Development Commission and other local nongovernmental organizations will distribute the bleach, with instructions on how to use it, to more than 1,000 towns and villages affected by the highly infectious bacterial disease contracted by ingesting contaminated food or water, Timmel said.

Cholera, which causes severe diarrhea and dehydration, has spread

to all of Zimbabwe's 10 provinces. The World Health Organization said Dec. 31 that Zimbabwe had more than 30,000 reported cases of cholera and the infection rate shows no signs of slowing.

"One teaspoon of Jik will purify 25 liters of drinking water overnight," said the campaign's press release.

The WHO said related cases of cholera also have been reported in neighboring South Africa, Botswana, and Mozambique as infected Zimbabweans cross borders in search of help. The epidemic has heightened the humanitarian crisis in Zimbabwe, which has chronic food and fuel shortages and where prices double every 24 hours.

Aid agencies say that more than 5 million Zimbabweans face starvation.

"When we have enough Jik we will use whatever money is left to buy food for Zimbabweans," Timmel said.

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PG PARENTAL STRONG SUGGESTION: SOME MATERIAL MAY BE OFFENSIVE TO CHILDREN

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Diocesan / International

Pope Benedict XVI says Christians need to promote life, traditional families

VATICAN CITY (CNS) — Today more than ever, Christian families need to pay witness to and promote the irreplaceable value of life and the family based on marriage between a man and a woman, Pope Benedict XVI said.

"The best service that we Christians can offer today's society," he said, is being "people who are free and rich with human and Gospel values and who are on a journey toward holiness."

The traditional family is "an indispensable foundation of society and peoples as well as an irreplaceable good for children who deserve to come into the world as a fruit of love and the total and generous giving of the parents," he said, at the end of the Sixth World Meeting of Families which took place Jan. 14-18 in Mexico City.

The pope made his comments via satellite from the Vatican Jan. 18 after a closing Mass at the shrine of Our Lady of Guadalupe. The Mass was celebrated by the pope's envoy, Vatican Secretary of State Cardinal Tarcisio Bertone.

"Today more than ever, there is a need for the witness and public commitment of all Christians

to reaffirm the dignity and the unique and irreplaceable value of the family founded on marriage between a man and a woman," he said.

Christians also need to show that they are open to life at all its stages, he said.

Every Christian must help promote "legislative and administrative measures" that support the traditional family and their "inalienable rights," he said.

The pope said the family, "founded on indissoluble marriage between a man and a woman, is the expression of this relational, filial, and communal aspect of life. It is the setting where men and women are enabled to be born with dignity, and to grow and develop in an integral manner."

But families' efforts to be a true school of humanity and perennial values are being hindered by "a deceptive concept of freedom," the pope said.

This false sense of freedom, he said, glorifies whims and individual impulses "to the point of leaving everyone locked up in the prison of his or her own 'I.'"

"True human freedom comes

from having been created in the image and likeness of God and, therefore, should be exercised with responsibility, always opting for the true good, so that it becomes love, the gift of self," the pope said.

Real love and closeness among family members are needed more than ideals or theories, he added.

It is through one's concrete experience in the home "that one learns to truly live and value life and health, freedom and peace, justice and truth, work, harmony, and respect," he said.

Pope Benedict also said his prayers were with families who are facing the trials of poverty, illness, isolation, and separation because of migration, as well as those families being persecuted for their Christian faith.

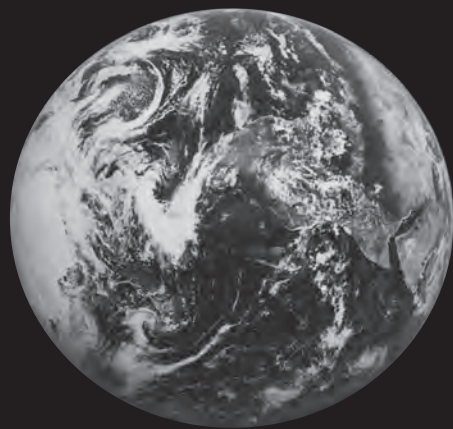
He encouraged large families who are oftentimes criticized or not understood by others yet are giving "an example of generosity and faith in God."

He urged families to pray together, especially the rosary, and to build their faith on listening to the word of God and working to incorporate Gospel values concretely in their lives.

Special Collection: Propagation of the Faith World Mission Sunday

Parish Name	Parish Location	Propagation of the Faith October 2007	Propagation of the Faith October 2008
Immaculate Heart of Mary	Abbott	263.00	188.00
Jesus of Nazareth	Albany	0.00	35.00
Holy Redeemer	Aledo	1,254.00	1,219.99
Most Blessed Sacrament	Arlington	3,356.24	4,144.25
St. Joseph	Arlington	2,044.76	1,656.68
St. Maria Goretti	Arlington	2,661.06	2,462.50
St. Mary the Virgin	Arlington	629.00	170.00
St. Matthew	Arlington	550.00	0.00
St. Vincent de Paul	Arlington	1,010.73	932.00
Vietnamese Martyrs	Arlington	2,554.00	2,033.00
Holy Trinity	Azle	650.00	637.00
St. Michael	Bedford	2,010.00	4,088.00
St. Jerome	Bowie	50.00	85.00
Sacred Heart of Jesus	Breckenridge	463.87	404.09
St. John the Baptist	Bridgeport	425.64	514.11
St. Jude Thaddeus	Burkburnett	474.00	340.00
St. Ann	Burleson	1,053.00	1,507.50
St. Catherine of Siena	Carrollton	2,313.00	2,089.00
Holy Rosary	Cisco	98.00	227.00
St. Joseph	Cleburne	910.34	768.49
Holy Angels	Clifton	608.45	0.00
Good Shepherd	Colleyville	2,139.00	3,825.00
Holy Cross	The Colony	1,199.31	253.55
Sacred Heart	Comanche	172.63	0.00
St. Joseph	Crowell	27.00	95.00
Assumption/Blessed Virgin Mary	Decatur	622.15	766.20
Our Lady of Guadalupe	De Leon	63.00	66.00
Immaculate Conception	Denton	704.50	1,165.46
St. Mark	Denton	2,681.96	2,601.10
St. Mary	Dublin	559.00	445.00
St. Francis Xavier	Eastland	60.00	97.00
St. Paul	Electra	36.00	0.00
All Saints	Fort Worth	1,659.60	1,582.56
Christ the King	Fort Worth	0.00	939.00
Holy Family	Fort Worth	2,210.00	2,433.00
Holy Name of Jesus	Fort Worth	426.00	0.00
Immaculate Heart of Mary	Fort Worth	0.00	1,898.00
Our Lady of Fatima	Fort Worth	2,348.15	1,149.51
Our Lady of Guadalupe	Fort Worth	1,842.68	2,339.00
Our Mother of Mercy	Fort Worth	305.00	0.00
San Mateo	Fort Worth	352.00	417.00
St. Andrew	Fort Worth	4,156.32	4,315.81
St. Bartholomew	Fort Worth	5,710.33	5,309.20
St. George	Fort Worth	606.00	766.00
St. John the Apostle	Fort Worth	1,147.88	954.00
St. Mary of the Assumption	Fort Worth	425.50	212.00
St. Patrick Cathedral	Fort Worth	4,933.60	4,228.01
St. Paul	Fort Worth	946.45	933.20
St. Peter the Apostle	Fort Worth	1,278.00	620.00
St. Rita	Fort Worth	240.00	202.00
St. Thomas the Apostle	Fort Worth	1,438.09	1,767.61
St. Mary	Gainesville	365.50	30.00
St. Rose of Lima	Glen Rose	259.00	157.02
St. Francis of Assisi	Graford	0.00	0.00
St. Mary	Graham	610.02	702.00
St. Frances Cabrini	Granbury	3,533.00	1,853.00
St. Francis of Assisi	Grapevine	2,083.00	0.00
St. Mary	Hennetta	60.00	48.58
Our Lady of Mercy	Hillsboro	881.96	682.72
Korean Catholic Community	Hurst	0.00	0.00
Christ the King	Iowa Park	35.00	0.00
St. Mary	Jacksboro	102.85	68.00
St. Elizabeth Ann Seton	Keller	4,982.00	5,208.00
Santa Rosa	Knox City	165.00	105.05
St. Philip the Apostle	Lewisville	2,819.53	3,172.48
St. Peter	Lindsay	1,753.50	1,718.00
St. Jude	Mansfield	779.00	2,024.82
St. Mary of the Assumption	Megargel	45.00	127.00
Our Lady of Lourdes	Mineral Wells	182.48	0.00
St. William	Montague	0.00	0.00
Our Lady of Guadalupe	Morgan	161.25	0.00
Sacred Heart	Muenster	3,272.70	0.00
St. Joseph	Nocona	0.00	0.00
St. Theresa	Olney	145.33	130.00
Nativity/Blessed Virgin Mary	Penelope	102.00	131.00
St. Thomas Aquinas	Pilot Point	177.75	886.44
St. Mary	Quanah	117.00	172.00
St. Rita	Ranger	40.00	74.10
St. Joseph	Rhineland	0.00	362.25
St. Boniface	Scotland	64.00	106.00
Sacred Heart	Seymour	223.00	266.00
St. Brendan	Stephenville	349.00	327.00
St. John	Strawn	102.00	90.00
Holy Family of Nazareth	Vernon	322.00	415.00
St. Stephen	Weatherford	2,162.00	2,126.00
Immaculate Conception of Mary	Wichita Falls	762.00	718.00
Our Lady of Guadalupe	Wichita Falls	1,318.72	1,335.17
Our Lady Queen of Peace	Wichita Falls	927.00	690.51
Sacred Heart	Wichita Falls	983.00	882.00
St. Mary	Windthorst	466.00	608.50
		92,020.83	88,098.46

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Prepared by the Accounting Dept for the Catholic Diocese of Fort Worth
Please forward all questions and comments to Debbie Lankford

NATIONAL NEWSBRIEFS

No time to waste: SCHIP vote just one step on long road to health reform

WASHINGTON (CNS) — As the reauthorization of the State Children's Health Insurance Program zooms through Congress at nearly unprecedented speed, health reform advocates aren't taking the time to pat themselves on the back. "There's a tremendous amount to be enthusiastic about in the SCHIP reauthorization," said Alan Weil, executive director of the National Academy for State Health Policy and former executive director of the Colorado Department of Health Care Policy and Financing, at a Jan. 15 forum in Washington on "Health Care Reform and Children: The Prognosis for Change in 2009." "But SCHIP is not a comprehensive health agenda and was not meant to be," Weil added. "Much work remains to be done." The reauthorization bill that passed the House by a 289-139 vote Jan. 14 would expand the joint federal-state program to include about 4 million more children, including some 240,000 children of legal immigrants. It would be funded by increasing the federal tax on cigarettes by 61 cents to a dollar per pack. The Senate Finance Committee approved a similar version of the legislation late Jan. 15, and President Barack Obama has said he hopes to sign the reauthorization bill as one of his first acts as president.

Bishop John Wester says ACLU suit over USCCB trafficking grants without merit

WASHINGTON (CNS) — An American Civil Liberties Union of Massachusetts lawsuit against the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services over human trafficking grants allocated to the U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops is without merit, according to the chairman of the USCCB Committee on Migration. Bishop John C. Wester of Salt Lake City said in a Jan. 15 statement that he hoped the U.S. Justice Department would "mount a vigorous defense" against the lawsuit, which charges that HHS is violating the Establishment Clause of the First Amendment "by permitting USCCB to impose a religiously based restriction on the use of taxpayer funds." The "religiously based restriction" it cited was that the USCCB requires its subcontractors providing the direct services to trafficking victims to not use the funds for contraceptives or abortion or contraception referrals. Bishop Wester said the lawsuit threatened both "the weakest in our society" and religious liberty. The suit, *ACLU of Massachusetts vs. Leavitt*, was filed Jan. 12 in the U.S. District Court for Massachusetts, based in Boston. It asks for a permanent injunction requiring HHS to ensure that funds under the Trafficking Victims Protection Act are disbursed "without the imposition of religiously based restrictions."

Father Neuhaus recalled as spiritual patriarch who influenced faith of many

NEW YORK (CNS) — Father Richard John Neuhaus was a spiritual patriarch whose "priestly and fatherly soul generated sons to the order of grace and begat many who labor even now to make his beloved America a morally great nation," according to Father Raymond J. de Souza. He made the comments in his homily at the standing-room-only funeral Mass for Father Neuhaus Jan. 13 at Immaculate Conception Church in New York. Father Neuhaus, a former Lutheran minister who became a Catholic priest and ardent defender of church teaching on life issues, died Jan. 8 after a recurrence of cancer. He was 72 and was a parochial vicar at Immaculate Conception. The Canadian-born Father Neuhaus was an author, lecturer, and the founder of *First Things*, a journal published by the Institute on Religion and Public Life. According to its mission statement, the magazine is "an ecumenical journal whose purpose is to advance a religiously informed public philosophy for the ordering of society." Father de Souza, a priest of the Archdiocese of Kingston, Ontario, said Father Neuhaus "never ceased to call upon the Lord of life for those most vulnerable."



Seminary Vincent Druding responds to a question during a canon law class at St. Joseph's Seminary in Yonkers, New York, in this file photo from Feb. 7, 2008. A Vatican-run apostolic visitation team of bishops and seminary personnel has recommended a stronger focus on moral theology, increased oversight of seminarians, and greater involvement of diocesan bishops in the formation process. (CNS photo/Gregory A. Shemitz)

Vatican report: Most U.S. seminaries are generally healthy

WASHINGTON (CNS) — An apostolic visitation team concluded that U.S. Catholic seminaries and houses of priestly formation are generally healthy, but recommended a stronger focus on moral theology, increased oversight of seminarians, and greater involvement of diocesan bishops in the formation process.

"This visitation has demonstrated that, since the 1990s, a greater sense of stability now prevails in the U.S. seminaries," the report said. "The appointment, over time, of rectors who are wise and faithful to the church has meant a gradual improvement, at least in the diocesan seminaries."

The report, sparked by the sexual abuse crisis that hit the U.S. church, concluded that seminaries appeared to have made improvements in the area of seminarian morality, most notably with regard to homosexual behavior.

"Of course, here and there some case or other of immorality — again, usually homosexual behavior — continues to show up," the report said. "However, in the main, the superiors now deal with these issues promptly and appropriately."

The report was dated Dec. 15 and signed by Cardinal Zenon Grocholewski, head of the Congregation for Catholic Education, which deals with seminaries. It was published on the Web site of the U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops to coincide with National Vocation Awareness Week, which began Jan. 12.

The report said some seminaries need to examine how educators can ensure the good behavior of their students when they are

off-campus as well as their access to emerging technology.

"Seminaries face extra challenges today, as compared to recent years," the report said. "Among these is how to monitor the students' use of the Internet." It recommended that seminaries and religious houses of priestly formation use Internet-filtering programs and restrict Internet use to public rooms within the seminary.

Bishops sometimes delegate too much responsibility for the acceptance of diocesan candidates to their vocation directors and other subordinates, the report said.

"This is unfortunate, as it is the bishop who will ultimately have to call, or not call, the candidate to orders," it said, recommending a more collaborative approach to the formation process.

Cardinal Sean P. O'Malley of Boston, chairman of the U.S. bishops' Committee on Clergy, Consecrated Life and Vocations, said in a letter to U.S. bishops that it was "gratifying to read in the report that our seminaries are generally in a healthy condition that strongly promotes the formation of men for the sacred ministry in this country."

"The general conclusions of the visitation are positive," Cardinal O'Malley added. "I am sure that all bishops and religious superiors will take seriously the observations and recommendations of the congregation that will further strengthen our seminaries and houses of formation."

The plan to hold apostolic visitations to assess the quality of formation in seminaries arose

in Rome at an April 2002 special meeting of the U.S. cardinals and U.S. bishops' officials with top Vatican officials.

Archbishop Edwin F. O'Brien, now head of the Baltimore Archdiocese, was chosen to coordinate the visitation team, which included 117 bishops and seminary personnel. Archbishop O'Brien was rector of the Pontifical North American College, the U.S. seminary in Rome, from 1990 to 1994. For five years before that and two years after, he headed the New York archdiocesan seminary, St. Joseph's in Yonkers, New York.

Working in teams of three for smaller programs or four for the larger ones, the panels visited more than 200 U.S. seminaries and formation houses in 2005 and 2006. The visitations paid special attention to areas such as the quality of the seminarians' human and spiritual formation for living chastely and of their intellectual formation for faithfulness to church teachings, especially in the area of moral theology.

Cardinal O'Malley noted that although the report generally praised the academic standards of most institutions for both philosophy and theology, it reported gaps in some programs, particularly in the areas of the theological study of Mary and the study of early Christian writers, as well as some lack of commitment to *sentire cum ecclesia* (to think with the church) in the area of moral theology.

Editor's Note: The apostolic visitation report is available in its entirety online at www.usccb.org/cclv/financial_report.pdf.

Pope expresses hope for Gaza truce, resumption of dialogue

By John Thavis
Catholic News Service

VATICAN CITY — Pope Benedict XVI said he hoped a fragile cease-fire in the Gaza Strip would be the first step toward serious negotiations for a lasting peace in the Holy Land.

The pope made the remarks at his noon blessing at the Vatican Jan. 18. The same day, the Palestinian militant organization Hamas said it would stop rocket attacks so that Israel could withdraw its troops from Gaza after a deadly three-week offensive.

The pope offered prayers for “the hundreds of children, elderly, and women, the innocent victims of unheard-of violence, the wounded, those mourning their loved ones, and who have lost their possessions.”

At least 1,300 Palestinians were killed in the offensive, many of them civilians, according to Palestinian sources. Israel reported the deaths of 13 people, including three civilians. Thousands of buildings in Gaza were destroyed in the bombardment.

The pope asked leaders on both sides to “help their people rise up from the ruins and from terror and courageously resume the path of dialogue in justice and truth.”

The Vatican announced Jan.

17 that the pope was sending a cash gift to aid relief efforts carried out by the small Catholic community in Gaza, including Blessed Mother Teresa’s Missionaries of Charity.

A Vatican statement said church personnel in Gaza were serving the most vulnerable people in the Holy Land, who were “being tragically scourged by death, human pain, material damage, and tears that cry out for peace.”

At the United Nations Jan. 16, a Vatican representative expressed the church’s closeness to civilian victims in Gaza and urged continuing U.N. action to ensure that humanitarian assistance reaches those in need.

“In the past few days we have witnessed a practical failure from all sides to respect the distinction of civilians from military targets,” said Archbishop Celestino Migliore, the apostolic nuncio and permanent observer to the United Nations.

He addressed a special session of the U.N. General Assembly on the topic “Illegal Israeli Actions in Occupied East Jerusalem and the Rest of the Occupied Palestinian Territory.”

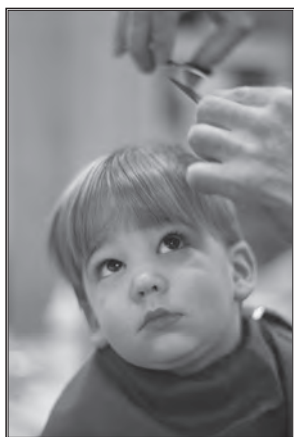
A wounded Palestinian girl is carried into a Shifa hospital during Israel’s offensive in the Gaza Strip Jan. 15. Archbishop Celestino Migliore, the Vatican representative to the United Nations, said Jan. 14 the denial of humanitarian assistance in the Gaza Strip demonstrates the urgent need for greater protection of civilians during conflicts. (CNS photo/Mohammed Salem, Reuters)



A girl is helped at the scene of a rocket attack in the southern Israeli city of Ashkelon, Israel, Jan. 12. An Israeli offensive on the Gaza Strip, which began Dec. 27, was aimed at ending Hamas rocket strikes on Israel. (CNS photo/Baz Ratner, Reuters)



A wounded Palestinian girl is carried into a Shifa hospital during Israel’s offensive in the Gaza Strip Jan. 15. Archbishop Celestino Migliore, the Vatican representative to the United Nations, said Jan. 14 the denial of humanitarian assistance in the Gaza Strip demonstrates the urgent need for greater protection of civilians during conflicts. (CNS photo/Mohammed Salem, Reuters)



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- Pope John Paul II
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INTERNATIONAL NEWSBRIEFS

Once controversial, U.S.-Vatican relations mark silver anniversary

VATICAN CITY (CNS) — The Vatican and the United States quietly celebrated a silver anniversary in mid-January, marking 25 years of formal diplomatic relations. The U.S. Embassy to the Holy See observed the event with a symposium and a dinner, where about 50 guests raised their glasses in a toast to a milestone that today seems inevitable, but once seemed unthinkable. The U.S. ambassador to the Vatican, Mary Ann Glendon, who was to leave her post six days later to return to a teaching job at Harvard, drew appreciative laughter at the dinner when she read from an 1865 letter that described Rome as the perfect listening post. At that time, the secretary of the U.S. legation to the Papal States wrote to his superiors in Washington and asked for a bigger budget, so he could give “small but frequent entertainments” to other diplomats and the monsignors heading Vatican departments. “European diplomacy is carried on by dinners and parties — you gather information this way to be obtained in no other manner,” he wrote. A glance around the embassy’s banquet tables found clerical and diplomatic guests nodding in assent.

Pope encourages Iran’s Catholics to persevere patiently

VATICAN CITY (CNS) — Pope Benedict XVI encouraged Iran’s tiny Catholic communities to be patient and persistent as they try to improve relations with the government and ensure a continued Christian presence in the Islamic republic. He also called on the “vast and beautiful country” to contribute to “the common good and peace among nations,” particularly in the Middle East. Iran’s four Armenian, Chaldean, and Latin-rite Catholic bishops met the pope Jan. 16 at the end of their “ad limina” visits to report on the status of their dioceses. Pope Benedict said that in order to overcome some of the concrete difficulties Iranian Catholics face, including providing enough priests to minister to the country’s scattered Catholic communities, “the establishment of a bilateral commission with your government is being considered.” Such a commission, he said, also could be a channel “to develop relations and mutual understanding between the Islamic Republic of Iran and the Catholic Church.”

Holy Land patriarch says violence never a solution to problems

JERUSALEM (CNS) — Violence may seem like an easy solution to complex problems, but it is not the answer, said Latin Patriarch Fouad Twal of Jerusalem. “Violence no matter where it comes from and whatever form it takes must be condemned,” the patriarch told several hundred Catholic Palestinian children participating in the Holy Land Christian Ecumenical Foundation’s fifth annual Journey to Bethlehem, in the West Bank, Jan. 11. Accompanied by bishops and church leaders of the Coordination of Episcopal Conferences in Support of the Church of the Holy Land, Patriarch Twal called on religious and political leaders to show “compassion, wisdom, and mercy.” Addressing the crowd, Archbishop Patrick Kelly of Liverpool, England, vice president of the Catholic Bishops’ Conference of England and Wales, said the religious leaders had come not only to show solidarity with the local church but also to “pray for a greater and safer future for ... the many children that live in the Holy Land.”



February 1, Fourth Sunday in Ordinary Time.
Cycle B. Readings:

- 1) Deuteronomy 18:15-20
Psalms 95:1-2, 6-9
- 2) 1 Corinthians 7:32-35
Gospel) Mark 1:21-28

By Sharon K. Perkins

My mom and dad, like many other parents, tried during my childhood to teach me the wisdom of doing certain things: eating my vegetables, putting money aside in savings, getting enough sleep, caring for my belongings, etc. The repetition of their instructions usually had limited effect, for even as I paid lip service to them most of the time, I obeyed because they held a position of authority, not because I recognized the truth in their admonitions.

As I became more mature and less stubborn, I received those same nuggets of parental advice more enthusiastically — but mostly from the mouths of other people with whom I didn't share the parent-child relationship.

This Sunday's passage from Deuteronomy follows several chapters' worth of seemingly endless statutes and commandments covering a variety of situations: a collection of Yahweh's

"I will raise up for them a prophet like you from among their kin, and will put my words into his mouth."

— Deuteronomy 18:18

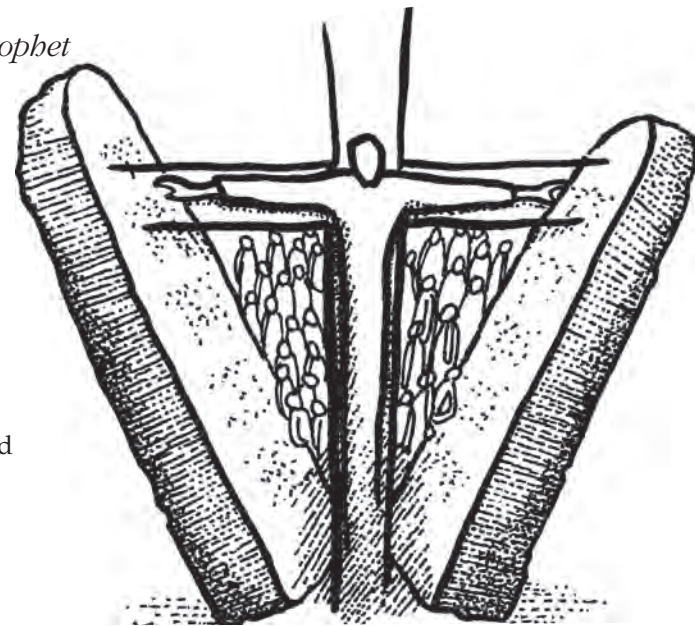
"parental advice" to his people. While each of these directives conveys a truth helpful for living faithfully in community, it's easy to see how this same people, generations removed from a relational encounter with the living God at Mount Horeb, might have "hardened their hearts" as well as their ears, rendering them unmoved by God's message.

When Jesus taught in the synagogue, he repeated many of the words that his ancestors had heard, but something about the way he communicated them — "a new teaching with authority" — not only drove out unclean spirits but jarred his hearers from their complacency and opened them anew to the healing, yet challenging presence of the living God in their midst. In Jesus, God not only raised up the promised prophet "from among your own kin" and brought a fresh voice to the ancient truths, he himself became living Word among us.

For many Christians today, the Scriptures are

QUESTIONS:

How have your ears become deaf or your heart unresponsive to the words of Scripture? How can an encounter with Jesus, the living Word, restore freshness to your hearing and reading of Scripture?



widely accessible through the printed page and repeated liturgical proclamation — a privilege so familiar and taken for granted that we become impervious to their transforming power. By inviting Jesus, the living Word of God, into our hearing and reading of Scripture, we not only open ourselves to receive God's words anew in all their richness, but we move beyond lip service to the loving relationship that God longs to have with each of us.

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United with Christ, people have nothing and no one to fear, says pope

By Carol Glatz
Catholic News Service

VATICAN CITY — While people lacking faith in God may dread numerous dangers and hostile forces in the world, those who are firmly united with Christ have nothing and no one to fear, Pope Benedict XVI said.

Jesus Christ is above every form of domination and "he is the true Lord of the world," the pope said Jan. 14 at his weekly general audience.

With an estimated 4,000 people gathered inside the Paul VI hall, Pope Benedict continued his audience talks about the life and teaching of St. Paul, focusing on the theme of Christ as the head of the church and the universe.

In his letters to the Colossians and to the Ephesians, St. Paul gives Christians an enormously positive and important message: that Christ is above "every form of power that might aim to humiliate the human being," said the pope.

He said St. Paul taught that Christ, as head of the church, is the leader and Lord of the Christian community and guides it with his example and teaching.



Also, like the head of a human body, Christ is physically connected to the members of his body — the church — and with his love, he inspires, helps and gives them life, the pope said.

But Christ's domain also goes above and beyond his church; he is, in fact, "head of heavenly powers and the entire universe," the pope said.

"If we are united with Christ,

we do not have to fear any enemies and adversaries, but it also means that we have to hold on to him tightly without loosening our grip," he said.

The pope said St. Paul's message was a revelation and truly liberating for the many non-Christians at the time. The pope said the pagan world the saint preached to was full of spirits — many of them dangerous and threatening.

The same could be said for today's pagan and secular ideologies, the pope said, as those who have no faith in God "see the world full of dangerous powers."

But when people understand that God placed Christ above all princes, authorities, powers, and dominions existing both today and those that will come in the future, then "whoever is with Christ fears nothing and no

Pope Benedict XVI greets a child after his weekly general audience at the Vatican Jan. 14. (CNS photo/Chris Helgren, Reuters)

one," he said.

Also, as Christians "we have to learn in this world full of fear that (Christ) is above every form of domination" and that he is the true victor against all evil, he said.

At the end of his catechesis, the pope greeted everyone taking part in the Jan. 14-18 World Meeting of Families in Mexico City.

He said he hoped the gathering "would again demonstrate the beauty and value of the family" and encourage fresh efforts to promote and protect this "irreplaceable, fundamental unit of society and the church."

When greeting pilgrims at the end of his audience talk, the pope received a reliquary containing the bones of Blessed Louis and Marie Zélie Guérin Martin — the parents of St. Therese of Lisieux.

A group of pilgrims from France presented the pope with the silver and glass reliquary. Joining the group was an Italian boy who had been healed through the intercession of the Martins. The boy's healing was recognized by the Vatican as the miracle needed for the Martins' beatification, which took place in October.

Scripture Readings



February 8, Fifth Sunday of Ordinary Time.
Cycle B. Readings:

- 1) Job 7:1-4, 6-7
Psalm) 147:1-6
- 2) 1 Corinthians 9:16-19, 22-23
Gospel) Mark 1:29-39

By Jeff Hensley

The quality of drivenness is obvious in the attitudes of Paul and Jesus in this weekend's readings. Paul's great desire was to preach the Good News to others so they could enter into the love of God made possible by Jesus' presence among us. Jesus was moved to carry out the Father's will by going about announcing the love of God and showing his Father's greatness, power, and compassion through healing and teaching.

They showed the highest of motivations: the desire to help others in the name of God, and a self-forgetfulness in pursuing that goal.

Job, by contrast, pulls himself along, suffering the passing of time, purposeless, depressed, and defeated. He has no great drive; he has all but given up under the great weight of his trials.

We can identify with both ways of facing the world. We learn in other passages that, to Job's credit, he clings to the shard of his broken faith in the face of his supposed friends who search for

"The Lord sustains the lowly."
— Psalm 147:6a



ways to find him at fault for his run of incredibly hard times. Even his wife asks why he doesn't simply curse God and die.

But faith, no matter how small, is substantial, and without knowing why God is allowing all of this to happen, Job perseveres in the belief that God remains God, no matter what.

At this moment, my wife, who had major cancer surgery only three weeks ago, is spending her second uncomfortable night in the hospital with her elderly, frail mother who injured her hip. Tomorrow, unable to walk, her mother will have to go from the hospital to some other form of

assisted care to help her with the simplest things of life. She remains the same delightful, happy woman I have known for 45 years despite an aphasia that robs her of her power to effectively use spoken words to communicate.

Sometimes life is hard. But my wife, like Job, continues on. Like Paul and Jesus, she has a sense of purpose, a drive to do what she can to make sure her mother is cared for with love and respect.

And with the psalmist we can still say: "Praise the Lord, for he is good ... Praise the Lord, who heals the brokenhearted and binds up their wounds."

QUESTIONS:

Have you had to endure hard times in pursuit of your goal of serving God, others, or your family? What did you learn from persevering in faith? How has it made you stronger?

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Working out (our salvation) with fear and trembling

By Jeff Hedglen

There are times in any marriage when you might second guess if your spouse is getting tired of you. In my marriage I always thought my wife liked me in her life, but now I have proof. She is so intent on keeping me around that for Christmas this year she got me a personal trainer.

Once a week for all of 2009 I will meet with a taskmaster who is being paid to push me past my normal limits at a local workout facility. The first couple of meetings were introductory, an assessment, a light workout, and some encouraging words. At the end of our second session he said, "Next week I am going to work you until you are dizzy and nauseous." He did just that.

I willingly admit that I am out of shape. Since I turned 40 I have noticed that things that used to be easy for me to carry, are all of the sudden noticeably heavy. I used to relish the stairs instead of an elevator; now one

All too often, we take our faith life for granted, much like I had done with my physical life. St. Paul calls us to kick it up a notch and feel the burn of extra effort.

flight feels like a marathon. I am more tired, less energetic, and weaker than I have ever been. I am thrilled with my wife's gift, but it is not going to be easy.

At that first hard workout we did 20 repetitions with relatively low weight at seven different stations, three times. The first time through wasn't too bad. I struggled getting all the way to 20 on some of the exercises, and I was pretty winded, but I made it.

The second time through was a totally different story. My muscles had just expended more energy in 10 minutes than

they had in the previous three weeks combined. I was not sure that I could do it again. Lifting that bar on the bench press, trying to balance it, bring it down, then up again was more difficult than I thought it should be. My trainer was nice and encouraging, but I felt like a failure, making it to only 15 repetitions, the last five with his help.

That was just the beginning of my struggle. The rest of the way through the second cycle was more of the same, but now I could hardly breathe. I was way past perspiration and in a full-on sweat. I pushed through

and finished all the stations and was completely spent.

Then he said the worst thing I have heard in a long time: "One more time." I did not look at him; I just reached down for some determination. As hard as this was, I wanted to keep going. I am so tired of feeling the way I feel that whatever it takes, I am ready to do.

I barely remember round three; it is a haze of grunts, pushes, sweat, and pain. I was so weak I could hardly walk from one torture device to the next. Somehow, mercifully, we were done. I said some things I do not remember, shook his hand, and stumbled to my truck.

My arms were like spaghetti strands fresh from the boiling water. I could not make the key go in the hole on the door. Once inside I collapsed, trembling, blurry-eyed, and exhausted. In the far back reaches of my mind I remember thinking: "That was great."

Though I could barely move, I knew I had just begun something that might just change

my life.

While I was trembling in my truck, trying to get it together enough to drive home, a Scripture verse foggily meandered through my mind. "Work out your salvation with fear and trembling" (*Philippians 2:12*).

The idea of fear and trembling is a common Old Testament expression indicating awe and seriousness in the service of God. All too often, we take our faith life for granted, much like I had done with my physical life. St. Paul calls us to kick it up a notch and feel the burn of extra effort.

With just a few workouts under my belt, I am seriously in awe at what I can do if I push myself. Now I just need to apply this lesson to the salvation workout. Fear and trembling, here I come!

Jeff Hedglen, youth minister at St. Bartholomew Parish in Southwest Fort Worth, is the principal organizer of Camp Fort Worth each summer. Readers with questions can contact Jeff at jeff@stbartsfw.org.

¿POR QUÉ SER CATÓLICO?

EL CATECISMO COMO CAMINO

Talleres de Lanzamiento (en español)

jueves	febrero 19	6:45 p.m.	Our Lady of Lourdes	Mineral Wells
viernes	febrero 20	6:45 p.m.	St. Matthew	Arlington
sábado	febrero 21	9 a.m.	el Centro Católico	Fort Worth
domingo	febrero 22	2:45 p.m.	Nuestra Sra. de Guadalupe	Wichita Falls
lunes	febrero 23	6:45 p.m.	Immaculate Conception	Denton
martes	febrero 24	6:45 p.m.	el Centro Católico	Fort Worth

Talleres de Evangelización (en español)

miércoles	abril 22	7:00 p.m.	St. John the Apostle	Fort Worth
jueves	abril 23	7:00 p.m.	St. Joseph	Arlington
viernes	abril 24	7:00 p.m.	St. Ann	Burleson
sábado	abril 25	10:00 a.m.	St. Rita	Ranger
domingo	abril 26	3:00 p.m.	Nuestra Sra. de Guadalupe	Wichita Falls
lunes	abril 27	7:00 p.m.	Immaculate Conception	Denton

¿Por qué ser católico?

A dónde pertenecen estos talleres dentro del plan general?

EL LANZAMIENTO DE ¿POR QUÉ SER CATÓLICO?

Proporciona el enfoque y la ayuda para crear un plan adaptado a la implementación de *¿Por qué ser católico?* como una experiencia total de la parroquia. Los talleres cubren las responsabilidades del equipo de *¿Por qué ser católico?* de la parroquia; herramientas para involucrar la máxima participación de la parroquia; estrategias para crear invitaciones dinámicas; y la planificación y ejecución de una noche exitosa de *¿Por qué ser católico?* (El público clave: el pastor, el personal pastoral, el equipo de *¿Por qué ser católico?*, y líderes de catecismo).

DETALLES PRÁCTICOS DEL EVANGELISMO CATÓLICO

Aumenta la comprensión del evangelismo católico y explora la relación entre el evangelismo y el catecismo. Ofrece estrategias prácticas y concretas para involucrar a los católicos activos e inactivos en la fe. (El público clave: el pastor, el personal pastoral, el equipo de *¿Por qué ser católico?*)

LOS PRÓXIMOS PASOS

Agosto/Septiembre 2009
— **Formación de los líderes de las comunidades pequeñas: Lo que debemos creer**

Proporciona una base teológica fundamental en la creencia esencial de nuestra fe, cómo está expresada en el credo apostólico, con énfasis especial en el misterio central de nuestra fe cristiana — la Trinidad. También ofrece destrezas prácticas para facilitar el aprendizaje de adultos y para explorar elementos claves de "Nuestros corazones ardientes". (El público clave: líderes de comunidades pequeñas, el equipo de *¿Por qué ser católico?*)

OCTUBRE 2009

La participación en la fe
— **La profesión de la fe: Sesiones 1-6**

INVIERNO 2009/2010

La participación en la fe
— **Taller sobre la formación de la fe: Las escrituras sagradas y la tradición: la trenza de la revelación**

Taller centrado en la convicción cristiana que en Jesucristo Dios se ha revelado absolutamente a la humanidad. Entrelazando las escrituras sagradas con la tradición, se descubren la presencia y el significado de Cristo en el mundo. (El público clave: la parroquia completa, el equipo de *¿Por qué ser católico?*, líderes y participantes de las comunidades pequeñas, catequistas, participantes de RCIA)

CUARESMA 2010

Retiro: Descubriendo a Dios en lo ordinario

Proporciona una oportunidad para la reflexión sobre la belleza infinita de nuestro padre el Creador en plena creación. Explora la experiencia del encuentro de Dios revelado en Jesucristo, a través de nuestra vida cotidiana. Se invita a todo participante al silencio, la oración y el ritual. (El público clave: la parroquia completa)

Este programa continuará por tres años más, siempre incluyendo talleres sobre la formación de líderes y de la fe al igual que dos temporadas sobre la participación en la fe y el retiro anual.

El padre Mele anima a las parroquias a terminar de fundar el programa *¿Por qué ser católico?*

Por Padre Carmen Mele, OP
Coordinador de ¿POR QUÉ SER CATÓLICO?

Si los albañiles vinieran a nuestra puerta con madera, clavos, cemento, y bloques pero sin algún plan para la construcción, no tendríamos confianza que irían a producir algo útil. Así, después de recibir el paquete parroquial de *¿Por qué ser católico?*, necesitamos un plan para implementar el programa. Se puede encontrar este plan en el libro de color rojo-anaranjado del paquete parroquial titulado: "Cómo usar *¿Por qué ser católico?* en su parroquia: manual para la implementación."

Desde ahora hasta el Taller de lanzamiento, las parroquias deberían enfocar en las primeras 24 páginas del manual. El párroco y su equipo tendrán que leer la materia introductoria (pp. 1-12) y, después, nombrar el equipo promotor y también escoger un coordinador (pp. 13-18). Aunque esperamos que los párrocos asistan a un Taller de lanzamiento

y un Taller de evangelización, sus tareas básicas se acaban en este momento. Una vez que el equipo esté formado, se debería hacer una reunión inicial y asistir uno de los Talleres de lanzamiento (vea la lista arriba). La participación en un Taller de lanzamiento ayudará a los miembros del equipo promotor hacer una estrategia por la implementación de un programa exitoso en su parroquia.

Como indicado, todavía hay mucho tiempo para comenzar a implementar *¿Por qué ser católico?* Sin embargo, no demoren más para seleccionar a los miembros del equipo, escoger a un coordinador, y tener la reunión inicial. Como todos los empeños que valen, *¿Por qué ser católico?* requiere la atención y el esfuerzo. Creemos que tendrá mucho fruto, debido a toda la energía invertida.

Para más información, hablar con Padre Carmen Mele, OP: 817-560-3300, ext. 262, o mandar correo electrónico a cmele@fwdioc.org

Preguntas frecuentes sobre... *¿Por qué ser católico?*

1. ¿Qué beneficios ofrecerá a mi parroquia el programa *¿Por qué ser católico?*

Mientras los feligreses profundizan las experiencias y el conocimiento de su fe, su confianza crece de tal manera que pueden compartir su religión con familia y amigos. Con más conocimiento, las liturgias llegan a ser más reveladoras. Siendo parte de una comunidad pequeña fortalece el sentido de pertenencia en todos los feligreses: RCIA y la preparación para los sacramentos se enriquece, y los catequistas se benefician de una formación sólida en la fe.

2. ¿Cómo está estructurado el programa?

¿Por qué ser católico? refleja los cuatro fundamentos del Catecismo de la iglesia católica. Cada fundamento está cubierto en un libro para compartir la fe en las comunidades pequeñas, apoyado con talleres para la formación de la fe y experiencias de retiros. Si se termina cada libro en dos sesiones de seis semanas cada uno, la serie entera se podría completar en cuatro años. Los feligreses se podrían beneficiar con su participación en este programa en cualquier momento del proceso.

3. Ofrecerá una doctrina relevante el programa *¿Por qué ser católico?*

Las materias del programa *¿Por qué ser católico?* incluyen citas y referencias directas del Catecismo. Han recibido el *Imprimatur* y el *Nihil Obstat*, y también han sido evaluadas por el comité *ad hoc* de los obispos de los Estados Unidos para evaluar el uso del Catecismo.

Cardenal George promete trabajar con Obama en varios asuntos de política

WASHINGTON (CNS) — El presidente de la Conferencia estadounidense de bispos católicos ha prometido que él y sus compañeros prelados trabajarán con la administración entrante de Barack Obama y con el 111^{er} Congreso para “avanzar el bien común y defender la vida y la dignidad de todos, especialmente del vulnerable y pobre”.

En una carta del 13 de enero al presidente electo, el cardenal Francis E. George, de Chicago, ofreció un amplio esbozo de prioridades de política que preocupan a los obispos estadounidenses, extendiéndose desde la recuperación económica que cubre todos los segmentos de la sociedad hasta proteger las vidas “de los miembros de la familia humana más vulnerables que no tienen voz”, especialmente los niños que están por nacer.

Una carta correspondiente fue enviada al vicepresidente electo

El cardenal George volvió a declarar la oposición de mucho tiempo de la iglesia contra los esfuerzos de ampliar o financiar el aborto con dólares provenientes de impuestos.

Joseph Biden y a cada miembro del Congreso.

El cardenal George le recordó a Obama que los obispos enfocan la política pública como pastores y maestros, y que los principios morales que los dirigen han sido desarrollados mediante su experiencia, cuidando de la gente que está en necesidad.

La carta del cardenal trató particularmente la crisis económica, los servicios médicos, los asuntos internacionales y la inmigración,

el matrimonio como la unión de un hombre y una mujer, el empoderamiento de los grupos basados en la fe, como socios para superar la pobreza, y las amenazas contra la dignidad humana y la importancia de proteger al vulnerable y al que no tiene voz, especialmente el que está por nacer.

El cardenal George volvió a declarar la oposición de mucho tiempo de la iglesia contra los esfuerzos de ampliar o financiar el

aborto con dólares provenientes de impuestos.

En el frente económico, aconsejó a Obama hacer de las familias pobres y los trabajadores vulnerables una “prioridad clara”, sugiriendo que las medidas de recuperación incluyan nuevas inversiones y maneras de fortalecer la maya de seguridad pública.

El cardenal George pidió a Obama “asegurar una cobertura de servicios médicos verdaderamente universal” que proteja toda la vida, incluyendo los niños que están por nacer, y provea acceso a los servicios médicos para todos, especialmente para la gente pobre.

La carta trató varias preocupaciones internacionales, incluyendo una transición responsable en Irak, de modo que el país esté libre de persecución religiosa, y un final a los conflictos violentos en Tierra Santa.

La ayuda exterior debe apoyar

programas para terminar el hambre y la pobreza, combatir la enfermedad y reducir el impacto del cambio de clima, en relación a la gente pobre y vulnerable, escribió el cardenal.

Además, el cardenal George pidió a la nueva administración “arreglar un sistema quebrado de inmigración, que hace daño a ambos — nuestra nación y los inmigrantes”.

Hizo un llamado a la reforma abarcadora de inmigración.

El cardenal George reiteró la creencia firme de la iglesia que el matrimonio es una “unión fiel, exclusiva y de por vida de un hombre y una mujer, y debe mantenerse así en la ley”.

También dijo que los obispos continuarán a apoyar los programas que den a los padres opciones en la educación que mejor atiendan las necesidades de sus hijos.

El presidente mexicano advierte que descomposición de valores familiares aumenta corrupción

CIUDAD DE MÉXICO (CNS) — La sexta reunión mundial de familias abrió el 14 de enero con una advertencia de parte del presidente mexicano que una descomposición de valores familiares está llevando a cabo más problemas sociales y criminalidad.

“Muchos de aquellos que mueren en confrontaciones son jóvenes que están separados de una familia nuclear, algo que resulta en una carencia absoluta de valores”, dijo a los asistentes el presidente Felipe Calderón mientras abría la reunión de cinco días.

“Es la responsabilidad de los gobiernos crear las condiciones de seguridad económica, social, pública, judicial y cultural que hacen posible el desarrollo completo de las familias”, dijo.

El cardenal Norberto Rivera Carrera, de Ciudad de México, hizo eco de ese sentir durante sus comentarios de apertura.

“Reconocer y ayudar esta institución (la familia) es uno de los mejores servicios que pueden ser ofrecidos para el bien común y el verdadero desarrollo de (personas) y sociedades”, dijo.

Anteriormente ese día, al final de su audiencia semanal en el Vaticano, el Papa Benedicto XVI saludó a los participantes en la reunión. El Papa verá la Misa de cierre de la reunión el 18 de enero en televisión antes de bendecir a

“Muchos de aquellos que mueren en confrontaciones son jóvenes que están separados de una familia nuclear, algo que resulta en una carencia absoluta de valores”

— el presidente de México, Felipe Calderón

los participantes vía satélite.

La reunión en Ciudad de México viene durante un tiempo retador para los católicos mexicanos, quienes han estado intentando tener un rol más influyente en el debate sobre la política pública del país en un esfuerzo de proteger mejor a la familia tradicional, especialmente en Ciudad de México, donde el gobierno local ha estado liberalizando rápidamente sus leyes sobre el aborto, las uniones civiles entre personas del mismo sexo y la eutanasia.

Para obtener mayor influencia, la iglesia ha estado cabildeando para cambios constitucionales que permitirían que organizaciones religiosas sean dueñas de estaciones de radio y televisión, y permitirían la enseñanza religiosa en las escuelas públicas.

LA OFICINA DE SERVICIOS PASTORALES HISPANOS
Y LA OFICINA DE CATEQUESIS DE ADULTOS HISPANOS
DE LA DIOCESIS DE FORT WORTH

PRESENTA

Retiro Pre-Cuaresmal + y el Lanzamiento de ¿Por Que Ser Católico?

SABADO 21 DE FEBRERO
DE 8:30AM HASTA LAS 3:00PM
CATHOLIC CENTER
DIOCESIS OF FORT WORTH
800 West Loop 820 South
Fort Worth, 76108

PRESENTADORES:

Padre Alejandro López-Cardenale de RENEW INTERNATIONAL

y

Andres Aranda, Director de SPH-Dioecese de Fort Worth

Donación \$10.00 para comidas y materials

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P. Carmen Mele ext. 262

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The Catholic Center
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Fort Worth, Texas 76108

El Papa dice que el futuro del mundo depende de las soluciones éticas para desterrar la pobreza y la guerra

CIUDAD DEL VATICANO (CNS) — Diciendo que el futuro del mundo estaba en juego, el Papa Benedicto XVI hizo un llamado para que se realicen nuevos esfuerzos a fin de reducir la pobreza mundial, terminar los conflictos regionales y restaurar la ética en los sistemas financieros mundiales.

En su discurso anual ante el cuerpo diplomático del Vaticano, el 8 de enero, el Papa también abogó a favor de las minorías cristianas en lugares como Irak y la India, exhortando a los gobiernos a responder con firmeza contra los actos de violencia y discriminación anticristianas que recientemente han aumentado.

Después de su discurso, que se llevó a cabo en la decorada sala Regia, el Pontífice, de 81 años de edad, saludó a cada uno de los diplomáticos y posó para fotografía de grupo. Entre los representantes, se encontraba la embajadora de los Estados Unidos ante el Vaticano, Mary Ann Glendon, que se suponía dejaría su cargo el 19 de enero.

En su discurso, a veces conocido como "estado del mundo", el Papa revisó la situación actual de varios continentes, desde la crisis de refugiados en África central hasta la reciente ofensiva militar en la franja territorial de Gaza. El Papa censuró los ataques terroristas que "han sembrado la muerte y destrucción" en países como Afganistán, Pakistán, la India y Algeria; pero también encontró señales de esperanza en lugares como las Filipinas, en donde el gobierno y los rebeldes han entrado en nuevas negociaciones.

Y aprovechando el tema de su reciente mensaje del *Día mundial de la paz*, les dijo a los diplomáticos que "para edificar la paz debemos darles nueva esperanza a los pobres". En la actual "fase delicada de la historia de la humanidad", dijo, los principios morales y éticos son cruciales para el mejoramiento de las condiciones de millones de personas que viven en situación precaria.

"¿Cómo no podemos pensar en tantas personas y en familias oprimidas por las dificultades e inseguridades que la actual crisis financiera y económica ha provocado a escala mundial?" dijo.

"¿Cómo no podemos mencionar la crisis de alimentos y el calentamiento global, que hacen aún la situación más difícil para los que viven en algunas de las partes más pobres del planeta en su acceso a alimentos y agua?" dijo.

El papa hizo un llamado a favor de una estrategia efectiva a fin de combatir el hambre y de promover el desarrollo de la agricultura local respectiva, junto con la reducción de gastos militares, los que, dijo, desvían enormes recursos de los proyectos de desarrollo. Para restablecer la confianza económica, dijo el papa, se requerirá la puesta en práctica de principios éticos fundamentados en la dignidad humana, tarea que requiere mucho (esfuerzo) pero que no es imposible.

El papa dijo que el mundo se ve amenazado no solamente por pobreza material sino también por pobreza moral, como se ha visto en actos de discriminación y violencia en contra de miles de cristianos durante el año pasado.



El 8 de enero, el cuerpo diplomático del Vaticano aplaude al Papa Benedicto XVI en la sala Regia del Vaticano. En su discurso anual al cuerpo diplomático, el Papa pidió nuevos e importantes esfuerzos para reducir la pobreza global, acabar los conflictos regionales y restaurar la ética a todo sistema financiero. (CNS foto/L'Osservatore Romano de Reuters)

Clases del método natural para la planificación familiar

El método natural para la planificación familiar es un método seguro, natural, de bajo costo y altamente confiable para evitar un embarazo, lograr un embarazo, espaciar el tiempo entre cada nacimiento o aceptar y respetar su fertilidad de modo que no comprometa su salud o sus valores personales. Las

clases en español empezarán el domingo, 22 de febrero a las 4 p.m. en el Centro católico, 800 W. Loop 820 S., Fort Worth. Es muy importante que se inscriban lo más pronto posible.

Si desean más información, llame a Suzanna Ordóñez al teléfono (817) 560-3300, ext. 256.

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:

- llame a Judy Locke, Coordinadora de asistencia para víctimas, al número (817) 560-2452, Ext. 201, o, mandarle correo electrónico a

jlocke@fwdioc.org

- llame al número de emergencia para el abuso sexual: (817) 560-2452, Ext. 900

- o llame al Centro Católico al número: (817) 560-2452, ext. 102 y preguntar por el canciller/moderador de la curia, el padre James Hart

Mecanismo para reportar abuso

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

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Matrimonios

Todas clases de parejas, enero 30, 31 y febrero 1, comenzando a las 7 p.m. Para información o reservación, llame a Sergio o Dulce Morataya: (817) 733-3143

Mujeres

Entre los 16 y 30 años, febrero 27, 28 y marzo 1, comenzando a las 7 p.m. Para información o reservación, llame a María Querea: (817) 624-4911

Muchachos

Entre los 16 y 30 años, marzo 6, 7 y 8, comenzando a las 7 p.m. Para información o reservación, llame a María Querea: (817) 624-4911

Adultos

Hombres y mujeres, un día de retiro de cuaresma, domingo, marzo 15, desde las 8 a.m. a las 5 p.m. Para información o reservación, llame a Martha Galvan: (817) 770-6522

Todos estos retiros son en español

También se puede llamar para toda clase de información al Centro de Cursillos (817) 624-9411 o mandar correo electrónico a cursilloctr@aol.com.

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y de nuestra diócesis.**

Regional / National / International

Bishop Farrell and pro-life leaders stir crowd's enthusiasm for life

FROM PAGE 1

The Dallas event frequently is poignant because of its place in history — the city where the original petition that sought to legalize abortion was filed.

Marques Dunham, 20, a student at Christ the Nations Institute in Oak Cliff, was at the cathedral plaza with dozens of friends and was carrying a sign that read "Adoption, the loving option."

"I'm here to support life," he said. "I'm just totally against the fact that women don't seem to think they have a decision but to kill their babies."

He was one of several hundred youth and young adults who participated in the rally and the march, among other programs surrounding the annual event.

At the cathedral, the Knights of Columbus led a procession of two dozen priests who had joined Bishop Farrell and 36 people representing the years 1973-2009. They would later

place a rose at the foot of the altar, representing each year since the Supreme Court decision.

After the bilingual Mass, hundreds of people spilled into the plaza for a rally that called for the faithful to write to their legislators to oppose the pending Freedom of Choice Act and other legislation that would make abortions easier.

"Last year, I said I wanted to see double the crowd," Bishop Farrell said at the rally. "I hate to tell you the bad news. I want to see double the crowd next year."

"This is a wonderful testimony to life — the greatest gift and the most precious gift that God has given to anybody," he said.

He also told the crowd to be steadfast in its resolve for life.

"It is important that we not become discouraged," he said.

"It is important that we continue the struggle and that we not give up. We must never, never, never be discouraged because we must continue to stand up for life."

He was joined by Dr. Robert Jeffress, pastor of the First Baptist Church, who preached about the biblical teachings against abortion and asked the crowd several times to pray with him.

"As a people of God, and despite the travesty of abortion, I believe it is time for people like you and me today to affirm a few truths about abortion that the Bible speaks without stuttering," he said.

"We need to stand up and say without hesitation that the word of God says that life begins at conception; that life begins in the womb," he said.

Angela Walters, director of Catholics Respect Life of Fort Worth, said that since the rally last year, approximately 1.3 million babies had been aborted across the country.

"We need our hands, our legs, our minds, and our hearts to fight against the culture of death," she said. "Write your legislators regularly and tell them

that we don't want legislation called the Freedom of Choice Act to be passed and that we don't want our government to pay for abortions or force physicians to perform abortions."

State Rep. Dan Patrick, R-Houston, said that his faith and that of his family is affirmed daily. He is Baptist and his wife is Catholic.

He urged the crowd to join him in getting involved in government, especially because of leadership changes in Washington and at the Speaker of the House level in Austin.

"They say that in business if you are not involved in politics, you are not involved in business," he said. "If you believe in pro-life, and you are not involved in politics, you are not doing all that you can for the pro-life movement."

"No one can get me to stand down when Jesus wants me to stand up for his work, and abortion is nothing more than an

attack on God," he said.

Marchers making their way from the cathedral to the federal courthouse, included people of all ages and from different parts of the area. Men and women alike pushed strollers. Others, including members of youth groups, carried signs proclaiming their schools or parishes; others carried placards that encouraged adoption and still others had the word "life" on their arms and faces.

At the Earle Cabell Federal Building the marchers stopped for more words of encouragement and prayers before returning to First Baptist Church for a reception and another informational rally.

"Don't wait until next year's March for Life to stand up for life," said Karen Garnett, executive director of the Dallas Catholic Pro-Life Committee. "Babies die in Dallas six days a week and they need you to stand up for them and defend their lives."

Milwaukee social worker to chair bishops' National Review Board

WASHINGTON (CNS) — The former director of Catholic Charities of the Archdiocese of Milwaukee has been appointed to chair the bishops' National Review Board by Chicago Cardinal Francis E. George, president of the U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops.

Diane Knight, a social worker from the Archdiocese of Milwaukee, will succeed Judge Michael Merz as head of the USCCB's National Review Board at the conclusion of his term, following the bishops' spring meeting in June.

Cardinal George made the announcement Jan. 8 and said Knight's dedication to the mission of the Catholic Church and her experience in the protection of children and young people made her a prime candidate for the post.

The USCCB established the National Review Board in 2002 as a consultative body that reviews the annual report of the Office of Child and Youth Protection on the implementation of the "Charter for the Protection of Children and Young People" and the recommendations that emerge from it. The National Review Board then offers its assessment to the president of the USCCB.

The board also offers its advice in cooperation with the Committee on the Protection of Children and Young People, especially with regard to policies and practices related to child and youth protection, as well as reviewing the work of the Office of Child and Youth Protection.

"The last several years have witnessed great strides in the efforts of the Catholic Church in the United States to strengthen and renew her efforts for the protection of young people and healing for victims."

— Chicago Cardinal Francis George

Knight, a member of the National Review Board since 2007, spent the first 20 years of her career in social work directly involved in child protection and related services for Milwaukee County.

She currently serves on the Archdiocese of Milwaukee's Community Advisory Board, which, along with the Archdiocesan Review Board, advises the Milwaukee archbishop on child and youth protection and victim outreach. She also serves on the Milwaukee Area Review Board, which advises orders of Catholic religious priests and brothers on child and youth protection.

Knight, who earned a master's degree from the University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee, also served on the Code of Ethics Task Force of Catholic Charities USA.

Her appointment to the National Review Board reflects the continuation of the dedicated

efforts undertaken by the bishops to create a safe environment within the church for children and youths, and to care for and reach out to victims of sexual abuse and their families, Cardinal George said.

"We bishops are dedicated to the continued implementation of the charter and the application of the 'Essential Norms' as the guidelines for our response to the grave sin and crime of the sexual abuse of minors by clergy," he said. "The collaboration and support of the NRB has been a critical source of advice and assistance in that undertaking."

The National Review Board flourished under the direction of Merz, Cardinal George said, adding that he expects that trend will continue when Knight takes the helm.

"The last several years have witnessed great strides in the efforts of the Catholic Church in the United States to strengthen and renew her efforts for the protection of young people and healing for victims," he said.

Bishop Blase J. Cupich of Rapid City, South Dakota, chairman of the Committee on the Protection of Children and Young People, said he welcomed the news of Knight's appointment.

"I look forward to working with Ms. Knight," he said, "and all of the members of the NRB in our goal of helping the bishops foster a safe environment for children and outreach to victims."

Vatican: Gaza war shows need for better protection of civilians

VATICAN CITY (CNS) — A Vatican official said the denial of humanitarian assistance in the Gaza Strip demonstrates the urgent need for greater protection of civilians during conflicts.

Archbishop Celestino Migliore, the Vatican representative to the United Nations, made the remarks Jan. 14 during a U.N. Security Council debate on civilian protection during war. The archbishop's U.N. office released his comments Jan. 14.

The day after he spoke, the United Nations was forced to suspend its humanitarian operations in the city of Gaza when Israel shelled the U.N. headquarters there, injuring three workers and setting a blaze that destroyed relief materials.

Other international aid agencies have found it difficult or impossible to deliver humanitarian assistance since the Israeli offensive began Dec. 27. More than 1,000 Palestinians, including several hundred civilians, have died in the conflict; as of Jan. 15, 13 Israelis had died, three of them civilians killed by Hamas rockets.

Archbishop Migliore said that "overwhelming mistreatment of civilians" occurs in too many parts of the world. He said civilians are being deliberately targeted as a means for achieving political or military gains.

"In the past few days we have witnessed a practical failure, from

every side, to respect the distinction of civilians from military targets," he said.

"It is sadly clear that political and military designs supersede basic respect for the dignity and rights of persons and communities, when methods or armaments are used without taking all reasonable measures to avoid civilians; when women and children are used as a shield for combatants; when humanitarian access is denied in the Gaza Strip; when people are displaced and villages destroyed in Darfur (Sudan); and when we see sexual violence devastating the lives of women and children in the Democratic Republic of the Congo," he said.

The archbishop said humanitarian access, the special protection of children and women, and disarmament were the "three vital pillars" for providing better protection to civilians. In order to enforce the existing mechanisms designed to safeguard noncombatants, he said, the United Nations needs to hold member states accountable for their actions.

More generally, he said, the burden of war casualties on civilians comes from massive production of increasingly sophisticated weapons. The higher quality and availability of light weapons and anti-personnel weapons "tragically make the killing of human beings that much easier and more efficient," he said.

Stephen's legacy of generosity lives on through others

FROM PAGE 28
Spirit Games in 2007 and 2008, exemplify the underlying force that helps the foundation move forward. The St. Andrew parishioners settled here from Louisiana after Stephen died and never met the charismatic teen.

"They weren't motivated by him. It was believing in the cause and faith," his mother says.

The Breens are quick to credit others for the foundation's early success and ability to generate

\$474,000 during its brief history. Failure was never an option for the determined community of friends who rallied around the couple when the organization started, they point out.

"Any success we've had isn't about Kathy and me," Jim Breen says modestly. "There's been a concerted effort of 10 to 20 core people, and then multiply that by 10. At least 100 to 200 volunteers are involved in this organization every year. They're

successful people who do what they put their minds to."

In addition to its support of Catholic schools, the foundation also networks with social workers at the local children's hospital to identify young cancer patients with special needs. Funds recently purchased a swing set for one youngster undergoing chemotherapy. Others have enjoyed trips to a nearby water park with their families.

Firmly focused on the future,

the Breens are developing a professional video that showcases the foundation's good deeds. They hope to send the informational tool to schools and grant writing organizations to generate interest and donations. The Breens expect requests for assistance to grow as more families are affected by job loss and a worsening economy.

"It's something we talked about at the last board meeting," Kathy Breen says. "We don't want

to see enrollments go down."

So what would Stephen think of the foundation that bears his name and the scores of children it helps each year?

"He's smiling," his mother says confidently. "Stephen had a vision and we kept our promise."

"He asked us not to forget him, so we're successful at that I suppose," her husband adds, nodding in agreement. "Of course it didn't take a foundation to accomplish that."

Obama, Mexican president both urged to care for migrants

WASHINGTON (CNS) — More than a week before he was to take office, President-elect Barack Obama met with Mexican President Felipe Calderon, prompting advice and recommendations about how the two leaders' governments should be handling immigration, among other matters.

Bishop John C. Wester of Salt Lake City, chairman of the U.S. Catholic bishops' migration committee, encouraged the two men to end abuses against

migrants and put more effort into economic development to deter people from leaving their homelands.

"The issue of illegal immigration transcends borders and must be addressed on a regional, if not hemispheric level," Bishop Wester said in a statement released by the U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops in Washington Jan. 12, the day Obama and Calderon met.

The bishop said the long-term solution to illegal immigration

"is not militarization of the U.S.-Mexico border, but economic development in poor nations. At a minimum, U.S. trade and international economic policies should not contribute to this forced migration."

A meeting with the president of Mexico before or soon after the inauguration of the U.S. president has become something of a tradition for the neighboring leaders.

Obama and Calderon held a private lunch at the Mexican

Cultural Institute in Washington and met briefly with the press, describing their discussion only in general terms. They said they talked about organized crime, immigration reform, the financial crisis, energy, and other hemisphere issues.

Calderon met with President George W. Bush the next day.

Obama was elected by a wide margin among Hispanic and immigrant voters, and expectations are high for new approaches in dealing with immigration and policies that affect Latin American countries.

Bishop Wester's statement reminded the two leaders that "migrants risk their well-being and lives to migrate in order to find work and support their families — it is a decision made out of necessity, not choice." He encouraged Obama and Calderon to "build bridges of cooperation, not walls of separation."

The bishop also referenced a joint 2003 statement by U.S. and

Mexican bishops in which they said Mexico also must reform its immigration laws and policies, "so that migrants from Central and South America are not subject to exploitation."

Obama spokesman Robert Gibbs said the two men also talked about the North American Free Trade Agreement, with Obama saying he supports updating the agreement to strengthen labor and environmental provisions.

"President-elect Obama underscored his commitment to working with Congress to fix the broken U.S. immigration system and fostering safe, legal, and orderly migration," he said.

"He expressed his strongly held view that immigrants should be treated with dignity and that the immigration debate should not be a vehicle for vilifying any group, and that our two countries need to work more effectively to stop the flow of illegal immigration into the United States," Gibbs said.

Hamer...

FROM PAGE 13
and took them off at 2:30 a.m. When I walked down the hall, the wood floors were shiny; inside the bathroom a cascade of water ran over the rim of the tub, and downstairs there was real live rainfall.

Water was pouring out the light fixture on the porch; my entry hall was soaked, and water dripped down the living room walls onto the framed photographs.

Talk about taking the wrong path! I had sat down for a 10-minute evening snack, and ended up spending three hours soaking up water, drying furniture, and questioning my sanity.

I learned something important that night: When really obnoxious things happen and no one else is there, you don't scream. You just start working.

It was in the effort of cleaning up this obnoxious, unnecessary mess, that I broke my mother's lamp, knocking it off a dripping table. One delicate, gold-leafed leg snapped off, rolled under the couch, and hid.

The destruction of that lamp was as catastrophic to me as my flooded house.

So, weeks later, I stood in a repair shop line, near a man who later told me something

I didn't understand... maybe "Sometimes the path is provided?"

The shop's proprietor couldn't fix my lamp, so I was leaving with Julie, discussing the fate of the broken heirloom, when the man who had been behind us in line approached.

"I can fix your lamp," he said. "Welding is what I do."

Julie and I walked to his truck. He talked about the repair, how long it would take, and what it would cost. He had no business cards, and instead grabbed a piece of paper printed with his name—Jimmy — and phone number.

As we drove away in opposite directions, Julie and I looked at each other and smiled. We'd trusted a stranger. I'd handed him my treasured lamp, and left with no assurance I would ever see him again.

I'd been so happy we'd coincidentally met, and told him so. That was when he called out the sentence I couldn't hear — What was it??

I nodded, smiled, and "Yes, yes," I replied, waving.

Two weeks later my lamp was finished. Jimmy brought it to my house, carried it in, and tenderly handed it over.

"Some pieces were missing," he explained, "and I filled them in. I smoothed it out and covered the cracks. I added some gold leaf, too," he said,

"to make it look pretty."

The wonderful man I hardly knew charged me \$15 less than estimated, but did twice as much work.

I chatted with him and his friend Winda; I thanked him; he put his arm around my shoulder and gave it a little squeeze. "I knew it was an important lamp," he said.

As Jimmy walked off my porch and into his truck, I remembered, and called out to him, "Wait!"

"When we were leaving the repair shop, you said something, and I didn't hear it exactly. Do you remember what it was?"

"Sure," said the man who had taken a badly broken treasure and fixed it.

"I said, 'Sometimes our paths be guided,'" he smiled, and opened the truck door.

Looking back at me, he added, "Whether we know it or not."



Kathy Cribari Hamer, a member of St. Andrew Parish, has five children, Meredith, John, Julie, Andrew, and Abby. In May, her column received the second place award for best family life column by the Catholic Press Association of the U.S. and Canada at the Catholic Media Convention in Toronto. In 2005, Kathy's column was recognized with the first place award in the same category.



Calendar

CELEBRATE CATHOLIC SCHOOLS

The 22nd Annual Celebration of Catholic Schools will be held Saturday, Jan. 31 at the Fort Worth Convention Center. The Stephen Breen Memorial Foundation will receive the Diocesan Leadership Award. The evening will include a social hour followed by dinner. Sister Carol Cimino, a national consultant for the William H. Sadler Company, will be guest speaker. Bishop Kevin Vann will also be in attendance. Reservations are \$75 per person. Everyone is invited to the celebration to show their support and commitment to Catholic schools. For more information and to secure reservations, please contact the Catholic Schools Office at (817) 560-3300, or email rsvp@fwdioc.org.

SIGN LANGUAGE CLASSES

Sign Language classes will be offered this semester on Tuesday evenings at St. John the Apostle Church in North Richland Hills from Jan. 27 through March 10 and sponsored by the Deaf Ministry Program. There will be a Beginning class offered at 7 p.m. and an Advanced Beginning class offered at 8 p.m. Adults and children ages 12 and older who have always wanted to learn more about the deaf community and the language they use, are encouraged to come learn American Sign Language. Both classes will meet in Room 'C' of the Formation Center at 4101 Frawley Rd. Students will learn the manual alphabet and signs for basic vocabulary. Cultural aspects of the deaf community as well as basic grammatical rules will be taught through fun hands-on activities and games. Cost for the class will be \$50 per person, which includes the cost of the book. There is no pre-registration. Those interested are asked to come the first night of class a few minutes early. For more information contact Mary Cinatl, director of Deaf Ministry at (817) 284-3019 or mcinatl@fwdioc.org.

APOCALYPTIC LITERATURE

Sister Dorothy Jonaitis, OP, will present "The Left Behind Alternative: A Workshop on Apocalyptic Literature" from 9 a.m. to 3 p.m. Saturday, Jan. 31 at St. Bartholomew Church at 3601 Altamesa Blvd. in Fort Worth. Sr. Jonaitis is the author of *Unmashing Apocalyptic Texts: a Guide to Preaching and Teaching*, and an assistant professor at the University of Dallas School of Ministry. She will present the Catholic teaching of apocalyptic texts, especially related to the Rapture and imagery of the Book of Revelation. Sr. Jonaitis will sign copies of her book, which may be purchased at the workshop. For more information, call Marco Castellon at (817) 293-5589.

LAY CARMELITES

The Lay Carmelites invite those in search of a deeper relationship with Christ to join them on the second and fourth Sundays of the month for a time of prayer and fellowship. Those interested in participating are asked to gather at 2 p.m. Feb. 27 in the chapel of The College of St. Thomas More, 3017 Lubbock St. in Fort Worth. Formation will take place in the college library from 2:30 p.m. to 4:30 p.m. For more information, call Phyllis Poth at (817) 457-1746.

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To Report Misconduct

If you or someone you know is a victim of sexual misconduct by anyone who serves the church, you may

- Call Judy Locke, victim assistance coordinator, (817) 560-2452 ext. 201 or e-mail her at jl Locke@fwdioc.org
- Or call the Sexual Abuse Hotline (817) 560-2452 ext. 900
- Or call The Catholic Center at (817) 560-2452 ext. 102 and ask for the chancellor/moderator of the curia, Father James Hart

To Report Abuse

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

DIVORCE CARE

St. Paul Church in Fort Worth will offer a new Divorce Care Series and the addition of a companion series, Divorce Care for Kids (DC4K) to run with it, from 6:30 to 8:30 p.m. beginning Jan. 29 and continuing for 12 weeks. Church Initiative distributes the program. Facilitators and helpers in both programs have been through divorce themselves, have been trained in the program, and have attended "Keeping Children Safe." Each session is age-appropriate. DC4K is geared towards children between ages 5 and 12, and the adult series is for those 13 and older. The program addresses the recovery process and the outcome is the realization that it is possible to recover from separation and divorce. Though the program is free, pre-registration is preferred. For more information, call St. Paul at (817) 738-9925.

RACHEL MINISTRIES

Rachel Ministries, a program that offers a safe, non-judgmental, and supportive environment to those struggling with abortion's aftermath, is expanding its outreach to include programs and services in Spanish. The expanded outreach program is currently seeking volunteers who can read and speak Spanish to help build the Spanish program. The ministry is also seeking Spanish-speaking licensed counselors to volunteer during the Rachel's Vineyard weekend retreats. There are also opportunities for volunteers to be included on the referral list. Training will be provided to all volunteers. Anyone who is bilingual and is interested in this ministry is asked to contact Betsy Kopor at (817) 923-4757 or by e-mail to forgiven@racheltx.org.

ST. AUGUSTINE GROUP

The St. Augustine Men's Purity Group, a support group for men who struggle with sources of sexual impurity such as those found on the Internet, meets regularly in Room 213 at St. Elizabeth Ann Seton School, located at 2016 Willis Lane, Keller; at 1301 Paxton Ave. (Padre Pio House) in Arlington; and at Immaculate Conception Parish in Denton at 2255 Bonnie Brae St. For additional information, visit the Web site at www.sampg.com, or e-mail to Mark at seamspurity@yahoo.com.

SPAIN AND PORTUGAL PILGRIMAGE IN THE SPRING

Msgr. Charles King, pastor of Immaculate Conception Parish in Denton, is leading a group to Spain and Portugal departing DFW on April 13 and returning April 27. The group will enjoy the services of an English speaking escort and a private motor coach throughout the trip. Some of the highlights will include visits to Madrid, Salamanca, Santiago de Compostela, Porto, Lisbon and Fatima, just to name a few of the destinations. For more information and a copy of the itinerary call Bob Wolfle at (817) 788-9383.

CALIX SUPPORT GROUP

Calix, a monthly support meeting for Catholics who are alcoholic and others who are struggling with addiction and seeking recovery, is offered the first Saturday of each month at 10 a.m. in the chapel of Holy Family Church, 6150 Pershing Ave. in West Fort Worth. The next meeting will be Saturday, Feb. 7. Calix meetings focus on enhancing spiritual growth through sharing Eucharist, discussion, and fellowship. For more information, call Deacon Joe Milligan at (817) 737-6768 ext. 105.

MARRIAGE ENCOUNTER

A Marriage Encounter weekend will be held Feb. 13-15 at the Catholic Renewal Center of North Texas, 4503 Bridge St. in East Fort Worth. A marriage enrichment is a weekend program for married couples led by married couples designed to help couples deepen their relationship. Reservations are required with a \$60 non-refundable deposit, and space is limited. The balance of \$175 per couple is due at the program. In case of financial needs, scholarship funds are available. A partial deposit is still required. For more information, visit www.ntexasme.org or to make a reservation, call (817) 451-6005 or e-mail meregistration@sbcglobal.net.

NTC DEADLINES FOR SUBMISSION

The *North Texas Catholic* is published twice monthly, except during the months of June, July, and August when it is published monthly. The deadline to submit information is noon on the Wednesday of the week before the paper is published. Items for the Feb. 6 issue must be received by noon on Wednesday, Jan. 28. Items for the Feb. 20 issue must be received by noon on Wednesday, Feb. 11.

KNIGHTS OF PETER CLAVER

The Knights of Peter Claver Council # 89 of Our Mother of Mercy Church in Fort Worth will hold their 19th Annual "Mardi Gras & Zydeco Dance" from 8 p.m. to midnight Saturday, Feb. 21 at the Meadowbrook Lions Club, 6013 Craig St. in Fort Worth. Donations are \$20 per person and admission includes authentic Louisiana gumbo and red beans and rice. Call (817) 253-0806, (817) 534-7652, or see any Knight at Our Mother of Mercy Church at 1007 East Terrell Ave. for more information about this event. Proceeds from the event go towards funding the many charitable activities sponsored throughout the year.

PURE REALITY RALLY

Pure Reality, a youth rally for eighth- through 12th-graders from the Metroplex and presented by the Catholic Pro-Life Committee and Catholics Respect Life, will be on Sunday, Feb. 8, from 4 to 9:30 p.m. at the Metro Center in Arlington. Dinner and a T-shirt are included in the \$20 price for attendance. For more information, contact Sue Laux at (817) 939-8595, or visit www.purerealityrally.com.

PATRIOTIC ROSARY

St. Patrick Cathedral will host a Patriotic Rosary prayer service for the United States as it assumes new leadership during a time of many difficulties and trials from 7 to 8 p.m. Tuesday, Jan. 27 at 1206 Throckmorton St. in Fort Worth. For information call the Fort Worth Queen of Peace Center at (817) 244-7733 or (817) 558-9805.

MINISTRY FOR GAYS, LESBIANS

The Fort Worth diocesan Ministry with Lesbian and Gay Catholics, other Sexual Minorities and Their Families regularly meet the fourth Thursday of the month at 7 p.m. at the Catholic Renewal Center at 4503 Bridge St. in Fort Worth. For more information, contact Father Warren Murphy, TOR, at (817) 927-5383 or Doreen Rose at (817) 329-7370.

COURAGE GROUP

Courage D/FW, a spiritual support group for those striving to live chaste lives according to the Catholic Church's teachings on homosexuality, meets regularly. For information, e-mail to CourageDFW@Catholic.org or call (972) 938-5433.

EDUCATE THE CHILDREN

Bishop Kevin Vann will be the guest speaker at the Fifth Anniversary Gala for Friends of Educate the Children 6:30 p.m., Friday, Feb. 13 at the Tarrant County College Northeast Campus at 828 Harwood Rd., in Hurst. The Gala will include a dinner and a silent auction. For more information contact Hilda Flores at (817) 560-3300 ext. 112 or hflores@fwdioc.org.

TRIBUNAL SEMINAR

Father Hector Medina, pastor of St. Matthew Church in Arlington, will present an introduction to tribunal ministry from 10 a.m. to 3 p.m. Saturday, Feb. 7, at Good Shepherd Church in Colleyville. To pre-register, call Deborah Hawks at Good Shepherd at (817) 421-1387. For more information, contact the Tribunal Office at (817) 560-3300 ext. 200.

MAGNIFICAT

Magnificat, a ministry to Catholic women that draws participation from throughout the North Texas region, will sponsor a women's breakfast with praise and eucharistic devotion from 9 a.m. to noon on Saturday, Feb. 21 at the DFW Hilton Lakes Conference Center and Hotel, located at 1800 Highway 26 East in Grapevine. The opportunity to receive the sacrament of reconciliation and to meet with prayer teams will be available after the keynote presentation. Author Patricia Treece will serve as keynote speaker for the event. For more information or to purchase admission at \$18 per ticket to the breakfast, call Nancy Ferri at (817) 498-7980 by Tuesday, Feb. 17, or obtain tickets at local Catholic bookstores, including Keepsakes in Arlington; Little Angels in Coppell; Catholic Arts and Gifts in Farmer's Branch and St. Anthony's Bookstore in Fort Worth.

OLGHS OPEN HOUSE

Our Lady of Grace High School will hold an open house from 9 a.m. to 4 p.m. on Jan. 26 at 13517 Alta Vista Rd. in Roanoke. For more information, contact the school at (817) 933-6516, or visit its Web site at www.OLGHS.com.

Classified Section

ACCOMPANIST

Accompanist with experience at three-manual pipe organ needed for three weekend Masses at Holy Family Church in Fort Worth. Responsibilities include rehearsals with up to two choirs weekly, holy day Masses; availability for parish funerals, weddings, and major parish celebrations throughout the year is preferred. Applicant must be familiar with post-Vatican II Catholic liturgy. Send a résumé to Holy Family Church; Attn: Diane Kain, 6150 Pershing Ave., Fort Worth 76107 or e-mail to dkain@holysfamilyfw.org. For more information, call (817) 737-6768 ext. 104

LITURGY COORDINATOR

Large Vatican II parish with five weekend Masses is looking for an energetic, engaging person to coordinate liturgical celebrations with style and reverence. Responsibilities will include training and scheduling ministers, planning weddings, funerals, and sacramental rituals. The coordinator will also be responsible for all liturgical articles and vestments. This is a full-time position with weekends and offers competitive salary and benefits. Send a cover letter and résumé to LC Search, St. Philip the Apostle Church, 1897 W. Main St., Lewisville 75067; office@stphilipcc.org; fax (972) 219-5429. No phone calls. Job description may be viewed at www.stphilipcc.org/job_board.htm.

LITURGICAL MUSIC DIRECTOR

St. Patrick Cathedral seeks a full-time Director of Liturgical Music and Organist to assist the Rector by assuming responsibility for the musical life of the parish. The successful candidate will provide organ music for all 5 weekend Masses, Holy Days, and occasional diocesan events; will direct and rehearse the Adult choir and develop other ensembles; supervise and train Cantors; select hymns and find imaginative ways to broaden the musical and liturgical efforts of the Cathedral taking advantage of its location at the heart of downtown. Applicants must possess degrees in organ, choral or sacred music, strong organ and conducting skills, complete knowledge of Catholic liturgical traditions, and should be practicing Catholics living in full accord with the teachings of the Church. For a complete job description, compensation information and application procedure, please see the Cathedral website, www.stpatrickcathedral.org.

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PASTORAL ASSISTANT

Sacred Heart Catholic Church in Wichita Falls seeks a full-time Pastoral Assistant to assist the Pastor in meeting the temporal and pastoral needs of this active 1,300-family parish. Principal duties will include administrative and facilities management as well as serving as staff liaison to all parish ministries and committees. Qualifications include a Master's degree in Theology or other related field, or its equivalent in education and experience; prior experience in ministry; practicing Roman Catholic. For a full job description and application procedure, please visit www.sacred-heartwf.org. Applications are accepted immediately.

LITURGY AND MUSIC DIRECTOR

A North Dallas Suburban Parish in transitional growth is seeking a full-time director of liturgy and music to lead the assembly in worship and song as a member of our pastoral team. A collaborative person is needed to initiate and grow a comprehensive liturgical music ministry; to guide parish liturgical ministries, plan and accompany weekend liturgies, holy days, weddings, funerals, special liturgical celebrations, direct and rehearse choir and cantors and interface with existing Spanish Choir. Requires close collaboration with staff and parishioners. Needs strong piano and conducting skills, good vocal skills, knowledge of Catholic liturgy and must be a practicing Catholic with a degree in liturgy or music, or equivalent years of experience. Salary and diocesan benefits commensurate with education or experience. Send letter, résumé, salary requirements and three current/verifiable references to: Search Committee Liturgy and Music, 352 Cascata Drive, Frisco, TX 75034.

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Catholic schools banquet honors Breen family for honoring son's request to

Help his Peers

Story and photo by
Joan Kurkowski-Gillen
Correspondent

Families who suffer the loss of a child often channel their grief in a way that helps others. Few people, however, have done it with the determination, grace, and success of Jim and Kathy Breen.

As he battled his way through the last stages of a rare bone cancer, their son, Stephen, made two requests. The Nolan Catholic High School sophomore asked his parents not to forget him and to do something to help Catholic school students and kids with cancer.

Responding to the selfless plea, the grieving couple began laying the groundwork for the Stephen Breen Memorial Foundation just one month after the 14-year-old's death on Oct. 4, 2004. Four years later, the organization has helped provide a faith-based education for hundreds of youngsters and inspired countless others.

Thanks to tireless fundraising and the efforts of hundreds of dedicated volunteers, the foundation has contributed more than \$208,000 to a tuition assistance program that gives 368 children from 224 families the funds to provide their children with a Catholic education. Students from every school in the diocese have received scholarships.

For its support of Catholic schools, the Stephen Breen Memorial Foundation will receive the Diocesan Leadership



Jim and Kathy Breen pose with daughter, Cortni, a senior at Nolan Catholic High School, who is holding her nephew, Alec, in front of a portrait of their deceased son, Stephen, for whom a foundation for Catholic students was named.

Award at the 2009 Celebration of Catholic Schools Banquet set for Saturday, Jan. 31 in the Fort Worth Convention Center Ballroom. The keynote speaker will be Sister Carol Cimino, SSJ, a national consultant for the William H. Sadlier Company.

The Diocesan Leadership Award is an unexpected honor the Breens are pleased to accept on behalf of the foundation. But the husband/wife team, who have three other children, say personal satisfaction comes from reading thank you notes sent by grateful parents.

"One of the most poignant came from a single mother

who called what we were able to do 'her miracle.' She had no idea how she was going to pay her kid's tuition," Jim Breen recalls. "And we've had similar letters from other people who could not have made it without help."

Proceeds from several fundraising events fuel the foundation's outreach to Catholic school families and cancer patients at Cook Children's Medical Center. Each year, the Breens and a committee of volunteers organize a golf tournament and a dinner that features a nationally known motivational speaker. Money

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sustain itself, it had to move beyond that," Jim Breen explains. "Mission and objective is what drives any foundation or organization, so people had to believe in what we were doing, who we were helping, and what we've been able to accomplish."

The Spirit Games are one of those notable accomplishments. Started in 2007 by the Stephen Breen Memorial Foundation in conjunction with the Diocese of Fort Worth, the event uses athletic competitions, an outdoor festival, music, and liturgy to bring Catholic youngsters together in fellowship and faith. This year's program is set for Sunday, April 26 and will feature a motivational speech by former NFL Giants player Keith Davis. The annual diocese-wide project doesn't earn the foundation a dime.

"It's about touching people's lives," Kathy Breen points out. "It's about community and spirit and evangelizing the Catholic faith to the youth of the diocese."

Jim and Jennifer Batson, who served as chairs for the

also comes from matching grants and the Wildcat Challenge Basketball Tournament sponsored by Stephen's alma mater, St. Andrew's School.

Although the foundation has fallen short of its ambitious goal to raise one million dollars in five years, the organization has increased its philanthropic giving annually. In 2005, the organization contributed \$29,000 to students needing tuition assistance. Last year, that figure grew to \$84,000.

The Breens say the foundation continues to succeed because it's become more than just their son's legacy.

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